

## Discussion/balanced argument texts



*Sharing Aspirations Inspiring Learners*

### **Purpose**

To present a reasoned and balanced overview of an issue or controversial topic. Usually aims to provide two or more different views on an issue, each with elaborations, evidence and/ or examples.

### **Common examples of text type**

- Non-fiction book on an 'issue'
- Write-up of a debate
- Leaflet or article giving balanced account of an issue
- Writing editorials about historical attitudes to gender, social class, colonialism etc.
- Writing letters about pollution, factory farming or smoking
- Writing essays giving opinions about literature, music or works of art

### **Generic Text Structure**

The most common structure includes:

- A statement of the issues involved and a preview of the main arguments.
- Arguments for, with supporting evidence/examples.
- Arguments against or alternative views, with supporting evidence/examples.
- Another common structure presents the arguments 'for' and 'against' alternately.
- Discussion texts usually end with a summary and a statement of recommendation or conclusion.
- The summary may develop one particular viewpoint using reasoned judgements based on the evidence provided.

### **Planning and preparation**

- Questions often make good titles e.g. Should everyone travel less to conserve global energy?
- Use the introduction to show why you are debating the issue e.g. There is always a lot of disagreement about x and people's views vary a lot.
- Make sure you show both/all sides of the argument fairly.
- Support each viewpoint presented with reasons and evidence.
- If you opt to support one particular view in the conclusion, give reasons for your decision.

<b>Progression in skills</b>	
<b>EYFS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• n/a</li> </ul>
<b>KS1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• n/a</li> </ul>
<b>LKS2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present tense</li> <li>• Third person</li> <li>• Language to illustrate a balanced viewpoint e.g. On one hand, On the other hand, Some people think, Others think.</li> <li>• Use present perfect form of verbs e.g. some people have argued....some people have said</li> <li>• Effective use of noun phrases e.g. uncountable noun phrases (some people, most dogs). Nouns that categorise (vehicles, pollution) and abstract nouns (power).</li> <li>• A number of paragraphs, each one giving a point for or against supported with evidence.</li> <li>• Use adverbials e.g. therefore, however...</li> <li>• Pictures, labels or captions could be used to support the argument.</li> <li>• A concluding paragraph to summarise main reasons for and against and also provide a personal opinion supported with evidence.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Possible text layout:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Introduction</u></b> A title which should be a question. Sentences to introduce the issue to be discussed.</p> <p><b><u>Main body</u></b> A number of paragraphs, each one giving a point for or against, supported with evidence.</p> <p><b><u>Conclusion</u></b> Sentences to summarise key points for and against. Personal recommendation with reason.</p>

**UKS2**  
**As for LKS2 plus:**

- Cause and effect connectives e.g. consequently, hence.
- (Y6) Create cohesion across paragraphs using a wider range of cohesive devices which can include adverbials e.g. therefore, however.
- (Y6) Make formal and informal vocabulary choices to adapt writing to the form of discussion e.g. by making generic statements followed by specific examples e.g. Most vegetarians disagree. Dave Smith, a vegetarian, for 20 years, commented...
- (Y6) Use the passive voice to present points of view e.g. it could be claimed that.... It is possible that...some could claim that....
- (Y6) Adapt degrees of formality and informality to suit the form of the discussion e.g. whether writing a formal letter or a blog. This can include vocabulary choices e.g. choosing habitat rather than home or indicate rather than shows.
- (Y6) Use conditional forms such as the subjunctive form to hypothesise e.g. If people were to stop hunting whales...
- (Y6) Semi-colons, colons and dashes can be useful for developing and linking ideas in complex discussion texts.

**Possible text layout:**

**Introduction**

A title which should be a question.

Sentences to introduce the issue to be discussed and why it is being discussed.

**Main body**

A number of paragraphs, each one giving a point for or against supported and elaborated with evidence.

**Conclusion**

Summary of key points for and against.

Personal recommendation and give a reason for it.