

Argument Unit

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Framework objectives

Text

15. to recognise how arguments are constructed to be effective, through, e.g.

- the expression, sequence and linking of points;
- the provision of persuasive examples, illustrations and evidence;
- pre-empting or answering potential objections;
- appealing to the known views and feelings of the audience;

16. to identify the features of balanced written arguments which, e.g.

- summarise different sides of an argument;
- clarify the strengths and weaknesses of different positions;
- signal personal opinion clearly;

18. to construct effective arguments:

- developing a point logically and effectively;
- supporting and illustrating points persuasively;
- anticipating possible objections;
- harnessing the known views, interests and feelings of the audience;
- tailoring the writing to formal presentation where appropriate;

19. to write a balanced report of a controversial issue:

- summarising fairly the competing views;
- analysing strengths and weaknesses of different positions;

Sentence

5. to use reading to:

- investigate conditionals, e.g. using *if . . . then*, *might*, *could*, *would*, and their uses, e.g. in deduction, speculation, supposition;
- use these forms to construct sentences which express, e.g. possibilities, hypotheses;
- explore use of conditionals in past and future, experimenting with transformations, discussing effects, e.g. speculating about possible causes (past), reviewing a range of options and their outcomes (future);

Word

8. to build a bank of useful terms and phrases for argument, e.g. *similarly*, *whereas*;

Outcomes

Written argument, a debate and reading and writing test practice papers

Intensive two-week plan for Year 6 Term 2 Unit 3: Argument

	Shared text and sentence level	Guided	Independent work	Plenary
Analyse Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 51 from <i>Grammar for Writing</i>. Shared reading: read and discuss content of discussion text (e.g. Sample Text A); analyse and annotate for organisation of content and create skeleton-frame. 	Reading	In pairs, analyse and annotate another discussion text (e.g. Sample Text B) for organisation of content and create discussion skeleton-frame.	Children explain the organisation of their text(s) and generalise for discussion as a text type.
Apply Tuesday	Shared writing (demonstration) – fast planning. Import content from another curriculum area and organise it into discussion skeleton-frame.	Writing	In pairs, fast planning practice. Using children's existing knowledge of an issue, make brief notes in discussion skeleton-frame.	Children explain the reasoning behind their planning.
Analyse Wednesday	Shared reading: analyse and annotate text (e.g. Sample Text A) for language features and create checklist for discussion writing.	Reading	In pairs, analyse and annotate another text (e.g. Sample Text B) for language features and add to checklist for discussion writing.	Children contribute their additional points for the checklist or explain how the existing checklist works for Sample Text B.
Apply Thursday	Shared writing (teacher as scribe) – referring to skeleton-frame. Write introduction and some paragraphs of the text using checklist.	Writing	In pairs and referring to skeleton-frame, write remaining and closing paragraphs of the text, using checklist.	Children explain the reasoning behind their writing in relation to the checklist.
Analyse and apply Friday	Shared reading and writing: revision (demonstration and teacher as scribe): revise the opening paragraph and one or two further paragraphs of the text.	Reading	Revise the remaining and concluding paragraphs of the text.	Children explain where and why they have made revisions.
Analyse and apply Monday	Unit 51 from <i>Grammar for Writing</i> .	Writing	Work in spelling logs: identify the tricky bits of recently used words from this and other pieces of writing. In pairs, test each other's spelling knowledge.	Recap on the principles behind the sentence work.
Analyse Tuesday	Shared reading: analyse discussion text (e.g. Sample Text C) at both organisational and sentence/word level.	Reading	Individually, analyse another discussion text (e.g. Sample Text D) at both organisational and sentence level/word level.	Children explain their analyses.
Apply Wednesday	Import content from another curriculum area, quick plan for writing a discussion text. Then discuss how to use the same material in a debate and organise the children into groups to prepare for a debate.	Writing	In groups, prepare to defend one or other side of the argument in a debate later in the day.	
Thursday	Shared reading: do a reading test paper all together, based on a discussion text.	Individually, do a reading test paper (discussion text).		Finish reading test paper.
Friday	Shared writing: do a writing test paper all together, involving a discussion text.	Individually, do a writing test paper (discussion text).		Finish writing test paper.

Features of a discussion text

Purpose

To present argument and information from differing viewpoints

Generic text structure

- Statement of the issue plus a preview of the main arguments
- Arguments for, plus supporting evidence
- Arguments against, plus supporting evidence (alternatively, argument/counter-argument, one point at a time)
- Recommendation – summary and conclusion

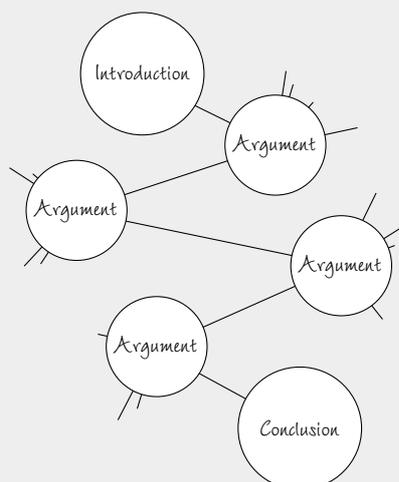
Sentence/word level features

- Simple present tense
- Generic human (or non-human) participants
- Logical connectives, e.g. *therefore, however*
- Movement is from the generic to the specific, e.g. *Hunters agree ..., Mr Smith, who has hunted for many years, ...*
- Emotive language may be used to engage interest or persuade the reader.

Writer's knowledge

- You can turn the title into a question, e.g. *Should we hunt whales?*
- Open by introducing the reader to the discussion – you may need to add why you are debating the issue.
- Try to see the argument from both sides.
- Support your views with reasons and evidence.
- In your conclusion, you must give a reason for what you decide.
- If you are trying to present a balanced viewpoint, check that you have been fair to both sides.

Skeleton-frame for planning a discussion



Should mobile phones be banned in schools?

In the last few years there has been an explosion in the use of new communications technologies, including mobile phones; it is estimated that over 70% of young people aged 10–14 now own one. Considerable debate has taken place in the press recently as to whether pupils should be allowed to take their mobile phones into school.

No one can deny the positive benefits of children communicating freely with each other, and pupils argue that using a mobile phone to talk to or text-message their friends is simply one way of doing this, using new technology. Many parents are in favour too, and like the reassurance of knowing their child can be safer and more independent if they have a mobile phone, since they can contact them at any time if necessary. They cite the potential risks faced by some children travelling alone.

However, schools point out that carrying a mobile phone could in itself make a child more vulnerable to theft or mugging, both on the street and even in the playground. Police figures confirm that a high proportion of crimes committed against young people involve thefts of mobile phones. Schools are concerned, moreover, that allowing pupils to bring their mobiles to school could create a competitive atmosphere amongst children and result in some children feeling left out and unvalued. In addition they claim that pupils' education would be affected by the distraction of phones ringing in class.

Some doctors fear that children using mobiles could suffer long-term brain damage. Until this is disproved, it would seem that schools might best protect their pupils from this and other problems by making them leave their mobile phones at home.

Text level

Title
A question summarising the issue being discussed. Keywords: *mobile phones, banned, schools.*

Introduction
First paragraph
Presents the facts that have given rise to the question in the title.

Argument
Paragraph 2
Against a ban. 1st sentence presents an argument based on children's needs. 2nd sentence adds a new argument (safety). 3rd sentence elaborates on this with evidence.

Paragraph 3
For a ban. 1st sentence contests the safety argument in Paragraph 2. 2nd sentence adds confirming evidence. 3rd and 4th sentences introduce two new reasons for a ban.

Conclusion
Final paragraph
1st sentence offers compelling reason for a ban, based on the issue of safety. 2nd sentence adds to this clinching argument a summary of Paragraph 3.

Sentence / word level

Should mobile phones be banned in schools?

Past tense to give relevant information

Passive construction

Emotive language to emphasise point

Passive construction

Formal language

Statistics to reinforce

Language of debate, strong assertion

Complex sentence using connective

Language of debate

Connective implying contradiction

Present tense generally used

Conditional form suggests hypothesis

Formal language

Connective

Connective implying an accumulation of arguments

Conditional form also distances author from the argument and so suggests a balanced presentation

Language of debate

Connective phrase showing a logical relationship between the two sentences

Conditional form suggests hypothesis

Passive

Connective implying a logical relationship between the two sentences

Formal language

Connective

Connective implying an accumulation of arguments

Conditional form also distances author from the argument and so suggests a balanced presentation

Connective phrase showing a logical relationship between the two sentences

Conditional form suggests hypothesis

Passive

Connective implying a logical relationship between the two sentences

Has the time come to ban cars from the centre of towns and cities?

Global warming caused by pollution has begun to affect us directly, with climate change starting to affect British weather. Some people believe the time has come for drastic action to reduce pollution caused by heavy traffic.

There is no doubt that traffic fumes are a major cause of pollution throughout the developed world, and are a particular problem in large towns and cities. In a small country like the UK, cities are close enough together to cause high levels of traffic fume pollution in the air over large areas of the land. Consequently, health problems are created such as asthma, which has rapidly increased as the number of cars on the road has risen. An additional problem in urban areas is congestion, which wastes time and adds to costs. The average speed of traffic in central London is now only 12 miles per hour, the same as it was in Victorian times. A ban on cars in the centre of large towns and cities would therefore seem sensible as it would cut pollution thereby improving health. It would also reduce congestion, allowing buses, emergency vehicles and delivery trucks to be more efficient.

On the other hand, it could be argued that such a ban would create other problems. Public transport in this country is expensive and sometimes unreliable. Would there be enough trains and buses to cope with the numbers needing them? Furthermore, there is also the issue of personal freedom. Is it right to prevent people from choosing the mode of transport they prefer? Many people feel safer in their cars when travelling at night than they do on a bus or a train.

While there is clearly an urgent need to cut pollution, this could be achieved by developing cleaner fuels and electrically powered cars, and encouraging people to use public transport where possible, rather than forcing them to do so.

Text level

- Title**
A question summarising the issue being discussed. Key words: *ban, cars, towns, cities*.
- Introduction**
First paragraph
States scientific facts that have given rise to the question in the title.
- Argument**
Paragraph 2
For a ban. 1st sentence gives facts which underpin all arguments in favour of a ban. 2nd sentence makes the general argument more specific (worse in UK). 3rd sentence introduces a new argument (health). 4th and 5th sentences add another argument with supporting evidence. 6th and 7th sentences summarise why a ban would be effective.
- Paragraph 3**
Against a ban. 1st sentence contests all arguments in Paragraph 2 with a contradictory assertion. 2nd sentence makes a claim that is specific to the UK. 3rd sentence elaborates on this. 4th sentence introduces a new argument. 5th sentence elaborates on this by citing an example.
- Conclusion**
Final paragraph
Sentence acknowledges the facts stated in the opening sentence of the introduction, and suggests alternative solutions to the problem.

Sentence / word level

Has the time come to ban cars from the centre of towns and cities?

Global warming caused by pollution *(third person)* has begun to affect us directly, with climate change starting to affect British weather. *(Language of debate)* Some people believe the time has come for drastic action to reduce pollution caused by heavy traffic. *(Present tense generally used)*

(Language of debate: strong assertion) There is no doubt that traffic fumes are a major cause of pollution throughout the developed world, and are a particular problem in large towns and cities. In a small country like the UK, cities are close enough together to cause high levels of traffic fume pollution in the air over large areas of the land. *(Technical language)* Consequently, health problems are created such as asthma, which has rapidly increased as the number of cars on the road has risen. An additional problem in urban areas is congestion, which wastes time and adds to costs. The average speed of traffic in central London is now only 12 miles per hour, the same as it was in Victorian times. A ban on cars in the centre of large towns and cities would therefore seem sensible as it would cut pollution thereby improving health. It would also reduce congestion, allowing buses, emergency vehicles and delivery trucks to be more efficient. *(Connective suggests causal link)*

(Statistics to reinforce) On the other hand, it could be argued that such a ban would create other problems. *(Formal language of debate)* Public transport in this country is expensive and sometimes unreliable. Would there be enough trains and buses to cope with the numbers needing them? *(Use of questions to provoke debate)* Furthermore, there is also the issue of personal freedom. Is it right to prevent people from choosing the mode of transport they prefer? Many people feel safer in their cars when travelling at night than they do on a bus or a train. *(Connective)*

(Connective) While there is clearly an urgent need to cut pollution, this could be achieved by developing cleaner fuels and electrically powered cars, and encouraging people to use public transport where possible, rather than forcing them to do so. *(Complex sentence)*

(Passive voice) *(Connective form suggests hypothesis)*

Should dogs be banned from parks?

There are thousands of pet dogs in Britain today, and clearing up after them costs local councils money. This fact, and some well-publicised attacks by dogs on children, have led to calls for dogs to be banned from parks.

Everyone at some time or other has experienced the unpleasantness of finding dog mess on their shoes. Yet it could be argued dog mess is not simply annoying: direct contact with it can also lead to an eye disease (toxocariasis) resulting in blindness.

However, dog lovers point out that this mess is biodegradable, whereas the mess and rubbish left behind by humans in parks and on the streets is not. Cans, plastic bottles and polystyrene packaging cost enormous sums of money to dispose of, and will pollute the planet for thousands of years. Toxocariasis is an extremely rare disease which can be avoided by following basic hygiene rules. Most dog owners clear up after their pets if bins are provided.

Critics of dogs often claim that they are unpredictable and dangerous, and therefore should not be allowed in parks because of the risks to children.

On the contrary, most dogs are friendly and sociable, particularly those whose owners take them out regularly. Attacks by dogs usually only arise when a dog is defending its territory. For example, in one serious incident it emerged that the injured boy had climbed into the pub yard which the dog was guarding.

Although dogs can sometimes be a nuisance and, very rarely, dangerous, they do less damage to our environment than lazy people who drop litter. Walking a dog is a cheap and easy way for many people to stay fit. Moreover, Parks Police admit that dog walkers, by being out at all hours and by often not sticking to the main paths, perform a valuable service in deterring would-be criminals from using our parks.

Text level

Title
A question summarising the issue being discussed. Key words: *dogs, banned, parks*.

Introduction
Each sentence gives a rationale in favour of a ban.

Argument
Paragraph 2
For a ban. 1st sentence appeals to common experience to argue dogs are messy. 2nd sentence elaborates, with scientific evidence that dogs are a threat to health.

Paragraph 3
Against a ban. 1st sentence contradicts the 1st argument (dogs are messy), with a counter-claim (people are messier). 2nd sentence elaborates with supporting evidence. 3rd sentence contradicts the 2nd argument (threat to health). 4th sentence offers a solution to both arguments 1 and 2.

Paragraph 4
For a ban. Sentence introduces a new argument (dogs are dangerous).

Paragraph 5
Against a ban. 1st sentence contradicts the assumption in Paragraph 4. 2nd sentence offers evidence based on scientific theory. 3rd sentence elaborates with a specific example.

Conclusion
Final paragraph
1st sentence summarises the arguments in Paragraph 3. 2nd sentence adds an additional reason against a ban, also related to health. 3rd sentence gives as a clinching argument the claim that, far from making parks dangerous for children, dogs can actually make them safer.

Sentence / word level

Should dogs be banned from parks?
Present tense generally used

There are thousands of pet dogs in Britain today, and clearing up after them costs local councils money. This fact, and some well-publicised attacks by dogs on children, have led to calls for dogs to be banned from parks.
Conditional distances
writer from argument
Formal language

Everyone at some time or other has experienced the unpleasantness of finding dog mess on their shoes. Yet it could be argued dog mess is not simply annoying: direct contact with it can also lead to an eye disease (toxocariasis) resulting in blindness.
Connective implying contradiction
Impersonal language
Technical term

However, dog lovers point out that this mess is biodegradable, whereas the mess and rubbish left behind by humans in parks and on the streets is not. Cans, plastic bottles and polystyrene packaging cost enormous sums of money to dispose of, and will pollute the planet for thousands of years. Toxocariasis is an extremely rare disease which can be avoided by following basic hygiene rules. Most dog owners clear up after their pets if bins are provided.
Passive voice used: identity of Agent irrelevant
Formal language of debate
Complex sentence

Critics of dogs often claim that they are unpredictable and dangerous, and therefore should not be allowed in parks because of the risks to children.
Connective phrase

On the contrary, most dogs are friendly and sociable, particularly those whose owners take them out regularly. Attacks by dogs usually only arise when a dog is defending its territory. For example, in one serious incident it emerged that the injured boy had climbed into the pub yard which the dog was guarding.
Connectives
Formal/impersonal language

Although dogs can sometimes be a nuisance and, very rarely, dangerous, they do less damage to our environment than lazy people who drop litter. Walking a dog is a cheap and easy way for many people to stay fit. Moreover, Parks Police admit that dog walkers, by being out at all hours and by often not sticking to the main paths, perform a valuable service in detering would-be criminals from using our parks.
Formal language

Do circuses still need animal acts?

For over a century, touring circuses have provided family entertainment with a mixture of human and animal acts. As more information about animal behaviour becomes available, the question arises of whether it is any longer acceptable for animals to be kept for performing.

Supporters argue that circuses are part of our tradition, and that many families visit a circus who might not go to other sorts of live entertainment. But traditions can and do change with time, and a circus without animal acts still provides plenty of variety, with clowns, trapeze and high wire acts, jugglers and acrobats.

It is claimed that circuses are educational, as they give many people the chance to see wild animals such as lions and elephants at close quarters. However, it could be argued that zoos and safari parks offer this opportunity more successfully, since they contain a far wider range of creatures living in a more natural habitat. They also usually provide additional information in the form of leaflets, signs and captions, and have staff available to answer questions.

Those in favour of animals in circuses say that the animals enjoy performing and are trained using rewards and tit-bits, so no cruelty is involved. Nevertheless, opponents point out that animals do not perform in their natural environments, and therefore it is not right to coerce them into doing this merely for the entertainment of humans. They also criticise the cramped living conditions in which circus animals are forced to spend most of their time.

Through watching informative programmes on television, more people have a growing understanding of the needs of wild animals, such as plenty of space to roam and the freedom to live with their own kind. In the 21st century, it seems unnecessary and even cruel to confine wild animals and train them to do tricks for the public's amusement.

Detailed lesson plans for Days 3 and 4:

Day 3: shared reading and analysis

Day 4: shared writing (applying the learning from Day 3)

Context

On Day 1 the teacher and children did some activities from Unit 51 in *Grammar for Writing* on conditionals. Then they read Sample Text A, and briefly discussed the issues presented before going on to analyse and annotate for organisational features in order to create the skeleton-frame of the discussion text type. They repeated the process independently using Sample Text B and other classroom texts. On Day 2, they used the skeleton-frame and facts and arguments they had been discussing in history to plan a discussion text on the Second World War.

Day 3 – Shared reading and analysis

1. Tell the children that in order to write a really effective discussion, they need to be clear about both the organisation of this text type, which they worked on earlier in the week, and its language features. This might include the tense and person the text is written in, the kinds of sentences used, the punctuation and particular sorts of vocabulary chosen to match the text type and to engage and stimulate the reader.
2. Explain that the purpose of today's session will be to analyse Text A, investigating its language features and creating a checklist of the features they can use for their own writing.
3. Re-read Text A (enlarged/OHT) briskly to orientate the children.
4. Referring to the title, model for the children how to annotate a text by underlining 'be banned' and annotating it as the passive voice. Remind them of the reasons for using the passive.
5. Analyse and annotate the first paragraph with the children. Begin to create the checklist of features as you go, on a flipchart.
6. For paragraph 2, ask the children to work in pairs for a few minutes, noting features which seem distinctive to this text type on their whiteboards. Then ask them to join with another pair, compare their lists, discuss them and agree on a final list of three or four features between them. Take feedback from the groups, annotate Text A and continue to add to the class checklist.
7. Repeat with paragraphs 3 and 4, noting the features of a conclusion.
8. Tell the children to use the checklist they have just created for Text A as a reference point and prompt to annotate Text B in pairs and write two checklists: one of any language features in B which were also in A, and one of any new features in B only. Make it clear that in the plenary, you will be adding what they've discovered to the class checklist.

Plenary

Take feedback from each group, asking first for one or two examples of language features in Text B which were also found in Text A. Annotate Text B as you go. Were there any features which occurred in the same paragraph in each text? Why might that be? Were there any additional features in B, that were not in A (e.g. *questions to provoke debate*)? If so, could they think of a way that feature could have been used in Text A? Take suggestions and encourage children to comment on the effectiveness of this. Conclude by telling children that tomorrow they will be thinking of how they can use the checklist of language features in their own writing of a discussion.

Day 4 – Application in shared writing

1. Tell the children that the objective of today's session is to write a discussion text, based on the plan they made on Tuesday, on the Second World War. Re-read Texts A and B briskly to remind them of the text type they will be producing. Refer to the checklist made yesterday and tell them you will be using this as a prompt.
2. Display the notes made in the discussion skeleton-frame on Tuesday. Give the children some time in small groups to discuss the issue and ask if anyone has thought of any additional arguments or has located any useful facts or figures to support the argument which are not on the plan. Add these on.
3. Begin with the title. Remind the children of what they noticed about the titles when analysing Texts A and B (e.g. *use of key words* and *question format*). Ask them in pairs to think of a suitable title for this piece. Take ideas, rephrase if necessary and scribe.
4. Move on to the introductory paragraph. Recap on the features identified in Texts A and B, pointing out that these introductions are usually only one or two sentences long. Write part of the sentence yourself, then ask the children to complete in pairs on their whiteboards. Take some of their ideas and scribe. Demonstrate using the checklists (for content and for language features) as reference points.
5. Explain that paragraph 2, as in Texts A and B, will contain all the arguments and evidence supporting one point of view on the issue. Ask the children to discuss, in pairs, which point of view should come first and why. Take suggestions and encourage children to respond to each other's opinions. Agree the broad content of the paragraph, and then tell the children in which order the points in the skeleton should go, i.e. which is the best point to start with. Give reasons for your choices.
6. Follow the same pattern for the points in paragraphs 2 and 3, remembering to re-read and emphasising the need for the ideas to flow logically.
7. Re-read what you have composed so far. Ask the children to consider whether it could be improved by using any of the features on the checklist. Re-draft as necessary.
8. Explain to the children that in pairs, during independent time, they are going to write paragraph 3 which will include all the opposing arguments, and the concluding paragraph. Remind them to refer to both checklists, and to discuss each sentence aloud with their partner.
9. Tell them that in the plenary you will be taking a couple of points from the skeleton and asking them how they expressed one of these points effectively in their writing.

Plenary

Select one of the points from the skeleton, which the children have been including in paragraph 3, and ask for volunteers to read aloud the sentence or sentences which relate to that point. Ask the other children to listen carefully and identify which features have been used and to suggest why they think the writers chose to use it. Encourage them to comment on their own and each other's sentences, particularly in relation to the effectiveness of using particular features (e.g. the use of certain connectives implying contradiction or reinforcement) and vocabulary choices.

Transcripts of lessons for Days 3 and 4

(taught by Year 6 teacher, Bobbie. Children's responses and contributions omitted)

Day 3 - Shared reading and analysis

Note: the texts for the shared and independent reading are on pages 6–13.

You remember that I told you on Monday when we started this work on discussion texts that the aim is for you to be able to write your own argument or discussion really effectively? Well, in order to do that, you have to be clear not just about how that type of text is organised, but also you have to know about the language features of discussion texts. What I mean by that is, the kinds of words you use, the way you construct your sentences. Can anyone suggest what else we mean by language features? Yes, right, punctuation. We might use particular forms of punctuation, like you often use bullet points when you write instructions Yes, definitely, the tense it's written in, good. So, our objective today is to look carefully at the discussion text we read and discussed on Monday, 'Should mobile phones be banned in schools?', investigate its language features together, and make a list of them on the flip chart. Then, when you come to write your own discussion later, you'll all be able to use the checklist to remind yourselves That's right, we did the same thing when we were writing playscripts, well remembered. And it did help, didn't it? [Switched on OHP - enlarged version of 'Should mobile phones be banned?' and read through it]

I know we all have lots to say about this issue and different points of view came up in our discussion. Now we are going to look more closely at how the argument has been constructed. If we look first at the title, I'm going to show you a language feature in that title, and it's not a very common one, [underlined 'be banned'] can anyone tell me what it is? Nearly right, it's called the passive voice [annotated 'passive voice' on OHT] and who can remember why it might be used? Yes, when you want your writing to sound more formal. Can you remember any other formal writing we did? Yes, when we wrote those letters of complaint to the council and the certificates too, that's right. Now if you look at this title you'll see it doesn't tell us who would be doing the banning, and that's what happens if you use the passive voice, it lets you 'hide' who's doing it, maybe because it doesn't matter or because you don't want to draw attention to them. So I'm going to start off our checklist of key language features with 'passive voice' [wrote this on flip chart headed 'Key Language Features of Discussion Texts'].

Now let's look at the first paragraph, the introduction, all together Good, you've spotted another use of the passive voice [underlined and annotated 'it is estimated'] the words the writer chooses. Yes, 'explosion' has greater impact on the reader than a phrase such as 'sharp increase' - Why? And tell us why you picked 'Considerable debate' Yes it does sound very formal again, doesn't it? It definitely lets us know there's a debate happening, there are two different viewpoints on this issue [underlined and annotated 'considerable debate' and added 'formal language of debate' to checklist]. Is there any evidence, any hard facts here? Well done, those statistics there [underlined and annotated '70% of young people'] make it sound more convincing, you're right [wrote 'evidence, e.g. statistics, to support a point of view' on checklist]. Now I want us to move on to paragraph 2. What do we know from our work on Monday is the content of paragraph 2? Thank you, all the arguments against a ban, so there should be plenty of these features here we can spot. I'd like you to work with your partner, find and note down at least three language features in this paragraph Yes, they might be ones we've found already or they might be new ones. You'll have three minutes for that, then I'm going to ask you as a pair to turn to another pair and compare your lists. I want you to discuss what you found and agree on one list between the four of you, OK? Five minutes for all of that, please Well done, you've found that it's written in the present tense, [underlined 'is'] can anyone else see some other present tense verbs, please? Yes, 'argue' 'can'

..... 'are' In fact all the verbs are in the present tense so I can underline and annotate them all, and also add 'present tense' to our checklist. What about other features? Yes, excellent, you four have noticed some of the particular language that people tend to use in discussion writing [underlined and annotated 'pupils argue' and 'They cite'] - these sorts of phrases are typical of a discussion text where both sides of the argument are being put quite strongly. Again, it's quite formal language. Can you see any more examples of this sort of formal, debating style of language? Very good, yes, 'No one can deny'. Can you explain to us, one of you four, why you picked out that phrase? I do see what you mean, yes, what about the rest of you? OK so I'm going to write that on our checklist as 'strong claim' or 'strong assertion'. Is there anything we've missed in either paragraph? Just check through them again Good, there's a connective there, 'since', in that complex sentence which links together the two parts of the sentence.

If we start to look at paragraph 3, where we know all the opposing arguments are, we can see that it starts with another connective [underlined and annotated 'however']. Even if we didn't already know that the other side of the argument was going to be in this paragraph, that particular connective would tell us, wouldn't it? Can anyone explain that? Good, yes, it's like a signal to the reader that someone is about to argue the opposite, to contest the viewpoint in paragraph 2. I'd like you now to read through paragraph 3 with your partner and list some of the language features on your white boards You've said 'moreover' [underlined and annotated 'moreover'] so can another pair explain what kind of connective that is? Is it like 'however'? What does anyone else think about what she just said? So what do I need to write on our checklist? You're both right, so I'm going to write this [wrote 'connective suggesting further evidence (moreover)' on flip chart] These verbs, 'could' and 'would' - what form is that and when is it used? Good, they're conditional verbs [underlined and annotated] and they suggest a possibility, don't they, rather than a certainty. What's the effect of using them here? Let's replace them with 'does' and 'will' [wrote on OHT] - what's the difference when we read it? Talk about that for a minute in your pairs, please That's it, if you use the conditional form, 'could' and 'would' and 'might' and so on, it makes you sound more reasonable, as if you're making your arguments in a very measured way, not just flinging out a lot of wild claims that you can't prove. I'm going to write 'conditional form to suggest possibility/hypothesis' [wrote on checklist] because we've come across that word in our science work.

Let's do the concluding paragraph together quickly Yes, we've got those on our checklist [underlined and annotated 'could', 'might' and 'until this is disproved']. That last one is a connective phrase isn't it, rather than a single connective word, that links the ideas in the two sentences together. [Wrote 'connective phrase linking ideas' on checklist.]

Listen carefully while I explain what I want you to do while I'm reading with a group. On your tables is a copy of the text you analysed on Monday, 'Has the time come to ban cars from the centre of towns and cities?' In pairs, read through the whole text again first. Then start to annotate it, like I did, beginning with the title, underlining the language features you notice and writing what they are in the margin. Use our checklist we've made today to help you find as many features as you can. If you find a feature in this text that is on our checklist, write it in one list. If you find a language feature that isn't already on our checklist, write it in a separate list, so you could end up with two lists. In our plenary, I want to add all the features you've found to our class checklist, and also I'll be asking some of you about the effects of some of these features.

Plenary

Right, can your group start us off by telling us one or two features you discovered, that were also in this text? [ticked off items on class checklist, underlined and annotated copy of Text B on OHT] Thank you, next group, please [repeated for each group]. Has anyone noticed if there were any features which occurred in roughly the same place in each text? Yes, like both titles being questions, but looking at the language features So both paragraph 2s begin with a strong assertion, and there are several connectives in there, too. Why is that, do you think? You think it's an effective way to start off a paragraph of arguments, then? I agree, it takes the reader straight to the point of view very forcefully, doesn't it?

My last question to you is, were there any features in your text that weren't in this one we did together? Could that feature, asking the reader questions to make them think about the point being made, be used in this text? [pointed to Text A]. Have a quick go at changing this final sentence [pointed to Text A] in paragraph 3 into a question Well done, 'Would children's education be affected by the distraction of phones ringing in class?' You might like to think about the effect of making this change. This checklist is going to be really helpful to us tomorrow when we start to write our own discussion text and you need to include the key language features.

Day 4 - Shared writing - apply

Our objective today is to write our own argument or discussion text, using all the things we've found out about how this kind of text is written. We're going to use the plan we made on Tuesday as a basis, and we've also got these two checklists we can refer to [pointed to lists and plan displayed] that will act as reminders.

Now for our discussion text, we're using information from our history topic last term, when we learnt a lot about what life was like during the Second World War. As I said to you on Tuesday, we're using that because it's something you know a lot about, especially the effect of the war on children, and many of you said that the drama we did about evacuation really made you understand what that experience might have been like for the children and their families. So here's our skeleton-frame, with all the points in favour of evacuation down one side, and the points against down the other, and some additional detail for some of those points, such as evidence to back up a claim being made. Has anyone thought of any more points since Tuesday that we could include, either for or against? You've come up with an important fact that we forgot, that sadly, some children became orphans while they were evacuated because their dad was killed in the fighting and their mum died in the bombing - that is a really important piece of information. Well done. Now can you think of an argument to make, based on that fact? Talk to your partners for a moment and see what you can think of OK, you've put that very well. From your discussion you would like to argue that because some children were orphaned, evacuation was a bad thing and it would have been better if they could have stayed with their mums even if that meant running the risk of dying in an air raid. Can someone put the opposing argument? Good, yes, you've come up with a good reason, that they might have survived the bombing so it was better that they were living safely with someone they knew, if they were going to be orphaned anyway. I think if you want to include this point in your writing, you could argue it as a 'for' or an 'against', so I'm going to leave that to you to decide, and maybe later in the week we'll see who came up with the most convincing argument.

Now we said our writing would be a discussion that might have appeared in a newspaper or magazine during the war, once evacuation had started and some people had started to question whether it was such a good idea. Let's start with thinking of a title - remember what we found out about the title: that it's often in the form of a question, and includes the key words. Turn to your partner and decide on a suitable title I'm going to change what you said just a little bit to make it a bit shorter 'Will evacuation be good for our children?' 'Evacuation' is one of the 'shun' words we've looked at isn't it? Stephen can you think about the word ending please and spell 'evacuation' for me as I write [Wrote 'Will evacuation be good for our children?'] How did you know it ended with '-tion' and not '-sion' or '-cian' Stephen? Well remembered, it comes from the verb 'evacuate' and it keeps the 't' when you change it to 'evacuation' Yes, quite right, Hasna, we found out that '-tion' is the most common 'shun' ending, didn't we?

Next, we need to write our introductory paragraph, so let's recap on what we know about that. It's quite brief, usually only one or two sentences long, and it needs to clarify the situation, saying a bit more about those key words in the title. I'm going to begin by writing the first sentence. [Wrote 'Since the start of the war, more than 250,000 children have been evacuated'.] I'd like you, in your pairs, to write the next sentence on your white boards which will finish off the introduction I like the way you've managed to suggest the long-term effects of evacuation in your sentence, and it also uses one of the language features from the checklist. See if you can spot it as I'm writing. [Wrote 'Yet as the war continues into another year many of those have been removed from their new homes'.] Good, there's the passive voice there [pointed to 'have been removed'] setting a formal tone to the whole piece right at the start.

Let's move on to paragraph 2. As we know from the discussion texts we've read, this is often where we'll need to write all the arguments in support of one point of view. Here on our plan are the two different viewpoints: which shall we start with? Discuss it with your partner, and I want you to give me reasons why we should start with the point of view you choose Good, you've given me two reasons why we should start with the arguments against evacuation. Has anyone got two or more reasons why we should start with the points in favour? Anybody like to comment on either of those proposals? Right, I think that's a good point, to start with the points 'for' because that's what everyone thought to begin with, that it was a good idea to send the children to a safe place, and it was only as time went on that some of the points against evacuation began to be realised. So we could reflect that in the way we write this, beginning with this point on our plan, then moving to a sentence about this one because it follows logically, and finishing with a sentence about food shortages. Now what we need is an effective opening phrase for this sentence which is going to explain the idea of moving children away from the bombing. Talk to your partner and try to think of a strong phrase that we can use Yes, we could start off with that, but I think this pair's was better because it appeals to a common belief at the start of the war, that the bombing would kill everyone in the cities. [Wrote 'In 1939 everyone believed that'.] And I'm going to finish the sentence using the passive voice to get that feeling of formality [pointed to checklist, then wrote 'our cities would be destroyed and the'] and I want to write 'people killed'. Can anyone think of a more emphatic way of writing 'people killed' to make a greater impact on the reader? 'population wiped out'. OK, that's probably not an exaggeration. [Wrote 'population wiped out'.] I'm going to make a link now with one of the less serious effects of the bombing which we've got on our plan. I'm starting with a connective phrase [wrote 'Even when it was realised that this wasn't happening, the effect of the nightly bombing raids on children'] and I'd like you to complete this sentence on your white boards, please. Don't forget to use the checklists to help you Good,

you've brought in the formal language of debate with that phrase so I'm going to use it and add in what the others said about sleep being important for children's health. [Wrote 'convinced many people that children would be safer and healthier if they could leave the city and have a proper night's sleep'.] We want to bring in this point in favour of evacuation, [pointed to plan] that the food shortages were less severe in the country, so let's re-read what we've written so far, see how it sounds and then try to think of a way of linking in that next sentence I agree, we need a connective that suggests further evidence. Can you see one on the checklist? Good, 'moreover' will fit well, so start your next sentence with 'moreover' Well done, you've also used a more technical term: 'malnourished' which gives a greater sense of suffering than 'didn't have enough to eat' in this kind of writing, so we'll include that. [Wrote 'Moreover, many city children were malnourished and food shortages were less of a problem in the country'.] Just re-read what we've done so far today, and tell me if you think we could improve it by using any more features from the checklist

Listen carefully to what I want you to do next. In pairs, you're going to write paragraph 3, which will include all the opposing arguments, and then the concluding paragraph. Use the checklists to help you, keep re-reading what you've written and discuss each sentence before you write it. In the plenary, I'll be picking out some of the points against evacuation that we put in our skeleton-frame and asking you how you expressed that argument.

Plenary

Right, let's take this point from the plan, that evacuation was a bad idea because some children lived with much wealthier people while they were evacuated and that made it hard for them and their families when they went back home. I'm going to ask for volunteers to read out how they wrote that into their argument, and I'd like the rest of you to listen carefully and see if you can identify the features they've used and how they affect the argument Thank you. So who spotted one of the features on our checklist that the boys used there? You've said the conditional verbs. Can you tell us why you think they thought that would be effective? Boys, do you want to come back on that one? Yes, tell her your reasons Would any pair like to read their version of that argument? Tomorrow we'll have a chance to look at this again to see if we can improve on what we've done together. Any different features used there? Good. I agree. The sentence 'Parents haunted by the image of children scarred physically and mentally by the nightly bombings, have no alternative but to send them away to safety' is much more effective. Why? Tomorrow we'll have a chance to look at this again to see if we can improve on what we've done together.

Is homework necessary?

Secondary schools have been setting their pupils homework for many years, and more recently this has been extended into primary classes, including those for the youngest children. Recent articles in the press about standards in schools, and about the stresses placed on some pupils to achieve, have highlighted the role of homework.

It is argued that providing children with tasks to complete outside school hours helps them to develop the ability to work independently, without the supervision of an adult. This is important as pupils are increasingly expected to take responsibility for their own learning as they progress through secondary school. Most adults are expected to use their initiative at work, and to be able to do the job for which they are paid without constant supervision: in this sense, homework is a preparation for real life. Those who support homework point out that it would be impossible to cover in school time everything necessary, and that regular homework allows children the opportunity to practise and revise certain skills.

(continued)

Sentence structure and punctuation

A question summarising the issue being discussed

Past tense to give relevant information

Long sentence with clauses marked with commas

Formal language (noun)

Language of debate

Continues in the present tense

Formal language (noun)

Passive voice reinforces formal style

Colon suggests causal link

Language of debate

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(continued)

Text structure and organisation

Introduction: explains the current situation and why the question has arisen

Argument in favour of homework
Claim for independent learning

Reinforces 'independent' argument with examples

Second claim

Spelling

argument – no 'e'

practise – 's' – as a verb

practice – 'c' – as a noun

However, critics of homework argue that if the curriculum cannot be covered within the school day, there is clearly too much content and it should be reduced. They further claim that since some children have access at home to computers and books and others do not, certain children are at a disadvantage. They believe that this amounts to a lack of equal opportunities. In terms of encouraging children to become independent learners, they point out that in some cases, parents provide so much help and support for their children's homework that, far from learning to tackle problems on their own, these children are simply relying on adults even more. Furthermore, some critics argue that children are under a great deal of pressure to work hard at school, and that they need plenty of time to relax and develop hobbies and personal interests.

Schools have to balance the desire to prepare their pupils properly for the future against the risk of subjecting them to too much stress. Clearly, schools must think carefully about the homework tasks they set, in order to ensure that some groups of pupils do not struggle because they happen to lack certain resources at home.

Sentence structure and punctuation

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Language of debate

Passive voice creates formal style
Alternative 'teachers should reduce' = hectoring tone

Language of debate

Complex sentence to point up argument and then present counter arguments

Connective demarcated with a comma

Language of debate

Forceful language

Connective demarcated with a comma

Formal language

Text structure and organisation

Connective to suggest possible contradiction
Argument against homework

Counters second claim in last paragraph

Points out inequalities in pupil access to materials

Counter 'independence' argument

Introduces new argument against homework

Responsibility of schools in setting homework to take the counter arguments into consideration

Spelling

since, access, certain, reduced – 'c' – soft
disadvantage – break into syllables
independent – 'ent'

Composition and effect

Economical use of language reduces a lot of detail into a relatively short discussion paper. Consistently impersonal style not lapsing into hectoring but making forceful assertions. Conclusion accepts that homework inevitable but appeals to schools to exercise care.

Should smoking in public be banned?

Smoking continues to be one of the main causes of illness and death in the UK, and huge sums of money are spent both on treating victims of heart disease and cancer caused by smoking, and on trying to prevent young people from becoming addicted and risking their health and lives in the future. In recent years experts have become increasingly aware of the dangers of passive smoking – that is, the risk to non-smokers of breathing in smokers' tobacco fumes – and some people are now calling for a ban on smoking in public.

Anti-smokers point out that since the dangers of smoking are so serious and so well-known, it is completely unfair that they should be forced to be exposed to the risks of inhaling other people's dangerous fumes. Some places where smoking is allowed, for example on the top deck of buses, are very confined spaces that can quickly become filled with smoke. However, passengers may have no choice but to travel upstairs if the bus is crowded. In these circumstances, it is impossible to avoid breathing in

(continued)

Sentence structure and punctuation

A question summarising the issue

Passive voice, no reference to who should ban it

Present tense

Technical vocabulary

Language of debate

Strong assertion

Complex sentence economically containing all the points

Connectives keeping the argument going

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(continued)

Text structure and organisation

Presenting facts about smoking and health, and explaining risks of passive smoking

*Arguments in favour of a ban
Fairness argument*

Elaboration of argument with examples

Spelling

smokers' + people's – both plural

but in smokers the 's' is both possessive and plural so the apostrophe is at the end –

in people's, the 's' is only possessive

potentially toxic fumes. In restaurants and cafes where smoking is permitted, customers can have their meal ruined by smokers at an adjacent table. Those who are pressing for a ban on smoking in public complain that smokers can choose whether to put their own health at risk, but should be prevented from doing the same to everyone else.

However, many smokers argue that the risks of passive smoking are still relatively unproven, and may be quite minimal. They contest that smoking is now forbidden in numerous public places, such as shops, trains, many offices and some shopping malls, and that a further ban would limit their personal freedom. Moreover, they argue that since they pay enormous amounts of tax on each pack of cigarettes, they are contributing large sums of money to the government to help fund hospitals.

As people become more and more health-conscious, it seems unlikely that the bans which currently exist on smoking in public will be reversed. If the UK follows the example of the USA as it often does, we may well see such bans extended.

Sentence structure and punctuation

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Formal language

Language of debate

Passive, not stating who is responsible for doing the preventing

Conditional suggests hypothesis

Language of debate

Connective

Complex sentences with commas demarcating ends of subordinate clauses

Passive voice

Text structure and organisation

Summarises arguments in favour of a ban

Connective implying contradiction

Arguments against a ban

Questions assertion about danger of passive smoking (ref opening paragraph)

Raises issues of personal freedom

Assert that smokers pay for their hospital care through taxes (ref opening paragraph)

Comments on inevitability of continuing and extending ban without recourse to further argument

Spelling

government – ‘ern’
hospitals – ‘al’
health – ‘ea’

Composition and effect

Economical use of language reduces a lot of detail into a relatively short discussion paper. Consistently impersonal style not lapsing into hectoring but making forceful assertions. Without stating a viewpoint, the piece predicts an answer to the question ‘Will smoking be banned?’ rather than ‘Should smoking be banned?’

Should girls be able to play football in mixed teams after the age of 12?

The mushrooming popularity of women's football, coupled with the publicity given to the success of women's teams at home and abroad, has led to greater numbers of girls playing the sport at every level. The Football Association (FA) allows girls to play as part of mixed teams up to the age of 12, but will not permit mixed teams to enter its league competitions above that age. A number of individual cases have hit the national headlines, prompting questions about the FA's stance.

Talented girls turned away from mixed leagues after their 12th birthday complain that this is an old-fashioned ruling, dating from the time when it was thought wrong for girls to play football at all. The FA responds that it is inappropriate for adolescents to play a contact sport in mixed teams. They feel there might be problems at club level in providing separate changing rooms.

(continued)

Sentence structure and punctuation

A question summarising the issue

Complex sentence succinctly states explanation for more girls playing football

Formal language

Passive voice maintains the formality of a debate

Formal language Present tense

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(continued)

Text structure and organisation

Gives factual detail and explains why this issue has arisen as a problem

Paragraph presents arguments for and against Argument for mixed teams

Argument against and explanation

Spelling

women's – already plural: apostrophe then 's'

FA's – possessive (never use apostrophe for plural)

Supporters counter that, for the good of the game, players should be picked on merit, regardless of gender, and that not to do so amounts to discrimination. However, it could be argued that many other sports, such as athletics, tennis and swimming, segregate girls and boys at an even earlier age.

The football frenzy inspired by the 2002 World Cup has resulted in many more children and adults developing an interest in the game, and this may well lead to greater numbers of girls wanting to play competitively. As more girls develop their confidence and skills in football, it seems likely that the FA will come under increasing pressure to reconsider its ban.

Sentence structure and punctuation

Language of debate

Commas demarcating additional information

Connective suggesting contradiction

Conditional form suggests a hypothesis

Connective suggesting causal link

Formal language

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Text structure and organisation

Argument for a basis of discrimination

Argument against, claiming other sports are in same position and also discriminate

Suggests debate is live

and that FA may be forced to reconsider the status quo

Composition and effect

Level of formality tempered by journalistic tone such as 'hit the headlines' and words such as 'old-fashioned' (archaic would have been more formal), 'football frenzy'.

Spelling

competitively – competition
pressure – 'ssure' – 'ure' (unstressed vowel)
develop – no 'e'

How wrong was Goldilocks?

When young children are told the story of ‘Goldilocks and the three bears’, it is unlikely that they spend much time considering the behaviour of the characters. However, like many children’s stories, this tale does raise important questions about right and wrong that deserve consideration.

It could be argued that Goldilocks must have known it was wrong to go into someone else’s house when she was not invited and they were out. In helping herself to their food, breaking one of their chairs and climbing on all of their beds, she was doing one wrong thing after another, yet she seems not to care what damage she is causing or how the owners of the property might feel. This is very irresponsible behaviour. Furthermore, when the bears discover her in their house and very reasonably demand to know why she is there, she makes no attempt to explain or apologise, but simply runs away.

(continued)

Sentence structure and punctuation

Title summing up the issue under discussion

Passive voice putting children as the important subject of the sentence

Complex sentence: subordinate clause separated from main clause by a comma

Connective opening possibility that there may be an issue

Formal language of debate

Long, complex sentence with commas demonstrating grammatical boundaries and connective 'yet' to extend the sentence further

Strong assertion

Connective suggesting accumulating reasons

Complex sentence starting with subordinate clause separated by a comma

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It could be argued that Goldilocks must have known it was wrong to go into someone else's house when she was not invited and they were out. In helping herself to their food, breaking one of their chairs and climbing on all of their beds, she was doing one wrong thing after another, yet she seems not to care what damage she is causing or how the owners of the property might feel. This is very irresponsible behaviour. Furthermore, when the bears discover her in their house and very reasonably demand to know why she is there, she makes no attempt to explain or apologise, but simply runs away.

(continued)

Text structure and organisation

Introductory paragraph establishes that the story raises a moral question

Arguments that Goldilocks deserves blame

Lists Goldilocks' wrongdoings

Criticism of behaviour

Criticism of her reaction

Spelling

important – 'm' – 'ant'

unstressed vowel

explain – like complain

wrong – 'w'

However, it must be remembered that Goldilocks was only a young child, and may not have realised that it was wrong to enter a house where the door had been left open. She broke the chair quite accidentally after all, and since small children usually have their meals provided for them, she may have thought that she was allowed to eat food left out on the table. As to running away, this was the understandable reaction of a frightened young child.

In conclusion, although Goldilocks did do things which were plainly wrong, it is important to consider her parents' role in all of this. Why did they allow a small girl to go wandering off on her own? Why had they not taught her basic rules of safety, such as never to go into strangers' houses? It is the parents who are ultimately responsible, and it is to be hoped that both they and Goldilocks learnt a valuable lesson from this experience.

Sentence structure and punctuation

Connective suggesting
change in direction

Passive voice
Children are important — not the
provider of the food)

Impersonal language

Language of debate

Use of questions to provoke debate

Impersonal language

However, it must be remembered that Goldilocks was only a young child, and may not have realised that it was wrong to enter a house where the door had been left open. She broke the chair quite accidentally after all, and since small children usually have their meals provided for them, she may have thought that she was allowed to eat food left out on the table. As to running away, this was the understandable reaction of a frightened young child.

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Text structure and organisation

Arguments against blaming
Goldilocks

Elaborates with example

Responds to argument in previous
paragraph

Connective, holding the text together

Acknowledges arguments of previous
paragraph and introduces new argument
with which it concludes

Spelling

accidentally — accident
accidental

frightened — fright/frighten/frightened
strangers' — apostrophe after 's' plural

Composition and effect

A conversation is maintained in this text, by the author with the author — making points and then providing counter arguments. An element of irony runs through the text, heightening in the conclusion when the parents are blamed. The reader is appealed to in the questions in the conclusion.