**Writing worksheet week beginning 22nd February 2021**

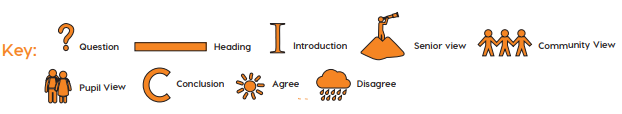
For our writing this half term we will be focusing on balanced arguments. This is where you focus on both sides of an issue rather than from one point of view.

Remember to follow the activities each day as you are being asked to do as this will form your writing at the end of the unit.

**Monday** – **To introduce a balanced argument shape**

Read the argument for today ‘Are playtimes essential to children’s wellbeing?’

Can you use these shapes to represent each paragraph. You may need more than one shape for each paragraph.

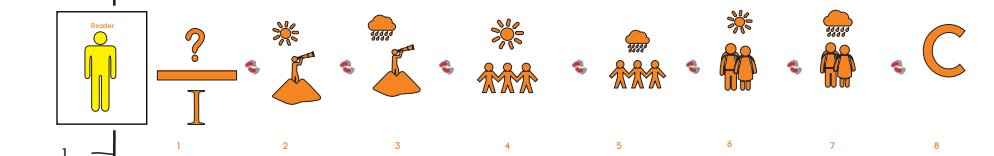


These shapes will help form your own writing. Agree will be a positive view and disagree will be a negative view.

Consider what research you might have to do to answer this question. Who could you ask?

**Tuesday** – **To recap and re-familiarise with the balanced argument shape**

Look at the argument for today, which has been muddled up. Can you go through and place each paragraph in the correct on this non fiction map?



Which number on this map belongs to each paragraph? Highlight/underline which words/phrases in each paragraph helped you decide where to put each one? Think about who was being asked to decide which group was making the point and, also any positive/negative verbs/feelings.

**Monday -** Are playtimes essential to children’s wellbeing?’

Since the academisation of schools, pupils’ entitlement to playtime is an issue that has polarised opinion. Many stakeholders believe it should be a ring-fenced time and protected at all costs, whilst others believe more time for lessons is required. The subject has ignited furious viewpoints, divided communities and caused conflict among professionals: social workers, child development officers and paediatricians included. Despite being a contentious issue, it is vital that a 360-degree viewpoint is taken, so we can fully understand all sides of this important debate.

The vast majority of head teachers, whose job it is to foster rounded pupils, are desperately worried that youngsters are not getting enough physical activity or fresh air. Mr Goode, head teacher of Southfield Junior School, Paddington, stressed, “Children need fresh air and to run around and let off steam. We can’t expect them to concentrate on their work without regular breaks.” Often, children who are denied outdoor playtimes struggle to focus, sit still and follow instructions.

In stark contrast, some head teachers argue that playtime is disrupting children’s learning and causing social and friendship problems that spill over into the classroom. Researchers found that 70-90% of primary children had felt ostracised and/or bullied at breaks. Allowing pupils to stay indoors would make them feel safer, happier and more able to engage in their learning.

To play or not to play is an issue that has divided opinion in local communities, especially among parents. Cherry Blossom, a long-standing member of an inner city PTA says, “As a loving and conscientious parent, I am very alarmed by the fact that playtimes are being taken away from children.” A recent Department for Education report states that some children are getting as little as 10 minutes of outdoor activity per day, which doesn’t even equate to 5% of the recommended daily amount. When are we going to act on this grave risk to our children’s health?

On the other hand, some parents argue their children should be prepared for the real world of work as early as possible. Ivor Genius, who hopes his sons will follow him into the world of banking, said, “Can you imagine if the world of business stopped to play tag twice a day? It’s nonsense. Playtimes make children overexcited and disrupt their concentration. ”It has been argued by some teachers that children take a long time to settle back down to learning after playtimes, meaning slower progress in core subjects.” In addition, playtimes can increase staff workload through: minor accidents/injuries requiring first aid; poor pupil behaviour; arguments/violence between pupils that requires teacher intervention and damage to school property.

Often, pupils’ own voices are discounted on this issue, so it is essential that we listen to their personal opinions. A recent survey of thirty Year 5 pupils showed the overwhelming majority (90%) to be in favour of playtimes. Children believed it was beneficial to their wellbeing to be able to: run around and exercise; have fun with friends; breathe some fresh air and to enjoy downtime from writing/concentrating.

In stark contrast, several pupils said playtimes were stressful and upsetting – having been isolated, bullied and made to feel fearful for their safety. Business magnate Steve Jobs, co-founder of technology giant Apple, said: “Playing hide and seek didn’t get me where I am today. I’ll always be grateful to the primary school teachers who let me stay indoors and mess around on the computers. It’s where I developed my ideas and work ethic.” Indeed, it could be argued that Britons have always put work before play: it’s the fighting spirit that saw us through The Great Depression of the 1930s, two world wars and a number of peacetime recessions.

The question that remains in this time of inactive infants is…should we be pummelling playtimes or encouraging exercise? This debate is a cooking pot of opinion that is likely to continue devouring the attention of those with an interest in children’s activity levels. In conclusion, there are many points for and against playtimes. At the very heart of this argument is the health of future generations. As we advance into an increasingly digital age, the debate around children’s right to some simple daily fresh air is likely to continue to play out.

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