

Grade 4 ELA Assessment: The Art of Discussion

Learning objective: To evaluate a balanced discussion text, identify formal features, and construct a reasoned argument.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Ensure your answers use formal, objective language where appropriate.

Should school libraries be open during the lunch break? Some people argue that libraries must be open at lunchtime to allow children to read in peace. For example, Pip the caterpillar suggests that a quiet environment helps students focus on their books away from the noise of the playground. Furthermore, it provides a safe space for those who prefer solitary activities. Conversely, others believe that lunchtime should be reserved for physical activity. Max the monkey points out that children need to move around and burn energy after sitting in lessons all morning. Additionally, playground games help develop social skills through teamwork. In conclusion, while physical activity is essential for health, a library provides a vital sanctuary for quiet reflection. Therefore, schools should perhaps consider a rota system to accommodate both needs.

Word bank: balanced · conjunctions · formal · objective · perspective · counter-argument · concluding statement

1. Identify two formal conjunctions used in the text to signal a change in perspective. (2 marks)

2. Why does the author use the phrase 'Conversely' in the second paragraph? Explain the purpose of this word in a discussion text. (3 marks)

3. Summarise the argument presented by Max the monkey in your own words. (3 marks)

4. Is this text balanced? Explain your answer by referring to the content provided. (4 marks)

5. Why is it important to remain objective (neutral) when writing a discussion text, rather than using 'I think' or 'I feel'? (3 marks)

6. Extended Writing Task: Write a short paragraph (50-70 words) discussing whether homework should be optional. You must include one argument for, one argument against, and a clear concluding statement. (10 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene where Pip the caterpillar is reading in the library while Max the monkey is playing outside, showing the two different viewpoints from the text.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Challenge: Write a list of three 'formal' synonyms for the word 'said' that you could use to introduce quotes in a discussion text.