Structuring a Balanced Argument: The Great Debate

Learning objective: To understand the structural components of a formal discussion text by creating a visual map of an argument.

Use this sheet to plan a discussion text about whether schools should have a four-day week. Follow the drawing prompt to create a visual plan, then complete the labels and questions to ensure your discussion covers all required sections.

Draw: Draw a 'Balanced Scale' in the centre of your page. On the left pan of the scale, draw Max the monkey holding a sign that says 'For (Pros)'. On the right pan, draw Nova the owl holding a sign that says 'Against (Cons)'. Above the scale, draw a large banner labelled 'Introduction'. Below the scale, draw a solid foundation block labelled 'Conclusion'. Use arrows to connect these sections to show the flow of a logical argument. Use a clean, diagrammatic style with clear labels.

Label words: Introduction · Balanced Viewpoints · Evidence · Formal Tone · Conjunctions · Conclusion · Counter-argument

Steps:

1. Label the three main sections of your drawing (Introduction, Arguments, Conclusion). Why must a discussion text include both sides of an argument?

2. List two formal conjunctions you could use to transition between 'for' and 'against' points (e.g., 'However').

3. In your drawing, add a speech bubble for Max the monkey. What is one piece of evidence he might use to argue that a four-day week helps with maths focus?

4. Why should a discussion text avoid using emotive or biased language?

5. Look at your drawing: where would you place the summary of your final decision or personal recommendation?