Should Schools Have Longer Lunch Breaks?

Learning objective: To identify the features of a balanced discussion text and evaluate arguments for and against a proposal.

Read the discussion text below carefully. Look for formal language, conjunctions that show contrast, and a balanced structure. Then, answer the questions based on the text.

In recent months, there has been an ongoing debate regarding the length of the midday break in primary schools. Some argue that extending the lunch break would be highly beneficial for pupils, while others maintain that the current schedule is sufficient. Supporters of longer lunch breaks suggest that more time for physical activity improves concentration in afternoon lessons. Furthermore, they claim that socialising with peers for longer periods helps children develop vital communication skills. Conversely, those who oppose the change express concerns about the academic curriculum. They argue that extending lunch would inevitably shorten teaching time, potentially leading to pupils falling behind in subjects like maths and literacy. Consequently, some headteachers believe that the current structure provides the perfect balance between relaxation and learning. In conclusion, while a longer break might enhance physical wellbeing, it is essential to consider the impact on the school day as a whole.

Word bank: furthermore · conversely · perspective · consequently · disadvantage · balanced · argument · evidence

1. Identify one argument in favour of longer lunch breaks mentioned by the author. (1 mark)

2. Find and copy a conjunction from the text that signals a contrasting point of view. (1 mark)

3. Why are some people concerned that extending lunch breaks might negatively affect a pupil's education? (2 marks)

4. Explain why the author uses the phrase 'In conclusion' at the end of the text. (2 marks)

5. Do you think the text is balanced? Use evidence from the passage to justify your opinion. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Pip the caterpillar sitting on a garden bench with a notepad, weighing up two options on a pair of scales: 'More Playtime' vs 'More Lesson Time'.

Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph (3-4 sentences) presenting your own opinion on whether lunch breaks should be longer. Ensure you use at least two formal cohesive devices, such as 'however' or 'in addition'.