



UNIT 4.04

SHOULD STUDENTS BE REQUIRED TO WEAR UNIFORMS?

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Action News

Should uniforms be required?

Can arguments be helpful for learning?

PAIGE: Good day, student viewers! Today we're reporting on a new study that says that school should be a place for **argumentation**, discussion, and debate because students learn by...talking! Now there's a twist! Some teachers might say they want their students to talk less, not more! But according to this new study, students should be discussing and debating more in class. Of course, students have to be talking about important things, and they have to learn to respect the different **perspectives** or positions of other students. That's pretty hard even for adults. Tell us a little more about this interesting **issue**, Shelley.

SHELLEY SUMMERS: Paige, it seems as though there's a good case to be made for more talk in classrooms, but the important part of this **argument** is that students have to understand the difference between their own personal **opinions** and evidence that gives them more support for a position.

PAIGE: Can you give me an example, Shelley?

SHELLEY: Well, for example, students might argue that they should have more recess. But they don't give good **arguments** or evidence for why this is a good idea. Maybe if they gave teachers or principals some evidence, they might change their minds. What do you think, Paige? Would that work?

PAIGE: Hmm, I'm not so sure. But I'm a little confused about the words *argue* and **argument**, Shelley. I tell my son not to argue with me at home, but now it's okay to argue at school? Is that right?

SHELLEY: Well, Paige, I'm glad you brought this up. Let me give you an example. When I argue with my daughter, we're usually mad at each other. It's hard to show respect, and we tend not to talk about facts. It gets emotional. But the other day, she asked if she could take a trip with her class to Washington, D.C. I was worried and didn't want her to go. She argued that this was a great opportunity to visit our nation's capital and that she would be very safe because teachers and parents were going with her. She gave me good evidence, and her **argument** convinced me. And we didn't yell or get mad.

PAIGE: So, did you let her go?

SHELLEY: I did, and she had a wonderful experience.

PAIGE: Wow! So what you're saying is that when students debate important ideas or **issues**, they learn more about the **issues**, and they learn to better support their positions. They also learn how to respect other people's **perspectives** and ideas. So, Shelley, how are the students taking the news that talking more in class is a good thing?

SHELLEY: Well, I spoke to some students at Wildwood Elementary, and to tell you the truth, they seemed a little confused! Many of them said that teachers and parents usually don't want arguing, but now they do? A lot of them were also happy to hear that arguing would make them smarter! Anyway, there's going to be a lot of work to make clear what *arguing* really means.

PAIGE: I **agree** with you on that point, Shelley. Thanks for that interesting report. Now back to the weather with Sunny.

This is Page Reider, signing off!



Discussion directions: With a partner, develop a good **argument** to convince the principal to give your class more recess. Write your ideas down and share them with the class.



wordgen.serpmedia.org/action_news

Reader's Theater

Should uniforms be required?

Forming Arguments

Ms. Barros' students discuss the difference between an **argument** and *arguing*. They debate whether wearing uniforms at school is a good idea.

Line

- 1  **Missy:** I don't get it. My mother tells me not to argue with her, and now Ms. Barros says that arguing is good for us! She says that it helps us learn.
- 2  **Santos:** I'm not going to argue with anyone no matter what the teacher says. My father already grounded me for talking back to him, and yelling hurts people's feelings!
- 3  **Julian:** I think Ms. Barros said "**argumentation**" or making a good **argument**; it's different from fighting or talking back.
- 4  **Rosie:** What I heard her say was that we had to discuss an **issue**, not fight about it.
- 5  **Julian:** Yeah, but that sounds like nice talking instead of trash talking. I think Ms. Barros is saying you have to have some reasons to back up what you're defending.
- 6  **Missy:** Okay, let's say that my **argument** is "I don't like school uniforms." My reason is "I like to wear my own clothes." Is this a good **argument**?
- 7  **Santos:** I think it's a good reason because I **agree** with you, but it's just an **opinion**. If someone is in favor of school uniforms, you haven't said anything that might make them change their mind.
- 8  **Julian:** So, if we're going to make a good **argument**, we have to give evidence and talk about other positions or **perspectives**. By the way, people, I really like the word "**perspective**."
- 9  **Rosie:** So, my mother's **perspective** would be that she likes school uniforms because she doesn't have a lot of money to spend on clothes.
- 10  **Missy:** My dad and your mom would be in **agreement**. So, how would a teacher argue her case for school uniforms?

Reader's Theater continues on the next page.

- 11  **Santos:** I think Ms. Barros' position would be in favor of uniforms so that kids would focus more on learning and less on their clothes. She wouldn't disagree with your parents, but she'd have a different **perspective**.
- 12  **Rosie:** So, now we have three positions or **perspectives**: Missy's, my mom's, and Ms. Barros's. Julian, what's your **perspective**?
- 13  **Julian:** You know, I think I'm changing my mind. I thought I hated school uniforms, but then I thought about my basketball team and how what we wear shows that we're part of something bigger than ourselves. I'm proud to wear that uniform! Maybe school uniforms are like that – a sign that we are all working together to learn. So I am in favor of that, but I'd still like to wear my favorite sweater to school.
- 14  **Missy:** I think Ms. Barros would be pretty proud of us. We're not fighting! We're ARGUING!
- 15  **Rosie:** Go us!
- 16  **Santos:** I'm just not going to tell my dad I'm getting a grade for arguing.
- 17  **Julian:** **Argumentation**, people! **Argumentation!**



Discussion question: What is your position on school uniforms? With a partner, practice developing a strong **argument** that includes evidence and not just **opinions**.

Characters' Perspectives

Should uniforms be required?

Missy, Julian, and Rosie

Directions: With a partner, talk about each statement and decide which one describes each character's **perspective**. **Find and highlight** evidence from the Reader's Theater text to support your answer.

What does **Missy** say her dad's **perspective** is?



- Students should wear uniforms to school.
- Clothes are too expensive.
- Students should be able to choose what they wear to school.

What does **Julian** think?



- Uniforms are too expensive.
- Uniforms can show group membership and shared ideas.
- His basketball uniform is uncomfortable.

What does **Rosie** say her mom thinks about uniforms?



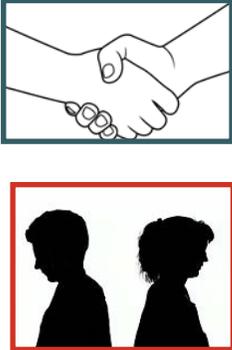
- Students should decide what they wear to school.
- Students should wear school uniforms.
- School uniforms are expensive.

What do **you** think? What is your **argument**? Your evidence?

Word Study

Should uniforms be required?

A Closer Look at Our Focus Words

	argument (n.) argumentation (n.)	agreement (n.) agree (v.)	perspective
<p>Definition</p> 	<p>(noun) support for a position or claim</p> <p>(noun) the presentation and development of an argument</p>	<p>(noun) a shared position</p> <p>(verb) to share the same position</p>	<p>(noun) a point of view</p>
<p>Sample Sentence</p> 	<p>I think Ms. Barros said “argumentation” or making a good argument; it’s different from fighting or talking back.</p>	<p>My dad and your mom would be in agreement.</p>	<p>So, if we’re going to make a good argument, we have to include other positions or perspectives. By the way, people, I really like the word “perspective.”</p>
<p>Another Example</p> 	<p>Michelle Obama’s argument is that junk food should not be sold with school lunches.</p>	<p>My dad and I made an agreement that I could stay up late on Friday if I went to bed early during the school week.</p>	<p>His perspective on smoking changed after his grandmother died of lung cancer.</p>
<p>Turn and Talk</p> 	<p>What is the best argument for getting out of school early?</p>	<p>How does your family reach an agreement about what to eat for dinner?</p>	<p>My perspective on adopting a wild animal is...</p>
<p>Choose a picture</p> 	<p>Which sign is making an argument?</p> 	<p>Circle the picture that shows two people who have reached an agreement.</p> 	<p>Circle the perspective a car salesman would have.</p> 

Word Study, continued

Should uniforms be required?

	issue	opinion
<p>Definition</p> 	<p>(noun) a topic for debate or discussion</p>	<p>(noun) a perspective or stance on an issue</p>
<p>Sample Sentence</p> 	<p>What I heard her say was that we had to discuss an issue, not fight about it.</p>	<p>I think it's a good reason because I agree with you, but it's just an opinion.</p>
<p>Another Example</p> 	<p>One of the issues I care about most is protecting endangered species.</p>	<p>In my opinion, blue is a better color than orange.</p>
<p>Turn and Talk</p> 	<p>Which issue is more important to you: litter or nutrition? Explain.</p>	<p>Whose opinion about school uniforms matters more: students or parents?</p>
<p>Choose a picture</p> 	<p>Circle the sign that is about an important issue.</p>  	<p>Which sign is an opinion?</p>  

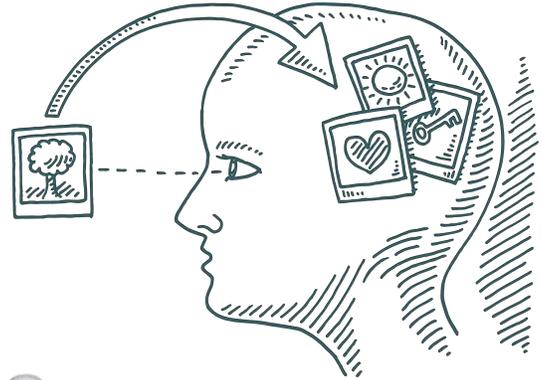
Word Study, continued

Should uniforms be required?

Think and Sort

Your teacher will read six words from a list and write them on the board.

- 1) Look at the words carefully and think about a way to organize them into two groups. The lists have been started for you.
- 2) Read the words again and decide which list they belong to.
- 3) Can you think of more words that fit the rule?



Verb	Noun
argue	argument

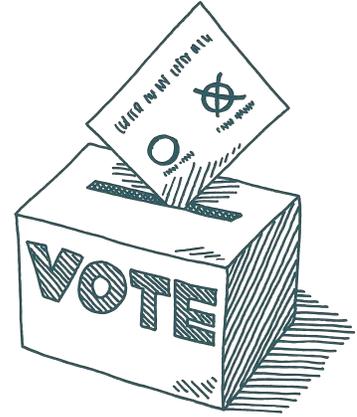
Think of more words to add to the list.

Math

Should uniforms be required?

Can a survey improve your argument?

After talking about the **issue** of school uniforms, the leadership team at Glenmont Elementary School decided to ask the students to vote on whether the school should require children to wear them. The school administration **agreed** to consider the students' **opinions**. At Glenmont, there are 3 fourth grade classes. Each class has 25 students. The numbers of students who selected each response on the survey are presented in the table below.



Should Glenmont require students to wear uniforms?

Response	# votes
School uniforms should be worn regularly.	18
School uniforms should be worn for school trips and special events.	12
School uniforms should not be required at all.	20

- 1) How many students voted in the survey?
- 2) Which choice got the most votes? What fraction of the votes did this choice get?
- 3) How many students did not vote?
- 4) What fraction of the fourth grade students at Glenmont voted?
- 5) How can the leadership team at Glenmont use this information to build their **argument**?



Discussion question: Considering the number of students who did not vote, would you consider this survey a true representation of fourth graders' **opinions** about school uniforms? Explain your answer.

Article Analysis

Should uniforms be required?

Can school uniforms prevent violence?

Bill Clinton was president of the U.S. from 1993 to 2001. In 1996, he spoke to the American people about violence in schools. President Clinton proposed that school uniforms could help prevent violence against students. Here is part of what he said:



"This morning I want to talk with you about what we can do to break hold of gangs and violence in our schools and what we can do to create an atmosphere in our schools that promotes discipline and order and learning. ...I believe we should give strong support to school districts that decide to require young students to wear school uniforms. ...Our young people will learn to evaluate themselves by what they are on the inside, instead of what they're wearing on the outside."

President Bill Clinton, 1996

However, many argue that clothing choice has nothing to do with ending violence. They say that violence results from bigger **issues** like poor and unsafe neighborhoods. Critics of school uniforms also say that they violate students' constitutional rights. One of these rights is "freedom of expression," or the right to speak or present yourself as you wish. Some people argue that this means you should be able to dress however you want to. On the other hand, President Clinton suggested that students should be evaluated "by what they are on the inside, instead of what they're wearing on the outside." What is your position on this **issue**? Look at the two discussion questions below, and talk with a partner about the pros and cons of requiring school uniforms.

 **Turn, talk, and write:**

1. Do you **agree** with President Clinton that requiring school uniforms can prevent violence against students? Why or why not?

2. Do you think that expressing yourself through the clothes you wear in school should be a privilege or a right?

Science

Should uniforms be required?

That Annoying Static Cling!

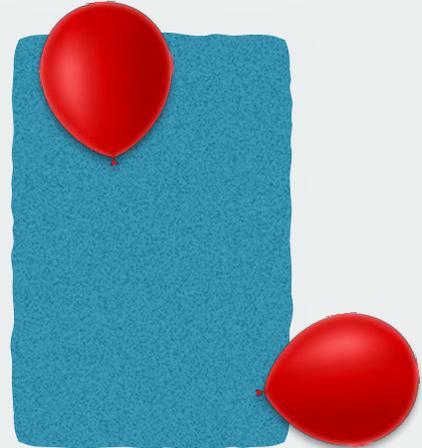
Jimmy has a negative **opinion** of his school uniform for one main reason: He hates static cling! He believes that the only time he experiences this annoying effect of static electricity is when he is wearing his school uniform because of the fabric it is made from.

Yadaris is in **agreement** with Jimmy about not liking uniforms, but her **argument** is that the fabric does not matter. From Yadaris' **perspective**, Jimmy is just inventing a way to complain about the **issue** of uniforms being required at their school. What do you think about Yadaris' position?

Let's test the static electricity of different fabrics.

Creating Static Electricity Using Different Fabrics

1. Find three different types of fabric that you or your classmates are wearing.
2. Describe each fabric using observation and by reading the label (if possible).
3. Rub an inflated balloon back and forth on each fabric for 15 seconds.
4. Test for static electricity by seeing if the balloon sticks to the wall.
5. Compare fabrics.



Name of fabric cotton? polyester?	Description of fabric soft? scratchy? fuzzy?	Did the balloon stick? "yes, but for 2 seconds..."
Fabric 1: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Details:
Fabric 2: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Details:
Fabric 3: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Details:



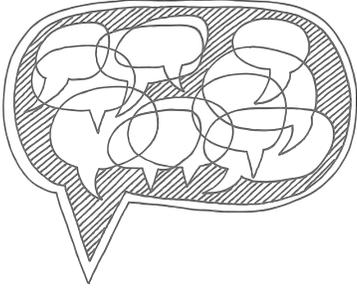
Discussion questions:

Did each of the materials cause the balloon to stick to the wall?

What did you observe about the materials that created the most static charge? What did they feel like? What were they made of?

Prepare and Debate

Should uniforms be required?



Should students be required to wear uniforms?

Gather evidence from the unit to support your **perspective**.

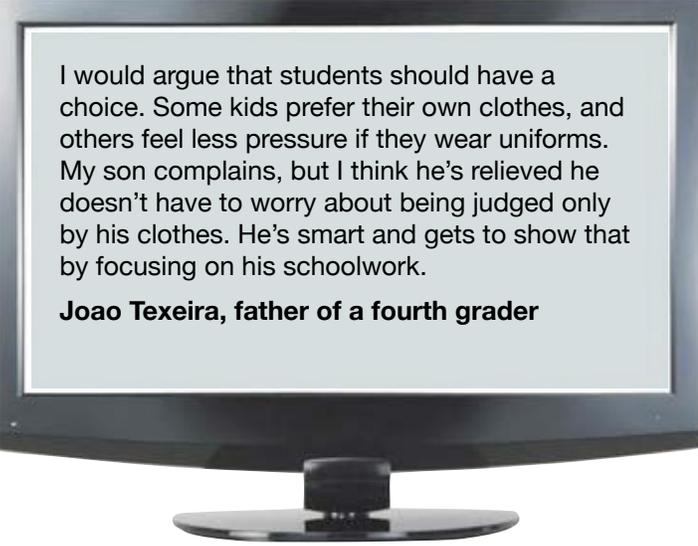
Perspective	Reasons and Evidence
<p>YES</p> <p>Students <i>should</i> be required to wear uniforms to school.</p>	
<p>NO</p> <p>Students <i>should not</i> be required to wear uniforms to school.</p>	

First Draft

Should uniforms be required?

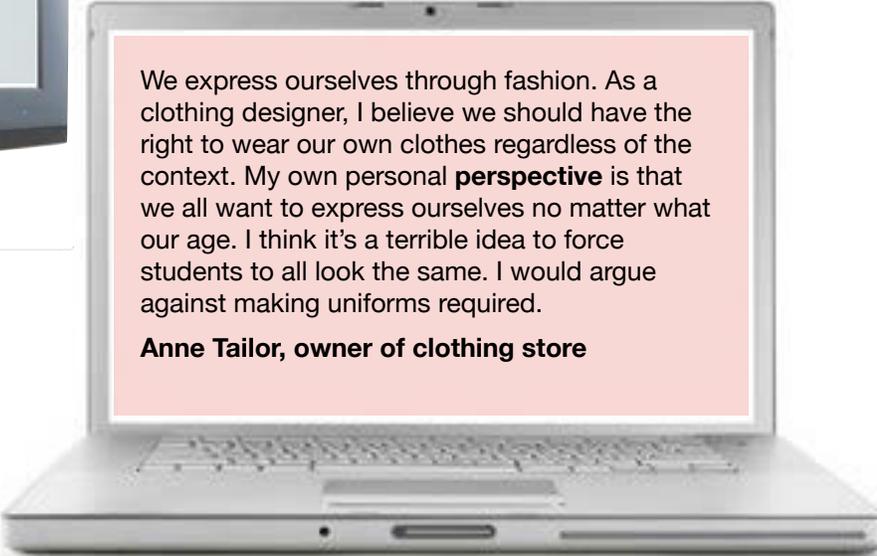
Considering More Perspectives

Below are three different **perspectives** about the **issue** from blog posts. Read their positions and **arguments** as you prepare to write your own. Will you argue for or against school uniforms?



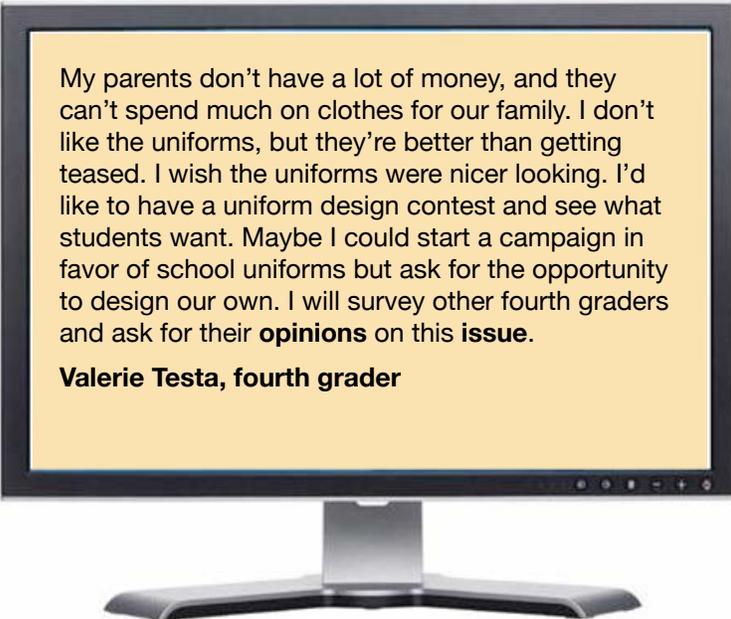
I would argue that students should have a choice. Some kids prefer their own clothes, and others feel less pressure if they wear uniforms. My son complains, but I think he's relieved he doesn't have to worry about being judged only by his clothes. He's smart and gets to show that by focusing on his schoolwork.

Joao Texeira, father of a fourth grader



We express ourselves through fashion. As a clothing designer, I believe we should have the right to wear our own clothes regardless of the context. My own personal **perspective** is that we all want to express ourselves no matter what our age. I think it's a terrible idea to force students to all look the same. I would argue against making uniforms required.

Anne Tailor, owner of clothing store



My parents don't have a lot of money, and they can't spend much on clothes for our family. I don't like the uniforms, but they're better than getting teased. I wish the uniforms were nicer looking. I'd like to have a uniform design contest and see what students want. Maybe I could start a campaign in favor of school uniforms but ask for the opportunity to design our own. I will survey other fourth graders and ask for their **opinions** on this **issue**.

Valerie Testa, fourth grader

First Draft, continued

Should uniforms be required?

Explain Your Thinking: First Draft

Now that you have debated for and against school uniforms, decide what you think about the topic and write a first draft of your paragraph below. Tomorrow, you will have the chance to write a more polished version.

Component	Text	What is the purpose?
<p>Topic Sentence:</p>	<p>I think _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><i>Introduces your opinion</i></p>
<p>Reasons:</p> <p><i>Use these words to help the reader follow your argument:</i></p> <p>→ My first reason for this opinion is...</p> <p>→ Second...</p> <p>→ Additionally...</p>	<p>_____</p>	<p><i>Provides reasons that are supported by facts and details</i></p>
<p>Closing Sentence:</p>	<p>In conclusion, _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><i>Restates your opinion</i></p>

