



Discussion Texts

Purpose

To present a reasoned and balanced overview of an issue or controversial topic. Usually aims to provide two or more different views on an issue, each with elaborations, evidence and/ or examples.

Common examples of the text type

- Non-fiction book on an 'issue'
- Write-up of a debate
- Leaflet or article giving balanced account of an issue
- Writing editorials about historical attitudes to gender, social class, colonialism etc.
- Writing letters about pollution, factory farming or smoking
- Writing essays giving opinions about literature, music or works of art

Generic Text Structure

The most common structure includes:

- A statement of the issues involved and a preview of the main arguments;
- Arguments for, with supporting evidence/examples;
- Arguments against or alternative views, with supporting evidence/examples.
- Another common structure presents the arguments 'for' and 'against' alternatively.

Planning and preparation

- Questions often make good titles e.g. Should everyone travel less to conserve global energy?
- Use the introduction to show why you are debating the issue e.g.
There is always a lot of disagreement about x and people's views vary a lot.
- Make sure you show both/all sides of the argument fairly.
- Support each viewpoint you present with reasons and evidence.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion texts usually end with a summary and a statement of recommendation or conclusion. • The summary may develop one particular viewpoint using reasoned judgements based on the evidence provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you opt to support one particular view in the conclusion, give reasons for your decision.
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Progression in skills	
Nursery	n/a
Reception	n/a
Y1	n/a
Y2	n/a
Y3	n/a
Y4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent use of present tense (Y2) • Use present perfect form of verbs (Y3) e.g. some people have argued....some people have said • Effective use of noun phrases e.g. uncountable noun phrases (some people, most dogs). Nouns that categorise (vehicles, pollution) and abstract nouns (power). • Use of paragraphs to organise ideas Use adverbials e.g. therefore, however... • Heading and subheadings used to aid presentation (Y3)
Y5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create cohesion within paragraphs using adverbials e.g. therefore, however...

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use layout devices to provide additional information and guide the reader e.g. diagrams, illustrations, moving images, sound.
Y6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create cohesion across paragraphs using a wider range of cohesive devices which can include adverbials• Make formal and informal vocabulary choices to adapt writing to the form of discussion e.g. by making generic statements followed by specific examples e.g. Most vegetarians disagree. Dave Smith, a vegetarian, for 20 years, commented...• Use the passive voice to present points of view e.g. it could be claimed that.... It is possible that...some could claim that....• Adapt degrees of formality and informality to suit the form of the discussion e.g. whether writing a formal letter or a blog. This can include vocabulary choices e.g. choosing habitat rather than home or indicate rather than shows.• Use conditional forms such as the subjunctive form to hypothesise e.g. If people were to stop hunting whales...• In discussions, complex ideas need developing over a sentence.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Semi-colons, colons and dashes can be useful for developing and linking these ideas. |
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