

Boost Free Lessons - Year 7 English

Lesson 11: Opinions vs Arguments

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Worked Example 1

Why is the statement below an opinion rather than an argument?

Year 7 students should not have homework.

1. An **opinion** states what someone believes and stops there.
2. An **argument** states a position **and** gives reasons and evidence to support it.
3. This statement gives no reason at all, so a reader has nothing to weigh up.
4. The test is simple: ask **why**. If the text does not answer, it is only an opinion.

It states a belief with no reasons or evidence, so there is nothing for a reader to weigh up.

Worked Example 2

Turn the opinion above into an argument.

1. Keep the position, then add reasons that answer the question **why**.
2. Reason one: Year 7 students are adjusting to a new school and a heavier timetable.
3. Reason two: evidence suggests homework has little effect on results at this age.
4. Adding evidence, and acknowledging the other side, turns a claim into an argument.

Model: Year 7 students should not have homework, because they are already adjusting to a new school and studies suggest homework has little effect on results at this age.

Remember: An **opinion** states a belief. An **argument** states a position **and** supports it with reasons and evidence. Ask **why**: if the text answers, it is an argument.



Question 1: Write whether each statement is an **opinion** or an **argument**.

1. Chocolate is the best flavour of ice cream.

2. Schools should start later, because teenagers need more sleep to concentrate.

3. Winter is miserable.

4. Plastic bags should be banned, since they take centuries to break down.

5. That film was boring.

6. Libraries should stay open on Sundays, as many families can only visit at weekends.

7. Maths is too hard.

8. Our school needs more bike racks, because thirty students already ride and there is room for ten.



Question 2: Read the passage below, then answer the questions.

Schools should give students longer breaks, because students concentrate better after time outdoors. One school that trialled a thirty-minute morning break reported fewer classroom disruptions afterwards. Sitting still all morning is awful.

1. Is the first sentence an opinion or an argument? Explain.

2. What reason does the writer give in the second sentence?

3. What evidence supports that reason?

4. Which sentence is pure opinion with no support?

5. How could the writer strengthen the final sentence?

6. Does the writer acknowledge any opposing view?



Question 3: Answer the following questions.

1. Write an opinion about school canteens.

2. Turn that opinion into an argument by adding two reasons.

3. Explain the difference between an opinion and an argument.

4. Why is an argument more persuasive than an opinion?





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Answers: Opinions vs Arguments**Question 1**

1. Opinion
2. Argument
3. Opinion
4. Argument
5. Opinion
6. Argument
7. Opinion
8. Argument

Question 2

1. An argument, because it states a position and immediately gives a reason.
2. That students concentrate better after being outdoors.
3. A trial at one school where reported classroom disruptions fell.
4. *Sitting still all morning is awful.*
5. By adding a reason or evidence, rather than simply repeating the claim more forcefully.
6. No. It never mentions any argument against longer breaks.

Question 3

1. Model response: The canteen should sell hot food every day.
2. Model response: The canteen should sell hot food every day, because students who bring no lunch currently have no warm option in winter, and a survey of Year 7 found hot food was the most requested change.
3. An opinion states a belief. An argument states a position and supports it with reasons and evidence.
4. It gives the reader something to weigh up. An opinion can only be agreed or disagreed with, while an argument can actually change someone's mind.

