

This week, we will be looking at constructing an argument.

Have a look at the two arguments on the following pages, one is for allowing teachers to set detentions and one is against. Which is more convincing? Why? Did they manage to change your mind? Are there any features you could include in your own argument?

Teachers should be allowed to give children detentions after school

It is clear that giving children detention – that is, making them stay behind after school has finished – is an excellent way of punishing bad behaviour.

Children who are naughty or who are unkind to other children must be punished. If no-one makes them understand that they have done wrong, then they will go on doing bad things. It is only by making sure that they realise that if they do bad things, then bad things happen to them, that they will stop.

Teachers have very few ways of punishing children nowadays. They are not allowed to cane children or hit them. Neither can they make children feel bad by making them look silly in front of their friends, for example by making them stand on a table or in a corner. It is certainly not okay nowadays to force a child to scrub the floor or clean the school windows! So teachers do not have much choice when it comes to thinking up good ways of punishing children who are naughty.

Detentions – keeping children in from play, or making them stay behind after school – are ideal punishments. Firstly, children do not like to be in detention. This is important since a good punishment needs to make children want to behave better.

Secondly, they are not violent or humiliating. Children are not made to feel silly or sad in front of their friends. Detentions take place after school, or at playtime, and are not carried out in public. So other children may not be aware that a child is being punished.

Thirdly, they are fairly effective. No child wants to have to stay behind after school, nor to miss their precious moments of playtime. Having been given a detention once, a child will try to avoid being given one again. This means that they will behave better and are less likely to be naughty or mean again.

But finally, the best argument is that the detention is traditional. It has been around a long time in British schools. Even Harry Potter doesn't escape! Harry, Hermione and Ron find themselves in detention, rightly or wrongly, many times during their six years at Hogwarts school of Witchcraft and Wizardry. It certainly does not seem to do them any harm. Neither does it harm children in our schools today. It is an effective and humane punishment, which puts children off being naughty. We should definitely keep them.

Teachers should not be allowed to give children detentions after school

Detentions – keeping children behind after school – are unnecessary and unpleasant ways of punishing children and should no longer be allowed.

It is certainly true that children do sometimes do naughty things and can be mean or unkind. Sometimes a child may disrupt the class, making it difficult for other children to learn. Or they might damage school property or someone else's belongings. Teachers have to think of ways to stop children doing wrong and to encourage them to behave well.

The very best way to help children to be both hard-working and kind is through positive reinforcement. This means that teachers notice, praise and reward good behaviour. When children see that their teachers praise certain things that they do, they will want to do more of these actions. The good feelings they get from being rewarded will encourage them to behave well more often. Rewards and praise are better ways of helping children to be good than

punishing them. The carrot works better than the stick with a donkey and it is the same with children!

If we need to punish children, then we should choose punishments that relate to the things the child has done wrong. If a child has been noisy or rude and disrupted the class, then they can be given extra tasks, which help the classroom run smoothly. Perhaps they can tidy the book corner or clean the painting equipment. If they have been unkind to another child, they can be asked to help someone to do something or go somewhere. Then the child can be helped to see that behaving well is actually nicer than behaving badly!

But there are other reasons why detentions are not a good idea. Children spend long hours each day in school. Children, like adults, need time to relax. They also need to play. Playing is good for children. But we know that many children have very little time, either before or after school. It is quite wrong for teachers to take away this playing time by giving detentions. It is likely that forcing a child to spend longer hours doing more boring tasks will make them behave worse rather than better. Detention is a most ineffective punishment and we can surely find better ones, such as asking children to do positive things to show that they are sorry. After all, being sorry is the way in which children learn to change their behaviour – which is the real point!

The Government are expected to make a decision soon on when to open up schools. There are lots of different opinions as to what should happen. What do *you* think? We would like you to write a persuasive argument to convince other people that you are correct.

Decide if you are **for** schools opening up in the next few weeks

Or you are **against** schools opening up in the next few weeks

Use the PowerPoint on your Class Dojo page and the checklist below to help you construct your argument. Read it to someone at home – do they agree with you or not?

Sentence openers

- Everyone knows that...
- It's a fact that...
- Surely everyone can see that...
- The truth is...
- Clearly...
- Obviously...

How good is my argument?



Colour the boxes:

-  **green** if you have included this fully in your writing and understand it;
-  **orange** if you have included this a little, or don't completely understand it;
-  **red** if you haven't included it, or don't understand what it means.

Layout Features

- Title explaining what the argument is about
- Introduction to put the argument in context
- Argument organised into paragraphs
- Conclusion to summarise argument

Language features

- Written from one viewpoint (for or against)
- Argument is developed to include several points
- Arguments are linked across paragraphs
- Counter-arguments shown (although some people say...most disagree...)
- Emotive, powerful language
- Rhetorical questions (Who wouldn't want...?)
- Opinions presented as facts (everyone knows that...)
- Ambiguous statements (probably, may, perhaps...)
- Statistics (75% of people say, half of schools...)
- Variety of sentence types and structures
- Variety of cohesive devices
- Variety of punctuation

Words with the suffixes 'tial' and 'cial'

- ✎ Find dictionary definitions of each word.
- ✎ Try using it in a sentence or two.
- ✎ Write your sentences down.
- ✎ Share what you have found out

'cial' suffix (usually follows a **vowel**)

- social
- special
- racial
- crucial
- spatial
- judicial
- official
- antisocial
- artificial
- beneficial

'tial' suffix (usually follows a **consonant**)

- partial
- impartial
- martial
- essential
- potential
- torrential
- substantial
- residential
- confidential
- circumstantial