



Argument Writing Performance Task

Teacher Version

Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework?
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The following sections are included in this Teacher Version:

- **Process: Day 1, 2 and 3**
- **Teacher Directions for Scoring Rubric**
- **Student Prompt**

Overview

On Day 1 students will engage in a shared reading and note-taking activity using three argument/opinion texts to learn about replacing homework with a longer school day and why. On Day 2, after the group activity, they will be directed to plan, and begin to draft an argument writing piece about homework versus a longer school day and why utilizing the information they read in the texts as well as notes they took during the shared lesson. On Day 3 students will finish their drafts, revise and edit their writing, and if they choose, produce a final copy.

Process

DAY 1: Shared Reading and Note-taking: Up to 60 minutes

Step 1: Connect to Background Knowledge

Provide an introduction to the classroom activity by indicating that after this activity, students will be writing an argument writing piece indicating whether they think homework should be abandoned in favor of a longer school day or not. Ask students to discuss this orally. Possible questions could include:

“Do you think schools should have a longer school day? What are the advantages of having a longer school day? What are the disadvantages? Would you rather have homework and a regular school day or no homework and a longer school day?”

For active engagement encourage pair or group sharing, before sharing out with whole group. You may also want to use the “take a stand” activity from our training handbook to generate discussion.

Step 2: Accessing the Information

1. Explain: *“Now we will read the pros and cons of homework versus having a longer school day. You will be writing an argument paper to your teacher about whether you agree or disagree with keeping homework and a regular school day or eliminating homework and having a longer school day and include you will include information from the articles provided in your reasons.”* Use the information from the texts to supply your reasons. Read the articles with the students and point out facts and features (pictures, captions, etc.) Use ONLY the sources provided in this prompt packet.
2. Lead a whole class discussion about the sources.
3. Think-Pair-Share: *“Tell your partner what you learned about the pros and cons of keeping homework or replacing it with a longer school day.”* Make sure both partners have time to share with each other.



Argument Writing Performance Task

DAY 2: Planning and Writing a Draft: Up to 60 minutes

Step 3: Clarify Expectations for the Writing Task:

Explain: *“In a few minutes you will have a chance to look at the sources, plan, and write a draft to explain to me why you agree or disagree with keeping homework or eliminating it in favor of a longer school day. Tomorrow you will have a chance to change and edit your work from today or add more detail.”*

Review the student directions and checklist for the writing assignment and give each student a sheet of blank paper for planning and lined paper for writing.

Step 4: Clarify Expectations for the Writing Task:

Tell students to begin planning their writing on the blank sheet of paper. You can remind them of planning strategies you have taught in your classroom such as outlining, lists, or webs. Don't provide a plan yourself just remind them of the strategies for planning.

After 10 minutes suggest to students that they begin writing their drafts.

Collect all materials from Day 2.

DAY 3: Up to 60 minutes


1. Allow students to access the sources, their notes, the classroom activity charts/key word lists, and their draft.
2. Direct students to re-read their draft from Day 2. Review the task using the student checklist poster.
3. When students are done writing, remind them to reread and edit.
4. Students may create a final draft or use word processing to publish their writing if time allows.
5. Collect all student writing materials.

Teacher Directions for Scoring Rubric:

Use the argument writing rubric to score the writing and enter a score for each student into assessment log.



Argument Writing Performance Task

Grade	7			Argument Writing Rubric
Level	ARGUMENT WRITING/PROCESS		LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledges and distinguishes claims from alternate/opposing claims <input type="checkbox"/> Maintains a formal style and objective tone in argument <input type="checkbox"/> Document is very well presented and documented with excellent organization		Mostly correct use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses verbs in indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood <input type="checkbox"/> Uses verbs in active/passive voice and in conditional/subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects 	Guidance & Support  Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:
3 Meets	ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING (W1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduces claim(s) and acknowledges/addresses alternate or opposing claims (W1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Organizes reasons and evidence logically (W1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Supports claims/counterarguments with logical reasoning and relevant evidence demonstrating understanding of topic/text (W1b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify relationships among claims, reasons and evidence (W1c) <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains a formal style (W1d) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented (W1e) <hr/> WRITING PROCESS (W4-W8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writes clearly and coherently and organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience (W4) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Develops and strengthens writing as needed, by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W5) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses technology to produce writing and link to and cite sources (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> Assesses credibility of each source and quotes/paraphrases the data/conclusions of each source (W8) <input type="checkbox"/> Avoids plagiarism and follows a standard format for citation (W8) 		Adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships between ideas (L3b) <input type="checkbox"/> Places phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced or dangling modifiers (L1b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (L2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Spells correctly (L2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely (L3a) <input type="checkbox"/> Eliminates wordiness and redundancy (L3a) 	Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Claim is well stated but does not address opposing/alternate claims <input type="checkbox"/> Has some reasons and evidence but may not be logical or relevant <input type="checkbox"/> Does not establish or maintain a formal style <input type="checkbox"/> Concluding statement may be unclear or not well supported <input type="checkbox"/> Writing may not fully address audience, task, or purpose 		Limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses mostly simple or compound sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Language may not always be precise or appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some punctuation errors <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some capitalization errors <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some spelling errors 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited information on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Does not state an argument or claim <input type="checkbox"/> Includes little to no facts or focus <input type="checkbox"/> Information is disorganized or missing 		Infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many punctuation errors <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many capitalization errors <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many spelling errors 	

- **WGASFA:** “with guidance and support from adults”

This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbusd.org and information from Smarter Balanced Assessments (www.smarterbalanced.org) using the California Common Core Standards at www.cde.ca.gov.



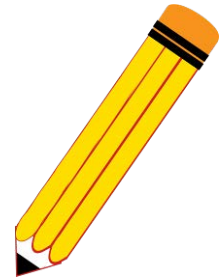
Argument Writing Performance Task

Student Version

Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework?
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Student Prompt:

Choose a position on the argument for or against trading homework for a longer school day. Write a multi-paragraph essay to your teacher explaining your **argument**. Include information from the following articles as you write.



Writing Tips:

- Be sure to introduce your claim and group related facts together.
- Use evidence from the two sources to develop your argument.
- Include linking words and phrases to connect your ideas, create cohesion, and clarify relationships among claims, reasons, and evidence.
- Maintain a formal style throughout.
- End with a conclusion.

Reminders:

- You can look at the two sources and your key word list to help you with your writing.
- You might begin by making a plan or drawing a graphic organizer to help you with your thinking.
- Do not plagiarize; do not copy sentences from the sources.

Step 1: Plan

Plan: review the texts and your notes

- Make a plan on the blank paper for your writing.

Step 2: Draft

- Introduce your claim or argument.
- Address opposing claims or arguments.
- Include relevant evidence to support your claim.
- Support your claims with logical reasoning.
- Group information together as you write into paragraphs.
- Write a concluding paragraph or section.
- Write a bibliography of sources for your paper using a standard format for citation.



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Student Version

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Step 3: Reread and Revise

- Does it make sense?
- Have you used evidence from the texts to support your claim?
- Have you used linking words to organize your writing?
- Have you used a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences to signal relationships between ideas?
- Have you maintained a formal style?
- Checked for wordiness and redundancy?
- Is it right for your task, purpose and audience?

Step 4: Edit

Reread your writing and revise:

- Capitals
- Punctuation: (end points) . ! ?
- Commas , quotation marks " " underlining and *italics*
- Spelling
- Complete sentences; avoid run-ons and fragments.
- Precise and concise language to express your ideas

Step 5: Final Draft

- Recopy and fix your mistakes.

Good work!





Argument Writing Performance Task

Writing an Argument Poster



1. *Research a topic.*



2. *State your claim: choose an argument which is well supported with evidence.*



3. *List evidence you will use. Focus on the most credible sources.*



4. *Choose your best evidence*



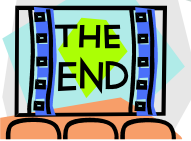
5. *Write a topic sentence that states your claim*



6. *Write paragraphs outlining your argument with evidence.*



7. *Use linking words to connect your ideas*



8. *Write a conclusion to remind the reader of your claim and/or call for action*



9. *Reread and revise: Does it make sense? Sound convincing? Any missing information?*



10. *Reread and edit: Check*

- *capitals*
- *spelling*
- *punctuation*

★	★	★	★	★
Punctuation	Capitals only where they go	Spelling	Spaces between all words	Paper is Neat
. ? ! " ,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning of sentence • Names • Months • Days of the week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All word wall words • Harder words spelled using the sound cards and/or attempted spelling 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting • No smudges



11. *Type or write a final draft!*

12. *Celebrate your hard work!*



Argument Writing Performance Task

Student Reading Text

Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework? Article 1
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Boston.com NEWS

Officials ponder a longer school day

From the United States

http://boston.com/news/education/k_12/articles/2005/10/09/officials_ponder_a_longer_school_day/?page=full

By Peter Martin, Globe Correspondent | October 9, 2005

School officials think that extending the school day at the town's two middle schools, Parker and Coolidge, by two hours -- a proposal they will consider in the weeks ahead -- would enhance learning and keep some youngsters whose parents both work from going home to an empty house.

The school district has applied for a \$30,000 state planning grant to explore the proposal. It is putting together a school day study committee and may seek up to \$1,300 per middle school pupil in state funds to help finance the first year of the change. Superintendent Patrick Schettini said the district's Parent Teacher Organization and the local teachers' union have expressed a willingness to look into the initiative, which could bring a change by as early as next September.

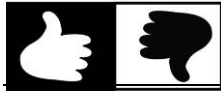
But parents interviewed at the Parker Middle School last week expressed misgivings about the proposal, which still needs to be worked out but may mean a 7:50 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. school day for middle school students. Now students get out at 2:25.

"I'm opposed," said Sue Cameron, the parent of a student at the school. "I can't imagine them there for more hours. They hate it for six; why would they like it for eight? The students and teachers would be burnt."

"The money could be better spent," said Adela Brennan, the mother of an eighth-grade student. "Hire more teachers, have smaller classes."

Reading is one of 20 Massachusetts school districts that have applied for the Department of Education planning grant. The Education Department will award the planning grants Nov. 1 and give the qualifying communities 11 weeks to submit proposals for extending the school day. The state is offering up to \$1,300 per pupil to help finance the first year of the effort. The funds must be matched by the community, meaning Reading could have to come up with as much as \$1.3 million to extend the hours for the 1,000 students at the middle schools. And the state monies are not guaranteed beyond the first year.

"At this point we simply want to explore this possibility and its feasibility and funding is something that will need to be discussed," said Schettini.



Argument Writing Performance Task

Student Reading Text

Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework? Article 1
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Other matters that need to be worked out are teacher scheduling, extra pay, and school supplies. The teacher issues would need to be discussed between school officials and the teacher union. Union president Alex Porter could not be reached for comment, but Schettini said Porter has told school officials that teacher representatives are willing to talk about the proposal.

Those who support the proposal believe that there's not enough time in the traditional school day to adequately teach children. Reading school officials said extending the hours would better prepare students to compete in the global marketplace, allowing teachers to dedicate more time to the core curriculum and to enrichment classes.

"I can't imagine how any negative would come from it," said Carl McFadden, a member of the School Committee. "We want children to learn as much as possible."

Extending hours would also keep some middle school children from returning home to unsupervised situations, said school officials. Some after-school activities are available to students, but not all participate.

"Ten years ago I would've thought differently; parents should be home for their kids," said Elaine Webb, cochairwoman of the Reading School Committee and a likely member of the school day planning team.

"But the tide is too strong. It's the way things have become in this postmodern society. Most parents have to work two jobs, and the schools can offer something that parents are unable to offer now."

Middle school children are at a particularly vulnerable age, said school officials.

"Obviously we want kids to make good decisions, and if left unsupervised, we don't want them going down the wrong path," said John Doherty, the assistant school superintendent who wrote the grant request.

But this will not be about providing baby-sitting for the children of busy parents, Webb said.

"It must be a high-quality extension, instructional and confidence-building," Webb said.

School administrators said they are focusing on extending hours at the middle schools because it presents fewer logistical complications than the high school. The middle school children are also considered better equipped to endure a longer school day than elementary school students.

The Reading middle schools do not have an after-school sports program, unlike the high school where teams compete against other towns. High school class hours and athletic schedules must mesh with other school districts that participate in the region's various leagues.

The Reading Recreation Department runs after-school sporting programs for middle school students and they will participate in planning a longer school day, Doherty said.

Also, class size is not a significant issue in the middle schools, Doherty said.



Argument Writing Performance Task

Student Reading Text			
Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework? Article 1

"I think in Reading we have a decent setup with two smaller middle schools, with pretty good class sizes in the low 20's," Doherty said. "We have those pieces in place and this is a good opportunity to enhance what we already have."

But a longer school day and the continuation of after-school recreational programs may leave less time for students to complete their homework. "It's something that the planning team will address," Doherty said. "If you lengthen the day, you have to look at expectations of homework."

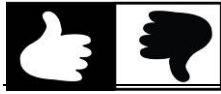
Parents interviewed at the Parker School were concerned about the toll such a long school day would take on students.

"They need to come home and blow off steam, play with friends, listen to music," said Suzy Axelson, the mother of an eighth-grade student. "There's pressure from other countries, like China, which has an intense curriculum, and we need to compete, but kids need to enjoy their childhood too."

While it's expected that students would object to more school, at least several students warmed to the idea of extending the school day in exchange for no homework.

"Yeah, no homework, I'd like that," said Tim Axelson, Suzy Axelson's 14-year-old son. "I'd take two more hours in school if I didn't need to worry about homework."■

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Argument Writing Performance Task

Student Reading Text

Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework? Article 2
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No homework but a longer school day instead?

From the United Kingdom

<http://www.bubhub.com.au/community/forums/showthread.php?213662-No-homework-but-a-longer-school-day-instead>

UK's biggest school to scrap homework

Homework is to be scrapped due to the amount of tension it causes at a school set to become the biggest in the country

Nottingham East academy, which will have 3,570 pupils when it opens, says it will replace homework with an extra lesson and after-school activities. It claims to be the first school in the country to take such a stand.

Barry Day, set to become principal at the new academy, believes the move will help children from poorer or illiterate families or those whose parents do not speak English.

He said: "If you ask most heads what most detentions are for, they will tell you for non-completion of homework.

"Homework causes an enormous amount of home conflict and parents and the community certainly won't mind children coming home later.

"It is often set simply because there is an expectation it should be set. It does not help with education at all."

Government guidance suggests between 45 and 90 minutes a night for pupils in the first year of secondary school.

But some leading schools commonly ask 11 and 12-year-olds to complete three or four hours' homework.

The new academy will retain some homework for exam revision and coursework, but otherwise will also ask parents to encourage their children to read books in a relaxed way, and report twice a term on what they have read.

Earlier this year, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers called for an all-out ban on homework in primary schools, saying forcing pupils to work at home was counter-productive.

Mary Bousted, general secretary of the ATL, said in March: "I think a lot of homework is a waste of time. It puts a huge amount of stress, particularly on disadvantaged children from disadvantaged homes."



Argument Writing Performance Task

Student Reading Text			
Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework? Article 2

Last week, Tiffin boys' school in Kingston Upon Thames, south-west London, decided to scale back homework schedules amid fears it was leaving pupils "depressed".

Tiffin, one of the top-rated grammar schools in England, has written to parents telling them it will limit homework to one 40 minute assignment, along with 20 minutes of independent study.

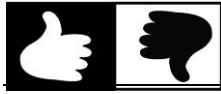
Nottingham East academy is set to open next year, educating children from nursery age to 19. It will cost about 50 million and will start life in former school buildings next September, before moving into new buildings in 2011, when homework will be scrapped.

The new academy aims to make its vast size manageable by sharing children around three mini-schools on different sites.

Blog Responses

Interesting idea. I think it'd work!

An hour or so longer at school and no homework!



Student Reading Text

Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework? Article 3
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thetele.co.uk

From the United Kingdom

By [Gayle Ritchie](#), 11 June 2013 11.00am. 2013-06-11

<http://www.eveningtelegraph.co.uk/news/local/homework-or-a-longer-school-day-what-do-dundee-parents-prefer-1.100878>

Homework versus a longer school day?

That's the question being debated by kids and parents across the country.

Some pupils reckon homework ruins their plans for the evening, whether that's watching telly or hanging out with pals.

But would they really rather see their school day stretched out to 5pm?

A pioneering new secondary school in Norwich is planning on doing exactly that.

The 1100 children who will attend the Jane Austen Academy won't have to do homework but, instead, they will stay on until 5pm to do extra study.

The mixed free school for 11-18-year-olds — which will specialise in English and the humanities — is set to open in September 2014.

Its prospective principal, Claire Heald, said most parents welcomed the idea of ditching traditional homework.

She said: "Rather than setting homework that pupils could go home and struggle with, and where there may be limited access to computers, they will do that as independent study in the day.

"We are saying that when they go home they should enjoy quality family time."

The Tele spoke to two Dundee mums to get their views on the issue...

'It's a great idea'

Menzieshill mum-of-two Karen Cruickshanks thinks it's a great idea.

She reckons that keeping kids on at school longer would enable them to get additional support with homework and free them up for the evening.

Karen, 37, said: "It can be very difficult to help kids with their homework, especially when they're at secondary school level.

"If they're able to stay on until 5pm, they would be able to get extra support from teachers, free of charge.



Argument Writing Performance Task

Student Reading Text			
Grade	7	Title/Subject	Longer School Day or Homework? Article 3

"I'm not that brilliant at math and it can be quite hard when it comes to helping my son with sums and fractions."

Karen believes evenings at home with her kids, nine-year-old Rebecca, and Cameron, 12, should be treasured — and not spoiled by homework.

She added: "Having kids stay on until 5pm is also a good way of eradicating any issues when it comes to persuading kids to start doing homework."

"It's sometimes a struggle getting my son to do it and before you know it, it's really late at night."

"If they did it during school hours, it would be over and done with, leaving them free to relax and enjoy family time at home."

'Days are long enough'

Lochee mum Fiona Taylor is against the concept of kids staying on beyond normal school hours.

Fiona, 52, who used to be involved with Lochee Community Action, thinks it's a long enough day as it is.

She said: "To make children stay on until 5pm is taking responsibility away from parents."

"My 12-year-old daughter Kirsty, who's going to St John's High School, used to attend a homework club at Lochee Primary."

"This was something many kids did voluntarily and it worked well for those who didn't get the support at home."

"But it wasn't what everyone wanted to do and those who preferred to go home and get help did so. I wouldn't be for it — it's a long enough day as it is."

"What happens if they get finished quickly, before 5pm? I'd imagine they would still have to hang on."

Fiona believes there's a case for children starting school later in the day.

She said: "Recent research has shown that teens would do better if they started school later, say around 10am."

"The truth is you can't please everyone but extending the school day to 5pm seems too much to impose on kids in my opinion."