

ENGLISH · Y6

Balanced Argument — Year 6

WAGOLL: Should Primary Children Have Mobile Phones?

Introduction

SHOULD PRIMARY-AGE CHILDREN HAVE MOBILE PHONES? In recent years, the question of whether primary-age children should own mobile phones has become a heated topic among parents, teachers and pupils alike. Whilst some argue that phones are a vital safety tool, others believe that they are a distraction from learning and a risk to children's wellbeing. This essay will examine both sides of the argument before reaching a balanced conclusion.

Arguments FOR

On one hand, there are several compelling reasons why children should be allowed to have mobile phones. Firstly, in an emergency, a phone could be life-saving. If a child becomes lost, separated from their family, or feels unsafe, being able to call a parent immediately is undeniably valuable. Secondly, mobile phones can support learning. Many educational apps make subjects like maths and languages more engaging, and children can use phones to research topics independently. Furthermore, in our increasingly digital world, it could be argued that learning to use technology responsibly from a young age is an essential life skill. Children who never use phones may struggle when they reach secondary school and find themselves behind their peers.

Arguments AGAINST

On the other hand, there are equally strong reasons to be cautious. To begin with, mobile phones can have a serious impact on children's mental health. Studies have shown that excessive screen time is linked to anxiety, sleep problems and reduced attention spans. Additionally, social media — which is often the main reason children want phones — can expose young people to bullying, inappropriate content, and unrealistic comparisons with others. Moreover, phones are a clear distraction. In school, they can prevent children from focusing in lessons; at home, they can replace reading, playing outside and spending time with family. Many teachers report that children with phones tend to communicate less face-to-face, which may



harm the development of important social skills.

Conclusion

In conclusion, both sides of this debate raise important and valid concerns. Mobile phones offer genuine benefits — particularly for safety and learning — but they also bring real risks for children's wellbeing and concentration. Perhaps the answer is not whether children should have phones at all, but rather how, when and under what supervision they use them. With the right boundaries, such as agreed screen-time limits, age-appropriate apps and ongoing conversations about online safety, mobile phones could become a useful tool rather than a harmful one.

Ultimately, this is a decision that families must make together, considering each child's age, maturity and circumstances.

Notated features

What makes this a strong Y6 balanced argument?

- TITLE phrased as a question: 'Should...?' makes it clear it's an argument
- INTRODUCTION: states the topic, both sides, and what the essay will do
- PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE: introduction, FOR, AGAINST, conclusion
- BALANCING CONNECTIVES: 'On one hand,' 'On the other hand,' 'Whilst,' 'However'
- ENUMERATIVE: 'Firstly,' 'Secondly,' 'To begin with,' 'Additionally,' 'Moreover'
- MODAL VERBS for nuance: 'could,' 'might,' 'may,' 'can'
- FORMAL VOCABULARY: 'compelling,' 'undeniably,' 'cautious,' 'inappropriate,' 'genuine'
- EVIDENCE REFERENCES: 'Studies have shown...' / 'Many teachers report...'
- MEASURED CONCLUSION: doesn't pick one side strongly, suggests nuance
- FORMAL THIRD PERSON: no 'I' or 'you' until perhaps the conclusion

Writing prompt

Write your own balanced argument. Choose: Should homework be banned? Should children be allowed pets at school? Should school uniform be optional? Should chocolate be banned in lunchboxes? Include: title as a question, introduction, FOR paragraph with three reasons, AGAINST paragraph with three reasons, and a measured conclusion. Use balancing connectives ('On one hand'/'On the other hand') and modal verbs to soften your claims.



