

Discussion Toolkit



Y1/2:	Y3/4: as in Y1/2 & ...	Y5/6: as in Y3/4 & ...
To discuss a topic:		
<p>The following tools may be used to fuel discussion around key topics explored by the class. Whilst discussion may not have a transcriptional focus, it is important that children are building confidence in some key phrasing for discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise key topics to be discussed through <i>should</i> questions (modal verb): <i>Should you have to wear a cycle helmet?</i> • Think of ideas and reasons for and against the topic. • Compose <i>for</i> and <i>against</i> sentences: <i>I think we should ...</i> <i>I think we should not ...</i> • Back up your ideas with reasons, facts and examples, using conjunctions: <i>'I think that ... because/so/so that, etc.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the topic being discussed through a question: <i>Is homework necessary?</i> • State clearly what is being discussed and why this matters: <i>We are discussing whether (or not) ...</i> <i>This is important because ...</i> • Build up arguments through a series of time/addition openers (fronted adverbials): <i>First of all, ... Secondly, ... Also, ... Furthermore, ...</i> • Introduce an opinion without bias: <i>Some people believe that ..., There are many people who believe that ...</i> • Present the other opinion using change of direction openers (fronted adverbials): <i>However, ... On the other hand, ...</i> • Explain the reason for the viewpoint using linking signposts (conjunctions and adverbials): <i>so, because, therefore, whereas, similarly, as a result, however, moreover, on the other hand ...</i> • Engage the reader through questions: <i>Do you think that ...? Why is it that ...?</i> • Give equal importance to both sides. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider your audience and vary your tone and formality for a desired effect. • Catch the reader's interest with your title: <i>Tragedy – who is to blame?</i> • Use ideas that will appeal to different stakeholders. • Explore differing views and ideas, sometimes being tentative: (modal verbs) <i>It may be that ... It could be ...</i> • Back up different points of view with information, reasons or evidence (including quotations or reported speech): <i>Local residents claim that it is dangerous!</i> • Include counter arguments within paragraphs: <i>Many people believe that ... however ...</i> • Weave in other non-fiction purposes, such as information/explanation: <i>The age of the building means that both walls and foundations are unstable. As a result, there has been an increase in reported accidents.</i>

Discussion – structure

Y1/2:	Y3/4:	Y5/6: as in Y3/4 & ...
To structure discursive writing:		
<p><i>If creating a response through shared writing, the following structure may be appropriate:</i></p> <p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell the reader what you are about to discuss. <p>Main body part 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write about why it is a good idea. <p>Main body part 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write about why it might not be a good idea. <p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write about what you have decided and give a reason why. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be clear in the title about what is being discussed: <i>Do dragons exist?</i> <p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the reader to what you are about to discuss. Explain why this matters at the moment: <i>This is being discussed because a dragon has moved into the local area.</i> <p>Main body part 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use topic sentences to show what paragraphs are about: <i>Most people believe dragons do exist ...</i> then back up the viewpoint. Provide as many points as you can think of that support the argument. <p>Main body part 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use topic sentences to show what paragraphs are about: <i>On the other hand, there are those who believe that dragons do not exist ...</i> then back up the viewpoint. Provide as many points as you can think of that counter the argument. <p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write about what you have decided having considered both sides of the argument and explain why: <i>Having considered both sides of the argument, I have concluded that ... because ...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manipulate the organisation of your writing to suit the audience: a letter, article, essay, news item, leaflet, interview, broadcast, etc. Present each argument and counterargument within a paragraph, starting with a clear topic sentence.