

How to use arguments: Three essays, same arguments



Landesbildungsserver
Baden-Württemberg

Topic: "School uniforms would be a benefit to any school."

Essay #1:

1 [...] **First**, uniforms prevent young people and parents from spending too much money on
2 certain designer labels or brands. **Second**, uniforms enable pupils and students to identify with
3 their schools. **And finally**, uniforms would encourage students to build an identity not based
4 on fashion. [...]

Comments:

- **good: use of connectors (first, second, finally....)**
- **Don't just list arguments like in this example, give details! If you don't elaborate on your arguments your readers may not understand what you are trying to tell them. On top of that, a quick succession of new ideas (here, arguments) won't convince anyone.**

Essay #2:

1 [...] First of all, **school uniforms would be a lot easier on the parents' wallets**. Of course school
2 uniforms cost money, too, but how often will a child need a new school blazer? In comparison,
3 just look at how often fashion changes and how often a new brand of jeans or trainers is "in".
4 How often would a parent have to buy new trainers, or a new pair of jeans?
5 Second, **pupils and students will develop a sense of identity with their school**. In other words,
6 they will develop a school spirit. With all students looking the same, they will be part of a team
7 rather than a class of individuals all trying to follow passing fads of fashion.
8 And finally, **uniforms would relieve pupils and students from the daily rat-race of needing the
9 latest in style and designer wear in order to be accepted at school**. School uniforms would
10 make sure that students look for other ways to excel, such as representing the school at sports,
11 for example. [...]

Comments:

- **red parts: core arguments**
- **blue parts: follow-up explanations, examples etc.**
- **better than essay #1, but the arguments given could still be expanded (see essay #3!)**
- **Begin a new paragraph for a new argument.**

Essay #3:

1 **When it comes to school uniforms, let us first consider the monetary aspect**. One closer look
2 at the price labels of the kinds of clothes children and teenagers like to wear might give an
3 unsuspecting parent a bad shock. Unfortunately, this is only the beginning of it: Today, a
4 typical teenager will want the right pair of trainers, tomorrow he will ask for a torn pair of jeans
5 because he does not want to look different from his mates, and the day after tomorrow he will
6 stop wearing those jeans again because now you have to turn up in baggies that will only look
7 cool to a fifteen-year-old. I am convinced that there are better ways of spending money on a
8 child than buying designer clothes. **And do we really want children to be slaves of fashion?**
9 **And now, in contrast, imagine a school where children wear uniforms**. Not only would these
10 uniforms reduce the amount of money parents would have to spend on clothes, not only would
11 uniforms reduce the daily rat-race of having to be up to date -- these uniforms would also

12 enhance one fact that is constantly trampled into the ground if we let children wear what
13 fashion dictates: A school uniform shows that the persons who wear it belong to the same
14 institution. They form a part of a team. **Why do players on a football team wear the same**
15 **jerseys? Could anyone imagine a professional team playing in individual gear?** Football
16 jerseys or school uniforms, both of them symbolize team membership as well as team values.
17 Additionally, school uniforms stand for all the values taught at a school – a constant reminder
18 of the ideals a school is trying to instil into its students.
19 **Then, there is an additional factor that we need to consider:** A school uniform would encourage
20 a child or a teenager to excel in other fields than just sporting certain looks and fashions. It
21 would teach them that there is more to individualism than just wearing what some fashion
22 designer thinks is cool. Moreover, it would help them to become **true individuals, individuals**
23 **in terms of personal interests, personal opinions, personal activities; individuals who act as**
24 **members of a team.**
25 And finally, who would not rather see a classroom full of well-groomed students wearing a
26 blazer and tie than a classroom full of kids all wearing baggies and torn tee shirts, and a few
27 unlucky ones ostracized because they cannot afford to wear what the rest think is cool? **An**
28 **easy choice.** [...]

Comments:

- Use **topic sentences** (i.e. mini-introductions) to introduce a new argument.
- You may use **rhetoric devices** (e.g. rhetoric questions, repetitions, alliterations etc.) to spice up your style.
- If you can manage **to round off a paragraph** with a snappy remark, a witty comment, a rhetorical question etc. – all the better! (But this isn't a must).