In this exercise, you will read a brief text about school uniform policies. In three steps, you will gather **evidence** to help you develop a **response** to the prompt:

An increasing number of schools are implementing uniform policies for students. Should there be a uniform policy at your school? Use specific details and examples to write an argument to convince others to support your position.

**Step 1: You Do It Together**

With a partner, **underline** evidencein the text that supports an argument **in favor of school uniform policies**. Make notes on how the evidence connects to your argument. Pay particular attention to the issues underlying the specific details you highlighted and note them.

**Step 2: Independent Application**

On your own, **circle** evidence in the text that supports an argument **against school uniform policies**. Make notes on your response to the evidence. Pay particular attention to the issues underlying the specific details you highlighted and note them.

**Step 3: Collaboration**

If time permits, work with at least one other partner to find two or more issues that drive the debate over school uniforms. Then review the highlights that you have and be sure that you have noted which issue relates to the highlighted material. If possible, find evidence on both sides of each issue or brainstorm possible additions to the debate based on your own discussions.

**Vocabulary Supports**

**Evidence:** Specific details and examples that support an argument

**In favor:** Supportive or accepting of

**Response:** Reaction or how one thinks or feels about an idea, event, or experience

**School Uniforms**

Is a school uniform a good thing? The answer to that question will **vary** widely depending on who is being asked. Some believe it is an **economical** choice that leads to safer schools. But some think uniforms impact on the student’s well-being in other ways. Does a uniform **enhance** a sense of community and **eliminate** the **appearance** of financial **disparities** among students, or does it leave students feeling **stifled** and **self-conscious**?

Supporters of school uniforms often **cite** the opportunity to **foster** school and community pride and to remove **socio-economic barriers** among students. A study by the Schoolwear Association found that 83% of teachers thought "a good school uniform . . . could prevent **bullying** based on appearance or economic background."[[1]](#footnote-0) They argue that uniforms create **consistency** in students’ appearance, which helps students see their shared community rather than their individual differences.

But not everyone feels the same. **The American Civil Liberties Union** of Nevada stated that clothing choices are "a crucial form of **self-expression**." [[2]](#footnote-1) They argue that individual clothing choices can provide a **non-disruptive** medium for student self-expression that can actually enhance a student’s learning experience. Giving students this most basic act of **self-determination**, they say, creates an environment of mutual trust important for learning.

School uniforms and their impact on students and schools is a topic that **provokes** conflicting opinions. Depending on the school or culture of the school, **perceptions** about the **impact** on freedom, identity, and community **differ**.

**Vocabulary Supports**

The definitions below provide just-in-time support for understanding challenging words in the passage. Use them as needed while you read.

**American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU):** An organization devoted to protecting the rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.

**Appearance:** Presence or display

**Bullying:** Intimidating or antagonizing

**Cite:** Refer to

**Consistency**: Likeness or similarity

**Differ:** Vary

**\*Disparities:** Inequalities

**\*Economical:** Related to finance or money

**Enhance:** Improve or strengthen

**Eliminate:** Erase or get rid of

**Foster:** Nurture

**Impact**: Affect or influence

**Non-disruptive**: Not troublesome; not upsetting

**\*Perceptions**: Thoughts, beliefs, or impressions

**Provokes**: causes

**\*Self-conscious:** Awkward or embarrassed

**Socio-economic barriers:** Obstacles related to lack of money

**Stifled:** Repressed or silenced

**\*Self-Expression**: Ability to show or tell about one’s self, one’s beliefs, or other aspects of one’s identity

**\*Self-determination**: Free choice

**Vary:** To be different from or differ

**\*Potential Key Issue**

**Issues Organizer**

Use **Potential Key Issue** terms from the **Vocabulary Support** list to generate ideas for issues to group highlights.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Issue | Evidence | Evidence |
| Self-expression |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Sentence Stem Bank:**

The person who said this cares about…

Someone who is convinced by this is someone who values…

Someone motivated by this detail is probably the kind of person who believes in...

1. Printwear and Promotion, "Schoolwear Association Research Reveals Uniforms Can Be a Powerful Tool," printwearandpromotion.co.uk, Sep. 13, 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada, "Four Reasons Public Schools Should Think Twice Before Instituting School Uniform Policies," aclunv.org, Dec. 19, 2008 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)