

# 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE WORK PACKET

## Reading/ Writing (3-week assignment)

1. Complete the Performance task on *Can Animals learn or use language?* (Week 1)

- a. Read and highlight important fact
- b. Answer the questions on the bottom of each page that has a question
- c. Complete the multiple choice and essay question on pages 29-30

2. On page 31- write down your claim (*Can animals learn or use language?*) (Week 2)

- a. Come up with 3 reasons and facts on why animals can or cannot learn or use language
- b. Write a counterclaim (what other people believe) and with a fact of why they believe that
- c. Write a conclusion. In the conclusion you need summarize your reasons on why you believe animals can or cannot use or learn language

3. Before Writing the essay: Do some practice skills.

- a. Complete the Organization Challenge for an Introduction, Body paragraphs 1-3, and conclusion. Review the complete essay to see how you did
- b. Review the Essay Example to see how the facts are put together

4. Writing your essay: Use the graphic organizer to begin writing your essay with the facts you have gathered and then transfer it on to binder paper (you may type it if you would like). (Week 3)

- a. Make sure you cite (for example: *In source 1 it states...*)
- b. Use quotation marks when copying a direct quote from the sources
- c. Each paragraph should have at least 4 complete and detailed sentences

## Studies Weekly (One per Week)

### History/ Social Science

Week #9 (People of Phoenicia) and Week #15 (More African Kingdoms)

Read, highlight/ underline important facts. Then answer the questions on the back. Complete the crossword puzzle, *Mapping and Charting, Think and Review*. Do not worry about the *Let's Write*

### Earth- Space Science Week #3

Read, highlight/ underline important facts. Then answer the questions on the back. You are welcome to attempt the *Mini- Lab*, but you do not have to do this portion. Complete the crossword puzzle and the *Let's Investigate* questions.

## Math (45 mins Daily)

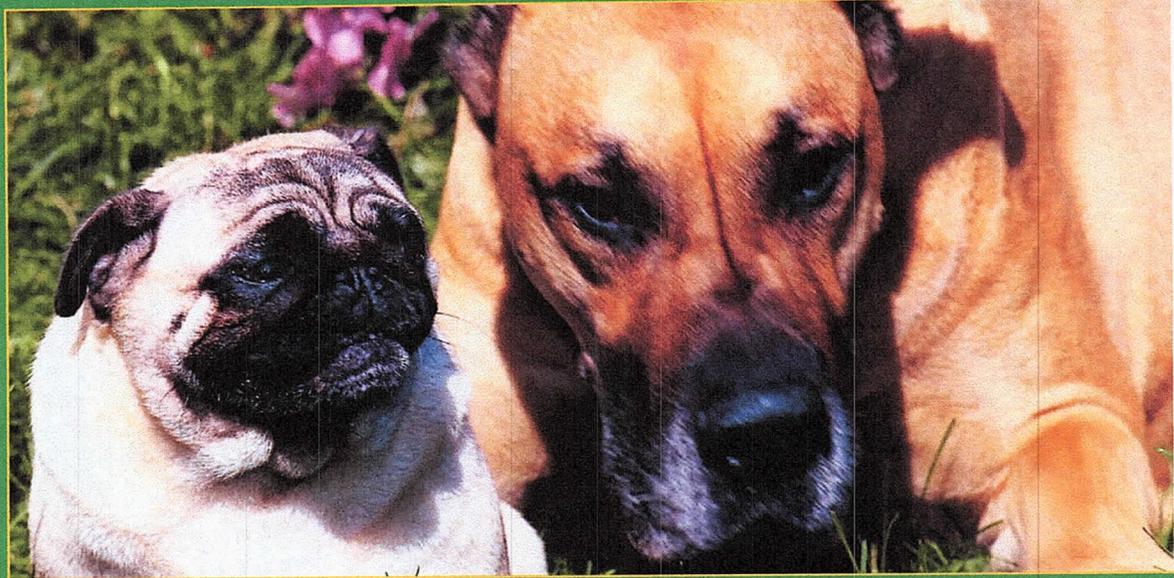
Choose one of the following apps and work on math daily for 45 minutes. You can use work on Prodigy, IXL, iReady. Mrs. Marcial's class will get an access code through Google Classroom.

STEP

3

## PERFORM THE TASK

*Can animals learn or use language?*



### You will read:

- ▶ TWO MAGAZINE ARTICLES  
*Speaking Bonobo*

*When Animals Communicate, They Are Not Using "Language"*

### You will write:

- ▶ AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

*Can animals learn or use language?*

### You will analyze:

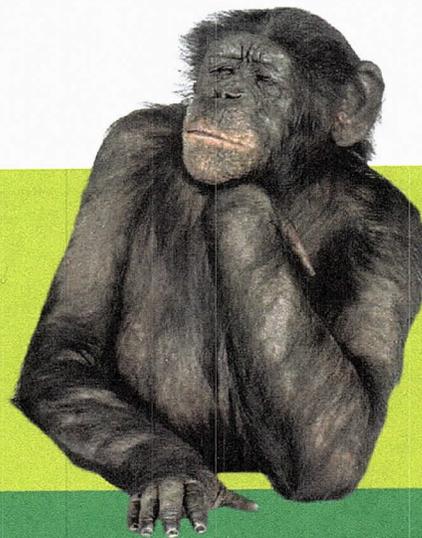
- ▶ A GRAPHIC FEATURE  
*What Is Language?*

## Part 1: Read Sources

### Source 1: Magazine Article

# Speaking BONOBO

by Paul Raffaele



**AS YOU READ** Look for evidence that supports your position—or convinces you to change your position on this question: *Can animals learn or use language?*

#### NOTES

#### SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE, NOVEMBER 2006

To better understand bonobo intelligence, I traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, to meet Kanzi, a 26-year-old male bonobo reputedly able to converse with humans. When Kanzi was an infant, American psychologist Sue Savage-Rumbaugh tried to teach his mother, Matata, to communicate using a keyboard labeled with geometric symbols. Matata never really got the hang of it, but Kanzi—who usually played in the background, seemingly oblivious, during his mother’s teaching sessions—picked up the language.

10 Savage-Rumbaugh and her colleagues kept adding symbols to Kanzi’s keyboard and laminated sheets of paper. First Kanzi used 6 symbols, then 18, finally 348. The symbols refer to familiar objects (yogurt, key, tummy, bowl), favored activities (chase, tickle), and even some concepts considered fairly abstract (now, bad).

Kanzi learned to combine these symbols in regular ways, or in what linguists call “proto-grammar.” Once, Savage-Rumbaugh says, on an outing in a forest by the Georgia State University laboratory where he was raised, Kanzi touched the  
20 symbols for “marshmallow” and “fire.” Given matches and marshmallows, Kanzi snapped twigs for a fire, lit them with the matches and toasted the marshmallows on a stick.

Savage-Rumbaugh claims that in addition to the symbols Kanzi uses, he knows the meaning of up to 3,000 spoken English words. She tests his comprehension in part by having someone in another room pronounce words that Kanzi hears through a set of headphones. Kanzi then points to the appropriate symbol on his keyboard. But Savage-Rumbaugh says Kanzi also understands words that aren't a part of his  
 30 keyboard vocabulary; she says he can respond appropriately to commands such as "put the soap in the water" or "carry the TV outdoors."

About a year ago, Kanzi and his sister, mother, nephew and four other bonobos moved into a \$10 million, 18-room house and laboratory complex at the Great Ape Trust, North America's largest great ape sanctuary, five miles from downtown Des Moines. The bonobo compound boasts a 13,000-square-foot lab, drinking fountains, outdoor playgrounds, rooms linked by hydraulic doors that the animals  
 40 operate themselves by pushing buttons, and a kitchen where they can use a microwave oven and get snacks from a vending machine (pressing the symbols for desired foods).

Kanzi and the other bonobos spend evenings sprawled on the floor, snacking on M & M's, blueberries, onions and celery, as they watch DVDs they select by pressing buttons on a computer screen. Their favorites star apes and other creatures friendly with humans such as *Quest for Fire*, *Every Which Way But Loose*, *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan and Babe*.

Through a glass panel, Savage-Rumbaugh asks Kanzi if it's  
 50 OK for me to enter his enclosure. "The bonobos control who comes into their quarters," she explains. Kanzi, still the alpha male of this group in his middle age, has the mien<sup>1</sup> of an aging

<sup>1</sup> **mien** bearing or manner, especially as it reveals an inner state of mind

### Close Read

Which details suggest that Kanzi knows 3,000 spoken English words? Cite text evidence in your response.

## NOTES

patriarch—he’s balding and paunchy with serious, deep-set eyes. Squealing apparent agreement, he pushes a button, and I walk inside. A wire barrier still separates us. “Kanzi can cause you serious damage if he wants,” Savage-Rumbaugh adds.

Kanzi shows me his electronic lexigram touch pad, which is connected to a computer that displays—while a male voice speaks—the words he selects. But Kanzi’s finger slips off  
60 the keys. “We’re trying to solve this problem,” says Savage-Rumbaugh.

She and her colleagues have been testing the bonobos’ ability to express their thoughts vocally, rather than by pushing buttons. In one experiment she described to me, she placed Kanzi and Panbanisha, his sister, in separate rooms where they could hear but not see each other. Through lexigrams, Savage-Rumbaugh explained to Kanzi that he would be given yogurt. He was then asked to communicate this information to Panbanisha. “Kanzi vocalized, then Panbanisha vocalized in  
70 return and selected ‘yogurt’ on the keyboard in front of her,” Savage-Rumbaugh tells me.

With these and other ape-language experiments, says Savage-Rumbaugh, “the mythology of human uniqueness is coming under challenge. If apes can learn language, which we once thought unique to humans, then it suggests that ability is not innate in just us.”

But many linguists<sup>2</sup> argue that these bonobos are simply very skilled at getting what they want, and that their abilities do not constitute language. “I do not believe that there has  
80 ever been an example anywhere of a nonhuman expressing an opinion, or asking a question. Not ever,” says Geoffrey Pullum, a linguist at the University of California at Santa Cruz. “It would be wonderful if animals could say things about the world, as opposed to just signaling a direct emotional state or need. But they just don’t.”

<sup>2</sup> **linguist** an expert who studies the nature and structure of many languages, and the variations among them

# When Animals Communicate, They Are Not Using “Language”

by Mia Lewis

**AS YOU READ** Pay attention to the evidence the author presents. Jot down comments or questions about the text in the side margins.

## NOTES

Over the years, a number of research studies have shown that it is possible to teach an animal to communicate using sign language or specially designed computer keyboards. Bonobos or other primates raised in captivity and trained from birth may over the course of many years learn signs or symbols representing hundreds of words. They may even be able to string a couple of them together to make basic phrases. Dogs, and even birds, can be trained to recognize and respond to many words and signals.

- 10 But does any of this constitute the ability to use language? Many linguists, zoologists, and other scientists say no. They believe that the ability to use language is unique to humans. We have something in our brains that enables us to learn and use language in a way that animals never can.

Skeptical scientists insist that when chimpanzees or other animals are taught to use words or signs, more often than not they are simply performing a kind of trick in order to receive a reward—usually food. That is why the animals do not then go on to create more words of their own, or string them together  
20 into complex sentences. A human baby, on the other hand, rapidly progresses from saying single words to being able to form complex sentences.

One famous linguist compares the animals that participate in human language studies to Olympic athletes. “Humans can

Whatever the dimension of Kanzi's abilities, he and I did manage to communicate. I'd told Savage-Rumbaugh about some of my adventures, and she invited me to perform a Maori war dance. I beat my chest, slapped my thighs and hollered.

90 The bonobos sat quiet and motionless for a few seconds, then all but Kanzi snapped into a frenzy, the noise deafening as they screamed, bared their teeth and pounded on the walls and floor of their enclosure. Still calm, Kanzi waved an arm at Savage-Rumbaugh, as if asking her to come closer, then let loose with a stream of squeaks and squeals. "Kanzi says he knows you're not threatening them," Savage-Rumbaugh said to me, "and he'd like you to do it again just for him, in a room out back, so the others won't get upset."

I'm skeptical, but I follow the researcher through the  
100 complex, out of Kanzi's sight. I find him, all alone, standing behind protective bars. Seeing me, he slapped his chest and thighs, mimicking my war dance, as if inviting me to perform an encore. I obliged, of course, and Kanzi joined in with gusto.

### Discuss and Decide

Which details about the author's interactions with Kanzi suggest that Kanzi communicates beyond "signaling a direct emotional state or need"?

fly about 30 feet—that’s what they do in the Olympics,” Noam Chomsky said in an interview. In other words, just because you can train a gymnast to fly through the air, that does not mean humans can fly. Likewise, the chimps in these studies aren’t really using language, and the studies don’t tell us anything  
 30 about actual animal communication. “If higher apes were incapable of anything beyond the trivialities that have been shown in these experiments, they would have been extinct millions of years ago,” Dr. Chomsky said.

Of course animals communicate with each other using various means—sounds, signals, even smells and vibrations. And as research technologies improve, scientists discover more and more about the complexity and sophistication of these communications. But all the same, those communication methods are not the same as language. They lack one or more  
 40 of the many attributes that make up human language, such as the following:

- Displacement: the ability to communicate ideas about things not present in time or space;
- Discreteness: discrete units of sound being combined to make up meaning;
- Productivity: the ability to combine the words in a language to produce an infinite number of meanings.

Even if it isn’t “language,” the natural communication in animal species is more interesting and important to study  
 50 than the tricks they can be taught. After all, what chimpanzees communicate to each other in the wild—without language—must go far beyond the 200-300 words they can be taught in a laboratory setting.

### Close Read

What makes animals’ natural communication—“sounds, signals, even smells and vibrations”—less complex than human language?

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## Source 3: Graphic Feature

**WHAT IS LANGUAGE?**

Language is more than talking and hearing.  
It is what we share when we do things together.  
It is how we create a common ground.  
It is how we collect shared meaning.

**1 COMMUNICATION**  
A message that goes in one direction.  
A speaker speaks.  
A listener listens.

**2 CONVERSATION**  
A message that goes two ways.  
The speaker and the listener have understanding.

**3 COLLABORATION**  
Taking part in thinking, planning, and deciding.  
The speaker and the listener share a process.

**4 CO-CREATION**  
Taking part in doing and making.  
The speaker and the listener share an activity.

### Discuss and Decide

How is language different from communication? Cite evidence in your discussion.

## Respond to Questions on Step 3 Sources

These questions will help you think about the sources you've read. Use your notes and refer to the sources to answer the questions. Your answers to these questions will help you write your essay.

- Why did Kanzi become a candidate for learning language?
  - a. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh took him from the wild to teach him.
  - b. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh had taught all members of Kanzi's family.
  - c. He was present when his mother, Matata, was being taught how to communicate.
  - d. He was the psychologists' favorite bonobo.
  
- According to Source 2, what do the methods animals use to communicate with one another reveal about them?
  - a. They show that animals have a language similar to humans.
  - b. They show that animals can communicate in many ways that are superior to human language.
  - c. They show that animals communicate in ways that are as sophisticated as human language.
  - d. They show that humans are not communicating effectively.
  
- Which words best support your answer to Question 2?
  - a. ". . .when chimpanzees or other animals are taught to use words or signs, more often than not they are simply performing a kind of trick. . ."
  - b. "But all the same, those communication methods are not the same as language."
  - c. ". . .what chimpanzees communicate to each other in the wild—without language—must go far beyond the 200-300 words they can be taught in a laboratory. . ."
  - d. "They lack one or more of the many attributes that make up human language. . ."
  
- Which best supports the idea that co-creation is the most advanced stage of language?
  - a. "It is how we create common ground."
  - b. "The speaker and the listener share an activity."
  - c. "Language is more than talking and hearing."
  - d. "A message that goes two ways."

- Is the evidence from one source more credible than the evidence from another source? When you evaluate the credibility of a source, consider the expertise of the author and/or the organization responsible for the information. Record your reasons.

Source	Credible?	Reasons
Magazine Article Speaking Bonobo		
Magazine Article When Animals Communicate They Are Not Using "Language"		
Graphic Feature What Is Language?		

- Prose Constructed-Response** You have read three texts about animals' ability to learn and use language. Analyze the strengths of the arguments made in at least two of the texts. Cite textual evidence to support your ideas.

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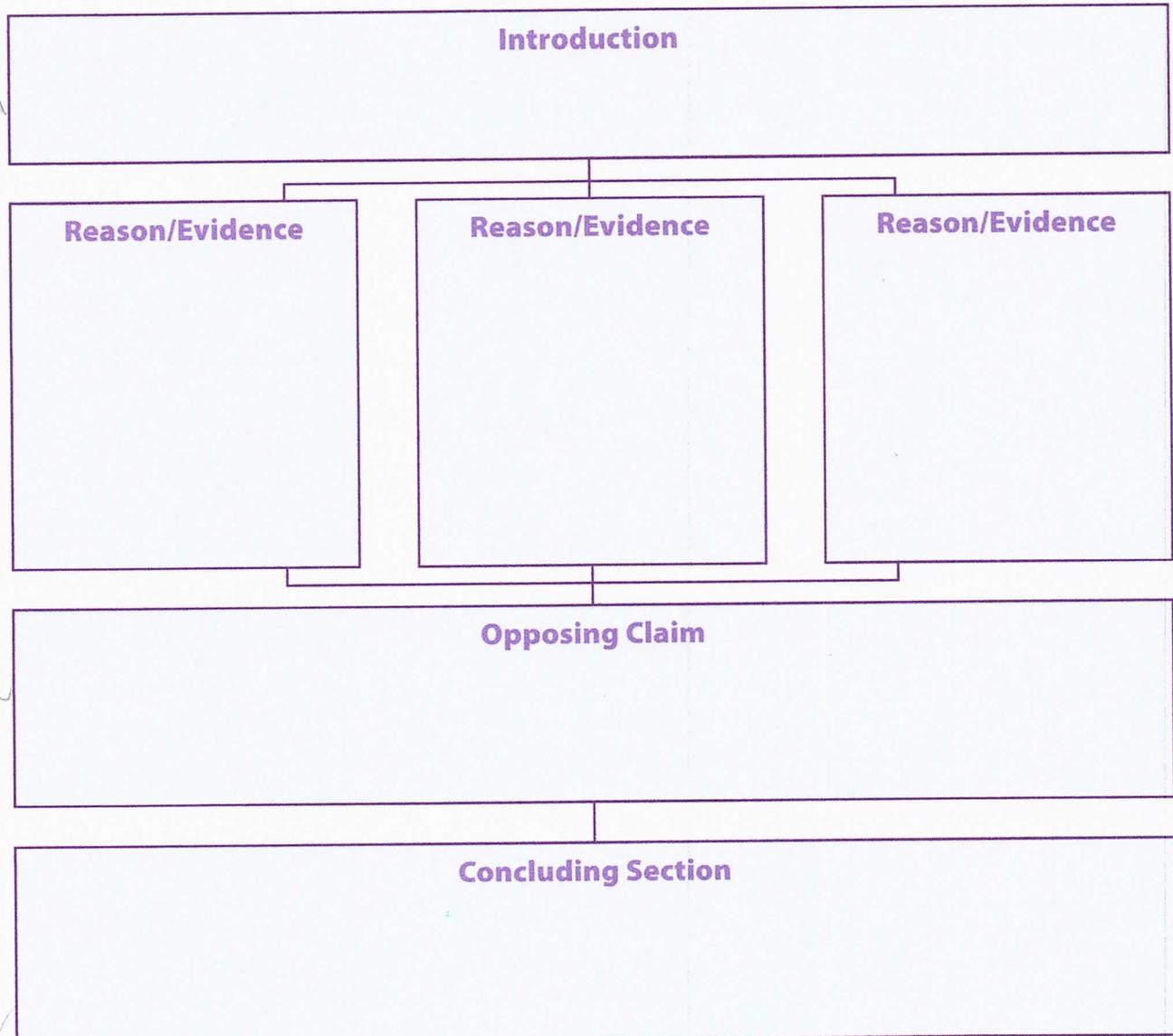
## Part 2: Write

### ASSIGNMENT

You have read about the animals and whether or not they are capable of learning or using language. Now write an argumentative essay explaining why you agree or disagree with the idea that animals can learn and use language. Support your claim with details from what you have read.

### Plan

Use the graphic organizer to help you outline the structure of your argumentative essay.



*add your claim*

*add opposing claim with evidence*

*summarize what your claim is and reasons*

## Draft



Use your notes and completed graphic organizer to write a first draft of your argumentative essay.

## Revise and Edit



Look back over your essay and compare it to the Evaluation Criteria. Revise your essay and edit it to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.

## Evaluation Criteria

Your teacher will be looking for:

### 1. *Statement of purpose*

- ▶ Is your claim specific?
- ▶ Did you support it with valid reasons?
- ▶ Did you anticipate and address opposing claims fairly?

### 2. *Organization*

- ▶ Are the sections of your essay organized in a logical way?
- ▶ Is there a smooth flow from beginning to end?
- ▶ Is there a clear conclusion that supports the argument?
- ▶ Did you stay on topic?

### 3. *Elaboration of evidence*

- ▶ Is the evidence relative to the topic?
- ▶ Is there enough evidence to be convincing?

### 4. *Language and vocabulary*

- ▶ Did you use a formal, noncombative tone?
- ▶ Did you use vocabulary familiar to your audience?

### 5. *Conventions*

- ▶ Did you follow the rules of grammar usage as well as punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

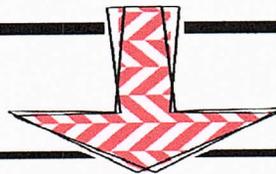
## ORGANIZING THE ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

For an argument essay to be effective, you must organize your ideas, provide solid supporting evidence, and present the information clearly. Let's take a look at how that's done.

An argument essay is usually at least 5 paragraphs. It requires an introductory paragraph, at least 3 body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.

### Introduction

The first paragraph is where you will hook the reader and state your claim. The *hook* is sometimes called a *lead*. The claim is the *thesis statement*.



### Body Paragraph #1

This paragraph introduces the first reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence, such as facts, examples, and data.



### Body Paragraph #2

This paragraph introduces the second reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence, such as facts, examples, and data.



### Body Paragraph #3

The paragraph should introduce an opposing claim, which is the counterargument. It also includes the turn-back, which takes the reader back to your claim and position.



### Conclusion

The last paragraph restates the thesis statement and summarizes the main idea of the argument. It also contains a strong concluding statement.

## ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

### INTRODUCTION

Year-round schooling requires students to attend school for 12 months, with short vacations that occur at varying intervals.

Twelve month programs are not a good idea; the educational benefits do not outweigh the high costs involved, and summer vacation is critical to a child's learning and development.

There was a time when summer vacation was stress-free; it meant endless lazy days, sitting on the porch and watching the bees pollinate the flowers. It did not mean attending school and having homework.



## ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

### BODY PARAGRAPH I

According to *The New York Daily News*, when Jefferson County, Colorado, moved to a year-round schedule, test scores actually declined.

Therefore, year-round schooling was just not worth the expense.

Additionally, one school district in Prince William County, Virginia, saw no educational improvements after nine years with a year-round schedule. According to the Supervisor of Programs in Prince William County, "There were not enough advantages to outweigh the disadvantages."

First, year-round schooling is expensive, due to air conditioning, maintenance, and staffing; yet it does not lead to significant academic improvement.

If the investments do not lead to improvements in student learning, they are not cost effective.

The district was then forced to spend an additional 93 million dollars to go back to a traditional calendar.



## ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

### BODY PARAGRAPH 2

According to Dr. Leo Wisebonder, psychologist for the Los Angeles Unified School Program, "Children learn many things outside of school. It's a different type of learning, which simply is not tested."

The ongoing demands of school would interfere with these valuable leisure and work experiences.

Children in year-round programs would be missing out on opportunities to discover talents and interests that are not taught in schools.

Furthermore, younger children would not be able to attend camp programs, and teenagers would miss out on summer employment opportunities.

Summer activities enhance a child's overall growth and development in a way that school cannot.

Another reason there should not be year-round school is because summer activities are critical to a child's learning and development.



## ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

### BODY PARAGRAPH 3: THE COUNTERCLAIM/COUNTERARGUMENT

Nevertheless, summer vacation allows students an opportunity to learn about important topics that are not related to school. Critics of a traditional schedule are not taking into account all of the opportunities young people will be missing out on.

Some people claim that year-round schooling reduces summer learning loss. They point out evidence that suggests some students might lose up to two months of learning during the summer.



## ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Directions: Each of the following boxes contains a small portion of an argumentative essay. Cut out each box, and then assemble the essay on the essay template in an organized, sensible manner.

### CONCLUSION

It has been proven that a year-round schedule does not lead to academic improvement, and it does not allow students to develop interests outside of school.

Year-round schooling would not be beneficial in any way.

Children should be our nation's first priority, and they deserve long periods of stress-free time, as well as the opportunity to explore the world outside of school.



## ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE COMPLETE ESSAY

There was a time when summer vacation was stress-free; it meant endless lazy days, sitting on the porch and watching the bees pollinate the flowers. It did not mean attending school and having homework. Year-round schooling requires students to attend school for 12 months, with short vacations that occur at varying intervals. Twelve month programs are not a good idea; the educational benefits do not outweigh the high costs involved, and summer vacation is critical to a child's learning and development.

First, year-round schooling is expensive, due to air conditioning, maintenance, and staffing; yet it does not lead to significant academic improvement. According to *The New York Daily News*, when Jefferson County, Colorado, moved to a year-round schedule, test scores actually declined. The district was then forced to spend an additional 93 million dollars to go back to a traditional calendar. Additionally, one school district in Prince William County, Virginia, saw no educational improvements after nine years with a year-round schedule. According to the Supervisor of Programs in Prince William County, "There were not enough advantages to outweigh the disadvantages." Therefore, year-round schooling was just not worth the expense. If the investments do not lead to improvements in student learning, they are not cost effective.

Another reason there should not be year-round school is because summer activities are critical to a child's learning and development. According to Dr. Leo Wisebender, psychologist for the Los Angeles Unified School Program, "Children learn many things outside of school. It's a different type of learning, which simply is not tested." Children in year-round programs would be missing out on opportunities to discover talents and interests that are not taught in schools. Furthermore, younger children would not be able to attend camp programs, and teenagers would miss out on summer employment opportunities. The ongoing demands of school would interfere with these valuable leisure and work experiences. Summer activities enhance a child's overall growth and development in a way that school cannot.

Some people claim that year-round schooling reduces summer learning loss. Nevertheless, summer vacation allows students an opportunity to learn about important topics that are not related to school. Critics of a traditional schedule are not taking into account all of the opportunities young people will be missing out on.

Year-round schooling would not be beneficial in any way. It has been proven that a year-round schedule does not lead to academic improvement, and it does not allow students to develop interests outside of school. Children should be our nation's first priority, and they deserve long periods of stress-free time, as well as the opportunity to explore the world outside of school.

# ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

## INTRODUCTION

Topic  
Sentence

Background  
Information

Claim



# ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

## BODY PARAGRAPH 1

Topic  
Sentence

Evidence

Bridge  
*(transition  
sentence)*

Evidence

Bridge  
*(transition  
sentence)*

Conclusion



# ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

## BODY PARAGRAPH 2

Topic  
Sentence

Evidence

Bridge

Evidence

Bridge

Conclusion



# ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

## BODY PARAGRAPH 3: THE COUNTERCLAIM/COUNTERARGUMENT

Counterclaim

Turn-back



# ARGUMENT ESSAY ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

## CONCLUSION

Restate  
Claim

Summarize  
Evidence

Final  
Statement

