

Name: _____ Date: _____

Scavenger Hunt

Directions: Fill in the boxes below to explore how the authors of the letters in "Should Fidget Spinners Be Allowed at School?" develop their arguments. We filled in some information for you.

	Liam Swan	Principal Schwartz
line that expresses the central idea, or central claim	"I—and my classmates—believe this ban should be lifted." (p. 26)	
two pieces of evidence that support the central idea, or central claim		
line that expresses the counterargument		
line that contains the rebuttal to the counterargument		

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Write an Argument Essay

Directions: Read "Should Fidget Spinners Be Allowed at School?" Complete the scavenger hunt on page 27.
Then follow the steps below.

STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

Should fidget spinners be allowed at school?

Consider what you read in the two essays, as well as your own viewpoint.

Check the box next to the point of view you will argue in your essay,
or write your own opinion in the space provided.

☐ **Yes!** Fidget spinners should be allowed. ☐ **No!** Fidget spinners should not be allowed.

☐

STEP 2: GATHER SUPPORT FOR YOUR OPINION

Which details from the essays support your opinion? What other information supports your opinion?
List at least three supporting details on the lines below.

Here's an example: If you think fidget spinners should be allowed in school, one of your supporting details might be that fidget spinners help some kids concentrate.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think fidget spinners **SHOULD** be allowed in school, summarize the strongest arguments that Liam Swan presents in his essay. If you think fidget spinners **SHOULD NOT** be allowed in school, summarize the strongest arguments that Principal Schwartz presents.

STEP 4: CRAFT YOUR THESIS (CENTRAL CLAIM)

The thesis is where you tell readers what your essay is going to be about. The thesis should be a clear, strong statement of the opinion you gave in Step 1. The rest of your essay will support this thesis.

Your thesis: _____

STEP 5: WRITE YOUR HOOK

The very beginning of your essay is called the hook because it "hooks" your readers' attention. The hook should relate to the topic of your essay, but it can take many forms. It can be:

- 1. An anecdote** (a very short story): Describe a personal experience that you had with a fidget spinner at school, whether the fidget spinner belonged to you or to someone else.
- 2. A surprising fact:** Find a fact that will raise your readers' eyebrows. Several surprising facts are included in the article. You can also do some research to find one that is not included in the article.
- 3. A rhetorical question** (a question to which you don't expect an answer): Ask your readers a question that reflects your point of view about fidget spinners in schools. Here's one way you could structure your question: *"Does allowing fidget spinners in school really _____?"*
- 4. A quote:** Find a thought-provoking quote that relates to the topic of your essay.

Choose one of the ideas above, or use your own idea, and write a hook on the lines provided.

Your hook: _____

STEP 6: SUMMARIZE THE ISSUE

Let readers know a little about the issue you will be writing about. This is not your point of view; it's a brief summary of the issue. Use information from both essays to finish the summary below.

Liam believes that students at his school should be allowed to use fidget spinners in class. His principal thinks that the use of fidget spinners at school _____

STEP 7: START WRITING

On the next page, you'll find guidelines for how to organize your essay.

Argument Essay Outline

Directions: Use the outline below to write your essay. You will use what you wrote on the first three pages of this activity.

1

INTRODUCTION

Open with your hook from Step 5.



Write a transition sentence that relates your hook to the question of allowing fidget spinners at school.



(See *Scope's* handout "Great Transitions" for some ways to link your ideas.)



Write your summary of the issue from Step 6.



Finish with your thesis from Step 4.

2

BODY PARAGRAPH(S)

**Now write your supporting points from Step 2.
For each one, write 1-3 sentences that
provide additional details.**

You can put your supporting points and detail sentences together in one paragraph or you can split them into several paragraphs. It depends on how much you want to write about each point.

Hint! Order your supporting points from weakest to strongest. Readers will remember details that are presented last.

3

ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

Now it's time to recognize the other side of the argument.

Use what you wrote in Step 3.

Then explain why you think the opposing point of view is wrong.

4

CONCLUSION

**Write 2-3 sentences to remind your readers
of your main points.**

Finish with a strong final sentence.

*Need an idea?
Refer to your hook,
find a quote, or give
a call to action.*

5

READ AND REVISE

Use *Scope's* "Argument-Essay Checklist" to evaluate and edit what you have written.

SKILL: Essay Writing

Great Transitions

Transitions are like bridges between your ideas—they help your readers move from one idea to the next. Here are some transition words and phrases you may wish to use in your essay. Keep in mind that they can be used at the beginning of a sentence or within a sentence.

If you are adding information or showing similarity between ideas:

- additionally
- besides
- so too
- first of all/secondly/thirdly
- in addition
- also
- likewise
- to begin with
- as well as
- another
- furthermore
- finally

If you are showing that one idea is different from another:

- however
- even though
- in contrast
- on the one hand/on the other hand
- yet
- despite
- still
- some people say/other people say
- but
- although
- in spite of
- regardless

If you are showing that something is an example of what you just stated:

- for example
- to illustrate
- this can be seen
- for instance
- namely
- specifically

If you want to show cause and effect:

- as a result
- consequently
- so
- it follows that
- therefore
- eventually

If you want to add emphasis:

- in fact
- of course
- truly
- even
- indeed

SKILL: Essay Writing

Argument-Essay Checklist

Directions: Use this guide to check your own essay, or exchange papers with a classmate and use the list to check each other's essays. In the margins of the essay you are checking, make notes about anything that needs to be revised.

Introduction

- ✓ Does the first sentence grab readers' attention?
- ✓ Does the first paragraph provide a general overview of the essay's topic?
- ✓ Does the first paragraph include a thesis statement that strongly and clearly states your point of view? Does the thesis clue readers in as to what the essay is going to be about?

Body Paragraphs

- ✓ Do they contain a total of at least three points that support the thesis?
- ✓ Do they provide details to further explain each of the supporting points?
- ✓ Are the supporting points presented in order from weakest to strongest?
- ✓ Do you acknowledge an opposing point of view and then explain why you think it isn't strong enough to change your point of view?

Conclusion

- ✓ Does the last paragraph remind readers of the main points of the essay, without going into *too* much detail and repeating everything readers just read?
- ✓ Is the conclusion free of new information (such as another supporting point)?
- ✓ Does the last sentence leave readers with a strong final impression?

General

- ✓ Does one idea flow smoothly into the next?
- ✓ Do the sentence structures and lengths vary?
- ✓ Does every sentence relate to the thesis?
- ✓ Does everything make sense?
- ✓ Is the essay convincing?
- ✓ Are the grammar, punctuation, and spelling correct?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Go to Scope
Online to listen
to the words
and definitions
read aloud.

Vocabulary:

"Should Fidget Spinners Be Allowed at School?"

1. alleged (uh-LEJD or uh-LEJ-id) *adjective*; If something is *alleged*, someone has claimed that it is true but without proof. This doesn't mean that it *isn't* true; it might very well be true—there just isn't any proof. *Alleged* is often used to refer to people who are suspected of a crime but have not yet gone to court and are therefore still presumed innocent. For example, a newspaper article might say, "The alleged thief was arrested shortly after 10 a.m."

Alleged can also be used to mean "so-called" or "supposed," as in, "Who is this alleged friend of yours? He doesn't sound like a friend at all!"

2. concrete (KON-kreet or kon-KREET) *noun or adjective*; Concrete (KON-kreet) is a pourable mixture of cement, sand, broken rocks, and water that hardens into a strong building material. Highways and sidewalks are made of concrete.

The adjective *concrete* (kon-KREET) means "real or solid." If you have some ideas about what you might do this weekend but you haven't committed to anything yet, you could say that you don't have concrete plans for the weekend. Your dad might ask if you have any concrete evidence that your sister ate the last cupcake, as you claim that she did.

3. drawback (DRAW-bak) *noun*; A drawback is a disadvantage or an undesirable feature. One major drawback of smartphones is the need to constantly charge them.

4. impede (im-PEED) *verb*; *Impede* means "to interfere with or slow the progress of." Watching TV and texting while doing homework might impede your ability to finish your assignments.

5. relatively (REL-uh-tiv-lee) *adverb*; *Relatively* means "when compared with others." In the middle of winter, a 60-degree day might feel relatively warm—but in the middle of the summer, a 60-degree day might feel relatively cool.

Relatively is also often used to mean "somewhat." If you thought *Guardians of the Galaxy 2* was kind of a funny movie, but not *that* funny, you might describe it as relatively funny.

Directions: On the back of this page, list any other words from the article whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.

Vocabulary Practice

"Should Fidget Spinners Be Allowed at School?"

Directions: Choose the word or phrase that is most similar in meaning to each word in bold.

1. impede

- Ⓐ help Ⓑ delay

2. drawback

- Ⓐ flaw Ⓑ benefit

3. concrete

- Ⓐ fake Ⓑ actual

4. relatively

- Ⓐ extremely Ⓑ sort of

Directions: For each statement below, fill in the circle to show whether you think it's true or false. Briefly explain your choice.

- 5.** If your neighbor is an **alleged** undercover FBI agent, your neighbor is definitely an undercover FBI agent.

- Ⓐ true Ⓑ false

Reason: _____

- 6.** A tall person wearing a hat who sits in front of you at the movies might **impede** your view of the screen.

- Ⓐ true Ⓑ false

Reason: _____

Directions: Rewrite each sentence below using one of the words in the box. There is one word you will not use.

relatively concrete drawback alleged
--

- 7.** One disadvantage of having a snake for a pet is that you have to feed it rats.

- 8.** "There were not a lot of people at the game last night," said Mark. "The bleachers were fairly empty."

- 9.** The "alien encounter" that Max claims to have experienced took place in his backyard.

