



Proficient | Exemplar Essay

Letter to Your Principal: School Uniforms

The Unstylish Cost of Uniforms



Claim and Focus

The essay states a clear claim in the introduction ("uniforms should not be mandatory... [they] are way too expensive, they stop students from expressing themselves ...and wearing them will not prevent bullying") and maintains adequate focus on developing the claim throughout the essay.



Support and Evidence

Relevant evidence is cited and reasoning is provided to support some of the points of the claim, however, the "bullying" point is developed unevenly. Additional support of this idea with cited evidence would move this essay to a 4.



Organization

Purposeful organization is employed, as paragraphs are structured for the introduction, two points of the claim, and a conclusion. Varied transitions - though basic - show the relationships between ideas ("According to," "Another good point is," "These pieces of evidence prove").



Language and Style

A consistent voice and formal style are maintained throughout the essay. An awareness of the reader's interests is demonstrated with precise and interesting word choices ("mandatory," "empowered," "financial") and adequately varied sentence structure.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait 'looks like' in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see "25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays" by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

Letter to Your Principal: School Uniforms



The Unstylish Cost of Uniforms

Dear Mr. Jones,

Some people say that school uniforms are beneficial to students and school culture, but I disagree. While school uniforms can help with some things, uniforms should not be mandatory at our school for many reasons. School uniforms are way too expensive, they stop students from expressing themselves through their choice of clothing, and wearing them will not prevent bullying. Please consider our point of view before you make a decision.

School uniforms should not be allowed because they can be costly for some families. According to Sherry Bowen, school uniforms "Cost too much for families who already struggle to make ends meet" (Source 2). Sherry Bowen's point shows that even though a lot of families will be able to pay, there are several who already struggle to get by and don't deserve to be charged for a uniform. Another good point is when Marian Wilde says that school uniforms "Are an unfair additional expense for parents who pay taxes for a free public education" (Source 1). Wilde is saying that they already pay taxes to the school, and many parents donate as well, so they shouldn't have to pay for a uniform. These pieces of evidence prove that school uniforms are too costly, and people do not deserve to be charged for them.

When it comes to style, school uniforms can't quite make the cut. With no patterns, single colors, and the fact of wearing the same type of shirt and pants every day, people will get bored and unenthusiastic about going to, or getting ready for school. They would decrease enthusiasm and school spirit. Having school uniforms tends to make kids gloomy and unhappy, while having freedom in choosing their outfit has

proven to make them enthusiastic and joyful. In Source 1, Marian Wilde explains how school uniforms "Violate a student's right to freedom of expression"(Source 1). When a child is picking their outfit, they feel empowered to express their creativity, attitude and personality. I have found in my personal experience that kids love to be on their own and independent. Students are proud of their rights to pick their own outfits and this right should not be taken away from them. In terms of bullying, wearing a uniform would only shift a bully's target point from clothes (if that is the current target) to something else like hair style or height. No matter what someone is wearing, bullies will be bullies, so the school should look for other ways to prevent bullying.

Overall, uniforms prevent creativity and self expression. They are a financial issue for some families and don't even prevent bullying during the school day. Uniforms should not be introduced into our school because this is our chance now for families to celebrate the clothing that best suits their children.

Thank you for your consideration.