

## Lesson 16: Write an Opinion

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

### Children Don't Need Curfews

Many children today have evening curfews. They have to be at home each evening by a certain time no matter what they are doing. But I believe evening curfews are unfair, unnecessary, and disrespectful to children.

Most children in grade five and up need to be out at least a few evenings a week. They often have extracurricular activities that both children and their parents feel are important. Maybe they have basketball practice that ends at 7:30 or a dance class that is dismissed at 8:00. These children have made commitments. Keeping these commitments may require them to be away from home in the evening. They cannot keep their commitments if they have a curfew.

Other children may have reasons to be out in the evening that are just as compelling. They may go to the library to do research for a school project. Some children may spend time studying at a friend's house. If these children had curfews, they couldn't do these activities that benefit their performance in school.

Another reason for not having a curfew is that relaxed rules help children develop good judgment on their own. They learn good judgment when they are allowed to make their own decisions and their own mistakes. Children also develop good judgment when parents help them learn how to handle different situations. A discussion about what children should do in an emergency or when approached by a stranger can prepare children and help them make good choices. Imposing a curfew will not.

When children do not have a curfew, they need to develop responsibility. If they are allowed to stay out in the evening, they should also take responsibility for themselves. They should make sure they get enough sleep, get themselves up in the morning, get to school on time, and do their homework. If children are responsible, as I am, and study and do their homework as they are supposed to, staying out in the evening will not cause a problem for them.

Parents worry that their children will be unsafe without a curfew. The earlier children are in for the evening, they think, the less chance they have of getting into a dangerous situation. Parents worry about their children having accidents in the evening. Many car accidents occur at night because drivers do not see children walking or biking in the dark.

However, parents forget that their children want to be safe, too. Children can work with their parents to avoid dangerous situations. For example, children who ride their bikes home in the evening can ride with a light so drivers will see them. Children can call their parents for a ride home if it is too dark to walk. In addition, many children have their own cell phones so they can call to check in with their parents throughout the evening. They can also use their cell phones to call a parent or the police if they need help. By taking these measures, children do not need curfews because they have planned other ways to stay safe in the evening.

Part of growing up is learning how to make decisions and become independent. This means that parents and children need to develop trust. A curfew is not the way to build trust. A better way is for parents and children to talk openly. Parents can voice their concern. Children can respond and share their point of view. Then parents and children can reach a solution that they both feel comfortable with. Open discussion between parents and

children improves communication, which, in turn, leads to trust. Curfews for children should not be part of it.

Answer the following questions.

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This question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

**Part A**

Which of the following **best** describes the author's claim?

- A. Curfews for children are unnecessary.
- B. Parents who want curfews don't trust their children.
- C. Curfews don't keep children out of trouble.
- D. Students participate in activities without curfews.

**Part B**

Identify **one** sentence in the passage that **best** opposes the author's claim.

Answer:

2

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Write **two** pieces of relevant evidence from the passage that support the reason given below.

**Reason**      Relaxed rules help children develop good judgment on their own.

Answer:

3

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Reread the concluding paragraph. Find the sentence that restates or summarizes the author's claim.

Rewrite it below.

Answer:

4

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Which of the following gives a reason supporting the author's claim about curfews? Choose **all** that apply.

- A. Children can plan ways to stay safe in the evening.
- B. Children lack common sense and do things that could get them into trouble.
- C. Children cannot learn good judgment if they are not allowed to make their own decisions.
- D. Children need to schedule school activities in the afternoon.
- E. Children can be responsible and make sure their schoolwork is done.

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The following sentence could be included in the passage. Which one shows the correct verb tense?

- A. Parents will be able to trust their children if the children had demonstrated that they were responsible.
- B. Parents will be able to trust their children if the children have demonstrated that they are responsible.
- C. Parents are able to trust their children if the children had demonstrated that they will be responsible.

- D. Parent have been able to trust their children if the children had demonstrated that they are responsible.

Use both passages from this lesson to answer the question that follows.

## Curfews for Children

Children often think that evening is the time when fun things happen. Many older children enjoy spending time with friends and attending events in the evening. On the other hand, parents usually want their children in at a “reasonable” hour. Clearly there are two sides to the issue of curfews.

A curfew is something parents use to try to keep their children safe by limiting their exposure to nighttime dangers. Parents reason that the later a child is out, the more chance that child has of getting into trouble. Parents may worry about car accidents and drivers who may be tired and careless at the end of a long day.

In addition, a curfew helps parents ensure that their children get enough sleep. This is important because children need to stay alert the next day while at school and during other activities, such as homework and after-school sports. According to the National Sleep Foundation, children ages five to twelve need ten to eleven hours of sleep each night.

On the other hand, children may argue that their parents haven’t considered their needs when making decisions about curfews. They may feel their parents do not respect their ability to make good decisions on their own. Curfews that are made without the input of the children affected may even cause children to act out in response.

What is the solution? A compromise between parents and children may be the best way to solve the curfew problem. Parents may insist that their children have a curfew. But if those children are able to be a part of the decision, there may be less conflict and more acceptance of the curfew.

Parents simply want their children safe and well rested. Children may have good suggestions about how to achieve these goals. A decision that is made by both parents and children can teach children how to problem-solve and be considerate of others’ views and can give parents the control they need.

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different situations. A discussion about what children should do in an emergency or when approached by a stranger can prepare children and help them make good choices. Imposing a curfew will not.

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“Curfews for Children” discusses opinions and reasons both for and against curfews. “Children Don’t Need Curfews” argues against curfews. Think about the claims, reasons, facts, and details presented in both passages. Why might a child be in favor of curfews? Write an argument from the perspective of a child who supports a curfew. Include evidence from both passages to support your claim.

Answer:

Standards: ELA.5.C.1.3, ELA.5.C.3.1, ELA.5.EE.1.1, ELA.5.R.2.4