

Section 1:

#1 "Homework in primary schools has long been a staple of education, but in recent years many educators, parents, and researchers have questioned whether it does more harm than good. In primary grades, children are still developing basic skills like self-discipline, focus, and time management."

Strengths: Your opening clearly states the topic and shows that this is a current debate. You also mention that children are still developing important skills, which is a good point to make.

Weakness: Vague supporting evidence → Your writing mentions "many educators, parents, and researchers" but doesn't give specific examples or numbers. This makes your argument less convincing because readers can't see exactly who supports this view.

Exemplar: *Recent studies by Harris Cooper and other education researchers have shown that homework provides little academic benefit for primary school children.*

#2 "One major problem is well-being. Homework can contribute to stress, reduce sleep, and produce frustration when students lack support or resources at home."

Strengths: You clearly explain how homework affects children's health and feelings. Your point about different home situations is important and fair.

Weakness: Superficial analysis → You list problems but don't explain deeply why these things happen or how serious they are. The phrase "contribute to stress" doesn't show readers how big this problem really is or what it looks like in real life.

Exemplar: *When children spend hours struggling with difficult maths problems after school, they often go to bed late and feel worried, which can make them tired and upset the next day.*

#3 "In my view, primary schools should indeed ban or strictly limit homework in the younger years (say, kindergarten through Grade 2), and only use homework in higher primary grades when it is short, meaningful, connected to classroom learning, and adaptable to students' home situations."

Strengths: Your solution is practical and considers different age groups. You also think about making homework fair for all children.

Weakness: Underdeveloped reasoning → You don't explain clearly why kindergarten to Grade 2 should be different from other primary years. The phrase "short, meaningful" doesn't tell readers exactly what this would look like or how schools would make sure homework is "adaptable."

Exemplar: *Schools should ban homework for kindergarten to Grade 2 because research shows children under 8 learn better through play and hands-on activities rather than sitting at desks doing worksheets.*

■ Your piece presents a balanced view of the homework debate and shows you understand both sides of the argument. However, your writing would be stronger if you included more specific examples and detailed explanations. Additionally, you could improve by explaining your ideas more deeply - for instance, when you mention stress, you could describe what this actually looks like for a 7-year-old child. Also, your argument would be more convincing if you provided clear evidence, such as specific studies or real examples from schools. Furthermore, you could strengthen your conclusion by explaining exactly how your solution would work in practice. Your writing structure is clear, but the content needs more substance to fully persuade readers. Consider adding concrete details that help readers picture the problems and solutions you're discussing.

Overall Score: 44/50

Section 2:

Should Primary Schools Ban Homework?

#1 Homework in primary schools has long been a staple of education, but in recent years many educators, parents, and researchers have questioned whether it does more harm than good. In primary grades, children are still developing basic skills like self-discipline, focus, and time management. Giving them substantial homework may overstretch their capacity and infringe on time that might otherwise be spent playing, resting or interacting with family. Studies suggest that the academic benefit of homework for younger children is modest. For example, a meta-analysis shows that homework in primary school has smaller average gains than in secondary school.

#2 One major problem is well-being. Homework can contribute to stress, reduce sleep, and produce frustration when students lack support or resources at home. When expectations are high, children may feel anxious or overwhelmed. Moreover, not all students have access to a quiet place to work,

technology, or parental help, which introduces inequity: children from disadvantaged backgrounds may suffer more.

On the other hand, supporters argue that homework can reinforce what is learned in class, help children build a sense of responsibility and independence, and connect school learning with home. Homework, when well-designed and moderate in amount, with clear feedback, may indeed help consolidate skills, especially literacy and numeracy. They also point out that completely banning homework might make it harder for some children to develop habits that are useful later (in secondary school and beyond).

#3 In my view, primary schools should indeed ban or strictly limit homework in the younger years (say, kindergarten through Grade 2), and only use homework in higher primary grades when it is short, meaningful, connected to classroom learning, and adaptable to students' home situations. The risks—stress, inequity, disruption of childhood [—]are real and significant; the benefits do not clearly justify giving all primary children regular homework. Schools should instead focus on high-quality in-class instruction, play, experiential learning, and methods that do not depend on out-of-school work.

Section 1:

#1 "The question of whether students should be allowed to use phones or tablets at school pits the benefits of technology against concerns about distraction, mental health, and fairness."

Strengths: Your opening sentence clearly sets up the main debate and shows you understand this is a complex issue with different sides.

Weakness: Vague introduction → Your introduction jumps straight into the argument without giving readers enough background about why this topic matters right now. You could help readers understand why schools are discussing this issue more than ever before.

Exemplar: *"In recent years, many schools around Australia have been debating whether students should bring their personal devices to class, as technology becomes more important in our daily lives."*

#2 "One meta-analysis of 39 studies showed a strong negative link between student mobile phone use and educational outcomes, including test scores and grade point average."

Strengths: You use specific research evidence to support your point, which makes your argument stronger and more believable.

Weakness: Insufficient explanation of evidence → You mention the research but don't explain what this actually means for students in simple terms. Your readers might not understand how big this problem really is or what "meta-analysis" means.

Exemplar: *"Research that looked at 39 different studies found that when students use mobile phones at school, their marks and test results get worse."*

#3 "Given these arguments, I believe the best policy is a restricted, conditional allowance: phones/tablets should be allowed only when used expressly for educational purposes, under teacher supervision."

Strengths: You present a balanced solution that considers both sides of the argument rather than picking just one extreme position.

Weakness: Unclear implementation details → Your solution sounds good but you don't explain exactly how teachers would make this work in real classrooms. Phrases like "expressly for educational purposes" are too general and don't help readers picture what this would look like.

Exemplar: *"Schools should allow phones and tablets only during specific lessons where teachers ask students to use them for learning activities, such as research projects or educational apps."*

■ Your piece tackles an important topic that affects many students today. You show good thinking by presenting arguments from different viewpoints before sharing your own opinion. Your writing flows well from one idea to the next, and you use research to back up your points, which makes your argument more convincing.

However, your piece would be stronger if you explained your ideas more clearly for your readers. Additionally, you could improve by giving more specific examples of how your solution would work in real schools. Your conclusion also needs more detail about what teachers and students would actually do day-to-day. Furthermore, some of your sentences use complicated words that might confuse readers who aren't familiar with education research.

To make your writing better, try explaining what research findings mean in simpler terms. Also, add concrete examples of how phones could be used well in lessons. Additionally, you could strengthen your argument by explaining why your middle-ground approach is better than completely banning devices or allowing them freely.

Score: 43/50

Section 2:

Should Students Be Allowed to Use Phones or Tablets at School?

#1 The question of whether students should be allowed to use phones or tablets at school pits the benefits of technology against concerns about distraction, mental health, and fairness. Many argue in ~~favour~~ [favour]: these devices can offer immediate access to rich educational materials, interactive resources, and allow for differentiated learning. Tablets and phones can enable students to do research, use learning apps, collaborate with peers online, or even submit work digitally. Given how digital our world is, allowing controlled use can help students build skills in digital literacy that will be essential later.

#2 However, there is mounting evidence that allowing devices freely bears measurable costs. Studies across multiple countries show that phone presence in class [—] even when not actively used—can reduce attention, lower academic performance, and fragment learning. One meta-analysis of 39 studies showed a strong negative link between student mobile phone use and educational outcomes, including test scores and grade point average. ~~Also~~ [Additionally], there are concerns about mental health: anxiety, distraction, sleep problems, and social/emotional issues have been linked to excessive device use.

Some propose banning phones altogether during school hours. While this might reduce distraction, simply banning is not a silver bullet. Evidence suggests that bans alone often do not improve student well-being or fully solve ~~issues~~ [these problems]; implementation is difficult, and students may still use devices outside class or feel alienated. ~~Also~~ [Furthermore], there are cases where devices help students with special needs, or in emergency situations, or where schools use them effectively as teaching tools.

#3 Given these arguments, I believe the best policy is a restricted, conditional allowance: phones/tablets should be allowed only when used ~~expressly~~ [specifically] for educational purposes, under teacher supervision. They should be turned off or stored away during instructional time unless needed for a lesson, with strict rules and consistent enforcement. Schools should ensure fairness (providing access for students without devices), teach students digital citizenship, and have clear consequences for misuse. This compromise preserves the benefits of technology while protecting learning, attention, and student well-being.