

Section 1

#1: Opening paragraph and introduction

Strengths:

- Your opening grabs attention effectively with a direct question to the audience, creating an engaging start that makes readers want to continue
- The conversational tone ("super-duper-secret button") helps establish your voice as a Year 5 student, which makes your argument feel authentic

Lack of clear position statement → Whilst you pose interesting questions in your introduction, your piece doesn't clearly state which option you're arguing for until much later. Your readers shouldn't have to guess your main argument. A strong persuasive text needs to tell the audience your position right at the start, perhaps after your opening questions. You could add a sentence like "I believe longer recess is essential for our learning and wellbeing" before moving into your reasons.

Example: "I believe that pressing the button for thirty fantastic minutes of recess would actually help us learn better than longer lessons ever could."

#2: Point about brain overload (Paragraph 1 under numbered points)

Strengths:

- The comparison about brains "brimming" with information creates a visual image that helps explain your point
- Your specific example about "counting lorries past the fence" shows real classroom experience

Underdeveloped reasoning → Whilst you mention that brains become "glitchy" when too full, you haven't explained *why* this happens or *how* recess would solve this problem. Your argument jumps from the problem (brains overloaded) to an observation (staring out windows) without connecting these ideas to your solution. You need to explain the link between mental fatigue and the need for breaks, perhaps mentioning how movement and fresh air help our brains process information.

Example: "When we attempt to absorb too many facts without a break, our brains become overloaded and stop processing information effectively. Scientists have discovered that taking breaks helps our minds organise what we've learnt, which is why recess gives our brains time to store information properly before returning to lessons refreshed."

#3: Phone battery metaphor (Final paragraph)

Strengths:

- Your phone battery metaphor is brilliant and relatable – every student understands what happens when a phone runs out of power
- You've identified a genuine benefit of recess (boosting energy and interest)

Insufficient explanation and support → Although your metaphor is strong, you haven't developed it fully. How exactly does recess "charge" our brains? What happens during those thirty minutes that helps us learn better afterwards? Your paragraph mentions students becoming "more active and interested" but doesn't explain the connection between playground time and improved learning. You could strengthen this by describing what happens during recess (running, talking with friends, getting fresh air) and explaining how each activity helps prepare our brains for more learning.

Example: "During recess, we run, climb, and play games that get our blood pumping and oxygen flowing to our brains. We also chat with friends and laugh, which reduces stress and helps us feel happier. When we return to class after thirty minutes of this brain-boosting activity, we're ready to focus and learn again."

■ Your piece tackles an important topic that matters to Year 5 students, and you've made some compelling points about why longer recess benefits learning. Your strongest moments come when you use specific examples from your own experience, like counting lorries or the "dinosaur claw" hand. However, your argument would be much more convincing if you developed each reason more thoroughly. Currently, you list problems with longer lessons but don't fully explain *how* longer recess solves these problems. For instance, your second point about noise building up mentions the problem clearly, but doesn't explain why recess specifically helps release that energy in a healthy way. Additionally, your piece would benefit from restructuring: state your position clearly in the introduction, then dedicate one full paragraph to each main reason (rather than using numbered

points), ensuring each paragraph explains both the problem and how recess addresses it. Your conclusion currently introduces new ideas about brain charging, when it should actually summarise your main arguments and make a final appeal to your audience. Also, consider adding a counterargument paragraph where you acknowledge why some adults might prefer longer lessons, then explain why recess is still more beneficial. This shows mature thinking and strengthens your overall argument by addressing potential objections.

Overall Score: 38/50

Section 2

Which is better: longer recess or longer lessons?

I have a question to pose to all the grown-ups who plan our school day. It's a very serious question, maybe even the most serious question ever asked in a Year 5 school.

If there was a super-duper-secret button that would revolutionise the school timetable, would you press it to make lessons longer (more maths! ~~more english~~ [more English]!) OR would you press it to give us thirty fantastic minutes of recess?

#1 What if suddenly lessons were twice as long! That would be sitting still for over an hour and a half.

- #2** When you attempt to make a Year 5 project or ~~smt~~ [something] ~~your~~ [, your] brain ~~keep on absorbing~~ [keeps absorbing] facts when it is already brimming, it becomes a bit glitchy. We don't actually learn anything new. We just ~~practice~~ [practise] staring out the window, counting lorries past the fence.
- Longer lessons ~~and~~ [mean] more dead time. If we have to be silent for so long, a little bit of noise accumulates inside us. It's a quiet squeak, but it's fighting to be heard! If we don't have a chance to shout on the playground, that noise will accumulate ~~and~~ [, and] before long somebody will scream about new trainers during a science test.
- Seriously, writing ~~hours on end~~ [for hours on end] makes my hand shrink to a dead dinosaur claw. That is not learning ~~that~~ [; that] is hurting! Having a longer break time is good ~~it~~ [; it] helps you a lot better ~~on study~~ [with studying] ~~this~~ [. This] will boost students ~~education~~ ['education'] :D

#3 Recess is not all playing and games. Recess is time to get fuel for learning! Think of our brains as phones. If we use them all the time, they run out of power. Recess is the power button to boost students' energy [' energy] every day at school. They will become more active and become more interested in learning.