

Join the national conversation!



Word Generation - Unit 1.09

Focus Words

adjustment | exposure | modify | monitor | transition

Weekly Passage

Parents and their teenage children have always fought about the way young people dress. Some schools are taking on the battle by making rules about what students may wear. Many school officials want to reduce skin exposure and ban t-shirts with offensive language. They argue that this type of clothing can be distracting to other students. Some schools want to make even greater adjustments to their dress codes by requiring school uniforms. Many parents are in favor of this transition to stricter dress code policies. They think requiring uniforms reduces the pressure students feel to look like their peers. Some parents also believe that uniforms contribute to a more structured classroom environment and help students focus on their schoolwork instead of worrying about how they look.

Some teenagers don't want the dress code to be modified because they like to

express themselves through their clothing choices. They think it's not the school's business to monitor what they wear. Other students who have been teased and criticized for wearing the "wrong thing" think stricter dress codes are a good idea.

What's your opinion? Should your school have a stricter dress code? How could a dress code have an impact on a school's culture?

TEACHER

Reading Comprehension/Discussion Questions:

- ▶ Why do some school officials want to reduce skin exposure and offensive language on clothing?
- ▶ What are some reasons why parents might want a transition to stricter dress code policies such as requiring school uniforms?
- ▶ Why don't some teenagers want the school to monitor what they wear?
- ▶ Why do some kids think a strict dress code is a good idea?
- ▶ Does having a strict dress code promote a positive school culture?

Unit 1.09

School dress codes: Not strict enough?

Focus Word Chart

Word	Meaning	Forms			Related Words
		Inflectional	Basic Word Classes	Prefixes/ Suffixes	
adjustment	(n.) - small change	adjustments	adjust (v.)	readjust adjusting adjusted adjusts adjustable	just justify
exposure	(n.) - uncovering; display	exposures	expose (v.)	exposing exposed exposes exposé expository exposition	depose impose
modify	(v.) - to make changes in	modifies modifying modified		modification modifier	
monitor	(v.) - to check; to keep track of	monitors monitoring monitored monitor (n.)			admonish premonition
transition	(n.) - change process	transitions		transition (v.) transitioned transitioning transitional transitive transient	transfer transit transform transcend transpose

School dress codes: Not strict enough?

Problem of the Week



In the early 1990s, Long Beach Unified School District in California was in trouble. Students in its schools were violent. District-wide test scores were low. School officials thought about different ways to **modify** the schools. They wondered what kind of **adjustments** would work best to fix their district. In 1994 they began a **transition** to school uniforms. Test scores improved. Violence decreased. Within a few years, school crime had dropped by 80%.

The uniform policy at Long Beach Unified got a lot of media **exposure**. President Bill Clinton praised school uniforms in his 1996 State of the Union Address. Groups that **monitor** education also took notice. The Broad Foundation, for example, awarded the school \$2.14 million in prizes.

Option 1: In Long Beach, school crime fell by 80%. Which of the following means the same thing?

- A) School crime fell by four-fifths.
- B) School crime fell by three-quarters.
- C) School crime fell by two-thirds.
- D) School crime fell by half.

Option 2: Each year, the average American school spends approximately \$10,000 per student. How many students could the Broad Foundation's \$2.14 million prize fund for one year? (Hint: to solve this problem quickly, use exponents.)

Answer: $2.14 \times 10^6 / 1 \times 10^4 = 2.14 \times 10^2$, or 214 students

Math Discussion Question: The media **exposure** of school uniforms in Long Beach sparked a debate. Some researchers pointed out that requiring uniforms was not the only **adjustment** made by the district. The uniforms were just one part of a larger **transition**. When the district **modified** the dress code, it also began to improve school security and closely **monitor** school attendance, among other changes. Did the uniforms fix the schools? How could we find out?

School dress codes: Not strict enough?

Debating the Issue

1. Get ready...

Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

A Schools should have rules against clothing that exposes too much skin or contains offensive language. This type of clothing is distracting to students and teachers and can be harmful to student learning.

B Schools should require students to wear uniforms so that kids will not feel pressure to buy expensive clothes in order to look like their peers. Uniforms would keep kids from being teased and criticized for wearing the “wrong thing.”

C Schools should require students to wear uniforms because this will create a more structured classroom environment. Students who are dressed well will behave better, and this will allow everyone to focus on school work.

D Schools should not monitor what students wear because students should be free to express themselves through their clothing. Choosing their own clothing lets students be individuals.

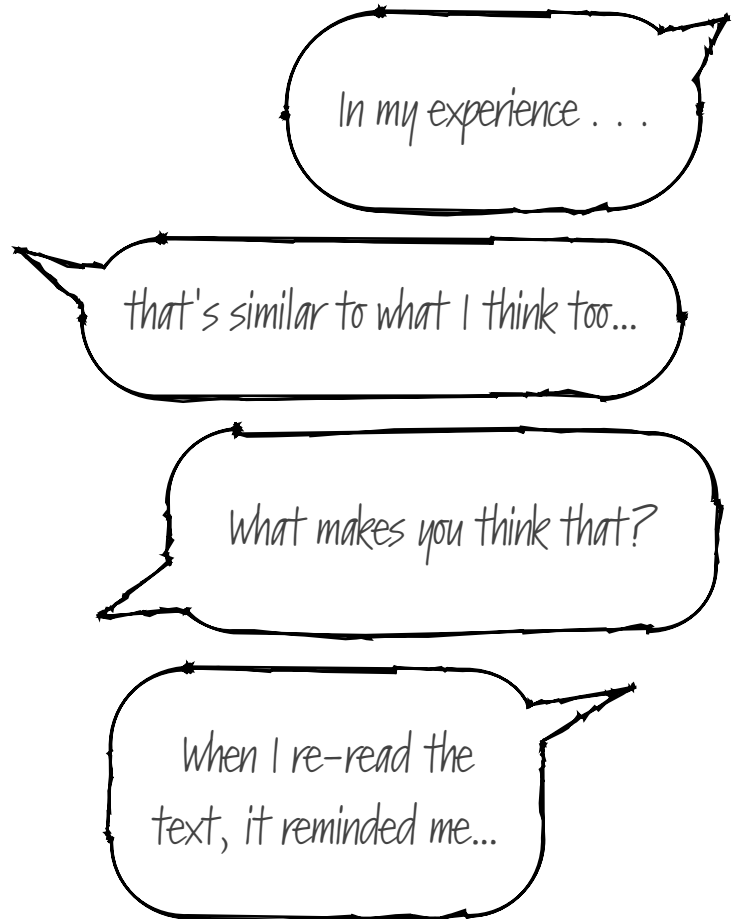
E _____

2. Get set...

Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Jot down a few quick notes:



Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.



TEACHER

Whatever the debate format, ask students to use academically productive talk when arguing their positions. In particular, students should provide reasons and evidence to back up their assertions. It may be helpful to read these sample positions to illustrate some possibilities, but students should be encouraged to take their own positions about the issue at hand.

Unit 1.09

School dress codes: Not strict enough? Science Activity

Jacob walks into class wearing a T-shirt with a logo for Marlboro cigarettes.

“Your shirt makes me think we should **modify** the dress code,” says Professor Kahn. “We **monitor** skin **exposure**, but what about exposure to dangerous advertising?”

“I disagree,” says Jacob. “Making **adjustments** to the dress code is a waste of time. I hate deciding what to wear! We should just have uniforms.”

“That’s a good idea,” says Anaya. “When kids wear uniforms, their test scores go up.”

Is Anaya right? Professor Kahn investigates.

Question:

Do school uniforms improve students’ grades?

Hypothesis:

Students' grades will improve after their school makes a **transition** to requiring uniforms.

Materials:

- ▶ 100 students
- ▶ Report Cards



This activity is designed to help you practice thinking like a scientist and to use this week's focus words. Sometimes the data are based on real research, but they should never be considered true or factual.

TEACHER

Real Research

-In this article, researchers found that uniforms do not improve school attendance, student behavior, or test scores once other variables are screened off. The researchers acknowledge that some data sets make it seem like uniforms do make a difference. For example, Catholic school students tend to score higher on achievement tests than public school students, and Catholic school students are more likely to wear uniforms. However, when researchers looked more closely, they found no correlation between uniforms and achievement. (For example, within Catholic schools, they found that students who did not wear uniforms outscored students who did.)

Brunsma, D. et. al. (1998, September/October). Effects of student uniforms on attendance, behavior problems, substance use, and academic achievement. The Journal of Education Research. Retrieved on November 9, 2009 from <http://sociology.missouri.edu/New%20Website%20WWW/Faculty%20and%20Staff/Assets/David%20Brunsma/Examining%20the%20Effects%20of%20Students%20Uniforms%20on%20Attendance.pdf>

Procedure:

1. Find 100 students in a school without uniforms.
2. Record and average their grades.
3. Start requiring uniforms at that school.
4. After all students are wearing uniforms, wait one year.
5. Record and average the grades from the same 100 students.

Data:

	Before Uniforms	After Uniforms
Average Grade	C+ (78.3)	C+ (78.2)

Conclusion:

Is the hypothesis supported or not by the data?

Not supported

What evidence supports your conclusion?

In this fictional case, there is no increase in test scores after students start wearing uniforms. Please share elements of the real research with your students! They will find this topic very engaging. Also review correlation vs. causation (see Teacher Notes Unit 1.05)

How would you make this a better experiment?

Encourage students to consider sample size, number of trials, control of variables, whether the procedure is a true measure of the question, whether the experiment can be repeated by other scientists, data collection and recording systems, and other potential explanations for the outcome. Students should understand that these simple experiments represent the beginning of an exploration, not the end. If time permits, have students suggest how the experiment could be strengthened, emphasizing the use of the target words in the discussion.



Writing Prompt:

Should there be stricter dress codes in schools?

Support your position with clear reasons and specific examples. Try to use relevant words from the Word Generation list in your response.

Focus Words

adjustment | exposure | modify | monitor | transition

A tool to help you think about your own writing!

Remember you can use focus words from any of the WG Units.

Check off what you accomplished:

Good Start

- ☐ Stated my own position
- ☐ Included 1 focus word

Pretty Good

- ☐ Stated my own position clearly
- ☐ Included 1-2 arguments
- ☐ Included 1-2 focus words

Exemplary

- ☐ Stated my own position clearly
- ☐ Included 1-2 arguments
- ☐ Included 1 counterargument
- ☐ Used 2-5 focus words

TEACHER

Ask students to write a response in which they argue a position on the weekly topic.

Put the writing prompt on the overhead projector (or the board) so that everyone can see it. Remind students to refer to the word lists in their Word Generation notebooks as needed.

[illegible]