

**TRIAL SAMPLE****English Unit 4: Analysing Argument****Outcome 2 – Print text****Instructions**

Students are required to write an analysis of the ways in which argument and language are used to persuade others to share a point(s) of view in a persuasive text.

- Read the background information on this page and then read the material on pages 2, 3 and 4.
- Write an analytical response to the task below.
- For the purposes of this task, the term 'language' refers to written and visual language.

**Task**

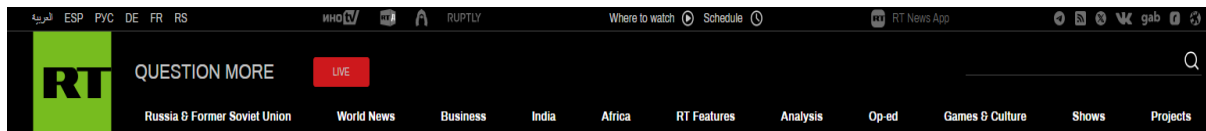
Write an analysis of the ways in which argument and written and visual language are used in the material on pages 2, 3 and 4 to try to persuade others to share the points of view presented.

**Background information**

*RT (formerly known as Russia Today)* is an international news network of eight TV channels, broadcasting news, current affairs, and documentaries, with digital platforms in six languages televising to 100 countries. In addition to its audio-visual programming, it has a website also published in numerous languages. It claims a combined print and television audience of 2.5 million in Britain alone.

On June 28, 2021, *RT (Britain)* published online an opinion piece written by Frank Furedi, an author and social commentator. He is an emeritus professor of sociology at the University of Kent in Canterbury. He is well known for his work on education and parenting.

Furedi's opinion piece is titled 'The campaign to ban smacking is based on the crazy idea that children shouldn't be disciplined by their parents'.

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# The campaign to ban smacking is based on the crazy idea that children shouldn't be disciplined by their parents



**Frank Furedi** is an author and social commentator. He is an emeritus professor of sociology at the University of Kent in Canterbury. Author of *How Fear Works: The Culture of Fear in the 21st Century*.

28 June, 2021

**A new study has warned against smacking, but there is no conclusive evidence that it causes long-term damage in a healthy family relationship. Parents shouldn't be made to feel guilty about disciplining their kids.**



I've learnt to be sceptical about so-called studies that suggest that smacking children should be banned because it makes youngsters more aggressive and antisocial. From my own study for my book 'Paranoid Parenting', I've concluded that there may be good arguments for opposing smacking, but they are not to be found in the scientific research.

Despite dozens of studies on the subject, nobody has yet established a causal relationship between smacking and long-term negative behaviour. Indeed, there is some evidence suggesting that, in certain circumstances, smacking can be an effective disciplinary tool. For example, psychologist Diana Baumrind concluded that,

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in the context of a warm family relationship, the occasional smack is an effective and legitimate way of gaining a child's obedience.

There is also evidence that, in certain situations, a smack can be an effective disciplinary tool. The psychologist Robert Larzelere published a major review and concluded there was no convincing evidence that the non-abusive spanking typically used by parents damaged their offspring. His work found that no other disciplinary technique – including time-outs and withdrawal of privileges – was more effective than smacking for gaining the compliance of children aged under 13.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to have an objective and reasoned discussion on smacking, since those hostile to it assume this issue is beyond debate. Campaigners define smacking as violence against children. They assert that violence can only lead to more violence, and therefore smacking should be illegal. The argument that violence breeds more violence is superficially plausible. This claim is promoted by the National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), which has been consistently hostile to the exercise of parental discipline.

However, the equation of smacking with violence is a verbal trick designed to associate this form of punishment with an act of abuse. Parents who occasionally spank their children are not behaving violently. Violence is physical force intended to cause an injury. Caring parents who administer a smack in response to a child's act of wilful defiance with the objective of discouraging unacceptable behaviour are actually behaving responsibly.

The inability to distinguish violence from caring discipline exercised by loving parents says more about the outlook of anti-smacking campaigners than it does about real-life mothers and fathers. It is an outlook that assumes parental abuse is the norm rather than the exception. And research shows that the claim that smacking has a destructive impact on children's lives is based on prejudice rather than on fact.

The impact of smacking on a child depends on the context within which this act of discipline occurs. Disciplinary methods are mediated by a child's perception of their

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legitimacy. In the context of a warm and responsive relationship, he or she can understand why their parents have disciplined them with a smack. Any form of punishment can have unexpected negative consequences. But such an outcome depends less on the form of punishment than the nature of the parent-child relationship. Parental love is not antithetical to punishment; it is often communicated through exercising discipline.

The main effect of the campaign against smacking is to undermine the ability of parents to exercise discipline. Most already find it difficult to hold the line. There are already far too many busybodies lecturing them about every dimension of child-rearing. Interference by the advocacy researchers, the government and the courts will serve only to further erode the ability of parents to exercise their authority within the home.

*The above text was published on the RT website (Britain). It can be accessed at <https://www.rt.com/op-ed/527907-smacking-children-parents-discipline/>*