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Vocabulary for Argumentative Writing

When we write an argumentative essay, our opinions carry more weight if we look at both sides of the issue. In other words, we acknowledge our opponents' views but try to convince the reader that our own argument is stronger.

Our essay would be extremely dull if we used the words *supporters* and *opponents* all the way through. Similarly, it would be unimpressive if we only used the verb *say* to refer to people's opinions. The tables below contain lists of useful alternatives. Study them and then do the gap-fill task that follows.

+	-
Supporters	Opponents
Proponents	Opponents
Those in favour of ...	Those opposed to ...
Defenders of ...	Critics of ...
Advocates of ...	Objectors
Pro-... (e.g. <i>Pro-abortionists</i>)	Anti-... (e.g. <i>Anti-abortionists</i>)

say that ...
argue
claim
maintain
assert
contend
allege
insist

contend
suggest
point out

Tasks

1. Complete the text below using words/phrases from the tables above. (Solid lines relate to the first table; dotted lines relate to the second.)

_____ of TV that it exposes us to too much violence and, as a result, we become less sensitive to real-life violence. They also that schoolchildren neglect homework and have problems concentrating in class as a result of spending too much time glued to the box. Finally, _____ that television has turned many of us into over-weight, unfit "couch potatoes".

_____, on the other hand, that it is a blessing for lonely, elderly or housebound people. Furthermore, they, it does not simply entertain; it can be very educational as well. Another argument _____ of TV is that it sometimes plays an important role in fundraising for disaster relief and various charities. For example, the "Live Aid" rock concert in 1984 raised millions of pounds for victims of the Ethiopian famine.

2. Choose another controversial issue (e.g. hunting, car use, school uniforms, meat-eating, the use of animals in medical research, single sex schools, euthanasia). Write some sentences that express the views of people on both sides of the argument. Aim for variety in your choice of language.

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