

TASK 1

RESEARCH SIMULATION

Argumentative Essay

Your Assignment

You will read three texts on the use of child labor to manufacture products. Then you will write an argumentative essay on whether or not we should buy products that have been manufactured with the use of child labor.

Time Management: Argumentative Task

There are two parts to most formal writing tests. Both parts of the tests are timed, so it's important to use your limited time wisely.

Part 1: Read Sources



Preview the Assignment

35 minutes

You will have 35 minutes to read several articles about the use of child labor to manufacture products. You will then answer questions on the sources.

*35 minutes!
That's not
much time.*

Preview the questions. This will help you know which information you'll need to find as you read.

How Many?

- How many pages of reading?
- How many multiple-choice questions?
- How many prose constructed-response questions?

How do you plan to use the 35 minutes?

Estimated time to read:	
"Nike Pledges to End Child Labor . . ."	<input type="text"/> minutes
"Nike's Dilemma: Is Doing . . ."	<input type="text"/> minutes
"This Company Is Employing . . ."	<input type="text"/> minutes
Estimated time to answer questions?	<input type="text"/> minutes

Total **35 minutes**

This is a lot to do in a short time.

Underline, circle, and take notes as you read. You probably won't have time to reread.

Any concerns?

Part 2: Write the Essay



How much time do you have? Pay attention to the clock.

Plan and Write an Argumentative Essay

→ **70 minutes**

You will have 70 minutes to plan, write, revise, and edit your essay.

Your Plan

Before you start to write, decide on your precise claim and reasons. Then think about the evidence you will use to support your reasons.

How do you plan to use the 70 minutes?

Estimated time for planning the essay? minutes

Estimated time for writing? minutes

→ Estimated time for editing? minutes

Estimated time for checking spelling, grammar, and punctuation? minutes

Total 70 minutes

Be sure to leave enough time for this step.

Notes:

Reread your essay, making sure that the points are clear. Check that there are no spelling or punctuation mistakes.

► Your Assignment

You will read three sources and then write an argumentative essay about whether or not we should buy products that have been manufactured with the use of child labor.

Complete the following steps as you plan and compose your essay.

1. Read a newspaper article about one company's pledge to end its reliance on child labor.
2. Read a newspaper article about what happened as a result of a child labor dispute.
3. Read an essay about the effects of product boycotts.
4. Answer questions about the sources.
5. Plan, write, and revise your essay.

► Part 1 (35 minutes)

You will now read the sources. Take notes because you may want to refer to them while you write your essay. You can refer to any of the sources as often as you like.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Nike Pledges to End Child Labor And Apply U.S. Rules Abroad

by John H. Cushman, Jr.
The New York Times

May 13, 1998

Bowing to pressure from critics who have tried to turn its famous shoe brand into a synonym for exploitation, Nike Inc. promised today to root out underage workers and require overseas manufacturers of its wares to meet strict United States health and safety standards.

Philip H. Knight, Nike's chairman and chief executive, also agreed to a demand that the company has long resisted, pledging to allow outsiders from labor and human rights groups to join the independent auditors who inspect the
10 factories in Asia, interviewing workers and assessing working conditions.

"We believe that these are practices which the conscientious, good companies will follow in the 21st century," he said in a speech here at the National Press Club. "These moves do more than just set industry standards. They reflect who we are as a company."

Nike said it would raise the minimum age for hiring new workers at shoe factories to 18 and the minimum for new workers at other plants to 16, in countries where it is common
20 for 14-year-olds to hold such jobs. It will not require the dismissal of underage workers already in place.

Footwear factories have heavier machinery and use more dangerous raw material, including solvents that cause toxic air pollution. At overseas factories that produce Nike shoes, the company said, it would tighten air-quality controls to insure that the air breathed by workers meets the same standards enforced by the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration at home.

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Mr. Knight's pledges did not include increased wage,
30 a major complaint of critics who say that Nike and other American companies pay workers in China and Vietnam less than \$2 a day and workers in Indonesia less than \$1 a day. (A 1996 World Bank report concluded that more than one-fifth of the world's population lives on less than \$1 a day.) Still, even with much lower prices in these countries, critics say workers need to make at least \$3 a day to achieve adequate living standards.

Nike, in a statement today, cited a report it commissioned in 1997, which said that its factories in Indonesia and Vietnam
40 pay legal minimum wages and more.

In his speech today, Mr. Knight defended Nike's record of creating jobs and improving factory conditions abroad, but seemed to acknowledge that it was time for drastic action. "The Nike product has become synonymous with slave wages, forced overtime and arbitrary abuse," he said. "I truly believe that the American consumer does not want to buy products made in abusive conditions."

Jeffrey D. Ballinger, director of Press for Change, a group that has been critical of Nike, called the company's plan a major
50 retreat and a sign of the critics' growing strength.

The company has been hurt by falling stock prices and weak sales even as it has been pummeled in the public relations arena.

Mr. Knight said the main causes of the company's falling sales were the financial crisis in Asia, where the company had been expanding sales aggressively, and its failure to recognize a shifting consumer preference for hiking shoes.

"I truthfully don't think that there has been a material impact on Nike sales by the human rights attacks," he said,
60 citing the company's marketing studies.

But for months, the company, which spends huge sums for advertising and endorsements by big-name athletes, has responded increasingly forcefully to complaints about its employment practices, as student groups have demanded

that universities doing business with Nike hold it to higher standards.

Mr. Knight emphasized today that using objective observers to monitor working conditions would serve not just Nike, but eventually American industry in general, by “giving the
70 American consumer an assurance that those products are made under good conditions.”

Some critics, though, stressed that the company could not reassure consumers without improving wages in its factories.

“We see one big gap,” said Medea Benjamin, director of the San Francisco-based human rights group Global Exchange. “A sweatshop is a sweatshop is a sweatshop unless you start paying a living wage. That would be \$3 a day.”

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Am I on Track?



ANCHOR TEXT

NIKE'S DILEMMA:

Is Doing the Right Thing Wrong?

A child labor dispute could eliminate 4,000 Pakistani jobs.

by David Montero
Christian Science Monitor

December 22, 2006

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SIALKOT, PAKISTAN

In this bustling commercial hub near the Kashmiri border, fortunes seem to rise and fall with the Nike swoosh. Some 80 percent of the world's soccer balls are produced here by Nike and other top sports brands—making Sialkot, a city of 3 million, a model of prosperity in a country where poverty and extremism freely intermingle.

But there is a controversy behind this pot of gold. In November, Nike severed its contract with Saga Sports, its chief supplier, saying Saga's poor management exposes Nike to the
10 threat of child labor and other labor violations.

The incident, observers say, highlights the moral dilemma of first-world corporations using third-world labor. And since it is Pakistan, the outcome may be more pressing than elsewhere in the world.

Many say a surge of unemployment and falling profits in Sialkot, a rare oasis, is the last thing a Pakistan struggling with militant Islam and poverty needs.

A soul-searching debate is now coursing through the country: Child labor is universally condemned, but is it fair for
20 multinationals¹ to cut and run when incidents arise of children working? Or do corporations have an obligation to work to fix these problems themselves?

For Nike's part, the Beaverton, Oregon-based firm stated in a November press release that it will continue working with contract factories in China and Thailand to supply hand-stitched balls. Nike's contracts with Saga will expire in March.

¹ **multinationals:** businesses that have companies in more than one country

About Saga's 5,000 stitchers, it added: "[I]n this case, the company exhausted all options and was left with no alternative but to cease orders, despite the potential impact to workers and the near-term effect on Nike's soccer ball business."

Gloomy-looking executives at Saga Sports, 70 percent of whose work is for Nike, say they're confident they can keep the company on board. The US Embassy recently told the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce that Nike will continue its other textile operations with existing contractors in Pakistan, according to unofficial statements from American officials.

By severing its contract with Saga, Nike is likely to score moral points with its customers in the West. But it's also likely, observers agree, to sink Saga, a corporate giant that makes about 6 million of Pakistan's annual production of 40-million soccer balls.

Saga estimates that as many as 20,000 families could be affected, since 70 percent of the local market relies on them for work.

"Definitely, Saga did wrong. But does the wrong they did warrant Nike leaving?" asks Nasir Dogar, chief executive of the Independent Monitoring Association for Child Labor (IMAC), which oversees compliance at Sialkot's 3,000 soccer-ball stitching centers.

Sialkot's hand-stitched ball industry, about a century old, is big business: Saga Sports alone accounted for \$33 million of the industry's \$210 million total. For Sialkot's 45,000 stitchers, who earn less than \$100 a month on average, soccer balls are a way of life.

But for as long as there have been soccer balls in Sialkot, the hands of children have stitched them. That is not unusual in Pakistan, where a per capita income of about \$2,800 commonly drives children to work. According to UNICEF estimates, more than 3 million boys and girls below age 14 work in Pakistan.

That began changing a decade ago in the soccer-ball industry, when Nike, Puma, and Adidas, among others, worked with the International Labor Organization (ILO) and Sialkot suppliers to eradicate child labor. Today a majority of soccer-ball manufacturers voluntarily participate in IMAC's child-labor

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monitoring program, but some contest how effective those measures have been.

The case of Saga Sports, in which two children were found working in the home of a subcontractor in May, is not unusual, points out Mr. Dogar of IMAC. Every morning, Dogar's 12 monitors perform unannounced checks on stitching centers
70 randomly selected by computer. Still, children are found from time to time.

"You cannot do 24-hour surveillance. You cannot cover the whole area," he says.

Nonetheless, he and many others question Nike's decision to leave, given how many families may be losing their livelihood.

"They could have found some alternative way with Saga," says Khawaja Zakauddin, who heads the anti-child labor wing of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "To go
80 away is the worst solution. If Nike moves from here, these people will have no work."

That's certainly a concern of Hussain Naqui, a decade-long employee in Saga's shipping department. "There will be no more jobs without Nike. I'm especially worried about my children, who are studying," he says.

Some say that Nike could have done more. Adidas maintains its own internal monitoring cell in Sialkot; Nike does not, observers say.

"They have to have a transparent monitoring mechanism."
90 It is not just the government or local administration that should be held responsible [for monitoring]. Nike is also responsible," says Kailash Satyarthi, chairman of the Global March Against Child Labor in New Delhi.

Others disagree. "The primary responsibility lies with the government," argues Kaiser Bengali, an economist in Karachi.

² **transparent monitoring mechanism:** holding corporations responsible for their actions, and making their practices visible to the public

Mr. Bengali hopes the incident will prove a wakeup call for the country, resulting in better enforcement of child-labor laws, which remain weak even though Pakistan has ratified ILO and United Nations conventions against child labor.

100 Many here in Sialkot worry that Saga’s fall could chip away at a decade of progress: Low unemployment, stability, and a private sector that pours money into schools, clinics, and roads.

“There is no link to terrorist activity here, because everyone is involved in their work,” says Khurram A. Khawaja, Chief Executive of Anwar Khawaja Industries, which produces soccer balls for Select Sports in Denmark. “This will create a void.”

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Am I on Track?



This Company Is Employing Children?

Let's boycott their products! Or better not?

by Nadira Faulmüller, Oxford University

November 15, 2012

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Regularly, media reports reveal that Western companies have children working in their factories in Third or Second World countries—may it be for clothing, furniture or, as recently, technical gadgets. Such reports are often followed by people calling for a boycott of the company's products.

“Work done by children” is an extremely broad expression. There is nothing else than to vehemently fight against “work” that goes along with gross abuse like forced labour, carrying heavy weights or any other activity putting a child's physical or
10 mental wellbeing in danger.

But also in cases where no such exploitation is taking place, we have good arguments against children doing work. We fear they might be “the cheapest to hire, the easiest to fire, and the least likely to protest.” And we don't want them to be deprived of the opportunity to get a proper education.

So what should we do if we read media reports about a company employing minors? Even if we don't know the exact circumstances, joining a boycott of this company's products can't be wrong, can it?

20 It can. Even if a boycott is well-intentioned, on a practical level it might be wrong to force companies to dismiss their child workers. The main cause for children doing work is poverty—“their survival, and that of their families, depend on it.” Earning money is an unavoidable necessity for them. If they must give up their jobs in Western companies, they are forced to exchange them for something else—and this might not be to their advantage. For example, when the U.S. Congress threatened to ban the import of clothing made by children under 14 in Bangladesh, around 50,000 of them went from their jobs in the
30 relatively clean textile factories to collecting garbage. Moreover,

economic modelling research implies that in certain situations product boycotts even can cause child labor to increase rather than decline.

Of course, the consideration that it can become even worse for children is no argument for them working in general. It rather is an argument for a well-considered approach towards this issue. Until we have tackled the problem of general poverty, rather than forcing companies to fire children—may it be via product boycott or regulations—we might think about
40 enforcing safe work conditions for them. Objectively, this might be of greater help for the children involved.

But there is more to that issue than the practical level. On a moral level, many of us still wouldn't want to buy a product manufactured by a child—even if we knew that the work conditions were optimal. We feel that it's simply wrong that the mobile phone we are about to give our teenage daughter was put together by another 14-year-old in India. A dinner party argument *why* this is wrong, I reckon, might come down to something like “Children should not work. This Indian girl is
50 deprived of her childhood if she has to.”

I want to suggest by no means that inequality in opportunities and wealth is a good thing to have. However, I feel that there is some sort of arrogance contained in the “children should not work” argument. What childhood is and what it should consist of is *a social construction* to some extent. This construction highly differs between countries and across time. The firm belief that a “proper childhood” does not entail any work is something specific to our time and culture. In
60 other cultures, children are expected to work together with their parents. This happens not only out of financial need, but also as part of the family's work ethics. And even within Western culture, what is seen as a good childhood can vary. Different from other children in the U.S., the Amish are allowed to leave school and start working at around the age of 14.

There is hardly any child unwilling to go to school who doesn't hear the “it's for your own good, it prepares you for

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adult life” argument. Couldn’t we let count the same argument for work that helps gaining practical skills or is in line with a culture’s ethics?

Long story short: If next somebody tries to convince me to boycott a company, I think I shouldn’t join in as long as I don’t know more about the actual circumstances of the children’s work involved—both for practical and moral reasons. What do you think?

Am I on Track?

