

## B Group Work

The teacher will divide the class into two groups. You are going to have a discussion on this statement:

The television is bad for family life and the less we watch it, the better.

Your group will speak **against** this statement – you believe that television is **not** bad for family life.

Now, read this newspaper article to give you some ideas for the debate.

## C Reading

Read the article on your own, then compare the article's main ideas with other members of your group.

### Television "enormously beneficial" to home life.

Barry Constance, New York.

In a move that may surprise many parents, the Communications Group has published the results of a year-long survey on TV watching habits and their effects on family life in the average American household.

The survey discovered that the average TV-owning family spent more time together than a family that didn't own a TV set. "We were surprised to find that members of families that didn't own a TV spent most of their time either out of the house or alone in their respective bedrooms", says Jane Thuggard who led the survey group.

It was discovered that TV-owning families generally gravitated around a single TV

set although it was shown that families owning multiple televisions spent far less time together.

"There is a huge amount of great, educational content on TV and that is something all the family can enjoy together. Even more controversial programmes can be watched by the whole family. Children are better off asking their parents about matters such as politics, current affairs and the problems of growing up during a quality TV programme than off their friends", insists Jane Thuggard. "I don't think it's too much of an exaggeration to claim that responsible TV watching in the context of a communicative family is enormously beneficial."

Another finding was the importance of "how" television is enjoyed and its importance in how beneficial it can be to family life. Steven Marks, another member of the Communications Group research team, explained: "We found that watching TV together as a talking, communicating family can be a great plus. If the parents insist on watching TV in silence and the children are not allowed to speak, not allowed to ask questions concerning the programmes they are watching, many of the benefits we have spoken about are lost. So we really have to take that into consideration."

## D Preparation

Now, before you begin the debate with the other team, make sure your group has:

- The arguments in favour of watching TV.
- Use ideas both from the article **and** your own ideas.
- Counter-arguments for what the other group is likely to say.