

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 **for** this statement – you believe that television **is** 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 "more and more damaging" to home life.

Jessica Laurence, Los Angeles

Another report released this week by the *Families Together Organisation* has pointed the finger at the humble television set as one of the worst culprits in worsening family relations in American homes.

They found that families who watched too much television were more likely to argue, less likely to read and more likely to spend long hours shut away in bedrooms than families where TV viewing was kept to a minimum.

The FTO studied more than 1200 families across the west of the USA. Timothy Hawkins, head of the survey group, said the results were not really that surprising. "We heard numerous tales of families being cut off from each other under the same

roof because of one or more TV sets. Televisions take the attention of every member of the household and families more or less stop communicating with each other."

The survey found that a family that, fifty years ago, may have gathered in the lounge to read or play cards together were more likely now to sit together and watch their chosen programmes in silence.

"We also found that TV watching was a major cause of arguments in the family," Timothy Hawkins goes on to say. "What to watch on TV was the cause of a staggering 42% of arguments reported to us in our survey. Families are tearing each other to pieces over what to watch on their TVs – and then sitting down

in silence to watch whichever programmes wins out."

And the news just gets worse. With the average family surveyed in this report owning some 1.8 television sets, television is set to become an ever more isolating influence in the family. As older children are bought their first TV sets, they are invariably disappearing into their bedrooms to watch what they want in privacy, emerging only to eat or to go out.

Timothy Hawkins is not optimistic. "Television has become more and more damaging to family life in this country and I can only see it getting worse."

D Preparation

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

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