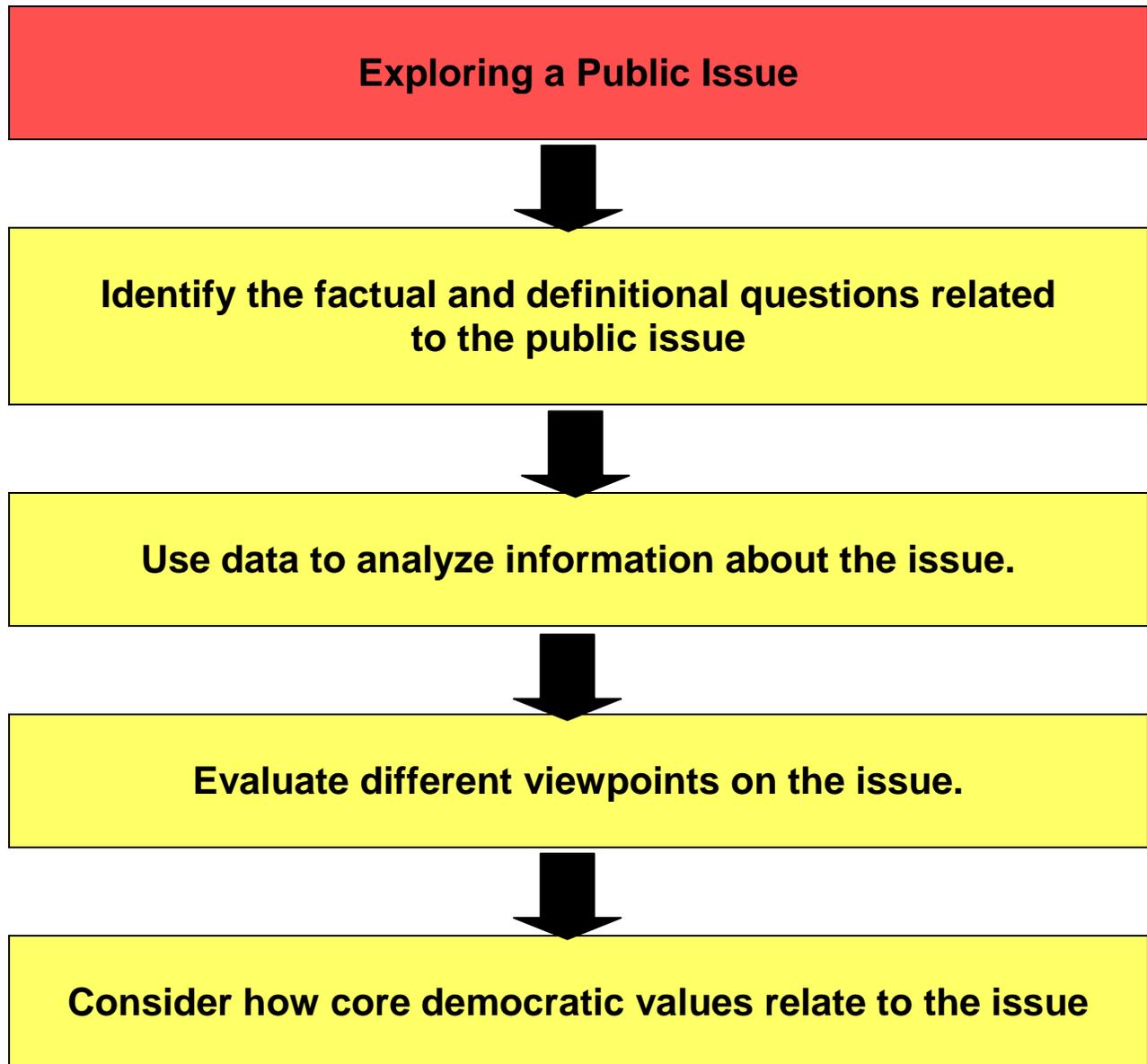


Graphic Organizer



Big Ideas Card

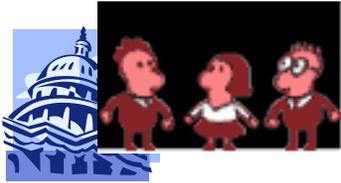
Big Ideas of Lesson 7, Unit 7

- It is important for citizens to make informed decisions about public issues.
- To make informed decisions, citizens need to identify factual and definitional questions related to public issues.
- To make informed decisions, citizens need to analyze data and information related to public issues.
- To make informed decisions, citizens need to examine different points of views on public issues.
- To make informed decisions, citizens need to consider how core democratic values relate to public issues.

Word Cards

Word Cards from previous lessons needed for this lesson:

- Constitution– Word Card #7 from Lesson 1
- Bill of Rights – Word Card #16 from Lesson 5

<p>18</p> <p>popular sovereignty</p>  <p>the power and authority of the government comes from the people</p> <p>Example: Popular sovereignty is an important core democratic value.</p> <p>(SS050707)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>public issue</p>  <p>a problem that affects many, many people</p>  <p>Example: Public issues can affect a local community, a state, or the nation.</p> <p>(SS050707)</p>
<p>20</p> <p>definitional issue</p>  <p>words related to a public issue that have different definitions, or meanings.</p> <p>Example: One definitional issue of the wind farm issue was how to define the word 'wind farm.'</p> <p>(SS050707)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>factual issue</p>  <p>facts that are connected to a public issue</p> <p>Example: One factual issue connected to the wind farm issue was whether or not wind farms have been built in the past in large bodies of water.</p> <p>(SS050707)</p>

22
core democratic
values



ideals and beliefs that people in America have in common and upon which our country is based

Example: Freedom and fairness are examples of core democratic values.

(SS050707)

Examples of Public Issues

A Community Issue

The Problem:

Several citizens in the town of Zeller are complaining about the large number of dogs some people in Zeller own. They say the dogs bark all the time. They also complain that many get loose and wander the streets.

Public Issue Question: Should the town of Zeller pass a law limiting the number of dogs a person can own?

A Michigan Issue

The Problem:

One problem facing Michigan is our growing use of energy. It is important to develop new sources of renewable energy to supply our energy needs. Wind farms are a good source of clean, renewable energy. Winds are often the strongest off the shorelines of the Great Lakes.

Public Issue Question: Should wind farms be built in the Great Lakes?

A National Issue

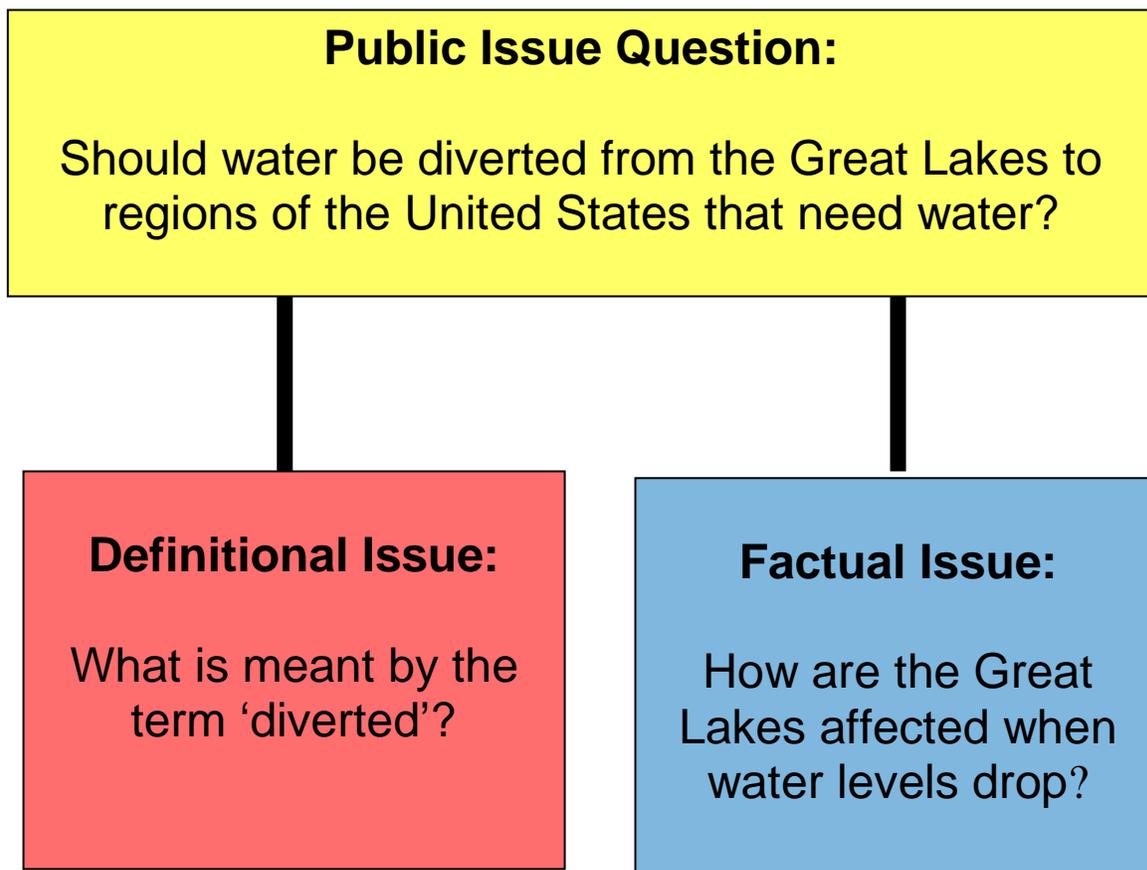
The Problem:

At times, areas of the United States, such as the southwest region, lack water. This can cause serious problems for people living in these regions.

Public Issue Question: Should water be diverted from the Great Lakes to dry places in other parts of the United States that need water?

DEFINITIONAL AND FACTUAL ISSUES

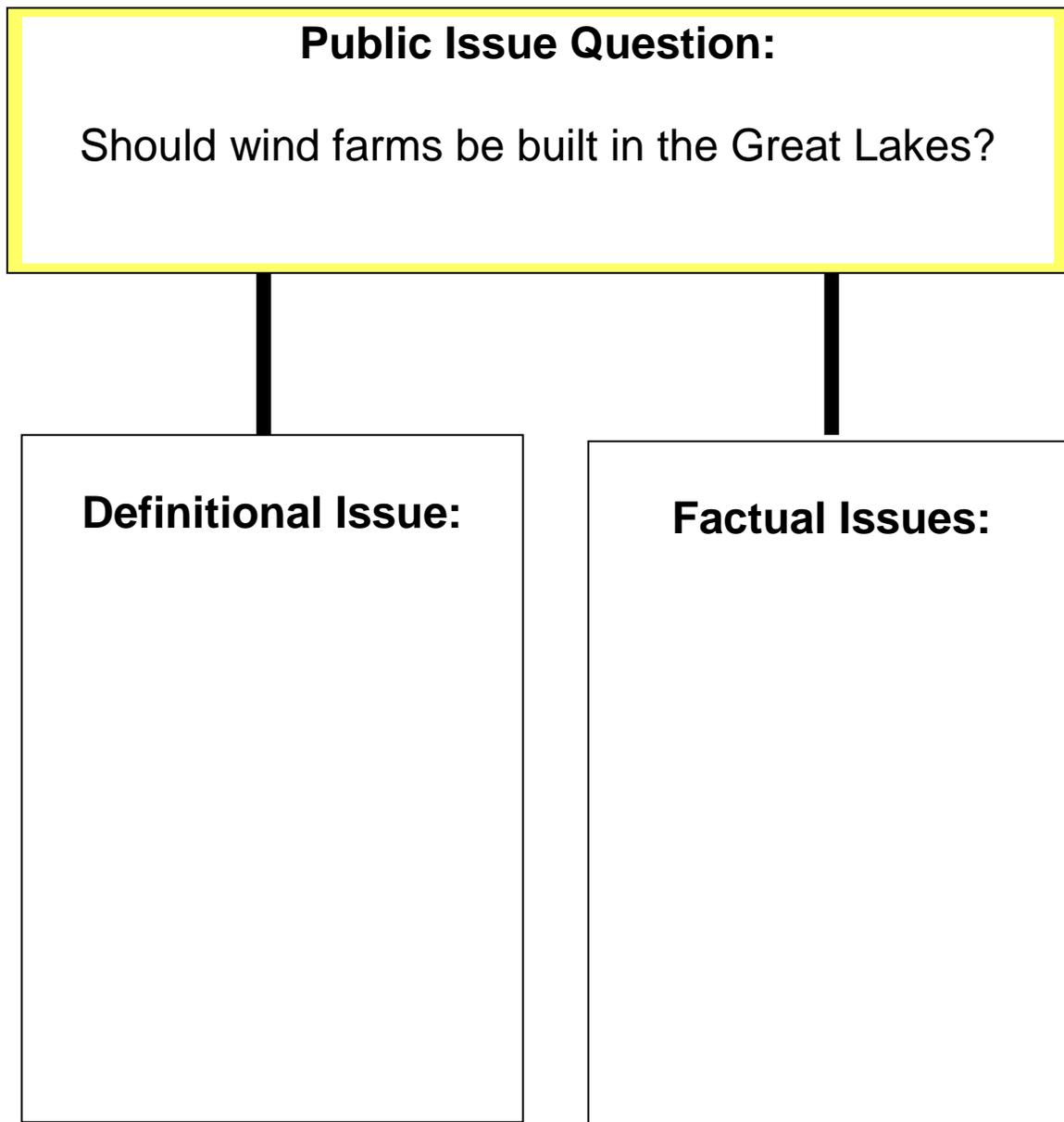
The Problem: At times, areas of the United States, such as the southwest region, lack water.



DEFINITIONAL AND FACTUAL ISSUES

Student Activity Sheet

The Problem: At times, areas of the United States, such as the southwest region, lack water.



Some Important Core Democratic Values

Liberty/Freedom	
Justice	
The Common Good	
Equality	
Diversity	

Some Important Core Democratic Values

Liberty/Freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The freedom to make choices• The freedom to believe what you want• The freedom to have your own ideas• The freedom to choose your own friends
Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is the same as fairness• The idea that all people should be treated fairly• No person or group should be favored
The Common Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The good of the whole community• People working together for the benefit of all
Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equal treatment• Equal protection under the law• Equal opportunity
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect for variety in cultural background, race, beliefs, differences, etc.

Looking at Both Sides of an Issue

Issue: Should water be diverted from the Great Lakes to dry places in other parts of the United States that need water?

Directions: Describe a position on each side of this issue using a core democratic value.

YES	NO

Looking at Both Sides of an Issue

Sample Answers

Issue: Should water be diverted from the Great Lakes to dry places in other parts of the United States that need water?

Directions: Describe a position on each side of this issue using a core democratic value.

YES	NO
<p><i>In the United States we believe in promoting the common good and looking out for the welfare of everybody. If people in one area need water, then it should be taken from another area so that people can survive. Water is important for survival.</i></p>	<p><i>The Great Lakes are one of the most important resources for people in the Great Lakes region. People there depend on the lakes for water, transportation, energy, food, and many other things. It is not fair to them to take water away from their region.</i></p>

DATA SHEET #1

The Long Beach Unified School District was the first public school district to enact a mandatory uniform policy. The Long Beach dress code policy affects nearly 60,000 elementary and middle school students. The Superintendent of that district stated that the uniform policy resulted in the following:

- 32% decrease in school suspensions
- 51% decrease in fighting
- 18% decrease in vandalism.

Source: <<http://eric.uoregon.edu/publications/digests/digest117.html>>.

A 1997 study which was called “*Effects of Student Uniforms on Attendance, Behavior Problems, Substance Use and Academic Achievement*” found that “school uniforms have no direct effect on substance abuse, behavioral problems or attendance”. The study further found that “our findings show that students who were forced to wear uniforms actually performed several points lower on standardized tests.”

Source: <http://www.aprod.org/myths.htm>>.

Ruffner Middle School in Norfolk Virginia began a mandatory uniform policy in 1995 for 977 middle school students. School data showed the following results:

- leaving class without permission decreased 47 percent
- throwing objects decreased 68 %
- fighting decreased by 38%.

Source: <http://www.ed.gov/updates/uniforms.html>>.

In 1999, a national survey of 240 principals was done.

- About 85% of the principals believed that some sort of dress code was needed at their school.
- Middle school principals expressed the strongest support for mandatory uniforms
- High school principals stated the strongest support for dress codes but were less enthusiastic about uniforms.
- Urban principals showed greater support for uniforms, followed by suburban and rural principals.

Source: <<http://www.ecs.org/html/IssueSection.asp?issueid=145&s=Selected+Research+%26+Readings>>.

DATA SHEET #2

In 2001, the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System surveyed the local community concerning dress-code issues. Survey results showed that people believed that school uniforms had the following advantages:

- They promote higher academic performance
- They promote an atmosphere of teamwork
- They make schools safer
- They make it easier to identify strangers in schools.
- They reduce absenteeism

The same survey showed people saw these disadvantages of mandatory school uniforms:

- They require an initial expense of purchasing the clothes
- They cause problems with student who will not agree to the policy
- They infringe on freedom of choice
- They hurt families who may not be able to afford uniforms
- They cause everyone to look the same
- They may contribute to negative behavior such as rebellion against a uniform policy

Source: <<http://www.ecs.org/html/IssueSection.asp?issueid=145&s=Selected+Research+%26+Readings>>.

In 1997, Sharon Shamburger Pate investigated two Florida school districts with mandatory uniform policies. She reported mixed results including a significant improvement in academic achievement in elementary school students and no significant decrease in discipline infractions among middle school students.

Source: <<http://www.ecs.org/html/IssueSection.asp?issueid=145&s=Selected+Research+%26+Readings>>.

There have been several successful programs implemented during the past few years, with the Long Beach, California program being by far the most widely reviewed and written about. Began in the fall of 1994, the program requires uniforms for 70,000 students in kindergarten through eighth grades. With a 98% compliance rate, results during their first years have proven the dramatic effect a successful school uniform policy can have on a school system. The first year alone they saw a 43% reduction in suspensions, 54% fewer fights, a 70% reduction in substance abuse, over 20% fewer cases of weapons possession and robbery, and an over 50% reduction in reports of battery against employees. Other school systems nationwide likewise report similar changes in statistics. And while those improvements cannot be linked entirely to the use of school uniforms, they are none the less part of a growing trend seen as school uniforms and other policies are enforced.

Source: <http://www.terrebonneparish.com/local/educational/schools/uniforms/uniforms.htm>

DATA SHEET #3

In 2000, Lands' End, a clothing retailer did a telephone survey in partnership with the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Survey results included this data:

- 21% of the principals said their schools have a uniform policy in place, are preparing one or have one on the agenda for discussion.
- 79% of the principals said that uniforms had a positive effect on classroom discipline.
- 72% stated uniforms had a positive effect on increasing school spirit
- 67% believed they improved concentration on schoolwork
- 62% believed uniforms improved school safety

Source: <http://www.ecs.org/html/IssueSection.asp?issueid=145&s=Selected+Research+%26+Readings>>.

In 2000 a survey by French Toast, a uniform manufacturer, reported that in New York City a year after dress codes were implemented:

- 68% of parents thought that uniforms helped improve the overall academic performance
- 84% of parents said uniforms promoted equality between the sexes
- 89% of guidance counselors thought that uniforms helped prepare students for an eventual work environment
- 59% of counselors said the uniform policy created a safer learning environment.

Source: "<<http://www.ecs.org/html/IssueSection.asp?issueid=145&s=Selected+Research+%26+Readings>>.

Question:

How many public schools require school uniforms?

Response:

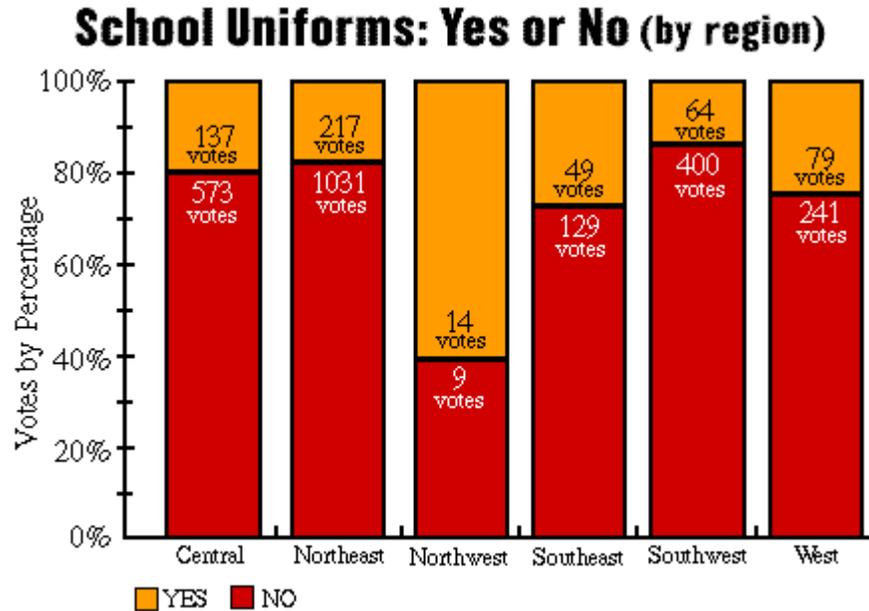
In 2007–08, about 18 percent of public school principals reported that their school required students to wear uniforms. In 1999–2000, the percentage of principals who reported that their school required students to wear uniforms was 12 percent.

Also, in 2007–08, approximately 55 percent of public school principals reported that their school enforced a strict dress code, an increase from 47 percent in 1999-2000.

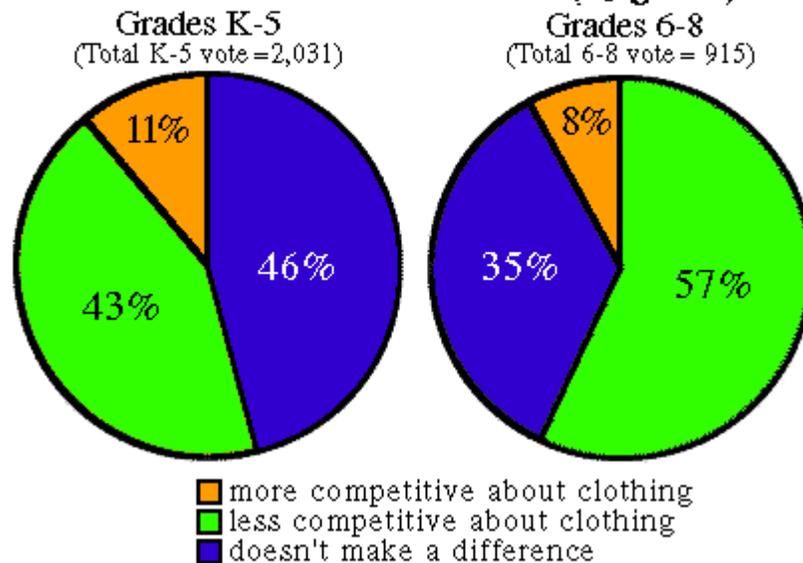
Source: <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=50>

DATA SHEET #4

Scholastic did a survey of students to see how kids across the country feel about having to wear school uniforms. Here is the data:



Do school uniforms make kids more or less competitive about clothing? (by grade)



Source: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/kidusasu/uniforms/chart2.htm>

Arguments in Favor

Arguments in favor of mandatory uniforms include the following:

- They make schools safer.
- They reduce gang influence
- They minimize violence by reducing some sources of conflict.
- They help to identify trespassers in the school.
- Parents no longer are pressured to buy the latest fashions so they spend less on clothes for their children.
- They help erase cultural and economic differences among students.
- They set a tone for serious study.
- They improve school pride.
- They promote good discipline.
- They reduce fighting and violence.
- They are more business-like.
- They increase a focus on academics.
- They increase student safety.
- They reduce distractions.
- They are a good bargain.

Arguments Against

Arguments against mandatory school uniforms include the following:

- They infringe on students' First Amendment right to freedom of expression.
- They are used as tools for administrators to control students and exercise power.
- They will not erase economic differences because students can still wear things like jewelry that can show how much money they have.
- Teenage gang members are not effected because most schools requiring uniforms are middle schools or elementary schools, not high schools.
- Some uniforms are much less durable than regular clothing such as denim jeans.
- They discourage individuality and critical thinking.
- They reduce creativity.
- They cause discipline problems because students will object to rules about wearing uniforms.
- Wearing uniforms has little or no relationship to increased achievement.
- Uniforms are costly and often available from few different stores.
- Uniforms are not attractive or stylish.
- They cause problems for students of different religions who must wear certain articles of clothing because of their religious beliefs.
- Two sets of clothing are now required, one set for home and one set for school.