

Join the national conversation!

**SHOULD CORPORAL PUNISHMENT  
BE COMPLETELY BANNED AT  
HOME AS WELL AS IN SCHOOL?**

Word Generation - Unit 2.21

## Focus Words

privacy | invasion | consists | secure | corporal



## Weekly Passage

Around the world, children are disciplined by their families. Sometimes this discipline may consist of spanking or hitting children when they are behaving badly. In 1997, the United States Court of Appeals ruled that parents do not have a secure right under the U.S. Constitution to physically punish their children. In the same year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that schools may use corporal punishment despite parental objections.

In some places, teachers physically punish students who misbehave. In fact, the U.S. and Australia are the only two industrialized countries that have not banned corporal punishment in schools, although 19 of the 50 states have explicitly prohibited corporal punishment. In the United States, some school districts allow “paddling,” i.e. using a wooden paddle to spank a child. There have been lawsuits against school districts by parents who have documented the

pain and suffering inflicted on their children inflicted by school staff.

But many school officials have banned physical punishment at school even if the state allows it. For example, paddling used to be allowed in Memphis, Tennessee, until Superintendent Carol Johnson asked the school board to consider alternatives such as counseling and in-school suspension.

Some parents claim that corporal punishment by teachers violates children’s rights. Some parents argue that using corporal punishment to discipline their own children at home is their business. They believe that having the courts decide what they may do in their own homes is an invasion of their privacy.

What do you think about this? Should corporal punishment be banned in schools as well as at home?

## Unit 2.21 -

# Should corporal punishment be completely banned at home as well as in school?

### Focus Word Chart

Word	Meaning	Forms	Examples of Use	Notes
privacy	(n.) - freedom from the attention of others			
invasion	(n.) - unwanted interference			
consists	(v.) - to be made up of			
secure	(adj.) - safe			
corporal	(adj.) - related to the body			

## Unit 2.21 - Should corporal punishment be completely banned at home as well as in school?



### Problem of the Week

According to a 2004 poll, most Americans think that good family discipline **consists** of occasional spankings. But while most Americans feel **secure** in the right to spank in the **privacy** of their own homes, they also tend to disagree with **corporal** punishment in school. Is spanking in school an **invasion** of family rights?

<i>Spanking Approval Poll</i>	Yes	No
Approve of spanking children at home	65%	31%
Think spanking should be permitted in school	26%	72%

**Option 1:** Which of the following is true?

- A) More people disapprove of spanking at home than agree with spanking in school.
- B) Most people disagree with spanking at home.
- C) Most people agree with school spanking.
- D) Seven out of ten people agree with spanking in school.

**Option 2:** What is the *maximum* percentage of people polled who could both approve of spanking at home and disapprove of spanking in school? Would you expect the actual percentage to be higher, lower, or exactly equal to the maximum?

**Discussion Question:** Why do people change their opinions about **corporal** punishment depending on where it happens? If people disapprove of **corporal** punishment in school, does that mean it shouldn't happen anywhere? Or, should families have a **secure** right to **privacy**?

# Should corporal punishment be completely banned at home as well as in school?



## Debating the Issue

### I. Get ready...

Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

**A** Corporal punishment should be banned from homes. There is no reason for violence against children.

**B** Discipline at home should be a decision left to parents. The government should not interfere with individuals' privacy.

**C** Corporal punishment should be banned from schools. There are other more effective and humane methods of disciplining children.

**D** Corporal punishment should not be banned from schools. Some cases require more vigorous discipline.

**E** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Get set...

Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Jot down a few quick notes:

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# GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

*I think it's more accurate to say...*

*That's interesting - can you tell why you think that?*

*I think the evidence is contrary to what you're saying because. . .*

*Let me share something from the reading that will help us...*

## Unit 2.2I - Should corporal punishment be completely banned at home as well as in school?

### Science Activity



This activity is designed to help you practice thinking like a scientist and to use this week's focus words. Sometimes the data are based on real research, but they should never be considered true or factual.

Professor Seemy's class is talking about **corporal** punishment.

Lisa says, "My cousin just moved to Mississippi. He got in trouble, and the principal hit him with a paddle."

"That's crazy!" says Aria. "In our state, a bad punishment **consists** of detention or extra homework. One mom went to jail for paddling her son."

"My dad hates that law," says Jeremy. "He says it's an **invasion** of his parental rights. In the old days, parents felt **secure** disciplining their kids the way that they thought was best."

"Your dad thinks corporal punishment is a **privacy** issue," says Professor Seemy. "But we can think of it as a scientific issue. Is corporal punishment effective? Let's investigate!"

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#### Question:

Is corporal punishment a good way to stop bad behavior?

#### Hypothesis:

Students will be better behaved in a classroom where the teacher praises good behavior than in a classroom where the teacher punishes bad behavior with paddling.

#### Materials:

- ▶ 2 classrooms, A and B

**Procedure:**

1. In Classroom A, have teacher use praise.
  - Identify good behavior. (“Raising hands helps us hear each other.”)
  - Praise good behavior. (“Great job raising your hand!”)
2. In Classroom B, have teacher use corporal punishment.
  - Identify bad behavior. (“Don’t talk in class.”)
  - Punish bad behavior. (Paddle. Remember, this experiment is fictitious.)
3. Each day, count and record the number of bad behaviors for one month.
4. Calculate the average number of bad behaviors.

**Data:**

	<b>Classroom A (praise)</b>	<b>Classroom B (corporal punishment)</b>
Average number of incidents of bad behavior (per day)	<b>0.9</b>	<b>1.4</b>

**Conclusion:**

Is the hypothesis supported or not by the data?

What evidence supports your conclusion?

How would you make this a better experiment?



## Focus Words

Support your position with clear reasons and specific examples. Try to use relevant words from the Word Generation list in your response.

	<input type="checkbox"/> Included 1-2 arguments
	<input type="checkbox"/> Included 1-2 focus words
	<b>Exemplary</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Stated my own position clearly
	<input type="checkbox"/> Included 1-2 arguments
	<input type="checkbox"/> Included 1 counterargument
	<input type="checkbox"/> Used 2-5 focus words

Check off what you accomplished:

- ☐ Stated my own position
- ☐ Included 1 focus word

- ☐ Stated my own position clearly
- ☐ Included 1-2 arguments
- ☐ Included 1-2 focus words

- ☐ Stated my own position clearly
- ☐ Included 1-2 arguments
- ☐ Included 1 counterargument
- ☐ Used 2-5 focus words

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