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

Word Generation - Unit 2.2.1

## 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?

### TEACHER

Reading Comprehension/Discussion Questions:

- ▶ What is corporal punishment?
- ▶ What are the only two industrialized countries that have not completely banned corporal punishment in schools?
- ▶ Why are some parents against laws banning corporal punishment at home?
- ▶ Do you think that teachers have the same rights as parents if students are misbehaving?



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

## Focus Word Chart

Word	Meaning	Forms		
		Inflectional	Basic Word Classes	Prefixes/ Suffixes
privacy	(n.) - freedom from the attention of others	privacies	private	
invasion	(n.) - unwanted interference	invasions invaded invading	invade	reinvade invasive
consists	(v.) - to be made up of	consist consisted consisting		consistency inconsistent
secure	(adj.) - safe	secure (v.) secures secured securing		insecurity insecure security securest
corporal	(adj.) - related to the body	corporally	corpus	corpulent corporality corpse corporate incorporate



## 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?

**Answer:** 65% of the people polled is the maximum that could both approve of spanking at home and disapprove of spanking in school. We could expect the actual percentage who both approve of spanking at home and disapprove of spanking in school to be lower, more like  $(72 - 31)\%$ , or 41%, because we could reasonably assume that the 31% who disapprove of spanking at home also disapprove of spanking in school.

### Math 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**?

Crandall, J. (2004, November 8). Support for spanking. Most Americans think corporal punishment is OK. *ABCNews.com*. Retrieved on October 23, 2010 from [http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/dailynews/spanking\\_poll021108.html](http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/dailynews/spanking_poll021108.html)



# 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...*

#### TEACHER

Whatever the debate format, ask students to use academically productive talk when arguing their positions. In particular, students should provide reasons and evidence to back up their assertions. It may be helpful to read these sample positions to illustrate some possibilities, but students should be encouraged to take their own positions about the issue at hand.



## Unit 2.21 - 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!"

### TEACHER

#### Real Research

-In the article cited below, Dr. Kazdin of the Yale Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic says studies show that corporal punishment is ineffective in changing behavior. In fact, he says, focusing attention on negative behavior tends to increase the behavior. Instead, he recommends identifying the positive opposite of the bad behavior, giving opportunities to practice the positive behavior, and praising efforts in the right direction.

Kazdin, A. (2008, April 10). Tiny tyrants: How to really change your kid's behavior. Slate. Retrieved on January 25, 2010 from <http://www.slate.com/id/2188744/>

#### Fast Fact

Mississippi is the top corporal punishment state. According to a report by the ACLU and Human Rights Watch, 7.5% of Mississippi students were struck by a teacher or administrator during the 2007-2008 school year.

#### Classroom Discussion

Summarize the real research. (Corporal punishment tends to encourage the bad behavior.) Are students surprised by this finding? Why or why not? How does it connect to this week's topic?

### 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:

	Classroom A (praise)	Classroom B (corporal punishment)
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?

Supported

What evidence supports your conclusion?

The classroom that used corporal punishment had a higher average number of incidents of bad behavior than the classroom that used positive reinforcement.

How would you make this a better experiment?

Encourage students to consider sample size, number of trials, control of variables, whether the procedure is a true measure of the question, whether the experiment can be repeated by other scientists, data collection and recording systems, and other potential explanations for the outcome. Students should understand that these simple experiments represent the beginning of an exploration, not the end. If time permits, have students suggest how the experiment could be strengthened, emphasizing the use of the target words in the discussion.





## Writing Prompt

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

### Focus Words

privacy | invasion | consists | secure | corporal

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

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### A tool to help you think about your own writing!

Remember you can use focus words from any of the WG Units.

Check off what you accomplished:

#### Good Start

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

#### Pretty Good

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

#### Exemplary

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

### TEACHER

Ask students to write a response in which they argue a position on the weekly topic.

Put the writing prompt on the overhead projector (or the board) so that everyone can see it. Remind students to refer to the word lists in their Word Generation books as needed.



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.