

## Writing to Argue – Riots

Riots are forms of violence that are carried out by large crowds, often in protest at an idea, an event or a political system.

Have you seen the news recently regarding the behaviour that followed the death of George Floyd in America? If not – find out what has happened? What are your opinions on all of this?

I would like you to write an article for a newspaper or magazine in which you express your opinions about whether rioting can ever be justified?

Try to include the following techniques in your writing:

Counter argument – showing awareness of others' ideas / points of view.

Emotive language – showing passion and emotion.

Statistics – use numbers and figures to back up your argument (you can make these up!)

Examples – provide evidence through individual cases or effects.

Rhetorical questions – questions with no expected answer.

Short sentences – to the point sentences that make a strong impact.

Repetition – repeating words for emphasis and making a point.

I have included an example of an article which also discusses the London riots of 2011 as a helpful example for you. See how many of the above techniques you can spot in the article. How are they effective?

Good luck! I look forward to reading your articles and hearing your arguments for and against rioting.

Stay safe,

Mrs Brindle x

Task: **“Rioting is never a justified form of protest.”**

***Write a magazine article to argue your point of view on this topic.***

Rioting divides public opinion, but it gets the public talking. That is what makes it such a powerful form of protest.

Critics of rioting will claim that it does nothing but create further violence, that it often ends in mindless destruction and looting that harms innocent business owners. However, riots do not happen without some forethought or planning involved. Take the example of the infamous Tottenham riots of 2011. These four days of conflict between young Londoners, the police and other members of local communities all originated from the killing of Mark Duggan, a 29-year-old man and father of six. There is no doubt that the way the police handled Duggan’s arrest, death and the aftermath of these angered many people from Duggan’s own family, from his local community and from people across the city and country that empathized with them.

For weeks Duggan’s death dominated the newspapers, the news channels, social media and therefore the public consciousness. Ordinary people across the country and the world were talking about what happened, but also why so many British people got involved in the subsequent riots. They created a narrative about poverty and disenfranchisement across the nation and for the first time in a long time these issues were brought to the forefront of British politics. Nine years after these riots took place, it can be said there have been some improvements, but 50% of London's wealth is owned by the top 10%. The bottom 50% own only 5% of London's wealth, and 27% of Londoners live below the poverty line. When you take these statistics into account, you can start to see why some people turned to rioting to highlight their anger and frustration.

However, in this example some critics would point to the looting that took place not only in London but in other major cities, and in the recent riots across the United States that began because of the killing of George Floyd, much of the media attention has been on looting. But

the actions of a few cynical opportunists should not take away from the deeper meaning that comes from why riots begin in the first place. When people feel they have no voice and no way to enact change, they will find some way of getting their voice heard and their messages listened to. Whilst riots can hurt innocent people, they only occur when the most desperate people in society can longer tolerate what they see as injustice anymore.

For that reason alone, rioting can be argued as being a legitimate form of protest, although only as a last resort when all other avenues have failed. Why else would normal people, people just like you and me, turn to such violence?