

TV—Bad for Kids?

Part 1 → Four years ago, the Staley family’s television set broke. They decided not to fix it. Living without a television was tough at first, but the family found other ways to spend time. Twelve-year-old Chase and nine-year-old Evan spent more time doing other things, like reading, practicing musical instruments, and playing outside. Should more families dump their TVs? Read the opinions below, and then decide.

Part 2 → **YES:** “It’s what kids aren’t doing when they’re watching TV that makes it so bad for them,” says Frank Vespy of TV-Free America. “Kids aren’t pursuing other interests or engaging in meaningful interaction with their family or friends.”

This can lead to big problems. Many members of the American Academy of Pediatrics believe that kids who watch too much TV can become overweight, antisocial, and poor students.

Television also makes some kids more violent. Many studies conclude that aggressive behavior in children can be linked to violence they see on TV. By age 18, the average American teen will have seen 200,000 acts of violence and 16,000 murders on TV.

Part 3 → **NO:** Most children can distinguish between the fantasy violence they see on television and reality. In addition, not all television shows are violent. Many television programs can help children grow into happy, healthy adults.

Part 4 → “Television can be a powerful educational tool,” says Jean Chase, national director of Ready to Learn, a PBS project that helps parents use television in more positive ways. “But like any tool, it has to be used the right way to be beneficial.” Educational television teaches kids how to handle issues such as conflict resolution and understanding emotions.

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SAM Keyword: Fact

Fact and Opinion

Facts are statements that can be proven to be true.

Opinions are personal feelings or beliefs.

Use this chart to show whether statements are facts or opinions.

Passage: _____

Statement	Fact	Opinion	How Do I Know?

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1 RDI Book 1: p. 413
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