

AE Academic English UK Students

Academic Reading Tests

Front Groups Booklet



EXAMPLE

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Front Groups EXAMPLE

Task 1: Introduction

Take some notes on the following questions.

1. What do you know about front groups / lobby groups?
2. How would you define a 'front group'?
3. What do you understand about false news, bias and misinformation?
4. Why do companies employ front groups?

Task 2: Reading text

Read the text and check any unknown vocabulary

Front Groups

By H. Kennedy (2023)

1. A front group is a type of independent organisation but is set up and funded by other corporations [redacted]. According to STOP (2020), front groups are perhaps the clearest example of the third-party technique whereby the front group will publicly champion another company in order to persuade [redacted], also known as lobbying. This in contrast to 'astroturf' groups, however, **who** specifically draft in new [redacted] 'grassroots' support for a particular issue or policy. In reality, the idea has usually been conceived [redacted] [redacted] are sockpuppets, that is to say, false online identities deliberately created by an individual or group to [redacted] (Beder, 2017).

2. There are several characteristics which can determine whether an organisation is acting as front group. Some of the key, tell-tale signs could be simply [redacted] is funded. SourceWatch (2020) argues that a front group will typically use a name that suggests [redacted] surveys, reports and polls conducted by their own 'esteemed and credible' experts, and which solely [redacted] corroborates with. There also seems to be an incredible amount of effort on the part of these experts [redacted] of tours, conferences and other promotional events, which would require a huge amount of additional [redacted]. As stated by SourceWatch (2020), although front groups rely on memberships to adhere to its [redacted] is required more than **their** money, as front groups are generally funded by outside sponsors, who incidentally, [redacted] far-reaching channels of communication.

3. Some well-known examples of front groups in the food, tobacco and climate industry include the [redacted] in 1985, has *Kraft Foods* and *The Hershey Company* as board members, and is an advocate of genetic modification, [redacted] in livestock; the 1996 *Center for Consumer Freedom*, which is against organic food and reduction policies [redacted] *Coca-Cola* on its board; and more recently in 2011, *Protect the Harvest*, of which *Lucas Oil* and the *Lucas Cattle Company* are members, and endorses industrial farming (Friends Of The Earth, 2017). With [redacted] *Reynolds Tobacco Company* funds two major front groups, *Business Tobacco Alliance* and *The Non-Smoker Protection Committee*, [redacted] taxation and overturn smoking bans, as well as preventing the adoption of any new smoking laws, whereas one of the largest [redacted] *Citizens' Alliance for Responsible Energy*, who object to

the promotion of solar or wind as an alternative and [redacted] several major oil and gas producers (SourceWatch, 2020). As these major industries are increasingly [redacted] possible adverse impacts their ideals and operations may have, which could have serious implications for [redacted] interest group has been created, known as the Social Aspects Public Relations Organization (SAPRO), [redacted] these potentially damaging consequences (Pietracatella and Brady, 2020). This is perhaps most felt in [redacted] Pietracatella and Brady (2020), industry-funded SAPROs such as *DrinkWise* use pro-consumption lobbying and self-[redacted] by harmful consumption of alcohol, and yet when disclosing **their** findings, they themselves do not [redacted] patterns instead.

4. What remains most apparent is that these organisations, which appear to be independent and [redacted] in fact [redacted] damaging to public health. Perhaps what is needed most of all at present is more awareness and education of these types of groups, [redacted] to lack strict policies, so that those wishing to invest financially or become recruited voluntarily are more informed [redacted] funding and members, front groups would not exist.

Reference list

Beder, S., (2017). *Front Groups and Astroturf* [online]. Available at:

<http://www.herinst.org/BusinessManagedDemocracy/environment/fronts/index.html> [Viewed 17.02.2023].

Friends of the Earth, (2017). [redacted] [pdf]. Available at:

https://foe.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/webiva_fs_2/FOE_Top11FrontGroups_1.pdf [Viewed 15.02.2023].

[redacted] (2020). *A New Development in Front Group Strategy: The Social Aspects Public Relations Organization (SAPRO)* [online]. Available at: [redacted] [Viewed 17.02.2023].

SourceWatch, (2020). *Front groups* [online]. Available at:

https://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Front_groups [Viewed 16.02.2023].

STOP, (2020). *STOP Identifies 18 [redacted] Public Health* [online].

Available at: <https://exposetobacco.org/news/stop-exposes-18-more-industry-allies/> [Viewed 17.02.2023].

Task 3: Comprehension Questions

Now see if you can answer these comprehension questions.

Comprehension Questions EXAMPLE

1. Headings: Choose a subheading for each paragraph. One title is not needed.

1		A	Clear recommendations for dealing with front groups
2		B	
3		C	Plausible interpretation of front groups
4		D	
		E	Typical cases of front groups

___ / 4

2. True / False / Not Given: One question per paragraph.

		T / F / NG
Paragraph 1		
i.	A front group is established to generate national interest.	
Paragraph 2		
ii.	Front groups often	
Paragraph 3		
iii.	Genetic front group 'the International Food Information Council' was set up.	
Paragraph 4		
iv.	Front groups provide	

___ / 4

3. Reference Words: What do these words connect to? (Underlined in the text).

Paragraph	Word	Connection
1	Who	
2		
2	Their	
3		
3	They	
4		

___ / 6

4. Open Answer Questions: One question per paragraph.

Paragraph 1		
i.	What are 'astroturf' groups?	
	1.	
Paragraph 2		
ii.	What THREE ways do	known?
	1.	2.
		3.
Paragraph 3		
iii.	What is the focus of the following front groups?	
	Front Group (s)	Focus

1.	International Food Information Council.	
2.		
3.	Business Tobacco Alliance and The Non-Smoker Protection Committee.	
4	The Citizens' Energy.	

Paragraph 4

iv.	What TWO things are needed the most, according to the writer?	
	1.	2.

___ / 10

5. Citations: Match the source with the point they make about front groups.

	Source		Point
i.	SourceWatch (2020)	a.	A new type of organisation has been set up to help companies
ii.		b.	A person or a group creates a fake identity in order to give the illusion of endorsements.
iii.	STOP (2020)	c.	Front groups and memberships.
iv.		d.	A front group openly endorses another company in order to convince others to support its policies.

i.		ii.		iii.		iv	
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___ / 4

6. Key language: Search for the word in the paragraph that means:

Paragraph	Explanation	Word
1	An attempt to influence people on an issue.	
1	A deceptive	
2	Able to judge something fairly without allowing your own interest to influence you.	
2	The act of something or someone.	
3	To ask for and	
3	Attempt to doing something.	
4	An action adopted or proposed by an organisation or individual.	
4	A set of	

___ / 8

Overall Total: ___ / 36

Task 4: Comprehension Questions

Check your answers to the comprehension questions.

Comprehension Questions ANSWERS

EXAMPLE

1. Headings: Choose a subheading for each paragraph. One title is not needed.

1	<i>C</i>	A	Clear recommendations for dealing with front groups
2	<i>D</i>	B	Severe restrictions on front groups
3	<i>E</i>	C	Plausible interpretation of front groups

ALL ANSWERS INCLUDED IN PAID VERSION...

Task 5: Summary Writing

Take notes on the key points of the text using this outline

Outline: Summary Notetaking

EXAMPLE

1. Main idea:
Support:
2. Main idea:
Support:
3. Main idea:
Support:
4. Main idea:
Support:

Task 6: Summary Writing

Using your notes write a 200-250-word summary of the text.

Summary

EXAMPLE

Word count: _____

Task 7: Note-taking Answers

Check your notes to these suggested answers

<p>1. Main idea: Definition</p> <p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front group = Type of ind. org. set up & funded by other corp. w purpose of infl. pub. int. • “ “ publicly 2 persuade ppl (STOP, 2020). • Astroturf groups = Draft new supporters 2 give impress. of grassroots support for pol./campaign. • Ideas = are sockpuppets (fake ids of support) (Beder, 2017).
<p>2. Main idea: How to detect a front group.</p> <p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attributes of front groups: Names that reg. pub. by own experts that ben. ind./grp it corroborates w (SourceWatch, 2020). • & other promo. events. spent is not revealed. • Front groups rely (SourceWatch, 2020).
<p>3. Main idea: Well-known examples of front groups.</p> <p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Food Information Council = food & use of • Center for Consumer Freedom = A/st org. food & red. pol. • Protect the Harvest = (Friends of The Earth, 2017). • Business Tobacco Alliance & The Non-Smoker Protection Committee = Enlists bus. owners 2 help fight tobacco tax, of new smoking laws. • The Citizens' Alliance for Responsible Energy = Objects 2 solar (SourceWatch, 2020). • (SAPRO) = Helps orgs. alleviate damaging effects (Pietracatella and Brady, 2020). • DrinkWise & self-reg. 2 prot. by alcohol.
<p>4. Main idea: How to protect people from front groups.</p> <p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front groups = health. • Need > aware. & edu. of these groups, partic. in low- & lack strict pols., so or become recruited voluntarily r >

Task 8: Model Summary

Check your summary to this model summary.

Front Groups - Model Summary

EXAMPLE

Structured as a private enterprise but established and financed by another organisation, a front group is a classic [REDACTED] it advocates for the 'parent' company in order to influence people to support its campaigns (STOP, 2020). [REDACTED] they are serving the 'parent' company, which uses the front group to advance its profits. Found in many risk [REDACTED] to detect. They tend to use neutral names, but publish biased research; they invest in promotional events, [REDACTED] approach, but hide the fact that their capital mainly comes from outside sponsors (SourceWatch, [REDACTED] a group known as the Social Aspects Public Relations Organization (SAPRO) has been set up [REDACTED] (Pietracatella and Brady, 2020). [REDACTED], one industry-funded SAPRO uses pro-consumption [REDACTED] its large profits (ibid). What is clear is that these front organisations are [REDACTED] t of risk industries, so more [REDACTED] is required in order for people to have a better become [REDACTED].

Word count 246