



# T-shirts out; uniforms in

1 School uniforms are becoming more and more popular across the U.S.A. That's no surprise, because they offer many benefits. They instantly end the powerful social sorting and labeling that come from clothing. If all students are dressed in the same way, they will not be distracted by fashion competition. Some students will also not be excluded or laughed at because they wear the "wrong" clothes.

2 Some people object to the "regimentation" of school uniforms, but they do not realize that students already accept a kind of regimentation — wanting to look just like their friends. The difference is that the clothing students choose for themselves creates social barriers; school uniforms tear those barriers down.

3 As in other places, uniforms remind the wearers of their purpose and responsibilities. When a man or woman puts on a police uniform, for example, he or she becomes, for a time, the symbol of law and order. The



uniform signifies to the wearer his or her special duties and sends the same message to everyone the wearer meets. Many different professions wear uniforms of one kind or another. For students, the school uniform reminds them that their responsibility for the six or seven hours they are in school is to get an education.

4 Some parents complain that school uniforms will affect their children's "creativity." First, as

noted above, the clothes students typically wear do not express their individuality. They just copy their classmates. Second, students have the rest of the day to be as creative as they like.



While they're in school, their job is to master reading, writing, and arithmetic; this should engage all the creativity they have. Mastery of those skills will enrich the creativity the students apply in every aspect of their lives.



Adapted from *The Columbus Dispatch*.

## READING TIP

When you want to understand the main points, skim the text first. Read through it quickly, without looking for details.