

## **Model Four-paragraph Essay on TikTok**

TikTok is a popular social media application created by ByteDance, which is a Chinese company. TikTok creates algorithms that feed short videos to the user by carefully analyzing what the user prefers. Social media analysis argue TikTok's algorithms are some of the best in the business, indicating they track their users across multiple platforms and create detailed analysis of each user. This has become a concern of the U.S. Government who passed a law that was upheld by the Supreme Court of the U.S. that ByteDance would have to sell TikTok to a U.S. buyer in order to continue selling its services to U.S. customers. The concern is national security. ByteDance is a Chinese company and the Chinese Communist Party (CPP) analyzes all internet practices in China. It is unknown but suspected that the CPP can gather information about users and potentially influence those users by controlling what information they receive through TikTok. Numerous countries around the world are attempting to interfere in democratic elections, and the CPP is no exception. Currently the Trump administration is not enforcing this law, but it has created confusion and concern around TikTok's use in the U.S.

TikTok has many promising features. It is a fun application that provides humorous and light-hearted videos that make people happy. Many businesses have found ways to market their products to new consumers by creating short, snappy videos. Many influencers are creating brands of themselves by selling products or lifestyles on the app. Being introduced to products and ideas from around the world is a good thing. Some people seem afraid of Chinese influence, but being open to new ideas and products from around the country provides more consumer and business choices. The answer to new ideas is not to try to stop them but compete with them.

TikTok is damaging our society in numerous ways. Teens and adults' attention spans have been shortened because our brains are being trained by these short videos. Users find themselves spending lots of time scrolling and looking for dopamine hits instead of studying, working, thinking, etc. This is a problem for our democracy and our work productivity. This app is also creating anxiety in teens constantly looking for escapism and validation by strangers after they post videos. Finally, ByteDance is collecting critical information about all its U.S. customers. The Chinese Communist Party forces all companies owned in China to share all the data they collect on their customers. The Chinese government could use that information to weaken our elections by spreading misinformation to our voters. The Chinese government censors what political information is allowed on TikTok so we could be receiving faulty or distorted news information. In this way, being influenced by a foreign country is negative for the U.S.

After considering the pros and cons of TikTok, I have come to support the U.S. Congress and Supreme Court and argue TikTok should have to sell to a U.S. Company. I urge the Trump administration to enforce this law. TikTok does not have free speech rights because it is not a U.S. citizen and the Chinese Communist Party is trying to influence our democracy through this company. TikTok is not different from the other social media platforms in terms of pros/cons of use on the individual users. However, because it is owned by a Chinese company, I feel the CPP's influence on our democracy is too dangerous to overlook. Normally, I favor free trade because I enjoy getting products and ideas from around the world. If ByteDance would sell to a U.S. company, then people can still enjoy their freedom of expression on the application, but if ByteDance refuses to sell, then I urge the Trump Administration to prioritize our national security and general welfare as a nation by banning TikTok in the U.S.