Name & Surname: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Analyzing an Argument

Is the reasoning sound and the evidence strong?



About 60 minutes Level ★★★☆☆

Delineate and Evaluate

To **delineate** an argument means to outline its **claims** and show how each one is supported. To evaluate it means to judge if the support works.



- Claim: what the writer wants you to believe.
- Reasoning: the logical link between claim and proof.
- Evidence: facts, surveys, or examples used as proof.
- Check evidence: Is it relevant to the claim? Is it sufficient to prove it?
- Watch for irrelevant evidence that does not connect to the claim.
- Consider the counterargument and the final conclusion.

TASK A

/3

Circle the odd one out in each row and explain why you chose it.

1. spelling | reasoning | claim | evidence

Why?

2. irrelevant | relevant | credible | sufficient

Why?

3. favorite song | class survey | expert quote | statistic

Why?

Created with LessonDino.com · AI lesson planner with checkable sources

Map Your Points

Plan reasons and proof for a clear position.

Key words

claim: what the writer wants you to believe

evidence: facts or examples used as proof

sufficient: enough to prove the point

sound: logical and well supported

reasoning: the logical link from proof to claim

relevant: directly connected to the claim

irrelevant: not connected and not helpful

TASK B

Use the map to plan a strong argument for the goal below with reasons and proof.

Goal **The school library should stay open one extra hour after school.**

Reason 1

Students need quiet time to finish homework.

Fact 1a _____

Fact 1b _____

Fact 1c _____

Reason 2

Students need computers and books they may not have at home.

Fact 2a _____

Fact 2b _____

Fact 2c _____

Reason 3

Later hours help students in clubs or sports.

Fact 3a _____

Fact 3b _____

Fact 3c _____

Conclusion

Created with LessonDino.com · AI lesson planner with checkable sources

Climb the Ladder

Answer the same article at four levels.

Phones Out of Class?

1. Our school should keep cell phones in lockers during class time. That is the author's main **claim**. The reason is simple: without constant messages and alerts, students will focus better and learn more. The writer admits phones can be useful, but argues class time should be protected for learning.
2. To support the claim, the writer points to what happened last semester when two classes tried a no-phone rule for a month. Teachers in those classes reported more finished classwork, fewer late assignments, and calmer discussions. In a short class survey, most students in those classes said they felt less distracted without their phones nearby.
3. In the middle of the argument, the writer adds that a popular singer earns millions of dollars and owns many pairs of shoes. That detail may be interesting, but it has nothing to do with focus or grades. It is **irrelevant** evidence because it does not help prove that storing phones improves learning.
4. The writer also answers an opposing view. Some students say phones must stay on hand for family emergencies. The writer responds that families can call the school office, and the office can reach any classroom in a minute. The conclusion is that the focus evidence is relevant and almost sufficient, while the singer detail should be set aside when judging the reasoning.

TASK C

/13

Answer each level to build from recall to judgment. Start longer answers with: This shows that...

State: give a short fact **Describe**: say what it is like or what happens **Explain**: say why or how; use "because" **Evaluate**: weigh up both sides, then give your judgement

State

State (say in one sentence) the author's main claim from paragraph 1. **(1)**

Describe

Describe (say what it is like) the irrelevant detail from paragraph 3. **(2)**

Explain

Explain (say how and why) whether the reasoning from the trial in paragraph 2 is sound. **(4)**

Evaluate

Evaluate (judge strengths and weaknesses) whether the evidence overall is relevant and sufficient. **(6)**

Created with LessonDino.com · AI lesson planner with checkable sources

Twelve-Part Review

Fill the clock to review argument skills.

TASK D

Fill each wedge with short notes and one tiny example.



Created with LessonDino.com · AI lesson planner with checkable sources

Crack the Question

Decode, plan, and judge an argument.

Pay for Grades?

1. Our school should not pay students cash for good grades. That is the writer's main **claim**. The writer argues that learning should come from interest and effort, not from a cash prize, and that paying for grades would create more problems than it solves.
2. The strongest support comes from last year's trial in two math classes. When small prizes for improved homework were offered for six weeks, homework completion rose at first but dropped right after the prizes stopped. Teachers said most students worked for the prize, not to understand the math, and quiz scores did not stay up.
3. The writer weakens the case by adding that the school parking lot needs repainting and that cheese costs $4.50 a pound at the store. Those details may be true, but they are **irrelevant** because parking lines and cheese prices do not show whether cash improves learning.
4. Others claim paying would especially help students with little money, but the writer answers that extra tutoring and library time would help more fairly without turning grades into a job. In short, the trial evidence is relevant but not yet sufficient alone, and the extra details about paint and prices should be ignored when judging the reasoning.

TASK E

/6

Box the command, underline the topic, then plan and write a full evaluation. Start with: Overall, the reasoning is...

1. Box the command word **2. Underline** the topic **3. Count** the marks: how many points? **4. Plan**, then write

Evaluate whether the reasoning in Pay for Grades? is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient. (6)

Command word	**Topic**	**Points I need**

State the claim about not paying cash for grades. → Explain relevant trial evidence about prizes and homework. → Point out irrelevant paint and cheese price details. → Give overall judgment on soundness and sufficiency.

My answer

Created with LessonDino.com · AI lesson planner with checkable sources

Analyzing an Argument

TASK F

/6

Tick fact or opinion for each sentence, then explain your choice for one of them.

Statement	Fact	Opinion
Two math classes tried prizes for six weeks.		
Paying students for grades is wrong.		
Cheese costs $4.50 a pound at the store.		
Learning should come from interest, not cash.		
Tutoring and library time would help more fairly.		

How can you tell that one of them is an opinion?

How did I do?

Circle a face for each line.

I can delineate the claims in an argument.

I can judge if reasoning is sound and evidence is relevant and sufficient.

I can spot when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Created with LessonDino.com · AI lesson planner with checkable sources

Answer sheet: Analyzing an Argument

Task A

1. spelling (The others are parts of an argument; spelling is not.)
2. irrelevant (The others describe strong, useful evidence; irrelevant describes weak evidence.)
3. favorite song (The others can be relevant evidence for learning; a favorite song does not prove the claim.)

Task B

Answers will vary, e.g. Students need quiet time to finish homework. Students need computers and books they may not have at home. Later hours help students in clubs or sports.

Task C

State: The school should keep cell phones in lockers during class time.

Describe: The detail that a popular singer earns millions of dollars and owns many pairs of shoes, which has nothing to do with focus or learning.

Explain: It is mostly sound because more finished work, fewer late assignments, and students feeling less distracted logically link no phones to better focus, which supports the claim.

Evaluate: Strength is the relevant trial and survey evidence about focus and work; weakness is the irrelevant singer detail and only two classes tested, so evidence is relevant but not fully sufficient alone.

Task D

Answers will vary.

Task E

Command word: Evaluate

Topic: sound reasoning and relevant, sufficient evidence

Points: State the claim about not paying cash for grades. Explain relevant trial evidence about prizes and homework. Point out irrelevant paint and cheese price details. Give overall judgment on soundness and sufficiency.

Task F

1. Fact
2. Opinion
3. Fact
4. Opinion
5. Opinion

Pictures: Pictograms: Sergio Palao, ARASAAC (arasaac.org) · CC BY-NC-SA; "Book stack, vintage drawing illustration" is marked with CC0 1.0. To view the terms, visit https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/.