

a)

Mike refuses to vote because he thinks all political parties are the same. → in the context that Mike is not present during this conversation and for instance, his co-workers are speaking about voting and who is going to vote for whom, when it was Mike's turn, his coworkers stated the previous statement, this statement is a report of an argument. It is a report of an argument because it states how Mike reasons.

The expressway was closed for three hours this afternoon because of the train derailment on the overpass. → in the context of 2 people going to the same destination and one of them wants to go to it via the expressway, this statement is an explanation.

To get rid of hiccoughs, breathe into a paper bag for a few minutes. → in the context that 2 people are sitting together and one of them can't stop his hiccoughs, it is an argument. The truth of the statements that make up this argument could easily be tested to prove or disprove this argument.

b) Argument:

"Geometry should be required in our high schools, rather than phased out" → conclusion.

"I'm sure this is why some high school students don't like it."

Explanations:

"It is one of the few courses in high school that require you to think, rather than just memorize facts" → premises.

and

"because thinking is hard--particularly if you're not used to it." → explaining why the author thinks why some high school students don't like geometry