

Lesson 6.1 Identify Argument Development

This lesson will help you practice identifying argument development in two texts. Use it with core lesson 6. 1 Identify Argument Development to reinforce and apply your knowledge.

Key Concept

The purpose of an argument is to persuade the reader that a claim is reasonable. A well-developed argument includes reasons and evidence that support the writer's claim.

Core Skills

- Understand the Relationship among Ideas
- Analyze Text Structure to Evaluate an Argument

Developing an Argument

An argument starts with a claim, or a statement of the authors opinion or position on a topic. The author wants to persuade readers to believe or act on the claim. In a good argument, claims are supported by evidence such as reasons, facts, and examples. The conclusion of an argument may restate the author's claim, summarize the evidence, or call upon the reader to take action.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then complete the activities.

Thomas Paine, a British-American political activist and revolutionary, published the booklet "Common Sense" in 1776. In it, he spoke against the authority of the British government and the king, who he felt oppressed the people of America. He also believed that the Constitution of England encouraged oppression by the king, rather than freeing the people from tyranny. The king could still override elected officials and often did. "Common Sense" was the first publication to encourage colonists in America to declare independence. The peers referred to in the passage are nobility, who inherited their positions, while people in the commons were elected.

Common Sense

- 1 I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for I he dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was overrun with tyranny the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated....
- 2 I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.
- 3 FIRST—The remains of monarchical tyranny in the person of the king.
SECONDLY—The remains of aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the peers.
THIRDLY—The new republican materials in the persons of the commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.
- 4 The two first, by being hereditary, are independent of the people; wherefore in a CONSTITUTIONAL SENSE they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the state.

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- 5 To say that the constitution of England is a UNION of three powers reciprocally CHECKING each other, is farcical, either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.
- 6 To say that the commons is a check upon the king, presupposes two things:
- 7 FIRST—That the king is not to be trusted without being looked after, or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of monarchy.
- 8 SECONDLY—That the commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the crown.
- 9 But as the same constitution which gives the commons a power to check the king by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the king a power to check the commons, by empowering him to reject their other bills; it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

—From “Common Sense” by Thomas Paine. 1776.

1. Write the statements below the chart in the appropriate columns.

| Claim | Supports Claim | Does Not Support Claim |
|-------|----------------|------------------------|
| | | |

The king can reject bills that the commons passes.

Members of the peers are part of the old tyranny.

Members of the commons are elected by the people.

England's constitution does not encourage liberty.

2. Which of the following definitions best fits the meaning of the word **check** as it is used in paragraphs 6 and 9?
 - A. hold accountable
 - B. stop or slow down
 - C. detect the presence
 - D. determine the condition
3. In building his argument, Thomas Paine makes the _____ that the king and the peers do not contribute to freedom.
4. Which phrase best describes the evidence that Paine presents to support his argument?
 - A. contradictory to the claim
 - B. insufficient to support the claim
 - C. irrelevant to the claim
 - D. relevant to the claim

5. Which statement can be considered a fact that supports part of the claim that the constitution of England is absurd?
- A. The king has the power to reject the common's bills.
- B. The king is not to be trusted and should be looked after by the commons.
- C. The members of the commons are wiser and more reliable than the king.
- D. The members of the peers and the king are part of an ancient tyranny.
6. What type of conclusion does Paine reach in his argument?
- A. restatement of ideas
- B. call to action
- C. ideas that extend the argument
- D. combination of A, B, and C

Analyzing Argument Development

Whether an author's claim is unstated or clearly laid out in the text, you can gain a better understanding of the author's claim when you analyze the author's argument. When an argument is structured properly, the relationship among ideas is clear and readers can easily understand the author's point of view.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then complete the activities.

- 1 Female suffrage is a reform demanded by the social conditions of our times, by the high culture of woman, and by the aspiration of all classes of society to organize and work for the interests they have in common ____
- 2 It is an interesting phenomenon that whenever an attempt is made to introduce a social reform... there is never a lack of opposition... As was to be expected, the eternal calamity howlers and false prophets of evil raise their fatidical [prophetic] voices... in protest against female suffrage, invoking the sanctity of the home and the necessity of perpetuating customs that have been observed for many years.
- 3 Frankly speaking, I have no patience with people who voice such objections.... I remember very well that in the past, not so very long ago, the same apprehension and fears were felt with regard to higher education for our women.... We are now able to observe the results, and if these results are found to be detrimental to the social and political welfare of the country, it is our duty to undo what we have done and to return to where we were before.
- 4 Fortunately, nobody would think of such a thing.... Education has not atrophied or impaired any of the fundamental faculties of woman; on the contrary, it has enhanced and enriched them.... Thank God, people are no longer ready to cast ridicule upon what some used to consider the foolish presumption of women to know as much as the men, and this is doubtless due to the fact that the disastrous results predicted by the calamity howlers, the terrible prophets of failure, have not materialized.

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5 Very well; if you allow the instruction and education of woman in all the branches of science, you must allow woman to take on her place not only in domestic life, but also in social and public life. Instruction and education have a twofold purpose; individually, they redeem the human intellect from the perils of ignorance, and socially they prepare man and woman for the proper performance of their duties of citizenship. A person is not educated exclusively for his or her own good, but principally to be useful and of service to the others. Nothing is more dangerous to society than the educated man who thinks only of himself, because his education enables him to do more harm and to sacrifice everybody else to his convenience or personal ambition. The real object of education is public service, that is, to utilize the knowledge one has acquired for the benefit and improvement of the society in which one is living.

6 In societies, therefore, where woman is admitted to all the professions and where no source of knowledge is barred to her, woman must necessarily and logically be allowed to take a part in the public life, otherwise, her education would be incomplete or society would commit an injustice towards her, giving her the means to educate herself and then depriving her of the necessary power to use that education for the benefit of society and collective progress.

—From "The Woman and the Right to Vote" by Rafael Palma

1. What is the claim made in this passage?
 - A. Women are entitled to the right to vote.
 - B. Women participate in all aspects of education.
 - C. Women are admitted to all the professions.
 - D. Women participate in many aspects of public life.
2. How does the author feel about people who protest against women's right to vote?
 - A. He thinks they are correct.
 - B. He thinks they are doing their duty.
 - C. He thinks they have no reason to protest.
 - D. He thinks they should be better educated.
3. As a(n) _____ of another way in which allowing women into public life was beneficial, the author cites the successes of women in education.
4. Which statement best describes how Palma builds his argument?
 - A. He states his claim and supports it with facts, reasons, and examples.
 - B. He states his claim and supports it with his opinion on the topic.
 - C. He states his claim and supports it with expert opinions on the topic.
 - D. He states his claim and supports it with examples of ways to gain the vote.

5. Which sentence best describes the way the author connects his ideas in this passage?
- A. The author connects his ideas chronologically.
 - B. The author connects his ideas logically.
 - C. The author connects his ideas using the question-and-answer form.
 - D. The author connects his ideas through comparison and contrast.
6. Which sentence best describes the author's conclusion?
- A. A woman has access to all sources of knowledge and all professions.
 - B. A woman is not educated exclusively for her own good.
 - C. It is not necessary to perpetuate customs that have been observed for many years.
 - D. It is necessary and logical for women to participate in public life by voting.

**Test-Taking Tip**

When you read a passage during a test, you need to eliminate information that is not necessary for answering questions. One way to do this is to read the passage, taking notes of important information, and then review the questions to see what information is covered and what is not.

Writing Practice

There are many reasons for developing an argument. Maybe you have strong feelings about a proposed law and want to write a letter to the editor. Maybe you are trying to convince your employer that you are the best candidate for an open position. When you develop an argument, you should make a clear claim that is supported by facts and evidence.

Directions: Write a paragraph making a claim that an action you support is the right action. It can be something that you advocate for in your personal life or an action that is more community based. Provide facts, reasons, and examples as evidence to support your claim. Finally, write a conclusion that summarizes your supporting evidence and reiterates your claim.

This lesson will help you practice identifying supporting evidence in two texts. Use it with core lesson 6. 2 Identify Supporting Evidence to reinforce and apply your knowledge.

Key Concept

Authors use various types of reasoning in developing an argument. Some types of reasoning are useful, but others are ineffective.

Core Skills

- Evaluate Arguments
- Cite Specific Evidence

Supporting Evidence

Authors making a claim in an argument must support that claim with evidence such as facts, reasons, and examples. Authors use this supporting evidence to back up the claim and to persuade you, the reader, that the claim is reasonable. The evidence presented must be logical and connected to the claim. Emotional appeals and faulty logic do not qualify as supporting evidence.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then complete the activities.

Excerpt from “The One Man Power,” *New York Times*, January 5, 1860

- 1 Mayor WOOD, in his eagerness to impress the public with the belief that he cannot justly be held responsible for defects or malfeasances in the City Government, overlooks or misrepresents one point of considerable importance. He states that there is no general supervision confided to the Mayor; —these are his words:
- 2 “While the Common Council, with the Mayor, can enact an ordinance, the administrative authority is not thus defined. This is diffused and uncertain. It is disseminated among several independent departments. There is no general head; there is no Chief Executive. Instead of one, there are eight coordinate Executives, separate and independent of each other, the Mayor having no supervisory control. These departments constitute the whole administrative municipal government of the corporation.”
- 3 This is an entire mistake. The Charter makes the heads of nearly all the Departments directly responsible to the Mayor. The Comptroller and Corporation Counsel are, it is true, elected by the people, and are not accountable to the Executive; but the Croton Aqueduct Board, the Street Commissioner, the City Inspector, and the four Superintendents of Bureaux under him, are all appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen, and may at any time be removed by the Mayor and Board for cause. Any malfeasance or neglect of duty on the part of either of those officers, entitles the Mayor instantly to supersede them. What more does Mayor WOOD desire? What greater power is necessary to enable him to enforce proper vigilance and energy in the business of these Departments? In speaking of the Street Inspector the Mayor says:
- 4 “The Mayor, being without power, should not be held accountable by the public. If nuisances abound and the streets remain filthy, it will be unjust to lay the responsibility at his door. Until he has power to appoint and remove the subordinates upon whom it is incumbent to perform these duties, he should be relieved from any censure which attaches to the neglect. It is well for the public and myself to have an understanding upon the subject at the commencement of my administration.”

- 5 “The public and myself” should have an accurate understanding of the subject, if they have any at all: —yet the Mayor’s words convey an impression in regard to the matter which is not correct. In the same paragraph the Mayor says: “The City Inspector and the Superintendents under him are appointed and removed in the same manner as the Street Commissioner,” and in regard to that officer, he says:
- 6 “Like the officers of the Croton Board, he derives his appointment, in the first instance, from the Mayor and Aldermen, but with a tenure of two years, unless sooner removed for cause, which removal requires the sanction of a majority of all the members elected to the Board of Aldermen. ”
- 7 His own admissions thus completely contradict his assertion that the Mayor is without power, and should therefore be without responsibility. He has power in every case of misconduct to remove the offender from office, and to demand the concurrence of the Board of Aldermen. Does he doubt the disposition of that Board to second promptly any effort he may make to remedy evils or punish mal-practices on the part of City officers? If so, he can very easily throw upon them the responsibility which he deprecates so much. Let him remove an officer for misconduct, and show' clear cause for the proceeding, and he will be sustained by the public, whether the Board second his action or not. But the fact that he is not arbitrary and absolute, —that others share the power of punishment which is placed in his hands, cannot relieve him from the just responsibility which belongs to his office.

—from “The One Man Power, ” *New York Times*, January 5, 1860

- The author’s claim in this passage is that the Mayor
 - is taking on too much responsibility.
 - has no real power over city employees.
 - is trying to shirk his responsibilities.
 - was not responsible for removing officers.
- What does the author say is the Mayor’s claim?
 - He has supervisory power over members of city government.
 - He should be held responsible for removing officers for misconduct.
 - He can get support from the Board for his actions to clean up government.
 - He is not responsible for removing officers for misconduct in city government.
- Which statement serves as evidence that is logically connected to the author’s claim?
 - The Mayor has no supervisory control over the Executives in the Common Council.
 - The Mayor, being without power, is not held accountable by the public.
 - The Mayor has the responsibility to provide the public with an accurate understanding of the distribution of power in the city.
 - The Mayor has the power to remove an offender from office and to demand the concurrence of the Board of Aldermen.
- The author provides evidence that _____ his claim by including the Mayor’s statements that contradict his insistence that he has no power.
- Which word best describes the Mayor’s logic in explaining his lack of responsibility?
 - faulty
 - sound
 - supporting
 - connected

Connecting Claims and Evidence

When reading an argument, use reasoning to evaluate the author's argument and to determine whether it is valid. If the reasoning is logical and you can cite specific evidence that supports and connects directly to the author's claim, then you can safely say that the argument is valid and reasonable.

Directions: Read the following passage. Then complete the activities.

"Checkers" Speech, Richard M. Nixon

- 1 My Fellow Americans,
- 2 I come before you tonight as a candidate for the Vice-Presidency and as a man whose honesty and integrity has been questioned....
- 3 I am sure that you have read the charges, and you have heard it, that I, Senator Nixon, took \$18, 000 from a group of my supporters.
- 4 [L]et me say this: Not a cent of the \$18, 000 or any other money of that type ever went to me for my personal use. Every penny of it was used to pay for political expenses that I did not think should be charged to the taxpayers of the United States.
- 5 It was not a secret fund ____
- 6 I just don't believe in that, and I can say that never, while I have been in the Senate of the United States, as far as the people that contributed to this fund are concerned, have I made a telephone call to an agency, nor have I gone down to an agency on their behalf.
- 7 And the records will show that, the records which are in the hands of the administration.
- 8 Let me tell you in just a word how a Senate office operates. First of all, the Senator gets \$15, 000 a year in salary. He gets enough money to pay for one trip a year, a round trip, that is, for himself, and his family between his home and Washington, D. C. and then he gets an allowance to handle the people that work in his office to handle his mail.
- 9 And the allowance for my State of California, is enough to hire 13 people. And let me say, incidentally, that this allowance is not paid to the Senator.
- 10 It is paid directly to the individuals, that the Senator puts on his pay roll, but all of these people and all of these allowances are for strictly official business; business, for example, when a constituent writes in and wants you to go down to the Veteran's Administration and get some information about his GI policy—items of that type for example. But there are other expenses that are not covered by the Government. And I think I can best discuss those expenses by asking you some questions.
- 11 Do you think that when I or any other senator makes a political speech, has it printed, should charge the printing of that speech and the mailing of that speech to the taxpayers?
- 12 Do you think, for example, when I or any other Senator makes a trip to his home State to make a purely political speech that the cost of that trip should be charged to the taxpayers?
- 13 Do you think when a Senator makes political broadcasts or political television broadcasts, radio or television that the expense of those broadcasts should be charged to the taxpayers?
- 14 ... The answer is no. The taxpayers should not be required to finance items which are not official business but which are primarily political business.

- 15 Well, then the question arises, you say, “Well, how do you pay for these and how can you do it legally?” And there are several ways, that it can be done, incidentally, and it is done legally in the United States Senate and in the Congress.
- 16 The first way is to be a rich man. So I couldn’t use that.
- 17 Another way that is used is to put your wife on the pay roll. Let me say, incidentally, that my opponent, my opposite number for the Vice Presidency on the Democratic ticket, does have his wife on the pay roll and has had her on his pay roll for the past ten years. Now let me just say this: That is his business, and I am not critical of him for doing that. You will have to pass judgment on that particular point, but I have never done that for this reason:
- 18 I have found that there are so many deserving stenographers and secretaries in Washington that needed the work that I just didn’t feel it was right to put my wife on the pay roll...
- 19 What are the other ways that these finances can be taken care of? Some who are lawyers, and I happen to be a lawyer, continue to practice law, but I haven’t been able to do that...
- 20 And so I felt that the best way to handle these necessary political expenses of getting my message to the American people and the speeches I made—the speeches I had printed for the most part concerned this one message of exposing this Administration, the Communism in it, the corruption in it—the only way I could do that was to accept the aid which people in my home State of California, who contributed to my campaign and who continued to make these contributions after I was elected, were glad to make.
- 21 And let me say that I am proud of the fact that not one of them has ever asked me for a special favor. I am proud of the fact that not one of them has ever asked me to vote on a bill other than my own conscience would dictate. And I am proud of the fact that the taxpayers by subterfuge or otherwise have never paid one dime for expenses which I thought were political and should not be charged [to] the taxpayers.

—from “Checkers” speech by Richard M. Nixon, September 23, 1952

1. What is Richard Nixon's claim in this speech?
 - A. He did not receive money from supporters for political expenses.
 - B. He did not use money from supporters for personal expenses.
 - C. He hired his wife to manage his political expenses.
 - D. He received money from the government for political expenses.
2. In this argument, what type of evidence is Nixon's statement that "the taxpayers should not be required to finance items which are not official business but which are primarily political business"?
 - A. an example
 - B. a verifiable fact
 - C. an emotional appeal
 - D. a supporting reason
3. Which of the following definitions best fits the meaning of the word **finance** as it is used in paragraph 14?
 - A. manage large amounts of money
 - B. provide funds for someone or for a venture
 - C. raise the funds to contribute support for a project
 - D. donate resources and monetary affairs of a government or organization
4. The author provides _____ as evidence that he used the money that was given to him for political expenses.
5. The fact that Nixon does not have proof that he has not given special favors for contributions makes his argument
 - A. valid.
 - B. faulty.
 - C. reasonable.
 - D. logical.



Test-Taking Tip

When a test includes questions related to a text, it is often helpful to read the questions before reading the text. You can even jot down notes and key words to help you identify the information that you'll need to look for in the text. Then as you first read the text, keep the questions in mind and look for the information that you need to answer them correctly.

Writing Practice

Many people have done things that others have disagreed with. Look at Nixon's situation in his "Checkers" speech, for example. Then recall something that you have done or a decision that you have made that others disagreed with.

Directions: Build an argument defending something that you have done in your life or a decision that you made that others have disagreed with. Start with a claim, and then list supporting evidence that is connected to your claim. Scan your list, and decide whether any of your reasons are faulty or based on emotional appeals. If you find any, cross them off the list. Then write a paragraph using your evidence to support your claim.

Lesson 6.3 Evaluate Relevance and Sufficiency

This lesson will help you practice evaluating relevance and sufficiency of supporting evidence in two texts. Use it with core lesson 6. 3 Evaluate Relevance and Sufficiency to reinforce and apply your knowledge.

Key Concept

To create a reasonable argument, an author must provide relevant and sufficient evidence for his or her claim.

Core Skills

- Identify Relevant Information
- Evaluate Arguments

Building a Case

To build an effective argument, writers must support their claim with evidence that is relevant not only to the claim, but also to the audience's interests and needs. Writers must also provide more than one piece of evidence to build a convincing argument. The validity of the argument depends on the relevancy and sufficiency of the evidence.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then choose the best answer to each question.

Corporate Memo on Sick-Leave Legislation

In response to the current influenza outbreak, the New York City Council is fast-tracking a piece of legislation. If passed, this would place statutory standards on the administration of corporate sick-leave policies. In a nutshell, it would require all New York City employers to provide the following.

- 10 paid sick days a year for full-time employees, and
- 5 paid sick days a year for employees working between 20 and 32 hours per week.

We strongly encourage employees to oppose this legislation. We have always acknowledged the importance of employee health. We also realize that our employees are more productive when their salary and position in the workforce are protected. Our current policy of granting sick leave on a documented, case-by-case basis is efficient and effective. It provides protection for our employees, their families, and society as a whole:

- It helps to maintain workplace health, in support of CDC guidelines. These guidelines suggest that people infected with influenza remain isolated for at least 24 hours after their fever breaks.
- It helps to maintain a healthy school environment for the children of our employees by allowing parents to remain home while their children are contagious.

Current law does not require employers to provide sick leave, paid or unpaid, under any circumstances. If, however, a company is held to a specific number of sick days, it is likewise obliged to compensate employees for their unused sick days. This amount must be paid yearly or when an employee leaves the company.

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Our current policy, then, is a vital tool for maintaining our bottom line. This, in turn, translates into benefits and job security for you, the employee.

- According to a March 2010 Department of Labor Statistics report, the cost of sick leave to a business or agency can average 81 cents per hour per employee. We are a mid-sized company. We employ approximately 1,200 full-time and part-time workers. Using the DLS report as a guide, let's consider some figures.

One full-time employee works 260 days a year. At 8 hours per workday, an individual works 2,080 hours per year. Multiply that by the number of employees (1,200), and there are 2,496,000 work hours per year in our company. Finally, multiply the number of work hours by the per-hour cost of sick leave (\$.81), and you get \$2,021,760 per year.

This is an unacceptable level of expense. It would force overall cost reduction. This cost reduction would most likely be administered through layoffs and reduced employee salaries. As an employee, voter, and citizen, this concerns you directly. Phone your city representative to protest this intrusion into the private sector-and remind him or her that you vote!

Source: Corporate Memo on Sick-Leave Legislation

1. Which statement is evidence that supports the claim that employees should oppose mandatory paid sick leave?
 - A. Employees should support their company's position.
 - B. The company can't afford mandatory paid sick-leave.
 - C. The New York City council is trying to pass legislation for mandatory paid sick leave.
 - D. The mandatory sick leave legislation is in response to the influenza outbreak.
2. Which statement is directly relevant to the audience?
 - A. "We have always acknowledged the importance of employee health. "
 - B. "We employ approximately 1,200 full-time and part-time workers. "
 - C. "Our current policy, then, is a vital tool for maintaining our bottom line. "
 - D. "Our current policy translates into benefits and job security for you, the employee. "
3. Which type of evidence does the author provide to support the claim that legislated sick leave would cost the company a lot of money?
 - A. verifiable but faulty
 - B. biased and repetitive
 - C. relevant and sufficient
 - D. valid but contradictory
4. The author links the evidence to the claim at the end of the passage by stating that
 - A. the employees are directly affected by this legislation and should oppose it.
 - B. the employees should oppose the legislation out of loyalty to the company.
 - C. the company's management is going to oppose the legislation.
 - D. the city leaders have doubts about the proposed legislation.

Evaluating Evidence in Various Texts

When you evaluate the evidence in a text, you look for appropriate evidence that supports the author's claim and is relevant to the topic and the audience's interests. You also check for sufficient evidence, in strength and amount, to support the claim.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then complete the activities.

Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress Reporting on the State of the Union

State of the Union, 1982

- 1 Today marks my first State of the Union address to you....
- 2 When I visited this chamber last year as a newcomer to Washington, critical of past policies..., I proposed a new spirit of partnership between this Congress and this administration and between Washington and our state and local governments. In forging this new partnership for America, we could achieve the oldest hopes of our republic—prosperity for our nation, peace for the world, and the blessings of individual liberty for our children and, someday, for all of humanity.
- 3 It's my duty to report to you tonight on the progress that we have made....
- 4 Seldom have the stakes been higher for America.... The situation at this time last year was truly ominous.
- 5 The last decade has seen a series of recessions. There was a recession in 1970, in 1974, and again in the spring of 1980. Each time, unemployment increased and inflation soon turned up again....
- 6 Late in 1981 we sank into the present recession, largely because continued high interest rates hurt the auto industry and construction. And there was a drop in productivity, and the already high unemployment increased.
- 7 This time, however, things are different. We have an economic program in place, completely different from the artificial quick fixes of the past. It calls for a reduction of the rate of increase in government spending.... But reduced spending alone isn't enough. We've just implemented the first and smallest phase of a three-year tax-rate reduction designed to stimulate the economy and create jobs....
- 8 I will seek no tax increases this year.... I promise to bring the American people—to bring their tax rates down and to keep them down, to provide them incentives to rebuild our economy, to save, to invest in America's future.... Seize these new opportunities to produce, to save, to invest, and together we'll make this economy a mighty engine of freedom, hope, and prosperity again.

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- 9 Now, the budget deficit this year will exceed our earlier expectations. The recession did that. It lowered revenues and increased costs. To some extent, we're also victims of our own success. We've brought inflation down faster than we thought we could ____ [W]e've deprived government of those hidden revenues that occur when inflation pushes people into higher income tax brackets ____
- 10 We must cut out more nonessential government spending and rout out more waste...
- 11 The budget plan I submit to you on February 8th will realize major savings by dismantling the Departments of Energy and Education ____ We'll continue to redirect our resources to our two highest budget priorities—a strong national defense to keep America free and at peace and a reliable safety net of social programs for those who have contributed and those who are in need ____
- 12 Our faith in the American people is reflected in another major endeavor. Our private sector initiatives task force is seeking out successful community models of school, church, business, union, foundation, and civic programs that help community needs. Such groups are almost invariably far more efficient than government in running social programs.
- 13 We're not asking them to replace discarded and often discredited government programs dollar for dollar, service for service. We just want to help them perform the good works they choose and help others to profit by their example. Three hundred and eighty-five thousand corporations and private organizations are already working on social programs ranging from drug rehabilitation to job training, and thousands more Americans have written us asking how they can help. The volunteer spirit is still alive and well in America ____
- 14 Our foreign policy is a policy of strength, fairness, and balance. By restoring America's military credibility, by pursuing peace at the negotiating table wherever both sides are willing to sit down in good faith, and by regaining the respect of America's allies and adversaries alike, we have strengthened our country's position as a force for peace and progress in the world....
- 15 We have made pledges of a new frankness in our public statements and worldwide broadcasts. In the face of a climate of falsehood and misinformation, we've promised the world a season of truth—the truth of our great civilized ideas: individual liberty, representative government, the rule of law under God. We've never needed walls or minefields or barbed wire to keep our people in. Nor do we declare martial law to keep our people from voting for the kind of government they want....
- 16 A hundred and twenty years ago, the greatest of all our presidents delivered his second State of the Union message in this chamber. "We cannot escape history," Abraham Lincoln warned. "We of this congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves." The "trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest [last] generation."
- 17 Well, that president and that congress did not fail the American people. Together they weathered the storm and preserved the Union. Let it be said of us that we, too, did not fail; that we, too, worked together to bring America through difficult times. Let us so conduct ourselves that two centuries from now, another congress and another president, meeting in this chamber as we are meeting, will speak of us with pride, saying that we met the test and preserved for them in their day the sacred flame of liberty—this last, best hope of man on Earth.

— From "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress Reporting on the State of the Union"
by Ronald Reagan

1. President Reagan uses Abraham Lincoln's words as _____ to support his claim that the country needs to work together to bring America through difficult times.
2. In which sentence does President Reagan present evidence to support his claim that government programs can be cut?
 - A. "[W]e have strengthened our country's position as a force for peace and progress in the world.
 - B. "We just want to help [private sector groups] perform the good works they choose and help others to profit by their example.
 - C. "[Volunteer groups] are almost invariably far more efficient than government in running social programs.
 - D. "[We do not] declare martial law to keep our people from voting for the kind of government they want.
3. Which of the following definitions best fits the meaning of the word **dismantling** as it is used in paragraph 11?
 - A. rebuilding
 - B. restructuring
 - C. improving
 - D. eliminating
4. Which statement is relevant evidence to support President Reagan's claim that the government will do its part to turn around the recession?
 - A. He has promised the country a season of truth.
 - B. He believes our foreign policy is fair, strong, and balanced.
 - C. He will not raise taxes to pay for the new budget.
 - D. He will not declare martial law to change how people vote.
5. President Reagan's argument is supported by several pieces of evidence related to his claim, but the lack of specific examples makes the evidence _____.
 - A. interesting but biased
 - B. connected but faulty
 - C. relevant but not sufficient
 - D. factual but not verifiable
6. Which phrase best describes the evidence that the recession caused the budget deficit?
 - A. interesting but biased
 - B. connected but faulty
 - C. relevant but not sufficient
 - D. factual but not verifiable

**Test-Taking Tip**

When you take a test that involves reading a text, scan the text for features such as headings and lists. As you scan, look in the text features and the text for words that you associate with the topic and words that are frequently repeated. These steps will help activate your prior knowledge about the topic and make it easier for you to answer questions about it.

Writing Practice

People write arguments for a number of reasons. They might be trying to convince others to invest in a project, or they could be writing a letter to the editor of a local newspaper to convince voters to support a certain political candidate.

Directions: Write a paragraph about a social program in your community that interests you, such as foster care or mental health services. In your paragraph, make a claim for the usefulness of this program and provide evidence to support your claim. Make sure that the evidence is relevant to your claim and that it is of interest to your audience. Be sure to provide more than one piece of evidence so your claim is sufficiently supported.

This lesson will help you practice evaluating the validity and reasoning used in arguments in two texts. Use it with core lesson 6. 4 Evaluate Validity and Reasoning to reinforce and apply your knowledge.

Key Concept

Readers can use logical tests to determine whether the reasoning authors use in their arguments is valid.

Core Skills

- Cite Specific Evidence
- Evaluate Arguments

Understanding Validity and Reasoning

An argument's validity is the degree to which it is logically or factually reliable. A valid argument is supported with sound, or sensible, evidence. To create a valid argument, the writer must also connect ideas in a logical way to the claim and to each other, leading to a reasonable conclusion about the claim. An argument is invalid if the author exhibits bias or presents contradictory evidence.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then complete the activities.

Argument Against Women's Suffrage

- 1 Suffrage is not a right. It is a privilege that may or may not be granted. Politics is no place for a woman, consequently the privilege should not be granted to her. The mother's influence is needed in the home. She can do little good by gadding the street and neglecting her children. Let her teach her daughters that modesty, patience and gentleness are the charms of woman. Let her teach her sons that an honest conscience is every man's first political law; that no splendor can rob him nor no force justify the surrender of the simplest right of a free and independent citizen. The mothers of this country can shape the destinies of the nation by keeping in their places and attending to those duties that God Almighty intended for them. The kindly, gentle influence of the mother in the home and the dignified influence of the teacher in the school will far outweigh all the influence of all the mannish female politicians on earth.

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- 2 The courageous, chivalrous, and manly men and the womanly women, the real mothers and homebuilders of the country, are opposed to this innovation in American political life. There was a bill (the Sanford bill) before the last legislature which proposed to leave the equal suffrage question to women to decide first before the men should vote on it. This bill was defeated by the suffragettes because they knew that the women would vote down the amendment by a vote of ten to one. Do women have to vote in order to receive the protection of men? Why, men have gone to war, endured every privation, and death itself in defense of woman. To man, woman is the dearest creature on earth, and there is no extreme to which he would not go for his mother or sister. By keeping woman in her exalted position man can be induced to do more for her than he could by having the mix up in affairs that will cause him to lose respect and regard for her. Woman does not have to vote to secure her rights. Man will go to any extreme to protect and elevate her now. As long as woman is woman and keeps her place she will get more protection and more consideration than man gets. When she abdicates her throne she throws down the scepter of her power and loses her influence.
- 3 Woman suffrage has been proven a failure in states that have tried it. It is wrong. California should profit by the mistakes of other states. Not one reform has equal suffrage effected.

—From An *Argument Against Women's Suffrage*, J. B. Sanford,
Chairman of [California] Democratic Caucus, 1911

1. What is the author's claim in this passage?
 - A. Woman suffrage should not be allowed.
 - B. Woman suffrage has been a failure in other states.
 - C. Women belong in the home and in schools as teachers.
 - D. Women are gentle creatures and should be revered.
2. Which of the following definitions best fits the meaning of the word suffrage as it is used in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3?
 - A. the right to go to war
 - B. the right to vote
 - C. the securing of rights
 - D. the right to be a citizen
3. Which idea from this passage is a verifiable fact?
 - A. Women should keep their place in the home.
 - B. Women do not have to vote to secure their rights.
 - C. The Sanford bill was defeated by the suffragettes.
 - D. Men can protect women if women keep their exalted position.
4. The author of this passage presents a(n) _____ argument because the evidence he uses to support his claim is not _____ or logically sound.
5. Which statement best describes the author's argument?
 - A. biased and invalid
 - B. reasonable and valid
 - C. biased but logical
 - D. logical but unreasonable

Evaluating Validity and Reasoning in Texts

To evaluate the validity of an argument, check whether the evidence is accurate, is connected to the claim, and helps build a logical argument. To evaluate an argument's reasoning, make sure the evidence relates to and fully supports the claim. The argument's reasoning is not sound if the evidence does not support the claim.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then complete the activities.

Remarks by President Barack Obama at Campaign Event—Stamford, CT

- 1 We are here to build an economy where work pays off so that no matter what you look like or where you come from, you can make it here if you try—
- 2 ... We've got the best workers in the world. We've got the best entrepreneurs in the world. We have the best scientists and the best researchers in the world. We have the best universities and the best colleges in the world. We are a young nation, and we've got the greatest diversity of talent and ingenuity from every corner of the globe ____ [N]o matter what the naysayers may say, no matter how dark the picture they try to paint, there's not another country on Earth that wouldn't gladly trade places with the United States of America ____
- 3 So what's standing in our way right now is not the lack of technical solutions to the deficit or to education or to energy. What's standing in our way is... the uncompromising view that says we should be going back to the old, top-down economics that got us into this mess in the first place....
- 4 And I don't exaggerate when it comes to how my opponent and his allies in Congress view this economy. They believe... that if we give more tax breaks to some of the wealthiest Americans, and we get rid of regulations. . . , that somehow prosperity will rain down on everybody....
- 5 So you're talking about each year, a tax cut that's equivalent of our defense budget for the next 10 years.... [T]his policy center... ran the numbers... And they determined that Governor Romney's plan would effectively raise taxes on middle-class families with children by an average of \$2, 000—to pay for this tax cut,... He'd ask the middle class to pay more in taxes so that he could give another \$250, 000 tax cut to people making more than \$3 million a year....
- 6 It's like Robin Hood in reverse....
- 7 ... They have tried to sell us this trickle-down, tax cut fairy dust before.... It didn't work then; it won't work now. It's not a plan to create jobs. It's not a plan to reduce our deficit. And it is not a plan to move our economy forward.

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- 8 ... We need tax cuts for working Americans. We need tax cuts for families who are trying to raise kids, and keep them healthy, and send them to college, and keep a roof over their heads.
- 9 So that's the choice in this election. That's what this is about. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States_____
- 10 ... Four years ago, I promised to cut middle-class taxes—that's exactly what I've done, by a total of about \$3, 600 for the typical family_____
- 11 ... [W]hen a construction worker has got some money in his pocket, he goes out and buys a new car. When a teacher is getting paid a decent wage, that means they can maybe take their family to a restaurant once in a while. And when the middle class is doing well, then business is doing well, and those at the top do well. Everybody does well. That's what we believe in—an economy that grows from the middle class out and the bottom up. That's the choice in this election—
- 12 And over the course of the next three months, the other side is going to spend more money than we have ever seen on ads that basically say the same thing you've been hearing for months. They know their economics theory won't sell, so their ads are going to say the same thing over and over again, which is: The economy is not where it needs to be and it's Obama's fault—
- 13 Their strategists admit it. They say... we're not going to put out any plans. We're just going to see if this works....
- 14 They don't have that plan. I do—
- 15 And if you still believe in me, and you're willing to stand with me, and knock on some doors for me, make some phone calls with me, work hard and organize and mobilize with me for the next three months, we will finish what we started in 2008, and we will show the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

—From “Remarks by the President at Campaign Event—Stamford, CT” by Barack Obama

1. What is the claim made in this speech?
 - A. Top-down economics doesn't work.
 - B. Americans are hard-working people.
 - C. Romney's economic plan is to give rich people a tax cut.
 - D. People should vote for Obama for a second term.
2. Which piece of evidence below is a verifiable fact?
 - A. Obama cut taxes by about \$3, 600 for the middle-class family.
 - B. The United States has the best workers in the world.
 - C. Any country in the world would want to trade places with the United States.
3. The speaker gives Romney's tax plan as an example to_____ the idea that trickle-down economics doesn't work.
4. The evidence about middle-class families helping the economy when they have more disposable income is logically_____ to the idea that raising taxes on the middle class in order to give the rich a tax cut will not help the economy.
5. Which phrase best describes the evidence presented to support the speaker's claim?
 - A. sound reasoning and valid evidence
 - B. sound reasoning but invalid evidence
 - C. faulty reasoning and invalid evidence
 - D. faulty reasoning but valid evidence

6. Which of the following sentences most strongly supports the speaker's claim?
- A. The opponent says that problems with the economy are Obama's fault.
 - B. The opponent spends money on ads that repeat the same message.
 - C. The opponent wants to cut taxes to stimulate the economy.
 - D. The opponent doesn't have a solid economic plan, but Obama does.



Test-Taking Tip

When you take a test, go for the “low-hanging fruit” first; that is, answer all the questions that are easy for you to answer. Answering the easy questions first leaves you more time for the questions that you might find more challenging. This technique prevents you from getting stuck on a question that you might not immediately be able to answer, and it increases your chances of completing the greatest number of items.

Writing Practice

To get elected or appointed to a position, politicians and community leaders give campaign speeches. These carefully crafted speeches are designed to convince the audience that the speaker is the best person for the job.

Directions: Write a short campaign speech describing why you or someone else should be elected to a political position. This can be a position in your town, in a school community, or in a larger political body. Provide facts and reasons as evidence for your claim that you should be elected. Finally, write a few sentences evaluating the validity and reasoning of your claim, explaining how you connected your evidence to your claim logically and gave sound reasons for your claim.

This lesson will help you practice evaluating logic and identifying hidden assumptions in two texts. Use it with core lesson 6. 5 Evaluate Logic and Identify Hidden Assumptions to reinforce and apply your knowledge.

Key Concept

Authors may support their claims with arguments based on logical reasoning.

Core Skills

- Identify Stated Assumptions
- Infer Hidden Assumptions

Evaluating Arguments Founded on Logical Reasoning

For some arguments, supporting evidence, such as facts, examples, and expert opinion, is not available or appropriate, so the writer needs to base the argument on logical reasoning instead. The writer starts by making an assumption and then builds the argument using the assumption as the basis for a series of deductions.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then complete the activities.

Overcoming Obesity

- 1 Doctors say that obesity causes or aggravates diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. In fact, about 90 percent of the type II diabetes cases worldwide are caused by excessive weight. The causes of obesity are too varied for doctors to be able to suggest a simple solution to the problem
- 2 According to the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Overweight and obesity are both labels for ranges of weight that are greater than what is generally considered healthy for a given height. ” In medical terms, obesity means having a body-mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher. BMI is an estimate of total body fat. It is based on a calculation using a person’s height and weight.
- 3 Despite the many negative effects of obesity, about 34 percent of adults and 17 percent of children 2-19 years old in the United States are obese. Obesity is also a problem in most other industrialized countries.
- 4 Some studies support an explanation of body weight called the “set-point theory. ” According to the set-point theory, a person’s genes determine his or her preferred weight. The brain adjusts a person’s metabolism and eating behavior to maintain weight at this genetically determined level. No one has proved the set-point theory. However, doctors have observed that most people’s bodies resist a weight that is lower than the “normal” weight for that person.

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- 5 Some people believe (hat the set-point theory helps explain why people find it difficult to maintain weight loss. These people are fighting against their bodies' set points. To weigh less than their set points, they must constantly exercise and limit food intake.
- 6 There is evidence that environmental factors have a strong influence on weight gain and obesity. Researchers have found that obesity affects people in wealthier industrial countries more than people in poorer countries. Because there is a large food supply in industrial nations, the people there tend to eat more high-calorie, processed foods. Because they have access to transportation and do less manual labor, they have lower levels of physical activity.
- 7 Doctors believe that many weight-loss programs are mostly ineffective. As many as 95 percent of people who lose weight on a specific program will gain back the weight within five years. Because body weight is the result of genes, environment, metabolism, behavior, and socioeconomic status, t here is no one solution for weight loss.

1. What is the claim in this passage?
 - A. It is that 95 percent of people who lose weight on a diet will gain it back.
 - B. It is that a person's BMI determines whether or not that person is obese.
 - C. It is that people in wealthy countries have a higher risk for being obese.
 - D. It is that the causes of obesity are too varied to suggest a simple solution.
2. Which statement is an assumption made in the passage?
 - A. that a person's genes determine his or her preferred weight
 - B. t hat obesity is a medical problem that needs to be solved
 - C. that the BMI is based on a calculation using height and weight
 - D. that people in industrialized countries have lower levels of physical activity
3. What purpose does the explanation of the set-point theory serve in this passage?
 - A. It is a claim.
 - B. It is a deduction.
 - C. It is an assumption.
 - D. It is a fact.
4. Which of the following definitions best fits the meaning of the word intake as it is used in paragraph 5?
 - A. a quantity of something taken in
 - B. an opening through which fluid flows
 - C. a contraction or narrowing of fabric
 - D. a shaft that serves to ventilate
5. The author of this passage builds an argument using a series of _____ from studies on obesity to support the claim.

Evaluating Arguments Based on Hidden Assumptions

Sometimes, the assumption on which a writer bases an argument is unstated, or “hidden.” If the reasoning in the argument depends on the reader accepting an idea that is not explicitly stated, then this idea is the hidden assumption. The validity of this supposition affects the validity of the argument as a whole. It can be challenging to find this assumption.

Directions: Read the passage below. Then complete the activities.

[T]he works of the poet may be considered in a very different light from those of the painter and the statuary Shak[e]speare, inimitable Shak[e]speare, will remain the subject of admiration as long as taste and literature shall exist.... [H]is writings will be handed down to posterity in their native beauty, although the present attempt to add to his fame should prove entirely abortive. Here, then, is the great difference. If the endeavor to improve the picture or the statue should be unsuccessful, the beauty of the original would be destroyed, and the injury be irreparable. In such a case, let the artist refrain from using the chisel or the pencil. [But] with the works of the poet no such danger occurs... [T]he critic need not be afraid of employing his pen, for the original will continue unimpaired.... That Shak[e]speare is the first of dramatic writers will be denied by few. I doubt whether it will be denied by any who have really studied his works, and compared the beauties which they contain with the very finest productions either of our own or of former ages. It must, however, be acknowledged, by his warmest admirers, that some defects are to be found in the writings of our immortal bard. The language is not always faultless. Many words and expressions occur which are of so indecent a nature as to render it highly desirable that they should be erased. Of these, the greater part are evidently introduced to gratify the bad taste of the age in which he lived. [T]he rest may perhaps be ascribed to his own unbridled fancy. But neither the vicious taste of the age, nor the brilliant effusions of wit, can afford an excuse for profaneness or obscenity.... [I]f these could be obliterated, the transcendent genius of the poet would undoubtedly shine with more unclouded lustre. To banish every thing of this nature from the writings of Shak[e]speare is the object of the present undertaking. My earnest wish is to render his plays unsullied by any scene, by any speech, or if possible, by any word that can give pain to the most chaste, or offence to the most religious of his readers.

—From *The Family Shakespeare* by Thomas Bowdler

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. What is the author’s claim in this passage?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. that families should read Shakespeare’s plays B. that Shakespeare is a widely admired dramatic writer C. that Shakespeare wrote for the tastes and language of his age D. that the language in Shakespeare’s works should be cleaned up | <p>2. What is the hidden assumption in this passage?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. that Shakespeare compares favorably with modern productions of plays B. that words that may offend readers lower the artistic quality of literature C. that Shakespeare’s works would be more beautiful without obscene words D. that critics can change words in a passage and not damage the original work |
|---|---|

3. Which assumption do you have to accept to evaluate the author's argument as valid?
- A. Changing a painting or a sculpture damages the work.
 - B. Changing a painting or a sculpture does not damage the work.
 - C. Changing the words in a work of literature damages the work.
 - D. Changing the words in a work of literature does not damage the work.
4. When you evaluate this argument for validity, which statement would you decide is based on an invalid assumption?
- A. Shakespeare's works should be read by everyone who loves literature.
 - B. Shakespeare's words fit with the language of his times and his culture.
 - C. Shakespeare's genius would shine more if his works were censored.
 - D. Shakespeare's plays are among the finest in dramatic literature.
5. The author of this passage _____ that Shakespeare's use of obscene language is a defect in his writing.



Test-Taking Tip

When you are taking a computer-based test, remember that you will not be able to return to a question after you have submitted the answer. Before clicking the Submit button, reread the question and your answer. Make sure that you have correctly understood the question and answer choices and that you selected the answer you intended to select.

Language Practice

Verbs may be active or passive. If the subject of the sentence performs the action, the verb is active. If the subject receives the action, the verb is passive. A passive verb includes a form of the verb *be* and the past participle of the main verb.

Directions: Fill in the blank in each sentence with a passive form of the verb in parentheses.

- 1 Tests_____ (give) to determine whether students have mastered the material taught.
- 2 In England, tea_____ (drink) for many reasons: to warm you up, to cool you down, to wake you up, and to calm you down.
- 3 Last Sunday Jaime_____ (see) running a marathon in the city.
- 4 Tuxedos_____ (wear) only for formal occasions.

Writing Practice

Many arguments rest on hidden assumptions. This often happens when the writer or speaker believes that the audience understands and agrees with the assumption. Think about political campaign speeches. Candidates often talk about how their policies will not involve raising taxes. The underlying, unstated assumption is that no one wants to pay higher taxes.

Directions: Think of a way of behaving that most people believe is appropriate. Then write a short paragraph suggesting that people follow a rule at work based on this assumption, but do not state the assumption. Be sure to support your claim with logical reasoning. Then state your hidden assumption in a separate sentence.