

English 12B

Unit 1: Understanding Arguments

Skills-Based Exam

Read and thoroughly annotate “How Scary is Disruptive Technology?” by Martin Feldstein. In your annotations, focus on **how the author is constructing his argument**. Try to pick out **the author’s claim**, the **evidence** he uses, and other parts of his **argument**.

Once you have read and annotated the text, please respond to the following prompts.

Notice

Make 6 noticings in the following table. Be sure to circle whether they are **interesting**, **strange**, **revealing**, **problematic**, or **important**.

What do you notice about how the author constructs his argument? Make 6 observations.	In/S/R/P/Im Circle One
	In S R P Im
	In S R P Im
	In S R P Im
	In S R P Im
	In S R P Im
	In S R P Im

Paraphrase 3x

1. Choose **one sentence** from the text that you agree with. Write it here:

Now, paraphrase this sentence **three times** in your own words:

Paraphrase 1	
Paraphrase 2	
Paraphrase 3	

2. Choose **one sentence** from the text that you disagree with. Write it here:

Now, paraphrase this sentence **three times** in your own words:

Paraphrase 1	
Paraphrase 2	
Paraphrase 3	

Did paraphrasing these two sentences help you to understand the argument more fully? If yes, how so? If no, why do you think it didn't help?

Analytical Summary

1. Write a 2-3 sentence summary of the main ideas in the text—what is the author’s **central claim**, and what is the **most important evidence** they offer for in support of it?

2. Write 4-5 additional sentences that focus in on specific elements or passages that you find particularly **interesting, revealing, strange or problematic**. Remember, you can refer back to your notice and focus above to organize your thoughts in this section. This is where you make some interpretations regarding **how the author expresses their ideas in the text and why you think the author made these decisions**.

Focus Paragraph

Based off of **one of your noticings**, make an argument about whether the author's argument was strong or weak and how you know this. Remember that your thesis should be clear, specific, direct, and argumentative. Your case paragraph should have a topic sentence, one piece of direct evidence, and your reasoning for how the evidence connects to your thesis.

Thesis Prewriting

1. Which **noticing** do you want to write about? _____

2. Does this noticing **strengthen** or **weaken** the author's argument? (Circle one)
3. **Why** do you think it either strengthens or weakens the argument? _____

Use our template to put all these pieces together in your thesis:

"It is interesting/revealing/problematic/important that the author [*answer to #1*] because [*answer to #3*]
which [*answer to #2*] the argument."

Thesis: _____

Case: _____

