The following editorial appeared in the *Lamont Times* newspaper.

"During last year’s election, only 35 percent of people living in Lamont voted, whereas in  
the nearby affluent town of Chiswick, that number was 75 percent. In a recent survey of  
young adults, over 80 percent of respondents in Chiswick reported frequently using their  
mobile devices to access social media sites. However, in Lamont, only 60 percent of  
young adults who own mobile devices reported accessing their social media accounts on a  
regular basis. The survey also revealed that young adults in both towns who use social  
media at least once a day are more likely to consider themselves knowledgeable about  
current political and social issues, which is considered a key characteristic of those who  
vote. Clearly, the number of people who vote in elections is higher in Chiswick than in  
Lamont because more of Chiswick’s young adults actively participate in social media."

Write a response in which you discuss one or more alternative explanations that could  
rival the proposed explanation and explain how your explanation(s) can plausibly account  
for the facts presented in the argument.

**Your Answer**

In the editorial from the Lamont Times newspaper, the author states that the higher percentage of voting rate in Chiswick in comparison to Lamont is caused by the difference in the acceptance of social among young people. The author comes to this conclusion base on the survey indicates more young people access social media in Chiswick as well as people who access social media more often show characters of active voters. However, before this conclusion can be properly evaluated, three questions must be answered.  
  
Firstly, do young people makes up the majority of the voting population? In other words, are people form elder generations more influential in the voting processes? Perhaps, young voters are just a minor factor in the elections and elder generations are the driving force in the elections. It is possible that there are more elders in Chiswick than Lamont who are not exposed to social media but display characteristics of active voters. If the above scenario has merit, the argument from the editorial is significantly weakened.  
  
Secondly, do young people form Lamont get exposed to politics the same degree as their counterparts in Chiswick? The argument prematurely assumes that politics valued the same way in Lamont as Chiswick. However, this might not be the case. There may be more political advertisements in Chiswick than Lamont, and these political advertisements vitalize people from Chiswick to vote in comparison to the dull political atmosphere in Lamont. If the above is true, the argument does not hold water.  
  
Lastly, is social media the main source of political information of young people? Local news stations, either on tv or radio, probably cover more local affairs than social media. For a town-level election, local affairs might be what electorates care the most. The difference in the coverage of local political information might be the cause for the difference in the voting rage between Lamont and Chiswick. There should be more information on this to evaluate the argument above in the editorial.  
  
In conclusion, as it states above, the conclusion from the editorial is considerably flawed due to its reliance on several unwarranted assumptions. If the author can answer the questions and provide more evidence, then it would be possible for us to fully evaluate the argument.

**Time Used**

29 minutes 60 seconds

**Score**

**4 points**

**Explanation of Score**

In addressing the specific task directions, a 4 response presents a competent examination of the argument and conveys meaning with acceptable clarity.

A typical response in this category

* identifies and examines aspects of the argument relevant to the assigned task but may also discuss some extraneous points
* develops and organizes ideas satisfactorily but may not connect them with transitions
* supports its main points adequately but may be uneven in its support
* demonstrates sufficient control of language to convey ideas with acceptable clarity
* generally demonstrates control of the conventions of standard written English but may have some errors