6.2 Developing a paragraph with claim and evidence

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 17 marks**

KEY WORDS synthesize • summarize • cite ( ) • complicate • exception • lower-achieving

Objective

Build the skills to **synthesize** sources in a paragraph: combining evidence from several sources with your own commentary, not summarizing them one by one.

You must be able to:

- tell synthesis from summary of sources
- combine two sources to support one point
- keep your own voice in control of the sources

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

■ Summary or synthesis?

summary (weak)	synthesis (strong)
"Source A says... Source B says... Source C says..."	"Both a teacher survey (Source A) and test results (Source C) suggest... though students (Source B) see a cost."
sources control the paragraph	the writer's claim controls the paragraph

■ A synthesis paragraph

1. **Your** claim (the topic sentence).
2. Evidence from one source, cited.
3. Evidence from another source that agrees, adds to or complicates it, cited.
4. Commentary that explains how the sources together support your claim.

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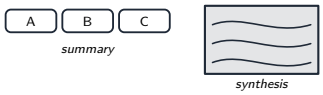
■ **Worked example**

Task: combine "Teachers report fewer distractions after a phone ban (Source A)" and "Test scores rose 6% in schools with bans (Source C)."

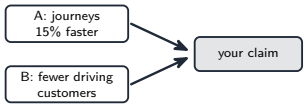
Answer: "A phone ban seems to help learning: teachers report fewer distractions (Source A), and schools with bans saw test scores rise about 6% (Source C). The two sources describe the same change from different sides, what teachers observe and what tests measure, so the effect is unlikely to be imagined."

2 Practice

2.1 Explain the difference between summarizing sources and synthesizing them. [2]



2.2 Source A says a city's new bus lanes cut journey times by 15%. Source B says shop owners on the bus routes reported fewer car-driving customers. Write one sentence that synthesizes both sources, and explain how they relate. [3]



2.3 Explain why a synthesis paragraph should begin with the writer's own claim rather than with a source. [3]



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3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Read the three sources about banning phones during the school day (composite sources written for practice).

> **Source A** (a teacher survey): "Eight in ten teachers said phones were the main distraction in class."
>
> **Source B** (a student editorial): "Phones are how we reach our parents in an emergency."
>
> **Source C** (a study of 90 schools): "After bans, average test scores rose about 6%, most for lower-achieving students."

(a) Identify the source that gives the student perspective. [1]

A: teachers: phones the main distraction | B: students: emergency contact | C: 90 schools: scores up about 6%

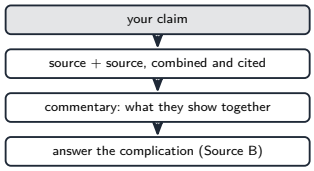
(b) Identify one way Source C adds to Source A. [1]

(c) Explain how Source B complicates the case for a ban. [1]

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3.2 Use Sources A, B and C in Question 3.1.

Write one synthesis paragraph that takes a position on banning phones during the school day. Use at least two of the sources, cite them, and make sure your claim, not the sources, controls the paragraph. [6]



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Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

summarizing reports what each source says, one after another; synthesizing combines sources to support the writer's own claim and explains how they relate

2.2

a sentence that combines both with citations, for example: "Bus lanes speed up travel (Source A), but they may cost shops on the route some customers who drive (Source B)."; identifies the relationship: Source B complicates Source A; explains: the benefit for passengers comes with a cost for some businesses, which the writer must weigh

2.3

the claim tells the reader what the paragraph will prove; the sources then serve as evidence for that claim; starting with a source lets the source control the paragraph, so it becomes summary rather than argument

3.1

(a) Source B

(b) it shows a measured result (higher test scores), not only teachers' opinion

(c) it raises a safety need that a full ban might ignore, so a ban may need an exception for emergencies

3.2

thesis: a clear claim in the writer's own words at the start

evidence: uses one source accurately with a citation; uses a second source accurately with a citation, combined with the first rather than listed

commentary: commentary that explains how the sources together support the claim; addresses Source B or another complicating point

sophistication: a nuanced position, for example a ban during lessons with phones stored for emergencies, or noting that lower achievers gain most

model: "Schools should collect phones at the start of the day but keep them available for emergencies. Teachers name phones as the main distraction in class (Source A), and a study of 90 schools found test scores rose about 6% after bans, most of all for lower-achieving students (Source C). Together these sources show that the problem teachers see is real and that removing it helps the students who struggle most. Students rightly point out that phones connect them to parents in a crisis (Source B), but stored phones and an office line meet that need without a screen on every desk."

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