2.4 Developing a paragraph with claim and evidence

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

KEY WORDS commentary • effect • purpose • simile • contrast • rhetorical choice

Objective

Build the skills to write **commentary** that connects evidence to a claim and to what the audience cares about.

You must be able to:

- explain what commentary does in a paragraph
- write commentary that explains a writer's choice
- analyze how a writer's reasoning moves an audience

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

■ What commentary does

Commentary answers **so what?** It explains:

question	example
how does this evidence prove the claim?	"Because the fall came after hours were cut..."
why does it matter to this audience?	"...which worries parents who rely on the library after school."
(in analysis) why did the writer make this choice?	"Paine compares tyranny to hell so readers see the war as a moral fight."

■ Analysis commentary: the choice → effect → purpose chain

1. **choice**: what the writer does (a contrast, a question, an image)
2. **effect**: what it makes the audience think or feel
3. **purpose**: how that helps the writer's aim

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■ Worked example

Task: comment on Paine's line "The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country."

Answer: Paine names a type of person no reader wants to be (choice). "Summer" and "sunshine" suggest loyalty that lasts only in easy times, so readers feel shame at the thought of quitting (effect). This pushes tired soldiers and doubtful colonists to stay in the fight in the hard winter of 1776 (purpose).

2 Practice

2.1 Read the paragraph: "(1) Libraries still matter. (2) Last year 4,000 people used our library's free computers. (3) For people without home internet, these computers are the only way to apply for jobs." Identify which sentence is evidence and which is commentary. [2]

(1) Libraries still matter. (2) Last year 4,000 people used our library's free computers. (3) For people without home internet, these computers are the only way to apply for jobs.

2.2 Explain the difference between summary and commentary in analysis writing. [3]

summary: what it says — *weak*

commentary: why it works — *earns credit*

2.3 Write commentary for this evidence in an essay about a speech: "The speaker repeats 'we will not wait' three times." [3]



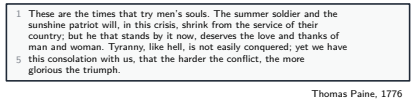
3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Read the passage.

> "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."

Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis*, December 1776

(a) Identify the audience of this passage. [1]



(b) Explain the effect of the contrast between the "summer soldier" and "he that stands by it now". [1]

(c) Explain how the final sentence turns hardship into a reason to fight. [1]

3.2 Use the Paine passage in Question 3.1.

Write one paragraph that analyzes how Paine's choices encourage his audience to keep fighting. Begin with a thesis sentence, and use the choice, effect, purpose chain at least twice. [6]



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