

# 1.2 Identifying claims and evidence

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Total: 11 marks

## Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on identifying a **claim** 主张 and its **evidence** 证据.

**You must be able to:**

- tell a claim from a fact and from an opinion without support
- identify the evidence attached to a given claim
- state what kind of evidence a passage uses
- explain why unattached evidence weakens an argument

## 1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

### ■ What makes a claim

A **claim** is a statement that could be disputed and that the writer is undertaking to support. "The river is 40 km long" is a fact; "the river has been mismanaged" is a claim.

### ■ Finding the evidence

Evidence is whatever the writer offers so that a reader who doubts the claim might accept it: data, examples, testimony, precedent, anecdote. The test is the question *why should I believe that?* —the answer is the evidence.

### ■ Naming the kind

Say **what kind** of evidence it is, not just that there is some: statistical, anecdotal, expert testimony, historical precedent, direct observation. The kind is what makes it fit or unfit for the audience.

## 2 Practice

**2.1** State the difference between a claim and a fact.

[2]

**2.2** State two kinds of evidence a writer might use. [2]

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**2.3** A writer states: "Our libraries are failing. Visits fell 30% in five years."

(a) Identify the claim. [1]

(b) Identify the kind of evidence. [1]

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### 3 Exam-style questions

**3.1** Which of these is a claim rather than a fact? [1]

- **A** The bridge was built in 1932.
- **B** The bridge carries 12,000 vehicles daily.
- **C** The bridge should be replaced.
- **D** The bridge is 400 metres long.

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**3.2** A paragraph gives three vivid personal stories and no figures. Its evidence is best described as [1]

- **A** statistical
- **B** anecdotal
- **C** expert testimony
- **D** historical precedent

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**3.3** A passage presents striking data and then moves to a new topic without comment.

(a) State what is missing. [1]

(b) Explain why the argument is weaker for it. [2]

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## 4 Go further

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- work through the **1.2 Identifying claims and evidence** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Claims, Evidence, and the Rhetorical Situation** section of the AP English Language handout on the **Know** page.

## Solutions

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**2.1** a fact can be verified and is not in dispute; a claim could be disputed and the writer undertakes to support it.

**2.2** any two of: statistics, anecdote, expert testimony, historical precedent, direct observation.

**2.3** (a) "our libraries are failing". (b) statistical.

**3.1 C.** it is disputable and requires support.

**3.2 B.** personal stories without figures are anecdotal evidence.

**3.3** (a) the link between the evidence and the claim —commentary. (b) the reader must supply the connection themselves, and may draw a different conclusion from the same data.