

3.2 Developing a paragraph with claim and evidence

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to develop a paragraph that makes its **assumption** explicit.

You must be able to:

- state the assumption connecting your evidence to your claim
- defend that assumption briefly where a reader might doubt it
- keep the paragraph to what the evidence earns
- avoid overclaiming in the final sentence

1 Worked examples

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

■ Making the assumption explicit

"Attendance rose after the change" supports "the change worked" only if other factors held steady. Saying so —"no other alteration was made that year" —turns an implicit leap into an argued step.

■ Defending briefly

You do not need a paragraph on the assumption; a clause is often enough. The point is that the reader can see the step rather than being carried over it.

■ Not overclaiming

A paragraph that has earned "this suggests" should not end on "this proves". The last sentence is where overclaiming usually happens, because it is where a writer wants to sound decisive.

2 Practice

2.1 State what making an assumption explicit achieves.

[2]

2.2 State where in a paragraph overclaiming most often occurs and why. [2]

2.3 Evidence: library visits rose 20% in the year a café opened inside.

(a) State a claim this evidence earns. [1]

(b) State a claim it does not. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A paragraph whose evidence supports "suggests" but which concludes "proves" has [1]

- **A** overclaimed
- **B** underclaimed
- **C** lost unity
- **D** used the wrong transition

3.2 Defending an assumption in a single clause is usually [1]

- **A** insufficient in every case
- **B** enough to make the step visible to the reader
- **C** a digression
- **D** a concession

3.3 Write a paragraph of four sentences that states a claim, gives evidence, names the assumption, and stops at what the evidence earns. [4]

4 Go further

- work through the **3.2 Developing a paragraph with claim and evidence** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Line of Reasoning and Methods of Development** section of the AP English Language handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 it turns an implicit leap into an argued step, so the reader can see and test the connection.

2.2 in the final sentence, because that is where a writer wants to sound decisive.

2.3 (a) that visits and the café's opening coincided, and the café may have contributed.
(b) that the café caused the whole rise.

3.1 A. the conclusion exceeds what the evidence supports.

3.2 B. the aim is visibility, not exhaustive defence.

3.3 claim; evidence; assumption named; conclusion limited to what the evidence earns.