

6.1 Identifying claims and evidence

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 11 marks

Objective

Build the skills to identify claims and evidence where the evidence is **contested or selective** 有选择的.

You must be able to:

- notice what evidence a passage does not mention
- assess whether evidence is representative
- identify a source and judge its standing
- state what a fuller body of evidence would change

1 Worked examples

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

■ Absent evidence

A passage arguing a scheme succeeded that never mentions cost has left something out. Naming the omission is a legitimate and strong critical observation.

■ Representativeness

Three examples chosen by the writer are not a sample. Ask whether the cases could have been chosen for fitting the claim; if so, they cannot test it.

■ Sources

Who produced the figure matters: a body with an interest in the answer is not disqualified, but its standing is part of the evidence. Say who, not only what.

2 Practice

2.1 State why noticing absent evidence is a legitimate criticism. [2]

2.2 State the question to ask about a writer's chosen examples. [2]

2.3 A figure is attributed to an industry association arguing for its own sector.

(a) State whether the figure is disqualified. [1]

(b) State what should be said about it. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Three examples selected by the writer to support a claim [1]

- **A** constitute a representative sample
 - **B** cannot test the claim they were chosen to fit
 - **C** prove the claim
 - **D** are irrelevant
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3.2 Naming the source of a statistic matters because [1]

- **A** long names are impressive
 - **B** the producer's interest is part of the evidence
 - **C** sources are always unreliable
 - **D** it lengthens the essay
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3.3 A passage arguing a policy succeeded gives outcomes but no costs.

(a) Name the weakness. [1]

(b) Explain what a full evaluation would need. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **6.1 Identifying claims and evidence** lesson on the **Learn** page;

- read the **Evidence, Thesis, and Stylistic Choices** section of the AP English Language handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 what is omitted may bear directly on the claim, so the argument may hold only because the omission was made.

2.2 could these cases have been chosen because they fit the claim; if so, they cannot test it.

2.3 (a) no. (b) that the source has an interest in the answer, which is part of how the figure should be weighed.

3.1 B. selection for fit removes the possibility of disconfirmation.

3.2 B. an interested source is weighed differently, though not dismissed.

3.3 (a) selective evidence —outcomes without costs. (b) both the benefits and the costs, on comparable measures, since a policy that produced the outcome at any cost has not been shown to be worth adopting.