

6.2 Developing a paragraph with claim and evidence

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 13 marks

Objective

Build the skills to develop a paragraph that **anticipates** the objection to its evidence.

You must be able to:

- state the strongest objection to your own evidence
- answer it inside the paragraph without derailing it
- choose evidence that is hard to dismiss
- avoid a paragraph that ignores an obvious counter

1 Worked examples

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

■ Naming the objection

Before writing, ask what a hostile but fair reader would say about your evidence. "That was one city, and an unusual one" is the sort of answer to expect.

■ Answering inside the paragraph

A clause is usually enough: "...and while the city is unusually dense, the same pattern appears in three smaller ones." The objection is met without becoming the subject.

■ Hard-to-dismiss evidence

Evidence produced by a source with no interest in the conclusion, or a case that runs against the writer's own preference, is harder to dismiss. Choosing it is a rhetorical decision.

2 Practice

2.1 State the question to ask about your own evidence before writing.

[2]

2.2 Explain what makes a piece of evidence hard to dismiss. [2]

2.3 Your only evidence is one large city's experience.

(a) State the objection. [1]

(b) Write a clause that answers it. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Answering an objection inside a paragraph is best done [1]

- **A** at paragraph length
- **B** in a clause or a sentence
- **C** in a footnote
- **D** not at all

3.2 Evidence from a source with no interest in the conclusion is [1]

- **A** less credible
- **B** harder to dismiss
- **C** irrelevant
- **D** anecdotal

3.3 Write a paragraph of four sentences that makes a claim, gives evidence, names the strongest objection, and answers it. [4]

4 Go further

- work through the **6.2 Developing a paragraph with claim 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 would a hostile but fair reader say about it; that is the objection to answer.

2.2 it comes from a source with no interest in the conclusion, or it runs against the writer's own preference.

2.3 (a) that one large city is unrepresentative. (b) a clause conceding the point and limiting its force, e.g. "…and although that city is unusually dense, the same pattern appears in smaller ones".

3.1 B. brevity keeps the objection from becoming the subject.

3.2 B. disinterest strengthens the evidence.

3.3 claim; evidence; strongest objection named; objection answered without derailing the paragraph.