

Exercise walk-through

Developing a paragraph with claim and evidence ■ 1.7

eXercise

You must be able to

- state what close reading enables a writer to do
- define a claim in the CED's terms
- name the initial components of a literary paragraph
- distinguish a claim from an observation

Method — Close reading

Writers read a text closely to identify details that, in combination, enable them to make and defend a claim about an aspect of the text. “In combination” — one detail rarely supports a claim.

Method — A claim

A claim is a statement that requires defense with evidence from the text. If nothing could count as evidence for it, it is not a claim.

Method — Two components

The initial components of a paragraph are the claim and textual evidence that defends the claim. Claim first, then evidence.

Method — Claim and observation

“The narrator is a soldier” is an observation — it is simply true or false. “The narrator’s military habits of mind blunt his account of the funeral” is a claim: it needs defending.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

Define a claim in the CED's terms.

Solution 2.1

Worked steps

a statement that requires defense **B1** with evidence from the text **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Name the initial components of a literary paragraph.

Solution 2.2

Method: Two components

Worked steps

the claim **B1** and textual evidence that defends it **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

A claim is not an observation.

- (a) State the difference.
- (b) State what “in combination” adds.

Solution 2.3

Worked steps

(a) an observation is simply true or false **B1**; a claim needs defending with evidence **B1**. (b) that a claim usually rests on several details together rather than one **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

A claim is a statement that requires

A defense with evidence from the text

B no support

C a biography

D a summary

Solution 3.1

Method: A claim

A defense with evidence from the text



B no support

C a biography

D a summary

Worked steps

A. defense with textual evidence.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

The first component of a literary paragraph is

A the evidence

B the claim

C the conclusion

D the title

Solution 3.2

Method: Two components

A the evidence

B the claim 

C the conclusion

D the title

Worked steps

B. the claim comes first.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A student writes: “The poem contains three similes.”

- (a) State whether this is a claim.
- (b) Rewrite it as one.

Solution 3.3

Worked steps

(a) no — it is an observation **B1**. (b) any claim requiring defense, e.g. “the poem’s three similes all draw on machinery, which makes the speaker’s grief sound mechanical” **B2**.