

# 3.8 Developing commentary

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **Total: 12 marks**

**KEY WORDS** commentary 评述 • line of reasoning 推理线索

## Objective

Build the skills to write **commentary** 评述.

**You must be able to:**

- define a line of reasoning
- state how a line of reasoning is communicated
- distinguish commentary from evidence
- explain why commentary is where the essay’s argument lives

## 1 Worked examples

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

■ **Line of reasoning**

**A line of reasoning is the logical sequence of claims that work together to defend the overarching thesis statement.** A sequence, so the order of claims is itself an argument.

■ **How it is communicated**

**Through commentary that explains the logical relationship between the overarching thesis statement and the claims/evidence within the body of an essay.**

■ **Commentary and evidence**

Evidence is from the text; commentary is the writer’s. Commentary says what the evidence shows and why that supports the claim. An essay of quotations has no argument.

■ **Where the argument lives**

Two students may use identical quotations and reach different conclusions. The difference is entirely in the commentary, which is why it carries the reasoning.

## 2 Practice

**2.1** Define a line of reasoning. [2]

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**2.2** State how it is communicated. [2]

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**2.3** Commentary is not evidence.

(a) State the difference. [2]

(b) Explain why commentary carries the argument. [1]

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## 3 Exam-style questions

**3.1** A line of reasoning is a logical [1]

- **A** sequence of claims
- **B** list of quotations
- **C** summary of the plot
- **D** set of definitions

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**3.2** Commentary explains the logical relationship between the thesis and [1]

- **A** the claims and evidence
- **B** the author’s life
- **C** the page numbers
- **D** the genre

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**3.3** Two essays use the same quotations and disagree.

(a) State where the disagreement lies.

[1]

(b) Explain what this shows about commentary.

[2]

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## Solutions

**2.1** the logical sequence of claims that work together to defend the overarching thesis statement.

**2.2** through commentary that explains the logical relationship between the thesis and the claims and evidence in the body.

**2.3** (a) evidence comes from the text; commentary is the writer's explanation of what it shows and why it supports the claim. (b) the interpretation is made in the commentary, not in the quotation.

**3.1 A.** a sequence of claims.

**3.2 A.** the claims and evidence.

**3.3** (a) in the commentary. (b) evidence does not interpret itself, so the essay's argument is made entirely in the writer's explanation of it.