Evaluating Arguments, Claims, and Evidence

Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10

Quick Review

Evaluate whether evidence is relevant and sufficient. A claim may sound strong but still fail if the support is unrelated, too narrow, or misleading.

PART 1 — READ

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Should Cities Ban Single-Use Plastic Bags?

A student editorial claims that the city should ban single-use plastic bags at grocery stores. The editorial argues that plastic bags often end up in waterways, where they break into smaller pieces that wildlife may swallow.

The editorial cites a local cleanup report showing that volunteers collected 18,000 plastic bags from riverbanks in one year. It also cites a store survey showing that shoppers adapted quickly when a neighboring city charged a small fee for bags.

One paragraph weakens the argument by adding that the writer dislikes the color of most plastic bags. Another paragraph is stronger because it explains that reusable bags must be washed and used many times to be the better environmental choice.

The best argument is not the loudest one. It is the one that uses relevant evidence and admits complications honestly.

PART 2 — PRACTICE

Use the passage to answer each question. Choose the best answer and support short responses with evidence.

1. Which sentence from the passage BEST supports the inference that The river cleanup report is relevant because it connects plastic bags to a local environmental problem.?

A. The writer dislikes the color of most plastic bags.

B. Volunteers collected 18,000 plastic bags from riverbanks in one year.

C. Reusable bags must be washed.

D. The best argument is not the loudest one.

2. Which statement BEST expresses the central idea or theme of the passage?

A. The editorial is strongest when it uses relevant evidence and acknowledges complications about alternatives.

B. Personal dislike is the best reason for a law.

C. Reusable bags are always worse than plastic bags.

D. Evidence does not matter in editorials.

3. What does the word 'sufficient' most nearly mean as it is used in the passage?

A. angry

B. unrelated

C. enough to support the claim

D. decorative

4. How does the structure or key detail identified in the passage contribute to meaning?

A. It avoids mentioning the claim.

B. It gives only emotional examples.

C. It describes how bags are manufactured.

D. The passage contrasts strong evidence with irrelevant evidence so readers can evaluate the argument.

5. Which conclusion is BEST supported by the whole passage?

A. The argument improves when it discusses bag colors.

B. The argument improves when it admits that reusable bags also require responsible use.

C. The argument fails because no evidence is included.

D. The argument proves bags never reach waterways.

6. Which choice is the BEST objective summary of the passage?

A. The passage evaluates a plastic-bag-ban argument by separating relevant local evidence from irrelevant personal preference and noting a complication.

B. The passage argues that grocery stores should choose bag colors.

C. The passage explains why all reusable bags are harmful.

D. The passage tells volunteers how to organize a river cleanup.

7. Which answer should be rejected because it goes beyond what the passage supports?

A. The editorial is strongest when it uses relevant evidence and acknowledges complications about alternatives.

B. The argument improves when it admits that reusable bags also require responsible use.

C. Personal dislike is the best reason for a law.

D. The passage contrasts strong evidence with irrelevant evidence so readers can evaluate the argument.

8. Which detail would be MOST useful to quote in a written response about the passage?

A. The writer dislikes the color of most plastic bags.

B. Reusable bags must be washed.

C. The best argument is not the loudest one.

D. Volunteers collected 18,000 plastic bags from riverbanks in one year.

9. In 2-3 sentences, explain how one quoted detail supports the idea that The river cleanup report is relevant because it connects plastic bags to a local environmental problem..

_____

_____

10. Write a one-sentence analysis of the passage's message or main idea. Then name one detail that supports it.

_____

_____

Answer Keys

1	A	**B**	C	D	6	**A**	B	C	D
2	**A**	B	C	D	7	A	B	**C**	D
3	A	B	**C**	D	8	A	B	C	**D**
4	A	B	C	**D**	9	See below			
5	A	**B**	C	D	10	See below			

Explanations

1. B	The correct evidence directly proves the stated inference rather than merely mentioning the same topic.
2. A	The correct answer covers the whole passage, while the distractors are too narrow, too extreme, or unsupported.
3. C	The context around the word points to this meaning in this passage.
4. D	The correct answer explains the role the detail plays in the development of the text.
5. B	The correct conclusion follows from multiple details, not from a single isolated word.
6. A	A strong summary includes the main conflict or idea and the outcome without personal opinion.
7. C	This choice overstates or invents an idea that the passage does not prove.
8. D	This detail is specific enough to support analysis in a written response.
9.	**Answer:** A strong response quotes or closely paraphrases: Volunteers collected 18,000 plastic bags from riverbanks in one year. Then it explains how that detail proves the inference instead of only repeating it. Use exact wording from the text or task, then explain your reasoning.
10.	**Answer:** A strong response states: The editorial is strongest when it uses relevant evidence and acknowledges complications about alternatives. It supports the statement with a precise detail such as: Volunteers collected 18,000 plastic bags from riverbanks in one year. Use exact wording from the text or task, then explain your reasoning.

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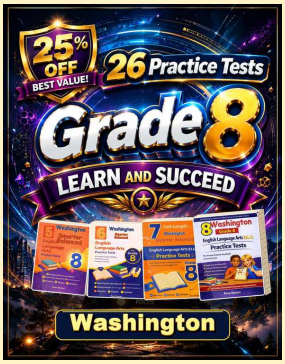

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