

An **argument** is a statement an author makes that he/she strongly believes.

- ▶ Authors make **arguments** and provide **evidence** to support them.
- ▶ The reader **assesses** the **evidence** of the author's argument to determine if it is **appropriate**, **accurate**, and **adequate**.

The Triple "A" Test of Evidence

Argument: The Internet is causing student grades to drop.

Appropriate: Does the evidence fit?

Evidence supports the argument.	The study shows that test scores fall as students increase use of the Internet because students simply run out of time to do their homework .
Inappropriate: Evidence is irrelevant.	90% of all families report owning a computer.

Accurate: Is the evidence true?

Evidence comes from a reliable source.	Accurate evidence can be statistics, studies, expert opinion or facts from a reliable source.	A Harvard study found that 69% of parents stated their child's internet use has caused their grades to decline. Established news sources, journals, and established educational institutions
	Inaccurate Evidence comes from an unreliable source .	My friend Frank told me his grades have gone up because he uses the Internet often. Internet blog and social media

Adequate: Is there enough evidence?

- Evidence** provides **many** cases or examples.
- **Adequate** evidence provides **at least three accurate** and **appropriate** examples.
- Inadequate:** Evidence provides **very few** cases or examples.



Which of the following evidence is **appropriate** to the argument: **Soccer is the greatest sport**. How do you know?

- A Soccer is played on a field with eleven players.**
- B Soccer is watched on TV more than any other sport.**

Which of the following is an example of **accurate** evidence? How do you know? Why is the other example inaccurate?

- A The newspaper reported that crime has decreased by 5% in our neighborhood.**
- B My sister has noticed that there has ben no crime recently.**

What is the difference between appropriate evidence and adequate evidence?

1. Read the passage, paying attention to the author's **argument**.
2. Identify **appropriate** evidence. (underline)
3. Assess whether the evidence is **accurate**. (circle if yes; cross-out if no)
4. Assess whether the author has **adequate** evidence. (count)
5. Assess the evidence that supports the author's argument. (write)

Argument: George Washington was the greatest president of the United States.

Our First President

¹**George Washington was the greatest president of the United States.** ²The 2005 *Wall Street Journal* poll listed him as the top U.S. president. ³My friend said Washington was commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, which showed he was a strong, successful leader and made him popular. ⁴Our history teacher said he used both wisdom and intelligence to govern. ⁵World Book Encyclopedia reports that George Washington averted₆ war with France or Britain, always promoting neutrality₇ toward conflicts between other nations.

⁷He was great at both listening and leading: said by historian Leonard D. White to be "...solicitous₈ of opinions of others but decisive...."

⁸Truly, he was the greatest American president. 109 words

Does the evidence support the author's argument? Explain.

Argument: Having a dog is good for your health

Dogs – Your Best Friend

¹**Having a dog is good for your health.** ²Jim says dog walking provides exercise. ³It has long been believed that owning a dog lowers blood pressure. ⁴In a study from State University of New York at Buffalo, it was found that not only does having a dog lower blood pressure levels and heart rates, but it also reduces stress. ⁵How about senior citizens who are lonely? ⁶The Saint Louis Medical Center reports that "nursing home residents felt much less lonely after spending time with a dog..." ⁷It said on Facebook that dogs can be difficult to care for. ⁸Pets are good for children too. ⁹Kids who learn how to care for dogs have better social skills and build up self-esteem according to an Oregon State University study. ¹⁰Dogs have been used with lonely children with great success. ¹¹Yes, a dog is good for your health. 143 words

Does the evidence support the author's argument? Explain.

Skill Closure

1. Read the passage, paying attention to the author's **argument**.
2. Identify **appropriate** evidence. (underline)
3. Assess whether the evidence is **accurate**. (circle if yes; cross-out if no)
4. Assess whether the author has **adequate** evidence. (count)
5. Assess the evidence that supports the author's argument. (write)

Argument: Pizza is the most popular food in America.

Pizza

Pizza is the most popular food in America. ²Pizza is popular among all ages, but especially children. ³According to a recent Gallup Poll, pizza is preferred by children above all other foods. ⁴Pizza is also a very convenient food, and is served in many restaurants. ⁵United States Census data has reported that there are over 60,000 pizza restaurants in the United States. ⁶Research by the National Association of Pizza Operators has found that Americans eat as much as 100 acres of pizza each day! ⁷There is no doubt that pizza is the favorite food of Americans. 96 words

Does the evidence support the author's argument? Explain.

Concept Closure

 **Write a sentence to explain. Explain why Shannon is incorrect in her claim.**

Shannon claims that the statement

"Pizza is made from dough, sauce, and cheese"

would be appropriate evidence to claim

"Pizza is the best food to eat."



Closure

What did you learn today about assessing the evidence that supports an author's argument?

Underline the appropriate evidence; circle the evidence that is accurate; cross-out the inaccurate evidence; count adequate evidence. Then, assess the support of the argument.

Tobacco and Your Health

1. **Tobacco is definitely bad for your health.** 2. The American Cancer Society says, "Tobacco use was responsible for nearly 1 in 5 deaths or an estimated 440,000 deaths per year during 1997-2001." 3. About 80% of all lung cancer deaths are related to smoking or other tobacco use, according to the 2004 Surgeon General's Report. 4. The United States Center for Disease Control reports that smokers die 13-14 years earlier than nonsmokers. 5. Tobacco is a crop that is grown in the United States and other places. 6. A drug company says the nicotine in tobacco is so addictive that smokers feel discomfort and, in some cases, pain if they cannot smoke. 7. Even so, nearly 70% of smokers want to quit smoking, according to research by MyAddiction.com. 8. Although addicted, even smokers know how bad smoking is for them. 120 words

Does the evidence support the author's argument? Explain.



Listening

Answer questions about the passage you just listened to.

1. Who is the author?

2. What is the author's argument?

3. Read the following statements. Circle the appropriate evidence.

	A	B	C	D
	Every classroom in America must be connected to the information superhighway.	I challenge ... every state to adopt national standards of excellence.	We are working with ... to connect 20% of California's classrooms by this spring.	Every diploma ought to mean something.

4. Why are these arguments not accurate?

Underline the appropriate evidence; circle the evidence that is accurate; cross-out the inaccurate evidence; count adequate evidence. Then, assess the support of the argument.

Climate Change 1

Overwhelming scientific consensus says human activity is primarily responsible for global climate change. The 2010 Anderegg study found that 97-98% of climate researchers agree on this.

For one thing, gases are warming the atmosphere. According to the Scripps Institution of Oceanology, the "extreme speed at which carbon dioxide concentrations are increasing is unprecedented."

Also, the land temperature is increasing. In 2012, UC Berkeley scientists found that the average land temperature increased 2.5°F over 250 years, with the last 1.5°F coming in the last 50 years.

This temperature increase is melting the ice and making the sea level rise. Arctic sea ice is now melting at the rate of 13.3% per decade, an increase of 6% in the last 30 years, according to a 2014 report of the National Academy of Sciences. It concluded that global sea level rise over the past century is much faster than the last 6,000 years. It's a dangerous situation for life.

Does the evidence support the author's argument? Explain.



Reading

Read the passage. Underline accurate evidence and cross out inappropriate evidence.

1. A 2013 study found that solar activity could not have added more than 10% of the observed global warming over the 20th century.
2. Solar flares really affect the electric grid on earth.
3. Measurements in the upper atmosphere from 1979-2009 show the sun's energy has gone up and down in cycles, with no net increase.
4. The sun will not burn out for 5 billion years.
5. A 2013 IPCC study reports "high confidence" that changes in the sun's radiation could not have caused the increase in the earth's surface temperature from 1986-2008.

Underline the appropriate evidence; circle the evidence that is accurate; cross-out the inaccurate evidence; count adequate evidence. Then, assess the support of the argument.

Climate Change 2

More than 1000 scientists disagree that human activity is primarily responsible for global climate change. A 2012 Purdue University survey found that 47% of climatologists believe that climate change is due equally to humans and the environment.

Many researchers feel that the earth has always warmed and cooled. A 2010 study in the *Chinese Science Bulletin* said that the global warming of the 20th century is the result of a natural 21-year temperature oscillation, and will lead to a "cooling period" in the 2030s.

Others think that carbon dioxide does not lead to global warming. A 2003 study in *Science* magazine found that measurement of core ice samples over 240,000 years showed that periods of natural global warming preceded global increases in carbon dioxide.

Climate change is a natural occurrence according these scientists, and we just have to deal with it.

Does the evidence support the author's argument? Explain.

**Writing****Write a sentence to explain.**

Shannon claims that the statement
“The small Honda Fit gets 40 mpg on the road, while the luxury Jaguar XE 20d gets 42 mpg, and the midsize Chevy Cruze Diesel gets 52 mpg”
 would be appropriate evidence to the argument
“Small cars get better gas mileage.”

Explain why Shannon is incorrect in this claim.**Honda Fit****Jaguar XE 20d****Chevy Cruze Diesel**

Underline the appropriate evidence; circle the evidence that is accurate; cross-out the inaccurate evidence; count adequate evidence. Then, assess the support of the argument.

Tablets

Tablets help students learn more material faster. The US Department of Education partnered on a study that showed tablets helped students reach a learning objective 30-80% faster. Another survey of K-12 teachers indicated that they believed “tablets enrich classroom education.”

Tablets are more space-effective and cost-effective. The Kindle Fire, for example, can hold 1000 books in 1 gigabyte of space. E-textbooks can save schools between \$250 to \$1000 per student in the cost of textbooks. These e-books can also be updated quickly

Tablets offer a search function along with interactive diagrams and videos. Students can also highlight and edit without ruining the text. Also, most tablets only weight 1-2 pounds. Textbooks, on the other hand, exceed the recommended weight for a student's backpack. One study showed that 13,700 kids, age 5-18, were treated for backpack-related injuries in 2011-2012.

Tablets aid learning in many ways. They will be required in the future.

Does the evidence support the author's argument? Explain.
