Light Under Review

Trace claims, evidence, and reasoning in an argument about outdoor lighting.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9b "Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g. "Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims")."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each claim the author makes, circle the evidence used to support it, and number the sentences that explain how evidence connects to a claim. These marks will help you judge whether the reasoning and evidence are strong enough.

A Case for Shielded Lights

1 During a visit to Tucson, Arizona, I noticed that many streetlights shone downward instead of into the sky. The city has long required many outdoor fixtures to direct light toward the ground, a policy meant to reduce glare and skyglow. Other communities should adopt shielded lighting because it can help people see sidewalks without sending as much wasted light upward. This change would make evening travel safer for everyone, including drivers, walkers, and cyclists who share busy streets.

2 Supporters point to a practical reason for this change: lights aimed where they are needed can reduce wasted electricity. The International Dark-Sky Association explains that fully shielded fixtures send light downward rather than above the horizontal plane. When a town replaces old fixtures, it may use lower-wattage bulbs while still lighting roads and paths. Therefore, every town that installs shielded lights will immediately cut its electric bill in half, and residents will pay less for public services.

3 Some residents worry that dimmer-looking streets will invite crime. In one neighborhood meeting, a speaker said that after a nearby park changed its lamps, she saw fewer people sitting outside after dark. Her observation may be worth investigating, but it does not show whether the lighting change caused the difference or whether crime changed. The city should compare crime reports and pedestrian counts before and after any lighting project. It should also ask residents about visibility.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the author's main recommendation in paragraph 1? Name two details from the paragraph that support that recommendation.

2. Is the evidence in paragraph 1 sufficient to support the claim that shielded lighting would make evening travel safer for everyone? Explain your judgment.

3. Evaluate the last sentence of paragraph 2. Is the earlier evidence relevant and sufficient to prove that every town will immediately cut its electric bill in half?

4. Why is the neighborhood speaker's observation in paragraph 3 limited evidence for the claim about crime? What additional evidence does the author recommend?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly four sentences arguing for or against installing a water bottle filling station near your school gym. Use these details: 68 of 90 surveyed students refill bottles at school, and the gym recycling bins fill with plastic bottles each week. State a claim, use both details, explain the reasoning, then judge whether the evidence is sufficient and name one more fact the school needs.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 7 · W.7.9b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each claim the author makes, circle the evidence used to support it, and number the sentences that explain how evidence connects to a claim. These marks will help you judge whether the reasoning and evidence are strong enough. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the author's main recommendation in paragraph 1? Name two details from the paragraph that support that recommendation.	**The author recommends that other communities adopt shielded lighting. Supporting details include Tucson's downward-facing streetlights and the explanation that shielded lights reduce glare and wasted upward light while helping people see sidewalks.**
2	Is the evidence in paragraph 1 sufficient to support the claim that shielded lighting would make evening travel safer for everyone? Explain your judgment.	**No. The details about reducing glare and lighting sidewalks are relevant, but the paragraph gives no safety data, such as accident reports, and it does not prove safety for everyone.**
3	Evaluate the last sentence of paragraph 2. Is the earlier evidence relevant and sufficient to prove that every town will immediately cut its electric bill in half?	**The earlier evidence is relevant because downward-directed lights can reduce wasted electricity. It is not sufficient because the passage says towns may use lower-wattage bulbs and gives no cost data or evidence that every town will save half immediately.**
4	Why is the neighborhood speaker's observation in paragraph 3 limited evidence for the claim about crime? What additional evidence does the author recommend?	**The observation does not show that the lamp change caused fewer people to sit outside or that crime changed. The author recommends comparing crime reports and pedestrian counts before and after a lighting project, and asking residents about visibility.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should install a water bottle filling station near the gym. A survey found that 68 of 90 students refill bottles at school, and the custodian says gym recycling bins fill with plastic bottles each week. These details support the claim because a nearby station could serve students who already carry reusable bottles and could reduce plastic waste. The evidence is useful but not sufficient because the school also needs the station's price and plumbing requirements.

Accept equivalent claims, evidence selections, and evaluations when students accurately distinguish relevant evidence from sufficient evidence. For Part 3, responses must use both provided details, include reasoning, and identify a needed additional fact.