After Closing Time

Test an argument for relevant evidence, false claims, and flawed reasoning

11-12.RC.8 "Delineate and evaluate the arguments and specific claims in U.S.and world texts, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; analyze the impact of false statements and fallacious reasoning."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the proposal and two pieces of evidence, circle a claim contradicted elsewhere in the passage, and number the two choices the writer presents as if they were the only options.

Should Harbor Stay Open Later?

1. At 6:05 p.m., the Harbor Branch's lights go out just as students arrive from late practices and family errands. Our library board should keep that branch open until 9 p.m. on weekdays during the four weeks before final exams. Last May, a volunteer counted 38 people entering Harbor between 5 and 6 p.m. on one Thursday; 21 carried schoolbooks. Those numbers suggest some demand for study space near closing time. They do not show how many visitors would stay until 9, and one Thursday cannot represent every school night. Still, a short trial could answer that question.

2. Opponents point to evening staffing costs. A supervisor estimates that paying two employees for three extra hours on twenty weekdays would cost $2,400, excluding electricity and security. The board should publish a complete estimate before voting. But the need is obvious: last year, nobody could use any town library after 6 p.m. Without a later schedule at Harbor, students have nowhere safe to study in the entire town. A bus stop bench is no substitute for a desk and reliable internet. The board must choose: fund later hours or admit it does not care whether students succeed.

3. Minutes from last year's board meetings show that West Branch stayed open until 8 p.m. on Tuesdays. That detail contradicts the claim that no town library offered evening access, though West is a forty-minute bus ride from Harbor. The minutes also list no survey of students about travel or preferred hours. An evening trial at Harbor may still be worthwhile, especially for students who cannot reach West. But the false claim about access makes the proposed change sound more urgent than the records justify. And the choice between funding and indifference ignores other options, such as a two-night trial or a partnership with a school.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What change does the writer propose? How relevant is the volunteer's count to that proposal, and what does the count fail to establish?

2. Is the $2,400 estimate relevant and sufficient evidence for deciding whether to extend Harbor's hours? Explain.

3. Which claim about last year's library hours is false? Cite the detail that disproves it and explain how the false claim could affect readers.

4. What two choices does the writer present as the only options? Use a detail from the passage to explain why that reasoning is flawed.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In one paragraph, argue for or against a limited trial of later hours at Harbor. Use at least two accurate passage details, explain one limit of the evidence, and avoid repeating the false claim or the either-or choice.

ANSWER KEY

After Closing Time

HIGH SCHOOL · 11-12.RC.8

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the proposal and two pieces of evidence, circle a claim contradicted elsewhere in the passage, and number the two choices the writer presents as if they were the only options. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What change does the writer propose? How relevant is the volunteer's count to that proposal, and what does the count fail to establish?	**The writer proposes keeping Harbor open until 9 p.m. on weekdays before finals. The count suggests demand near closing, but one Thursday does not show how many people would stay until 9 or visit on other nights.**
2	Is the $2,400 estimate relevant and sufficient evidence for deciding whether to extend Harbor's hours? Explain.	**It is relevant because staffing affects the cost, but it is insufficient because it excludes electricity and security and does not give a complete estimate.**
3	Which claim about last year's library hours is false? Cite the detail that disproves it and explain how the false claim could affect readers.	**The claim that nobody could use any town library after 6 p.m. is false: West Branch stayed open until 8 p.m. on Tuesdays. The claim could make the need for a change seem more urgent than the records support.**
4	What two choices does the writer present as the only options? Use a detail from the passage to explain why that reasoning is flawed.	**The writer says the board must fund later hours or admit it does not care about students. A two-night trial or a school partnership offers another option.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The board should test later hours at Harbor for two nights a week before deciding on a full schedule. On one Thursday last May, 38 people entered Harbor in its final hour, and 21 carried schoolbooks, which suggests interest but does not prove anyone would stay until 9 p.m. A supervisor's $2,400 estimate covers staffing for twenty weekdays but leaves out electricity and security. West Branch already offered Tuesday evening hours, although it is a forty-minute bus ride from Harbor. A limited trial could measure attendance and costs without treating a full schedule as the only way to support students.

Accept either position on a limited trial if the response uses two accurate details and explains a genuine evidence limit. Students should not claim that all branches closed by 6 p.m. or reduce the decision to funding the full schedule versus not caring about students.