Evidence After Hours

Evaluate claims in a student council discussion.

9-10.CC "Students actively engage in listening, discussing, and presenting ideas justified by sound reasoning and textual evidence while also evaluating and identifying fallacious reasoning or distorted evidence."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB As you read, underline two claims, circle the evidence offered for each, and number any places where the evidence may not support the claim. These marks will help you evaluate the speakers' reasoning.

Should the Library Stay Open Late?

1. At a student council meeting, Maya proposed keeping the school library open until 6 p.m. on Tuesdays for a six-week trial. She said students with noisy homes could use the quiet tables and computers after classes end at 3:15. Last month, the library stayed open late on two Tuesdays during exam week. The librarian counted 42 visitors on the first day and 37 on the second, compared with about 18 on a typical Tuesday before exams. Maya noted that exam week may have raised attendance, so those numbers alone cannot predict turnout on ordinary weeks.

2. Jordan disagreed. "Only 12 students used the computers on the second late Tuesday, so almost nobody needs longer hours," he said. The librarian's count, however, included students who read, studied, or used computers; Jordan had selected just one kind of visitor. He also reported that 80 percent of students opposed the plan, based on 40 no votes from a poll of 50 students waiting for the afternoon bus during exam week. Jordan argued that the poll proved the entire school rejected the change. Maya asked whether students who travel home other ways would answer the same way.

3. Ms. Chen, the librarian, added that a late day requires two paid staff members and that the budget could cover only one late day each week this term. She asked the council to consider whether the quiet space justified that cost. Eli replied, "My cousin stayed late once and missed his bus. If we extend hours, everyone will be stranded." Maya answered that one missed bus mattered but could not establish what would happen to every student. She suggested collecting daily visitor counts, asking visitors how they got home, and inviting a schoolwide survey before voting on a permanent schedule.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does Maya treat the two late-day visitor counts as limited evidence rather than proof of future attendance?

2. How does Jordan's claim about computer use distort the evidence about attendance? Use a number from the passage.

3. Why can't Jordan's poll establish what the entire school thinks about the plan?

4. Evaluate Eli's claim that everyone will be stranded. What evidence does he offer, and why is it insufficient?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence statement for the next meeting proposing a fair way to test whether longer library hours help students. Cite one detail from the passage, identify one misleading claim, and explain how your test would produce better evidence.

ANSWER KEY

Evidence After Hours

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

As you read, underline two claims, circle the evidence offered for each, and number any places where the evidence may not support the claim. These marks will help you evaluate the speakers' reasoning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does Maya treat the two late-day visitor counts as limited evidence rather than proof of future attendance?	**Both late days occurred during exam week, which may have increased attendance compared with ordinary weeks.**
2	How does Jordan's claim about computer use distort the evidence about attendance? Use a number from the passage.	**He cites only 12 computer users while ignoring students who read or studied. The librarian counted 37 total visitors that day.**
3	Why can't Jordan's poll establish what the entire school thinks about the plan?	**He polled only 50 students waiting for the afternoon bus during exam week. Their views may not represent students who travel home other ways.**
4	Evaluate Eli's claim that everyone will be stranded. What evidence does he offer, and why is it insufficient?	**Eli offers one example: his cousin missed a bus after staying late. One student's experience cannot show that everyone would miss a ride.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I propose a six-week Tuesday trial that records how many students stay after the library's usual closing time. Jordan's claim that almost nobody needs longer hours is misleading because 37 students visited on the second late Tuesday, not just the 12 who used computers. We should also ask those students how they plan to get home and compare turnout across ordinary weeks. Those records would show both how often students use the extra time and whether getting home is a problem.

Accept responses that distinguish a speaker's claim from the evidence offered and explain a specific gap in the reasoning. For Part 3, the proposed test should gather evidence beyond the two exam-week dates or the bus-stop poll.