Check the Claim

Test reasons in a town debate about library hours.

6.P.1.2.C "Develop deeper critical thinking skills by questioning assumptions and identifying inconsistencies or errors in reasoning."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB READ AND MARK: Underline Ms. Reed's and Mr. Vale's claims, circle a detail that challenges each claim, and put a question mark beside the assumption Ms. Chen makes about one day's count.

Should the Library Open on Saturdays?

1. At a town meeting, neighbors discussed whether the public library should stay open on Saturdays. Ms. Reed said, "No one visits on Saturdays. I drove past last week, and the parking lot was almost empty." The librarian replied that staff counted 32 visits that Saturday. Some visitors walked or rode the bus, so the parking lot could not show everyone who entered. The count did not tell whether 32 different people came in, since a person could leave and return. Still, it showed that the library was not empty all day.

2. Mr. Vale offered another reason to close: "Every Saturday visitor can just come on a weekday." He pointed to a busy Wednesday afternoon as proof. But the library had not asked most Saturday visitors when they were free. A crowded Wednesday does not reveal the schedules of people who came on Saturday. One student at the meeting said she could not get to the library on weekdays and had a ride only on Saturdays. Her story challenges Mr. Vale's claim, but it does not show why every other visitor came.

3. The group also heard from Ms. Chen, who wanted to keep Saturday hours. She said, "We counted 32 visits, so the library must stay open every Saturday." Several neighbors agreed, but the librarian urged care. The count came from one Saturday, and the group did not have counts from other Saturdays or the cost of keeping the building open. The numbers can test Ms. Reed's claim that no one visited that day. They cannot, by themselves, settle the larger decision about library hours for the whole year.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What detail disproves Ms. Reed's claim that no one visits the library on Saturdays?

2. Why could Ms. Reed not use the almost empty parking lot to tell how many people entered the library?

3. Which detail challenges Mr. Vale's claim that every Saturday visitor can come on a weekday? Explain.

4. Why does Ms. Chen's count not prove that the library must stay open every Saturday? Name two pieces of information the group lacks.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

YOUR TURN: A student says, "Five students in my class voted for longer recess, so every student in the school wants it." In three sentences, name the assumption, explain the reasoning error, and suggest one way to check the claim.

ANSWER KEY

Check the Claim

GRADE 6 · 6.P.1.2.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

READ AND MARK: Underline Ms. Reed's and Mr. Vale's claims, circle a detail that challenges each claim, and put a question mark beside the assumption Ms. Chen makes about one day's count. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What detail disproves Ms. Reed's claim that no one visits the library on Saturdays?	**Staff counted 32 visits on the Saturday Ms. Reed drove past.**
2	Why could Ms. Reed not use the almost empty parking lot to tell how many people entered the library?	**Some visitors walked or rode the bus, so they would not have parked a car.**
3	Which detail challenges Mr. Vale's claim that every Saturday visitor can come on a weekday? Explain.	**A student said she could not get to the library on weekdays and had a ride only on Saturdays. She is a counterexample to his claim about every visitor.**
4	Why does Ms. Chen's count not prove that the library must stay open every Saturday? Name two pieces of information the group lacks.	**The count covers only one Saturday. The group lacks counts from other Saturdays and the cost of keeping the library open.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The student assumes five classmates speak for every student in the school. Five votes cannot show what all students want. Ask every student in the school whether they want a longer recess.

For the short answers, accept equivalent wording that distinguishes a direct counterexample from evidence that is too limited to support a conclusion. For Your Turn, accept any three-sentence response that identifies the assumption, explains why five votes do not establish everyone's view, and proposes a way to check the schoolwide claim.