Before the Vote

Question the evidence behind a public decision

7.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 Underline two claims about Saturday library use, circle a detail that challenges each claim, and number the claims and details to show which go together.

Should the Library Close on Saturdays?

1. At a town council meeting, a member named Mr. Bell proposed closing the public library on Saturdays. He said, "Nobody needs the library then." To support his claim, he described a visit last Saturday from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. During that hour, he counted only four people inside. He also noted that the library offers digital books. Bell argued that shutting the building on Saturdays would not affect residents because anyone could read online instead. The council planned to vote the following week.

2. Library worker Ms. Ortiz questioned the claim. She checked the library's sign-in sheets for that same Saturday. They recorded 38 visitors between 10:00 a.m. and noon, including 12 people who used the public computers. The library opened at 9:00 a.m., but a heavy rainstorm had delayed the morning bus that serves the neighborhood. Ortiz did not say the sign-in sheets counted every visitor. People may enter without signing in, so the sheets show at least those recorded visits, not the full number of visitors.

3. At the meeting, Bell replied, "Those 12 computer users prove people can get everything they need online at home." Ortiz pointed out that the computers were inside the library and that the sign-in sheets did not say whether visitors had internet at home. Another council member asked how much money closing on Saturdays would save. Neither speaker had brought a budget estimate. The council postponed its vote and requested more information about Saturday visits, home internet access, and possible savings.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does Bell assume about residents when he says anyone could read online instead of visiting the library?

2. Which detail from the sign-in sheets directly challenges Bell's claim that nobody needs the library on Saturdays? Include the time.

3. Why might Bell's count from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. give a misleading picture of Saturday visits?

4. What is wrong with Bell's claim that the 12 computer users prove people can get everything they need online at home?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three- or four-sentence note to the council about what it should check before voting. Use two different details from the passage to challenge Bell's reasoning, and name one piece of information the council still needs.

ANSWER KEY

Before the Vote

GRADE 7 · 7.P.1.2.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two claims about Saturday library use, circle a detail that challenges each claim, and number the claims and details to show which go together. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does Bell assume about residents when he says anyone could read online instead of visiting the library?	**He assumes residents can access and use digital books outside the library.**
2	Which detail from the sign-in sheets directly challenges Bell's claim that nobody needs the library on Saturdays? Include the time.	**The sheets recorded 38 visitors between 10:00 a.m. and noon that Saturday.**
3	Why might Bell's count from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. give a misleading picture of Saturday visits?	**A heavy rainstorm delayed the neighborhood bus that morning, so fewer people may have arrived during that hour.**
4	What is wrong with Bell's claim that the 12 computer users prove people can get everything they need online at home?	**They used computers at the library, and the sign-in sheets say nothing about whether they had internet at home.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The 38 recorded visits from 10:00 a.m. to noon challenge Bell's claim that nobody needs the library on Saturdays. The 12 people who used public computers do not prove they have internet at home. The delayed morning bus may also explain why the first hour was quiet. Before voting, the council should find out how many Saturday visitors lack home internet.

Accept other passage-supported challenges to Bell's claims. The note should use two distinct details and identify information not yet established, such as home internet access or the amount the town would save.