The Shuttle Debate

Test claims against the evidence behind them

OKH.P.1.2.C "Reinforce critical thinking by evaluating and challenging ideas and assumptions, analyzing and explaining inconsistencies in reasoning."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two claims about the shuttle, circle the evidence offered for each, and write a 1 beside one conclusion that may go beyond the evidence.

One Day on the Shuttle

1 On a rainy Tuesday, the town of Glenbrook tested a free shuttle between a housing complex, a clinic, and a shopping district. A volunteer counted 40 boardings between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. She marked a boarding each time someone stepped onto the bus, including on return trips. The bus made ten trips that day, but the volunteer did not record where riders got off or ask why they traveled. At Thursday's council meeting, members had to decide whether to continue the trial for another month. The town could pay for only one new service this spring.

2 Council member Vale urged a longer trial. "Forty residents used it on Tuesday, so forty residents will use it every day," he said. He added that the shuttle would make clinic visits easier for people without cars. A clinic receptionist described two patients who arrived by shuttle before their appointments that Tuesday. Vale also said the shuttle would cut traffic downtown, though no one had counted cars on the route. His proposal was to keep the same hours and stops for the next month, then review the results. Several members liked the idea of testing before committing to a permanent route.

3 Council member Imani favored using the money for longer library hours instead. She said the shuttle "only takes people shopping," and pointed to the shopping district stop as proof. The receptionist's account complicated that claim, but it did not show how many riders traveled to the clinic. Imani also argued that a single rainy day could attract more riders than a typical day, since walking was unpleasant. Vale replied that rainy days might keep some people at home, producing fewer riders. Neither offered records from other days. The council postponed its vote and requested counts from a full week.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which two features of Tuesday's count weaken Vale's claim that forty residents will ride every day?

2. How does the receptionist's account challenge Imani's “only” claim, and what does it still leave unknown?

3. Imani and Vale make opposite predictions about rain. Why can't either use Tuesday's count to settle their disagreement?

4. What is missing from Vale's claim that the shuttle will cut downtown traffic? Name one measurement that could help test it.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a claim about a proposed school policy, such as changing lunch hours or phone rules. In four or five sentences, give limited evidence for the claim, identify a gap in the reasoning, and explain what new evidence would help test it.

ANSWER KEY

The Shuttle Debate

HIGH SCHOOL · OKH.P.1.2.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two claims about the shuttle, circle the evidence offered for each, and write a 1 beside one conclusion that may go beyond the evidence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which two features of Tuesday's count weaken Vale's claim that forty residents will ride every day?	**The count records boardings, so one person could be counted twice. It also covers only one day, which cannot establish daily ridership.**
2	How does the receptionist's account challenge Imani's "only" claim, and what does it still leave unknown?	**Two patients arrived at the clinic by shuttle, challenging the claim that all riders were shopping. The account does not show how many riders traveled to the clinic.**
3	Imani and Vale make opposite predictions about rain. Why can't either use Tuesday's count to settle their disagreement?	**Neither has counts from other days to compare with the rainy Tuesday, so the count cannot show whether rain raised or lowered ridership.**
4	What is missing from Vale's claim that the shuttle will cut downtown traffic? Name one measurement that could help test it.	**No one counted cars, and boardings do not show whether riders would otherwise have driven. The council could compare car counts downtown on days with and without shuttle service.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A principal says moving lunch ten minutes later will reduce cafeteria lines because one class had a short line at 12:20 on Friday. That class may have arrived after other classes had already eaten, so its line does not represent the whole school. The claim also assumes that moving everyone later will not create a new rush. The school could count waiting times for every lunch group on several days before changing the schedule.

Accept other passage-based explanations that distinguish a count from the conclusion drawn from it. For Part 3, look for a specific claim, limited evidence, a plausible reasoning gap, and evidence that could test the claim.