The Last Bus

Test claims against the evidence behind them.

USH.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 9:15 bus and circle the details offered to support them. Number two places where a claim rests on limited evidence or conflicts with another detail.

A Vote on the 9:15 Bus

1. At a public hearing, the city of Bellhaven considered ending its 9:15 p.m. bus trip to the hospital. Transit director Mara Ellis reported that only eight people boarded that trip on an average weekday last month. "A bus with so few riders cannot matter much," she argued. Her report counted boardings at the downtown station, where the trip begins, but did not count people who boarded at later stops. The hospital employs cleaners whose shifts end at 9 p.m., and the last earlier bus leaves its nearby stop at 8:40. Council members had to decide whether the trip's cost justified keeping it.

2. Hospital manager Devon Ruiz opposed the cut. He said that after the city canceled a different late bus last spring, three workers on that route bought cars. "That proves anyone who needs a ride will find another way," Ruiz told the council, although he also said some cleaners earn too little to afford parking at the hospital. A cleaner named Samira Chen described a coworker who walks two miles after missing the 9:15 bus. Chen did not claim that her coworker's experience represented everyone. She asked the council to find out how many riders use the later stops before voting.

3. Ellis offered a second reason for removing the trip: the city could use the savings to repair bus shelters. A council member asked how much money would remain after paying drivers for longer shifts on other routes. Ellis did not have that figure at the hearing. Another member suggested a two-week count at every stop on the 9:15 trip, along with a rider survey about possible alternatives. The council postponed its vote. No one disputed that shelters need repair, but members still had to choose what information would help them compare that need with the effects of ending the hospital trip.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does Ellis assume when she uses the eight boardings to judge how much the trip matters? Which detail calls that assumption into question?

2. Why do the three workers who bought cars not prove Ruiz's claim about anyone who needs a ride? Use another detail from the passage.

3. What can Chen's coworker's experience show, and what can it not establish about the proposed cut?

4. What is missing from Ellis's argument that ending the trip would pay for shelter repairs?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A student says, "Only three students spoke at the hearing about a later school start time, so the change would affect only three students." In four sentences, identify the assumption, challenge the reasoning, offer another explanation for the small number of speakers, and name evidence that could test the claim.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · USH.P.1.2.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two claims about the 9:15 bus and circle the details offered to support them. Number two places where a claim rests on limited evidence or conflicts with another detail. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does Ellis assume when she uses the eight boardings to judge how much the trip matters? Which detail calls that assumption into question?	**She assumes the downtown count reflects use of the whole trip. It leaves out people who board at later stops.**
2	Why do the three workers who bought cars not prove Ruiz's claim about anyone who needs a ride? Use another detail from the passage.	**Three workers on a different route do not represent everyone. Ruiz also says some cleaners cannot afford hospital parking.**
3	What can Chen's coworker's experience show, and what can it not establish about the proposed cut?	**It shows that missing the bus can leave one worker with a long walk. It cannot establish how many people rely on the trip.**
4	What is missing from Ellis's argument that ending the trip would pay for shelter repairs?	**The council does not know how much would remain for repairs after paying drivers for longer shifts.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The student assumes everyone affected by a later start time spoke at the hearing. The number of speakers does not show how many students would be affected. Some students may have been unable to attend the hearing. A survey of students about their schedules could help test the claim.

Accept other reasonable assumptions and challenges grounded in the passage. For Your Turn, accept plausible reasons students did not speak and evidence that could reach students beyond the hearing.