

Claim Check Challenge

Evaluate a speaker's reasoning without distorting the evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.3 "Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Keep paragraphs 1-2 covered while the teacher reads both speeches aloud. Make first-listening notes in Stage 1, then uncover and annotate the exact claims, evidence and rhetoric. Every learner evaluates both speakers before discussing. The speeches and data are fictional.

Two voices on a proposed library-hour trial

- ① Speaker A: "Keep the library open thirty minutes later every weekday. In our voluntary survey, 24 of 30 library-club members favored later hours. That is 80 percent of the respondents, so 80 percent of our whole school wants this change. Anyone who opposes it does not care about learning. At East School, checkout totals rose after the library extended its hours; that proves later hours always raise grades. We cannot let a few doubters steal our future. Approve permanent later hours now."
- ② Speaker B: "I support testing later hours before making them permanent. The 24 yes responses tell us about these 30 club respondents, not the whole school. We do not know how students outside the club would answer. East School's checkout increase is worth investigating, but it does not tell us whether grades changed or what else changed there. I propose a two-week trial on two afternoons, if staff and transport are available. Track attendance and ask users and nonusers about access, then review the cost. Even a useful trial would not, by itself, establish an effect on grades."

- ③ The reader delivers each complete speech twice, with a pause for notes. After listening, examine both transcripts. Evaluate what each speaker wants the audience to believe or do, how reasons connect to that position, how evidence is represented, and how language seeks to influence listeners. You may disagree with a policy while recognizing a well-supported point. Explain a reasoning problem in ordinary language; naming a fallacy without showing the faulty inference is not enough.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① How do the speakers' positions differ? Cite a phrase from each.

- ② What is valid about A's 80 percent calculation, and what is distorted about its use?

- ③ Identify two different problems in A's reasoning or rhetoric and explain their effects.

- ④ How does B use the evidence more carefully, and what important uncertainty remains?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Each learner needs a worksheet and pencil; the teacher or another adult reads the scripts. After independent analysis, discuss with one partner. No actual survey, library policy change or outside research is required. Evaluate the supplied speeches; do not invent missing sample sizes or outcomes.

1. Listen first

With the scripts covered, hear both complete speeches twice. Record each speaker's proposed action and a phrase or reason that stood out. Then uncover to check your listening notes against the actual words.

2. Evaluate independently

Answer Questions 1-4, then write a short overall evaluation here. Cover point of view, reasoning, evidence and rhetoric across both speeches. Quote briefly, distinguish calculation from inference, and state one missing piece of evidence that matters to your judgment.

3. Test your judgment aloud

Each partner explains their evaluation, asks a question about the other's reasoning, and responds using a precise speech detail. Record one clarification or revision to your judgment and its reason. A supported disagreement is acceptable.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Keep paragraphs 1-2 covered while the teacher reads both speeches aloud. Make first-listening notes in Stage 1, then uncover and annotate the exact claims, evidence and rhetoric. Every learner evaluates both speakers before discussing. The speeches and data are fictional. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the speakers' positions differ? Cite a phrase from each.	A wants permanent later hours every weekday immediately. B supports a limited, conditional two-afternoon trial before a permanent decision. Accept exact supporting phrases and a clear distinction.
2	What is valid about A's 80 percent calculation, and what is distorted about its use?	24 out of 30 equals 80 percent of the responding club members. A wrongly extends that percentage to the whole school; the voluntary club sample does not establish a representative school-wide preference.
3	Identify two different problems in A's reasoning or rhetoric and explain their effects.	Examples: checkout totals do not establish a grade change or prove causation; "always" overstates a single case; saying opponents do not care about learning unfairly attacks their motives; "steal our future" applies emotional pressure. Accept any two accurately explained problems.
4	How does B use the evidence more carefully, and what important uncertainty remains?	B limits the survey to its respondents and distinguishes checkout counts from grades. Staffing, transport, cost and broader access remain uncertain; the proposed trial has not happened. Accept one accurate improvement and a relevant unresolved question.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Illustrative evaluation: A's calculation is accurate for club respondents, but the school-wide claim is unsupported. A also switches from checkout totals to grades without evidence and uses an attack on opponents' motives to press for immediate approval. B favors a trial, narrows what the same survey can show, and acknowledges practical limits. That caution does not prove B's plan will work.

In a model exchange, a partner asks whether A's 30 respondents are too few. The learner clarifies that sample size alone is not the main demonstrated flaw: recruitment from a voluntary library club does not establish representativeness. They also distinguish evidence of more checkouts from evidence of better grades. The final judgment may support either action if it accurately evaluates the arguments and identifies uncertainty.

Read the scripts as written, not as paraphrased topic cards. Observe each learner analyzing all four dimensions and responding to a peer. Check $24/30 = 80$ percent; the unknown whole-school opinion must stay unknown. Do not reward a fallacy label without explanation. B's proposal is conditional and unevaluated; it is not a proven solution. The word "few" is A's rhetoric, not evidence of the number of opponents. The worksheet supplies all source material and separates listening from transcript checking.