



Claims, Reasoning and Evidence

FREE SAMPLE

A complete reading selection, one focused task, and matching teacher guidance.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Complete source reading selection
- Focused task with response space
- Teacher guidance and source notes
- Published Saint Pierre license

2017 NC ELA SCOS | In use for 2026-27

Supplemental practice for the named skill. Print-ready PDF.

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FICTIONAL SCENARIO | READING PRACTICE

Does the Claim Hold Up?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Read and annotate the complete selection. Then complete the included focused task.

1. Queues at the salad bar blocked the main serving aisle. School officials proposed removing the salad bar permanently. Some families supported removal to shorten waits; others wanted to test a different arrangement before losing a lunch choice. Before choosing a side, Nadia wrote a notebook question: "What would people need to know to make a responsible decision?"
2. The cafeteria served daily meals and hosted neighborhood suppers. Families gathered there to exchange school information and help neighbors at community events. One resident called its cramped layout outdated; another called the room the heart of the school community. Nadia wanted a decision that recognized both community history and present needs.
3. Nadia and a friend observed a lunch period with staff permission. They recorded queue length, students reaching the serving counters, and places where trays and people blocked the aisle. These observations showed access problems; they did not establish the cause of every delay. Nadia crossed out "obviously" in the notes because the available observations did not justify certainty.
4. A volunteer supplied dated cafeteria service logs and notes from earlier community suppers. Entries recorded how staff and volunteers changed serving arrangements when families needed additional meals. The records documented earlier responses, not a forecast of the new layout. Nadia asked where the materials came from and copied a dated detail. The volunteer distinguished personal recollections from documentation; an appealing account still needed support.
5. At a planning session, nutrition staff explained that students needed time to collect and eat lunch without a blocked serving aisle. Nadia listened, then restated the concern to check understanding. One speaker replied, "That is exactly the problem we keep describing." They recognized a shared problem without agreeing on a solution.

Does the Claim Hold Up? | continued

6. Back home, Nadia sorted the notes into direct observations, reported statements and questions still needing investigation. The dated record supplied historical context, not a prediction of future costs or outcomes. Nadia changed "This plan will work" to "This approach is worth testing." The new claim was more defensible because it matched the limited evidence.

7. Nadia's draft began with the present difficulty, then gave observations and dated evidence. It proposed a staff-approved trial moving the salad-bar queue while keeping the food choice available. The plan called for checking waiting times and aisle blockages during equal observation periods, plus staffing and equipment costs before review. The trial was a proposal for gathering information, not a claim that a permanent solution had already succeeded.

8. One classmate thought the draft gave history too much space; another feared that numbers alone would erase residents' experiences. Nadia placed an account from nutrition staff beside a direct observation. The revision explained that the account could clarify concerns and the observation could describe one period, but neither established future effectiveness or complete costs.

9. At the final meeting, participants asked what the trial would cost and how well it would improve access. Nadia cited useful observations and openly identified missing estimates and other research needs. A supporter of permanent removal of the salad bar still agreed that the public should see trial results. An official suggested a progress report and a volunteer offered to gather more observations.

10. The group voted to collect more evidence before making an irreversible change. No permanent plan was approved. Passing the cafeteria at Rosemont School afterward, Nadia saw that the practical problem and disagreement remained. Yet the group had agreed to test claims, listen to one another and return to the decision with better information.

ARGUMENT EXCERPT: A speaker claims, "A short trial is the strongest next step because it allows us to compare costs and access before acting permanently." The speaker cites the firsthand observations and requests a public progress report. An opponent argues that delay may have a financial cost; however, neither speaker has yet supplied a reliable estimate of that cost. Listeners must separate claims from reasons and determine which evidence is relevant but still incomplete.

RI.7.8 | Focused lesson

Evaluate whether reasons and evidence support a claim.

Companion material

Companion informational text: How to Evaluate a Public-Space Proposal

1. Define the question. A useful public-space review separates a current problem from a preferred solution. A proposal can preserve a valued place and still fail to solve an access difficulty. Explaining the practical question first helps readers understand what evidence matters.
2. Match evidence to claims. A dated record can explain earlier community use. A direct count describes what observers saw during a specified period. Neither alone establishes future repair costs or proves that a new plan will work. Evidence is useful when its scope matches the claim it supports.
3. Listen and test. People may agree on a problem while favoring different responses. Restating another person's concern gives that person a chance to correct a misunderstanding. A limited trial can test an idea before a permanent decision, but a trial also needs a time limit, fair measures and a review of its cost.
4. Report limits. A clear report distinguishes observations, reported views and unanswered questions. It places a recommendation beside relevant evidence and acknowledges what is still unknown. Calling an idea "promising" identifies potential; calling it "guaranteed" asserts certainty that the available information may not support.

Original explanatory article for this edition. It explains a method; it is not a report of a real town or a scientific study.

Completed model

A record of past use is relevant to history but insufficient to prove a new plan's future cost. Relevant evidence can still be incomplete.

Scope note: The preserved narrative is a fictional case study. The companion explanatory text supplies informational reading practice.

Name: _____ Date: _____

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

RI.7.8 | Sample teacher guidance

Task 1

Claim: a trial can test before a permanent decision. Reason: it yields information without full commitment. Conditions: bounded time, fair measures, cost review. It is not a guarantee of success.

The full packet includes retained comprehension questions and keys, all three focused tasks, and further teacher guidance.

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