

Name: _____

Evaluating an Argument Checklist

Standards:

ELAGSE8RI1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

ELAGSE8RI6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

ELAGSE8RI8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced

DIRECTIONS: Read the assigned article and check off each element of an argument as it is or is not found in the text. If you find it in the text, check "Yes", and if you do not find it in the text, check "No." If there are elements of an argument that are semi-present, check "Some."

Element of Argument	Yes	Some	No
Is there a clearly stated claim?		X	
Does the author include reasons that explain why he/she believes the claim?	X		
Are those reasons logical (do they make sense)?	X		
Are those reasons based on facts?		X	
Does the author provide evidence for each reason given?	X		
Does the author cite the source of his/her information?			X
Is each piece of evidence from a credible (trustworthy) source?			X
Is each piece of evidence relevant (on topic)?	X		
Is the evidence given sufficient to support the claim (is there enough evidence)?	X		
Does the author avoid logical fallacies? If not, list the ones that are used:	X		
Does the author acknowledge the counterclaim?	X		
Does the author prove the counterclaim wrong (rebuttal)?		X	

DIRECTIONS: Count up the number of checks in each column and evaluate the argument; strong arguments will have more YES marks, arguments that are just okay will have more SOME marks, and arguments that are weak will have more NO marks.

_____ YES

_____ SOME

_____ NO

Is this a strong argument? Why or why not?

DIRECTIONS: Read the assigned article again and answer the four steps of evaluating an argument.

ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY:

- valid: an argument that is based on facts rather than on opinions
 - Example: Students who read at least 20 minutes each night will have higher reading scores on standardized tests.
- facts: statements that can be proven through trusted or credible sources
 - Example: According to research completed by Dr. E. A. Poe, 75% of readers prefer scary stories over love stories (Poe 2016).
- opinions: statements that are based on emotions and feelings
 - Example: I think that students should read "The Tell-Tale Heart" because it is really creepy!
- bias: a prejudice against something
 - Example: My great great grandfather, Edgar Allan Poe, was the best author of his time.
 - Explanation: The fact that there is a relationship between the speaker and Poe presents a bias or a reason he/she feels more strongly about Poe than any other author.

Article Title: Who's got (better) game: College hoops or the pros?

<https://newsela.com/read/elem-nba-or-ncaa/id/28725>

Step 1: Identify the claim: [Pro basketball.] [is better than college basketball.] because

(HINT: Look to the title to help identify the claim)

Step 2: Evaluate the reasons and evidence:

Reasons given in the article	Valid? Why or why not?	What evidence is used to support each reason?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NBA has better players 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes- they are the best of the best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "Even the best college team has only two, three or maybe four players who go on to play in the pros. Every player on an NBA or WNBA team is a pro player. Even the worst pro team would beat the best college team."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional games are more evenly matched and therefore, more competitive and fun to watch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No- opinion, but a logical reason 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "Still, pro games are more evenly matched. Pro leagues are designed to be more competitive through such things as the player draft and rules about how much teams can pay their players."

Step 3: Evaluate the counterclaim:

1. How does the writer address the counterclaim in the article? Cite specific evidence from the text to support your answer. *The writer addresses the counterclaim by acknowledging the opposite view, which is that "college rivalries are more intense" than the pros. This statement agrees with someone who believes that college basketball is better instead of the pros.*
2. How does the writer refute or prove wrong the counterclaim in the article? Cite specific evidence from the text to support your answer. *The writer attempts to prove the counterclaim wrong by saying "it's harder for any pro team to stay on top," but he never ties that back to the idea of the rivalries mentioned in the counterclaim.*
3. What is the author's purpose in writing this article? How do you know? Cite specific evidence from the text to support your answer. *The author's purpose in writing this article is to persuade; the author uses loaded words like "intense", "rivalries", "best", and "worst" when describing the teams.*

Step 4: Synthesize your ideas (evaluate the argument as a whole):

Evaluation Writing Prompt:

Now it's time to *synthesize* your ideas and evaluate the argument as a whole.

Respond to the following prompt:

Is this article a strong article? Why or why not? Consider the reasons given by the author, the evidence used, the author's counterclaim and rebuttal, and any potential irrelevant evidence that could be used to throw you off. Be sure to include specific examples from the text to support your evaluation.

This article is strong because it includes each element of an argument; the author included a claim, and even though it could be stated more clearly, readers were still able to figure out that the author preferred pro basketball over college games. He provided two reasons, the pros have better players and pro games are "more evenly matched" than college games, and the author supported each reason with relevant and sufficient evidence to prove both; however, the argument could be stronger if the author cited his sources for his evidence. The writer addresses the counterclaim by acknowledging the opposite view, which is that "college rivalries are more intense" than the pros. This statement agrees with someone who believes that college basketball is better instead of the pros. The writer attempts to prove the counterclaim wrong by saying "it's harder for any pro team to stay on top," but he never ties that back to the idea of the rivalries mentioned in the counterclaim. The author's purpose in writing this article is to persuade; the author uses loaded words like "intense", "rivalries", "best", and "worst" when describing the teams.