

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Sharpen Your Rhetorical Lens: 9th Grade Critical Reading Quiz

Students gain the ability to dismantle complex arguments by identifying logical fallacies and evaluating the credibility of diverse source types.

1. An editorial arguing for urban green spaces cites a 2023 study from the 'Journal of Environmental Psychology' alongside a quote from a local gardener. Which source provides stronger evidence for a causal claim about mental health?

Answer: B) The peer-reviewed study, as it likely utilizes controlled variables and statistical significance.

In academic and critical reading, peer-reviewed journals are considered higher-tier evidence because they undergo rigorous vetting by experts in the field.

2. When a writer acknowledges a valid point made by the opposing side before refuting it, they are using a _____ to strengthen their own ethos.

Answer: B) Concession

A concession demonstrates that the author has researched the topic thoroughly and is fair-minded, which builds credibility (ethos).

3. A critical reader should assume that if an article contains many complex statistics, the author's conclusion is automatically objective fact.

Answer: B) False

Statistics can be manipulated or taken out of context; critical reading requires examining how data is interpreted, not just its presence.

4. Which of the following questions best targets the 'rhetorical situation' of a speech by a tech CEO regarding new privacy AI?

Answer: C) How might the CEO's financial interest in the company color their claims about 'user safety'?

Analyzing the author's motivations and potential conflicts of interest is a core component of evaluating bias and purpose.

5. Identifying the 'target audience' of a text is a form of _____ assessment, helping the reader understand why certain tones or vocabulary choices were made.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer: B) Contextual

Contextual assessment looks at the world outside the text—who it's for, when it was written, and why—to better understand the content.

6. An 'inference' is an educated guess based on explicit evidence from the text combined with prior knowledge.

Answer: A) True

Inference involves synthesizing what the text says 'between the lines' with logical reasoning and schema.

7. Select the statement that represents an UNSTATED assumption in an argument that says: 'Switching to electric buses will eliminate our city's traffic congestion.'

Answer: B) Congestion is caused by the type of fuel vehicles use, rather than the number of vehicles on the road.

Critical readers must identify logical gaps. This argument assumes fuel type affects traffic volume, which is a logical flaw (non-sequitur).

8. In a comparative analysis of two news reports on the same protest, a student notices one uses the word 'demonstrators' while the other uses 'rioters.' This focus on ____ reveals the authors' differing biases.

Answer: A) Diction

Diction, or word choice, carries different connotations that can subtly influence a reader's perception of an event.

9. You are reading a historical document from 1920 advocating against women's suffrage. To read this critically, you must use 'historical empathy.' What does this mean?

Answer: C) Analyzing the argument within the social norms and prevailing beliefs of the 1920s.

Critical reading involves situational awareness; you must understand the historical context to effectively analyze the author's logic and influence.

10. A logical fallacy is a technical term for a valid, well-supported piece of evidence.

Answer: B) False

A logical fallacy is an error in reasoning that renders an argument invalid, even if the conclusion seems correct.