

New SAGE Performance Assessment Sample (F451)

Carefully read the three texts.

Write a short essay in response to one (1) of these topics: All responses require **TEXTUAL EVIDENCE**.

- 1) What is the **tone** of Jerome Stern's monologue? Explain how he develops that tone.

- 2) What **claim** is Clarisse making about education? Explain how one of the other texts supports her claim.

- 3) What **claim** is the cartoon making? How does it achieve this? Offer a reasonable **counterclaim** that the cartoon does not address.

- 4) **Compare** two of the texts. Use **textual evidence** from both to support your comparison.

Keep in mind that on the actual test, there would be no classroom conversation before you had to write your responses, and you would likely be seeing the texts for the first time. Also, the test would not define the terms for you. We are still taking baby steps in this direction, but by the end of the year, you will be able to do this without too much difficulty.

Tone: the attitude or “voice” of the author. How does the writer feel about the subject? When we listen to someone talking, we can determine tone from the sound of his/her voice. In writing, our word choice (diction), sentence structure (syntax), and imagery (metaphors, similes, and other types of figurative language) must convey the tone. Tone is usually described with an adjective: angry, sarcastic, sweet, harsh, pleasant, cheerful, bitter, serious, etc. Identifying tone in another person’s writing requires you to look carefully at these items and consider their effect on the reader. To develop and maintain a consistent tone in your own writing is a sophisticated writing skill.

Claim: a statement that can be treated as true or false. The point of argumentation is to illustrate with evidence the truth of the claims one makes and/or to point out the faulty logic underlying the claims of others. The claim of a piece of writing may be clearly stated or implicit. Here is an example of an explicitly stated claim: Drinking pomegranate juice will lengthen one’s life. (Notice: The claim may or may not be true. It is the purpose of argumentation to examine and explain the evidence in the quest for truth.)

Implicit Claim: An implicit claim is not directly stated, but it is implied by the text. (*Implicit* means not directly stated.) In this advertisement, the implicit claim is that *drinking pomegranate juice will lengthen one’s life*. It doesn’t come right out and say that, but the claim is implied by the phrase “Cheat death” and the picture that accompanies it.



Counterclaim: a rebuttal to a previous claim that may include information the previous claim overlooked or misinterpreted. Here is a sample of a counterclaim:

While it has been used for thousands of years to treat various diseases, there is no scientific evidence that proves pomegranate juice has beneficial effects.

Compare: to point out likenesses and differences

Textual evidence: Quotations from the original texts that are used to support the claims a writer makes