

College Sample Assessment

OVERVIEW

CLA+ comprises a Performance Task (PT) and a Selected-Response Question (SRQ) section. There are three types of questions in the SRQ section: Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning (SQR), Critical Reading and Evaluation (CRE), and Critique-an-Argument (CA). CLA+ is administered online. The PT contains an open-ended prompt that requires written responses. The SRQs ask the student to choose the best response based on the Document Library provided.

CLA+ tasks are designed to assess students' general critical-thinking and written-communication skills, regardless of their academic concentrations. These skills include scientific and quantitative reasoning, analytic reasoning and evaluation of information, problem solving, writing effectiveness, and writing mechanics. These skills are necessary, not only for success in high school and college; they are important for success in the workplace and other aspects of life outside the classroom. No prior knowledge of any particular field is necessary in order to perform well.

What is presented in the practice example is an abbreviated version of a PT and of SRQs. Nevertheless, please familiarize yourself with how the assessment includes real-world scenarios and a series of documents that reflect an authentic situation.

This example is also intended to demonstrate what is expected in a high-quality response. The sample response demonstrates the student's critical-thinking and written-communication skills.

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Additional Information

The CLA+ is an online assessment. For more information about the CLA+, please visit cae.org/cla.

You may also email the CLA+ Team at clateam@cae.org.

PERFORMANCE TASK: SKATING ACCIDENT

INSTRUCTIONS

This is an example of a CLA+ Performance Task. In the course of this practice Performance Task, you will prepare a written response to a hypothetical but realistic situation. The Performance Task is made up of an introductory scenario, a question, and seven documents/information sources. You will use information from the Document Library in carrying out the task.

While your personal values and experiences are important, you should base your response solely on the evidence provided in the documents.

SCENARIO

You are the chief marketing officer of SportsCo, an athletic equipment company. The most profitable sector of the company is its new line of inline skates called HotSkates. Given the success of the current HotSkates advertising campaign, the company plans to continue with it for the next three months. However, after a recent skating accident in which a teenager was seriously injured, SportsCo is now receiving negative press relating to possible safety hazards associated with its products. Critics are saying that the HotSkates advertisements do not adequately convey the advanced skill level necessary to safely perform tricks on the skates. If SportsCo continues with the current campaign, it risks facing lawsuits as well as increasing negative public opinion of the company's ethical standards. However, instating a new advertising campaign will require a great deal of time and money, and the new campaign may not be as successful as the present one. **It is your job to decide whether to continue with the present ad campaign.** You have 60 minutes to complete this task.

PROMPT

Your task is to write a report for your marketing team that explains your decision on whether to continue the present campaign. You should support your position with ideas and evidence found in the documents and address potential counterarguments in your recommendation. If you choose not to continue with the current campaign, you should include recommendations for an alternative campaign. There is no "correct" answer. Your report should clearly describe all the details necessary to support your position. Your answers will be judged not only on the accuracy of the information you provide but also on how clearly the ideas are presented, how thoroughly the information is covered, how effectively the ideas are organized, and how well your writing reflects the conventions of standard written English.

While your personal values and experiences are important, please answer the question in the this task solely on the basis of the information provided above and in the Document Library.

DOCUMENT LIBRARY

Document 1 - SportsCo Profile

Document 2 - Daily News Story

Document 3 - Incident Report

Document 4 - Interview Transcript

Document 5 - NCSA Bulletin

Document 6 - Advertising Storyboard

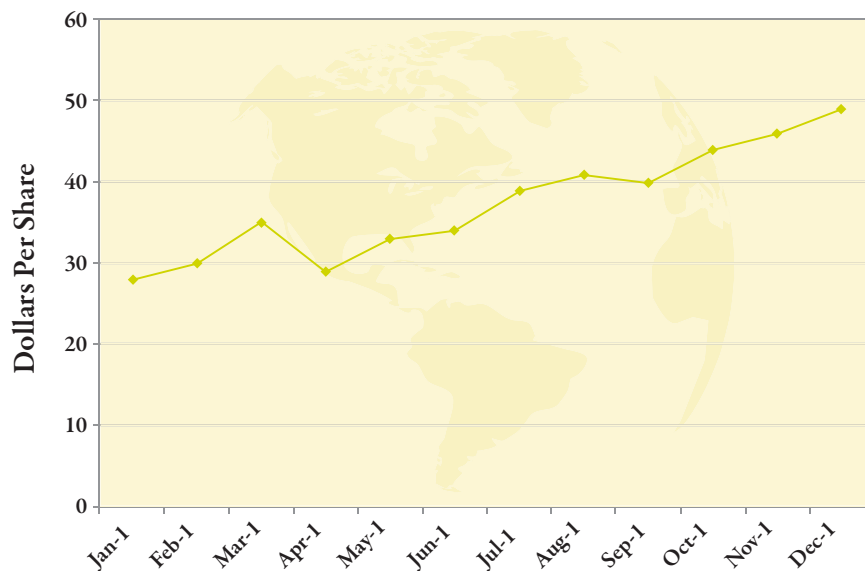
Document 7 - Blog Post

Company Profile-2014

SportsCo Manufacturing

Description: SportsCo is a diversified sporting equipment and leisure company that has grown significantly over the past decade. Founded in 1999 to produce wheels and wheel parts for the secondary bicycle market, SportsCo experienced rapid growth when the wheeled vehicle market grew in the 2000s. It broadened its product line significantly in 2007, with the acquisition of Fantam Sports. It has had its greatest success in the area of inline skating, where it holds a dominant share of the domestic market. Recent expansion into the apparel and leisure markets has netted solid returns. Investors have bid up the SportsCo share price by almost 80% during the past year.

SportsCo Share Price

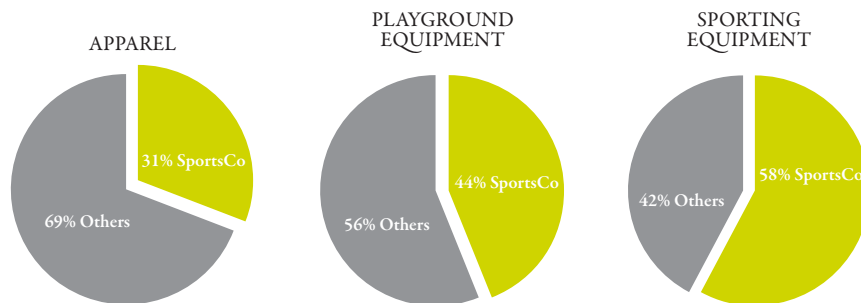


Share price increase
of almost
80%
during the past year

Leadership: SportsCo was founded by two brothers, Kyle and David Foster, who shared executive responsibility for the firm during its first few years. The Foster brothers were equally concerned about both community development and business success, and they devoted considerable effort to building a positive local environment by contributing to community projects. With the acquisition of Fantam Sports, the Foster brothers sought more experienced leadership and brought in Mitch Hennessey as chief executive officer (CEO). Hennessey has guided SportsCo to its current

success through conservative management coupled with aggressive, creative marketing. The Foster brothers' commitment to community continues in SportsCo's active involvement in community organizations. SportsCo is a major sponsor of the Junior Special Olympics for children with disabilities, and the company donates sporting goods equipment to inner-city schools throughout the country. CEO Hennessey serves on the board of "All Children Matter," an organization concerned with children from abusive homes.

Business Units: SportsCo has three major divisions: apparel, sporting equipment, and playground equipment. Each of the three divisions has a substantial share of the domestic market, but the sporting equipment unit remains the company's largest in terms of market share and total revenue.



Sporting equipment generated more than half of the company's revenue in 2013. The division has six operating units that focus on specific sectors of the U.S. market. SportsCo is the dominant manufacturer of skating equipment in the US, and they are among the largest firms in the market for fishing and boating and competitive team sports equipment. Their newer units have been solid performers but are still focused on niche markets.

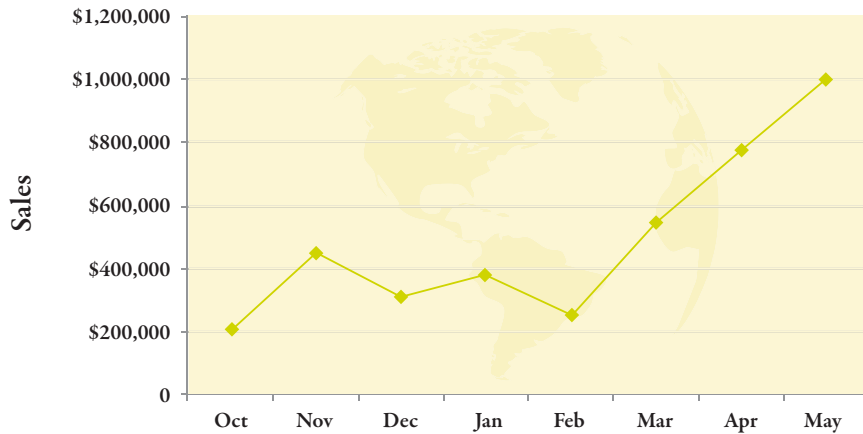
Sporting Equipment Sector

Team Sports	27%
Fishing and Boating	37%
Skating	52%
Bicycling	16%
Exercise Fitness	9%
Skiing	17%

Overall Growth: SportsCo is well managed, well positioned, and analysts predict continued growth.

Recent Developments: In 2013, SportsCo began manufacturing a new line of high-performance skates called HotSkates to market alongside its more traditional inline skates, StreetSkates. After releasing a new advertising campaign in March 2014, SportsCo saw a significant increase in the sales of HotSkates. This successful new campaign features exciting commercials targeted at children and young teenagers. Given the increase in sales following the launch of this campaign, the company plans to continue producing similar commercials with the same marketing platform going forward.

HotSkates Sales 2013-2014



**NEW
PRODUCT**

KENSINGTON DAILY NEWS

Kensington, Missouri

Friday, May 16

Local High School Student Paralyzed in Skating Accident

Fourteen-year-old Kyle Clester was paralyzed on Tuesday in a skating accident at Burroughs High School. Clester was found lying on the ground at about 4:00 p.m. by a school custodian. He had apparently been skating on school grounds when the accident occurred. Custodian Brad Steffens, who has worked at the school for five years, said he found Clester at the bottom of a flight of stairs leading to the football field. His helmet was lying next to him on the ground. According to Steffens, the boy was wearing HotSkates, which are the latest craze in inline skating. The custodian said he thought the boy must have fallen while trying to jump the stairs.

Clester was taken to Memorial Hospital where his condition is listed as serious. Hospital sources said the boy appears to be paralyzed, but it is too soon to tell whether the condition is permanent. Clester's parents said they continually warned Kyle to be careful when using the skates. They bought him elbow and wrist guards and required him to wear his helmet whenever he skated. His mother said, "I've heard about so many kids who have had accidents while wearing HotSkates that I didn't want to buy him a pair. But



source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roxa_Xtreme.jpg

he kept saying that HotSkates were what he wanted for his birthday, so eventually caved. Even so, I was scared every time he used them." Kyle turned 14 last month.

A nurse in the emergency room told reporters that the number of skating accidents has increased over the past few months, and more often the injuries involve HotSkates. "I'd say that half of the skating accidents we've seen involved these new HotSkates," the

nurse told reporters.

Shelly Banks, spokesperson for SportsCo, which manufactures HotSkates, refused to comment on this incident. "We stand behind the safety of our products," she said. "Our safety precautions exceed all industry standards."

One of Clester's friends said the boy had been practicing extra hard to perfect a trick he saw in a commercial for HotSkates. ♣



Fighting Falcons

INCIDENT REPORT

NAME:	Brad Steffens	DATE OF REPORT:	May 15, 2014
DATE OF INCIDENT:	May 14, 2014	TIME OF INCIDENT:	4:30 pm

LOCATION: Steps to football field

DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT:

I saw a kid lying at the bottom of the steps to the field. I ran outside and asked him what was wrong. He said he couldn't move or feel anything from the neck down. Nobody else was around. I ran back inside and called 911. The paramedics came right away. I gave them the helmet that was on the grass near the steps. After a while, they took the kid away.

IF ANYONE WAS INJURED, DESCRIBE WHO IT WAS AND WHAT THEY WERE DOING:

I don't know the kid who got hurt. He had one of those crazy haircuts and was wearing skates and a T-shirt with somebody's face on it. I don't know how he got hurt. Probably from skating.

DESCRIBE WHAT WERE YOU DOING PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT:

Checking that all the doors and windows in the main building were closed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Around 3 o'clock, I saw some kids skating on the handrails and benches, so I told them to leave like I always do. I usually let kids skate on the cement patio if they want to because it's wide open, but they have to wear a helmet. I never let them on the handrails or benches. I think the kid who got hurt was one of the ones I saw earlier in the afternoon. Not sure.

Transcript of Interview with Heather McKinley, May 24
Institute for Consumer Protection



TN: We are talking today with Heather McKinley, research director of the Institute for Consumer Protection, about roller skates. Welcome to the show, Heather.



HM: Thank you. It is a pleasure to be here.



TN: When I was growing up, skates had side-by-side wheels; now the wheels are one behind the other. Is this better?



HM: It depends on what you mean by better. Once you learn to use them, the new inline skates are faster and more maneuverable than the side-by-side, four-wheel roller skates you grew up with. But they are harder to learn.



TN: Does that mean more accidents?



HM: We are certainly seeing more skating injuries every year, but we are also seeing much more skating.



TN: Are these inline skates dangerous?



HM: Definitely. One of the advantages of side-by-side four-wheel skates is that they give you stable contact with the ground. There is less lateral pressure on your feet and ankles.



TN: In simpler terms, please.



HM: Inline skates tip from side to side. Roller skates don't. The only thing that keeps inline skates upright is your balance and the strength of your ankles.



TN: Are there more ankle injuries with inline skates?



HM: Definitely. Doctors call them "the orthopedic surgeon's friend" because they are associated with so many broken ankles, wrists, and arms.



TN: Why wrists and arms?



HM: Because people skate so fast that they can't keep their balance. And when they fall, they reach out to protect themselves and end up breaking an arm or wrist.



TN: So speed is part of the problem.



HM: Absolutely. Speed and stability.



TN: What about the new generation of inline skates, such as HotSkates?



HM: These skates are faster and narrower than earlier versions, and they are more dangerous as a result.



TN: How do they do that? Do they use only one wheel?



HM: No, they employ new space-age bearings that have less friction, allowing the wheels to turn faster. Also, they use new synthetic materials that permit narrower wheels for more maneuverability but less stability.



TN: So, are they safe?



HM: Not for beginners. You go faster, so if you do fall, you are likely to have a more serious injury. I inline skate myself, but I know my limits. HotSkates are too fast for me, and, I suspect, for most children.

Skaters Beware: Serious Injury Rates with Inline Skates

Sporting King, the nation’s leading retailer of inline skates, provided the National Consumer Safety Association (NCSA) with sales figures and customer lists for all the inline skates it sold between October 31, 2013 and April 30, 2014. These data indicate that 60% of the skates Sporting King sold during this period were manufactured by SportsCo, and the remaining 40% were manufactured by AXM.

Both SportsCo and AXM make traditional inline skates as well as newer high-performance inline skates that are faster and more expensive. SportsCo and AXM are currently the only two manufacturers of these new high-performance skates.

We surveyed a stratified random sample of 8,200 Sporting King customers who purchased SportsCo and AXM inline skates during the October 31, 2013 and April 30, 2014 period. The survey included questions about the skaters’ experience and skill level, the frequency of skate use, and the frequency of accidents and injuries. Skate purchasers who returned completed surveys to NCSA by May 15, 2014 received a store gift certificate worth \$15.

This report is based on the 3,884 completed surveys (47.4%) that NCSA received by May 15, 2014. SportsCo and AXM inline skate purchasers had nearly identical response rates (47.3% and 47.4% respectively).

Table 1 shows the number of Sporting King customers that were surveyed compared to the total customers who purchased SportsCo and AXM inline skates.

Table 1. Number of Sporting King customers completing the survey who purchased SportsCo and AXM skates.

Company	SportsCo		AXM	
	StreetSkates	HotSkates	Inlyne	Inlyne Pro
Model Name	StreetSkates	HotSkates	Inlyne	Inlyne Pro
Model Type	Regular	High Performance	Regular	High Performance
Responding	1613	716	1083	472

Many survey respondents reported that the person using the skates suffered one or more skating related injuries during the preceding three-month period. Injuries included abrasions and cuts, muscle strains and tears, and broken bones. This report does not include less severe injuries and, instead, focuses on the strains, tears, and breaks that required medical treatment by a physician. The numbers below are based on skaters who suffered one or more of these more serious injuries.¹

¹ No questions were asked about what caused the injury. There were too few fatalities to report reliable results by manufacturer, skate type, or experience level.

The breakdown of skaters by self-reported level of experience is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Number of skaters at each level of experience using each type of skate.

Experience Level	SportsCo		AXM		All Skates
	Regular (StreetSkates)	High Performance (HotSkates)	Regular	High Performance	
Beginner	600	198	412	132	1342
Intermediate	527	238	350	157	1272
Advanced	486	280	321	183	1270
All Levels	1613	716	1083	472	3884

Table 3 shows the number of skaters, among the 3,884 questionnaires returned, who suffered one or more serious injuries (as defined above).

Table 3. Number of skaters with serious injuries by type of skate, experience of user, and manufacturer.

Experience Level	SportsCo		AXM		All Skates
	Regular (StreetSkates)	High Performance (HotSkates)	Regular	High Performance	
Beginner	81	38	52	26	197
Intermediate	52	24	36	16	128
Advanced	25	13	13	6	57
All Levels	158	75	101	48	382

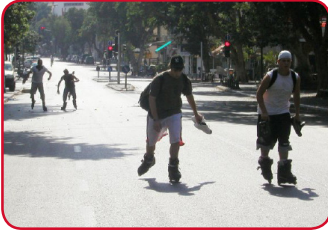
Table 4 shows the percentage of skaters in each combination of skate type and experience level that suffered at least one “serious” injury (as defined above) during the preceding three months. For example, of the 600 beginning skaters who used StreetSkates (i.e. SportsCo’s regular inline skate), 81 (13.5%) had at least one serious injury.

Table 4. Percentage of skaters with serious injuries by type of skate, experience of user, and manufacturer.

Experience Level	SportsCo		AXM		Overall
	Regular (StreetSkates)	High Performance (HotSkates)	Regular	High Performance	
Beginner	13.5%	19.2%	12.6%	19.7%	14.7%
Intermediate	9.9%	10.1%	10.3%	10.2%	10.1%
Advanced	5.1%	4.6%	4.0%	3.3%	4.5%
All Levels	9.8%	10.5%	9.3%	10.2%	9.8%



Opening scene: Quiet residential street. Camera pans right to reveal more houses.
Early morning sounds: a bird chirping, wind in trees, a door opening, etc.
Voice-over: It's Saturday. No school. Time to sleep in. Relax. Enjoy the weekend.



Scene 2: Camera pans back left to reveal four kids in the distance, rolling forward fast on HotSkates, weaving between obstacles on a street.
Voice-over: Or then again....



Scene 3: Cut to close up of skaters rushing past.
Sound of their laughter and excitement. Sound of HotSkates on pavement.
Music: "Wild and Wild" by DeIRay33



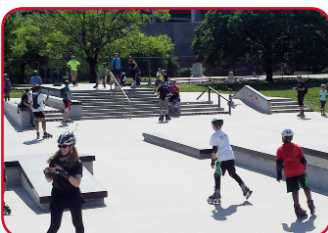
Scene 4: Camera pans back right to follow the four kids rolling away in the distance.
Music recedes. Early morning sounds come back.
Voice-over: The choice is yours.



Scene 5: Montage of kids doing tricks.

1. Spin flip	2. Grab
3. Huge air	4. Grind

Voice-over: Hotskates are something new. They are fast, slick, hot. Simply the best skates ever. They turn skating into a whole new sport.



Scene 6: Cut to scenes of open skating in a skate park with grind rails, half pipe, bowl, etc.
Sounds of skates and kids having fun.
Voice-over: HotSkates from SportsCo. If you haven't hot-skated, you haven't skated.

Text over screen: The athletes doing these tricks are experts. New skaters should not attempt these tricks.



Keeping In Line: A Skating Blog

Welcome to my blog about all things skating. My name is Cam, and I am an inline skating fanatic. I also consider myself to be a skating expert, having over 10 years of experience working for AXM Skates.

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HotSkates: Fast, Slick, Hot...Misleading?

By: Cameron Brooks

31 May 2014

Hi, everyone! I just want to share my thoughts on the HotSkates controversy that's been going on since Kyle Clester seriously injured himself in a skating accident.

If you know any kids between the ages of 9 and 15, chances are you are familiar with the latest HotSkates craze. Thanks to the wild and exciting HotSkates commercial that is playing on all the major TV networks and targeted at young people, kids all over the country are now begging their parents for these new high-performance inline skates, which allow for more speed and maneuverability than traditional inline skates. But should these kids really be using HotSkates?

The commercial shows children zooming around on HotSkates in their local neighborhood and performing complicated (and dangerous) stunts. Although the commercial warns that only skilled athletes should attempt the tricks shown in the advertisement, it does not warn against the dangers of fast skating for beginners. Furthermore, the advertisement implies that it is safe to attempt dangerous skating maneuvers in uncontrolled and possibly hazardous areas, such as open roads and unattended public buildings. The fact is that going at the high speeds made possible by HotSkates is only safe for experienced and skilled skaters, even when no stunts are being performed. And skating in zones not intended for skating is dangerous for everyone, regardless of experience or skill level. Most of the children targeted by the HotSkates commercial are not advanced enough to use the product safely. What's more, even young skaters who are advanced enough to try the stunts shown in the commercial may be misled into believing that they can skate anywhere safely.

So, what can we take away from this? For starters, HotSkates, though often targeted at kids and teenagers, may actually be more suitable for adults who are both skilled enough and mature enough to use the product safely. Additionally, if you were planning to purchase a pair of HotSkates for your daughter, son, niece, or nephew, you may want to think twice about whether or not your well-meaning gift may become a safety hazard.

ANSWER SHEET

Please use the space below to answer the question from the previous page. If necessary, additional paper can be used.

SAMPLE RESPONSE 1

As you all are well aware, HotSkates, our highest-grossing product, has come under public attack in recent months. The high incidence of accidents and injuries in young HotSkates users has attracted this negative media attention. Because this negative publicity could very likely damage our reputation as a company and hurt sales, I have made the decision to instate a new advertising campaign to protect the reputation of our company and our products.

This decision was made based on a thorough analysis of media coverage and financial reports that reveal the need to reassess and redesign our advertising approach to marketing HotSkates. HotSkates sales have jumped nearly 1 million dollars from February to May of 2014, providing us with the revenue necessary to make the marketing changes I propose. While these changes may lead to an immediate decrease in HotSkates sales, it will allow SportsCo to maintain our reputation—which we have worked for the past 15 years to build—as a reliable and high-quality sports equipment company.

An examination of recent media discussions of HotSkates will explain the necessity of a campaign adjustment. The incident of a fourteen-year old boy paralyzed in a skating accident involving HotSkates has received considerable press, even though it's unclear whether the boy was an experienced skater, given that—according to the Daily News article—Kyle Clester had only recently received his HotSkates. He may simply not have been skating appropriately for his skill level; a beginner should not have been attempting advanced skating tricks, as was suggested by the school custodian. In the new story, however, his mother is quoted describing HotSkates as the cause of the accident. The article even cites our popular HotSkates commercial as an influence in the boy's risky skating behavior. If this were an isolated incident, it might not be cause for alarm, but this sentiment has become part of the national attitude towards our product. In a recent television interview, Heather McKinley, the research director for Consumer Protection, called our skates “dangerous” and even announced that she would not use them or recommend them for children.

The National Consumer Safety Association has released a study showing that our high-performance skates do not have a significantly higher rate of serious injury than our major competitor's skates at any experience level (a 10.5% overall serious injury rate for HotSkates, compared to 10.2% for AXM's high-performance skates). Though this report was published later than some of the other documents I have compiled on the subject, we do not know whether these statistics will affect broader public opinion. People may instead focus on the fact that our advertisement targets younger skaters, when we know from the NCSA report inexperienced skaters have much higher risk of serious injury than experienced skaters when using high-performance skates; 19% of all beginner skaters who use HotSkates experience serious injuries.

Despite the fact that we provide a disclaimer at the end of our commercial, all the negative attention portrays SportsCo as an untrustworthy or even a dishonest company. In order to keep our sales steady and rising for decades to come, it is important that we maintain the trust of our customers. To continue with our campaign might save us money in the short-term but it will not be good for the long-term public opinion of SportsCo. With the recent spike in sales, we can afford to alter our HotSkates marketing campaign. Skating equipment is the largest unit within our Sports Equipment sector and HotSkates sales have been astronomical since the launch of the ad campaign, but the negative press could seriously impact our long-term success. I propose we work on marketing HotSkates to an older, semi-professional demographic and work with the development team to produce a new skating product that is safe for beginners who want to try low-level skating tricks. It is our responsibility to our consumers and to the future of our company.

Analysis and Problem Solving

Subscore: 6

- States an explicit decision/conclusion/position
- Provides comprehensive support, including nearly all of the relevant and credible information, in a manner that demonstrates outstanding analysis and comprehension of the documents
- Thoroughly refutes contradictory evidence or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)

Writing Effectiveness

Subscore: 6

- Organizes response in a logically cohesive way that makes it very easy to follow the writer's arguments
- Provides valid and comprehensive elaboration on facts or ideas related to each argument and clearly cites sources of information

Writing Mechanics

Subscore: 6

- Demonstrates outstanding control of grammatical conventions
- Consistently writes well-constructed complex sentences with varied structure and length
- Displays adept use of vocabulary that is precise, advanced, and varied

SAMPLE RESPONSE 2

Dear Marketing Team,

Our product, HotSkates has brought in 1 million dollars in recent months. It is an essential product to our company and it is selling so well because kids love the fancy tricks we portray in the commercial. It is enough to protect us that we put a disclaimer at the end saying that this product is for professional experts. I have decided we should not change our campaign just because some people complain. The issue is that they dont understand safety precautions or proper training. They should learn that and read our disclaimer.

SportsCo is not the only company making High Performance inline skates that lead to injury. AXM also does. In fact we have almost the same amount of injuries. Even they have more beginners with a percentage of injuries.

Even the experts who say that this is not for kids understand that you need special skills, and protection to safely use HotSkates. In the incident report it is clear, that the boy who became paralyzed was acting unsafely. This is not the fault of our company. We have other kinds of equipment for sale for beginners. Kids could also use our regular skates called StreetSkates. The most important point of course is that HotSkates make an enormous amount of money for our company. Skating is 52% of all the equipment we sell. We can't afford to drop this campaign. It's what the kids want.

Analysis and Problem Solving

Subscore: 4

- States an explicit decision/conclusion/position
- Provides valid support that addresses multiple pieces of relevant and credible information in a manner that demonstrates adequate analysis and comprehension of the documents; some information is omitted
- May attempt to address contradictory information or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)

Writing Effectiveness

Subscore: 3

- Provides limited or somewhat unclear arguments. Presents relevant information in each response, but that information is not woven into arguments
- Provides elaboration on facts or ideas a few times, some of which is valid; sources of information are sometimes unclear

Writing Mechanics

Subscore: 3

- Demonstrates fair control of grammatical conventions with frequent minor errors
- Writes sentences that read naturally but tend to have similar structure and length
- Uses vocabulary that communicates ideas adequately but lacks variety

SAMPLE RESPONSE 3

I have decided to stop the campaign ads for HotSkates. We owe it to, the kids and the mother of the kid who was paralyzed to advertise in a different way and even the experts agree that inline skating leads to serious injury like it says in the report about SportsCo and AXM. We have worse numbers than they do.

The way the incident report describes the boy is really sad, and the mother's words in the newspaper. It's important that we change the ad. If you look at the ad, it makes the skating look like a lot of fun not dangerous enough. One way we could change the ad is to make it look dangerous like in reality.

SportsCo make a lot of money from skating but it's not the only place we make money from. We also make money from Team Sports, Fishing and Boating, Bicycling, Exercise Fitness, and Skiing. I think we should use more money to sell products for one of these things. It could help cover whatever it costs to change the ads and we will still probably sell skates but hopefully no kids will become paralyzed or injured like before.

Analysis and Problem Solving

Subscore: 2

- May state or imply a decision/conclusion/position
- Provides minimal analysis as support (e.g., briefly addresses only one idea from one document) or analysis is entirely inaccurate, illogical, unreliable, or unconnected to the decision/conclusion/position

Writing Effectiveness

Subscore: 2

- Does not develop convincing arguments; writing may be disorganized and confusing
- Does not provide elaboration on facts or ideas

Writing Mechanics

Subscore: 2

- Demonstrates minimal control of grammatical conventions with many errors that make the response difficult to read or provides insufficient evidence to judge
- Writes sentences that are repetitive or incomplete, and some are difficult to understand
- Uses simple vocabulary, and some vocabulary is used inaccurately or in a way that makes meaning unclear

CLA+ Scoring Rubric

	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Analysis and Problem Solving</p> <p>Making a logical decision or conclusion (or taking a position) and supporting it by utilizing appropriate information (facts, ideas, computed values, or salient features) from the Document Library</p>	<p>May state or imply a decision/conclusion/position</p> <p>Provides minimal analysis as support (e.g., briefly addresses only one idea from one document) or analysis is entirely inaccurate, illogical, unreliable, or unconnected to the decision/conclusion/position</p>	<p>States or implies a decision/conclusion/position</p> <p>Provides analysis that addresses a few ideas as support, some of which is inaccurate, illogical, unreliable, or unconnected to the decision/conclusion/position</p>	<p>States or implies a decision/conclusion/position</p> <p>Provides some valid support, but omits or misrepresents critical information, suggesting only superficial analysis and partial comprehension of the documents</p> <p>May not account for contradictory information (if applicable)</p>	<p>States an explicit decision/conclusion/position</p> <p>Provides valid support that addresses multiple pieces of relevant and credible information in a manner that demonstrates adequate analysis and comprehension of the documents; some information is omitted</p> <p>May attempt to address contradictory information or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)</p>	<p>States an explicit decision/conclusion/position</p> <p>Provides strong support that addresses much of the relevant and credible information, in a manner that demonstrates very good analysis and comprehension of the documents</p> <p>Refutes contradictory information or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)</p>	<p>States an explicit decision/conclusion/position</p> <p>Provides comprehensive support, including nearly all of the relevant and credible information, in a manner that demonstrates outstanding analysis and comprehension of the documents</p> <p>Thoroughly refutes contradictory evidence or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)</p>
<p>Writing Effectiveness</p> <p>Constructing organized and logically cohesive arguments. Strengthening the writer's position by providing elaboration on facts or ideas (e.g., explaining how evidence bears on the problem, providing examples, and emphasizing especially convincing evidence)</p>	<p>Does not develop convincing arguments; writing may be disorganized and confusing</p> <p>Does not provide elaboration on facts or ideas</p>	<p>Provides limited, invalid, over-stated, or very unclear arguments; may present information in a disorganized fashion or undermine own points</p> <p>Any elaboration on facts or ideas tends to be vague, irrelevant, inaccurate, or unreliable (e.g., based entirely on writer's opinion); sources of information are often unclear</p>	<p>Provides limited or somewhat unclear arguments. Presents relevant information in each response, but that information is not woven into arguments</p> <p>Provides elaboration on facts or ideas a few times, some of which is valid; sources of information are sometimes unclear</p>	<p>Organizes response in a way that makes the writer's arguments and logic of those arguments apparent but not obvious</p> <p>Provides valid elaboration on facts or ideas several times and cites sources of information</p>	<p>Organizes response in a logically cohesive way that makes it fairly easy to follow the writer's arguments</p> <p>Provides valid elaboration on facts or ideas related to each argument and cites sources of information</p>	<p>Organizes response in a logically cohesive way that makes it very easy to follow the writer's arguments</p> <p>Provides valid and comprehensive elaboration on facts or ideas related to each argument and clearly cites sources of information</p>
<p>Writing Mechanics</p> <p>Demonstrating facility with the conventions of standard written English (agreement, tense, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling) and control of the English language, including syntax (sentence structure) and diction (word choice and usage)</p>	<p>Demonstrates minimal control of grammatical conventions with many errors that make the response difficult to read or provides insufficient evidence to judge</p> <p>Writes sentences that are repetitive or incomplete, and some are difficult to understand</p> <p>Uses simple vocabulary, and some vocabulary is used inaccurately or in a way that makes meaning unclear</p>	<p>Demonstrates poor control of grammatical conventions with frequent minor errors and some severe errors</p> <p>Consistently writes sentences with similar structure and length, and some may be difficult to understand</p> <p>Uses simple vocabulary, and some vocabulary may be used inaccurately or in a way that makes meaning unclear</p>	<p>Demonstrates fair control of grammatical conventions with frequent minor errors</p> <p>Writes sentences that read naturally but tend to have similar structure and length</p> <p>Uses vocabulary that communicates ideas adequately but lacks variety</p>	<p>Demonstrates good control of grammatical conventions with few errors</p> <p>Writes well-constructed sentences with some varied structure and length</p> <p>Uses vocabulary that clearly communicates ideas but lacks variety</p>	<p>Demonstrates very good control of grammatical conventions</p> <p>Consistently writes well-constructed sentences with varied structure and length</p> <p>Uses varied and sometimes advanced vocabulary that effectively communicates ideas</p>	<p>Demonstrates outstanding control of grammatical conventions</p> <p>Consistently writes well-constructed complex sentences with varied structure and length</p> <p>Displays adept use of vocabulary that is precise, advanced, and varied</p>

Fueling the Future

In a quest to solve the energy problems of the twenty-first century—that is, to find sustainable and renewable sources of energy that are less destructive to the environment yet economical enough to have mass appeal—scientists throughout the world are experimenting with innovative forms of fuel production. While oil is still the most common source of fuel, there is a finite amount of it, and new alternatives will become necessary to sustain the supply of energy that we are accustomed to.

Corn-based ethanol, the most common alternative to traditional fossil fuels (primarily coal, petroleum, and natural gas), is mixed into gasoline in small quantities, and it now accounts for about 10% of the fuel supply from sources within the United States. Because corn is grown on farmland, it is subject to price fluctuations based on supply and demand of the crop, as well as disruptions resulting from naturally occurring events, such as droughts and floods. At present, nearly 40% of the corn grown in the United States is used for fuel, and the demand for corn-based ethanol is rising. To meet this demand, wetlands, grasslands, and forests are all being converted into farmland with the sole intention of growing corn for more ethanol production. Corn grown for ethanol has become a more valuable commodity for farmers than crops grown for food, and this has negatively affected consumers worldwide, as shown by the increasing price of food over time.

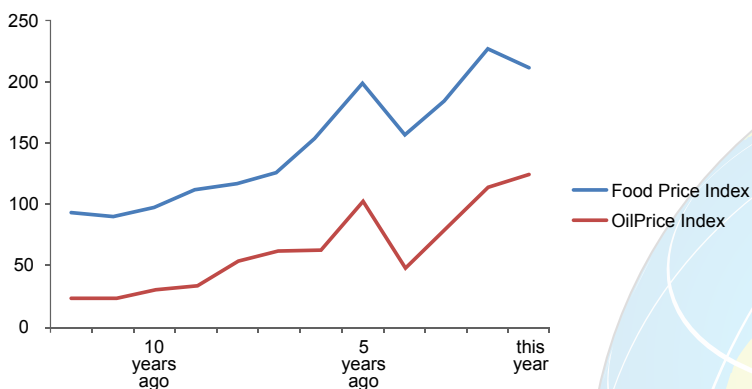


Figure 1: Food and oil price indices (based on information found at www.fao.org and www.indexmundi.com)

Another alternative that has gained attention in recent years is the harvesting of biofuel from algae. Biodiesel, a type of biofuel, is produced by extracting oil from algae, much like the process involved in creating vegetable oils from corn or soybeans. Ethanol can also be created by fermenting algae. Algae biofuel has some unique benefits that separate it from other fossil fuel alternatives. To begin with, while all fuels create

carbon dioxide when they are burned, algae have the ability to recapture and use that carbon dioxide during photosynthesis while they are growing. In this regard, the advantage is enormous. The process of growing algae actually absorbs more carbon dioxide than is released into the atmosphere when it is burned for fuel. Most manufacturing processes strive for “carbon neutrality”—or the balance between carbon emissions and depletion corresponding to a net carbon output of zero. Even better, algae-based biofuel can be described as “carbon negative.” Other forms of biofuel can make similar claims. For example, ethanol from corn also eliminates carbon dioxide in the atmosphere through photosynthesis. Unlike corn, however, algae grow in water, usually in man-made ponds built on land not used for crops. Additionally, algae do not require fresh water. Instead algae can be grown in salt water, and, in some cases, even sewage water and other waste material.

The most promising aspect of algae biofuel stems from its yield. When compared to other biofuel producers, algae’s fuel yield per harvested acre is over 500 times greater than that of corn.

The following chart compares commonly used biofuel crops on several important factors.

Table 1: Comparison of biofuel crops (based on information found at: algae-fuel.org and c1gas2.org.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com)

Product	Oil Yield Gallons/Acre	Harmful Gas Emissions	Use of Water to Grow Crop	Fertilizer Needed to Grow Crop	Energy Used to Extract Fuel from Crop
<i>Ethanol from Corn</i>	18	high	high	high	high
<i>Biodiesel from Soybeans</i>	48	high	high	low-medium	medium-low
<i>Biodiesel from Canola</i>	127	medium	high	medium	medium-low
<i>Biodiesel from Algae</i>	10,000	negative	medium	low	high

QUESTIONS: SCIENTIFIC AND QUANTITATIVE REASONING

1. Which of the following negatively affects algae biofuel's ability to be a "carbon-negative" energy source?
- A. It takes 3000 liters of water to create one liter of biofuel from algae, which is highly inefficient and wasteful of resources.
 - B. The process of extracting biofuel from algae requires more energy than is generated by burning the biofuel itself.
 - C. The construction of facilities needed to extract algae biofuel would initially require the use of fossil fuels for energy.
 - D. Algae biofuel is about 25 years away from being commercially viable, by which point there will be more efficient alternative energy sources.
2. The graph shows that food and oil prices increase and decrease together. Which of the following is the most plausible explanation for this phenomenon?
- A. As the price of food increases due to supply and demand, the cost of oil also rises because less land is available for planting corn.
 - B. Food and oil suppliers dictate the prices of their goods. Therefore, the prices of food and oil rise as consumers can afford to pay more for commodities.
 - C. The prices of oil and food are simultaneously affected by global conditions, such as natural disasters, weather, famine, and political unrest.
 - D. Farmers plant more corn for ethanol when the price of oil increases. The price of food then rises because less food-yielding crops are being produced.
3. What additional information could be added to the table for evaluating the efficiency and viability of algae biofuel compared to other sources of biofuel?
- A. The average amount of money farmers earn per acre for each biofuel source.
 - B. The costs associated with the extraction of energy from each biofuel source.
 - C. The taxes collected by the government on the sale of each biofuel crop.
 - D. The level of financial support each type of biofuel has received from investors.
4. Which of the following could plausibly occur if algae become a highly efficient and cost-effective source of biofuel?
- A. The price of food would fall because more farmland could be used to produce food rather than corn harvested for ethanol.
 - B. The supply of fresh water would be reduced because of the demands of harvesting algae for biofuel.
 - C. The cost of fuel would rise as the world's markets become flooded with alternative sources of energy.
 - D. The amount of carbon in the air would increase because more fuel will be burned due to lower costs.

DOCUMENT 1: CRITICAL READING & EVALUATION

Dear Nord County School Board,

We urge you to consider a ban on serving coffee in the Nord High School cafeteria. This is important for protecting and promoting good health practices in our teenagers. Caffeine is a harmful drug for growing brains and bodies. Many adults struggle to break their own addiction to coffee so allowing the teenagers at Nord High School to begin drinking coffee on a regular basis is a dangerous idea. Teenagers have less self-control and common sense about their own health than their adult counterparts.

There may be parents and researchers who claim that a daily cup or two of coffee for a teenager is not dangerous, but this is a misconception that is easily erased by simply looking at the facts. Teenagers need more sleep than most adults because their minds and bodies are still developing. Caffeine consumption disrupts their sleep cycles and leads to sleepiness during the school day. One study found that teenagers who fell asleep during class consumed 76% more caffeine than those who did not sleep during the school day. Additionally, caffeine consumption can lead to mood swings, impulsiveness, and loss of control. These are issues that many parents deal with. Serving coffee in the Nord High School cafeteria only worsens these problems and threatens the healthy functioning of our high school students.

Ban coffee from Nord High School and help Nord teenagers lead healthier lives.

Sincerely,



Garret Ricci

Parent of Nord High School students

PETITION TO KEEP COFFEE IN OUR SCHOOL CAFETERIA

To all Nord High School students:

Due to complaints from some parents, the Nord School Board is now considering a ban on coffee in our high school cafeteria. This would be an injustice to our school community! We have a right to make our own choices about our bodies and our consumption habits. Coffee is a healthy drink in moderation and is an important part of the school day for students who lead busy lives, balancing homework, friends, work, and extra-curricular activities. Just one cup of coffee during the day can help busy students stay alert and focused.

It's time that the Nord School Board treats high school students like the young adults that we are. They must give us the responsibility of making smart choices, and we will rise to the occasion. We must demand respect for our choices and our needs.

Oppose the ban on coffee in the Nord High School cafeteria by signing the petition below. Protect our rights!

Sincerely yours,
Lisa Browning
Nord High School Senior Class President

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

QUESTIONS: CRITICAL READING & EVALUATION

1. Which of the following statements, if true, would most seriously weaken Garret Ricci's claim?
- A. Teenagers who are prone to mood swings and impulsiveness consume caffeine at the same rate as their peers.
 - B. Adults who consume a small amount of caffeine daily are able to multitask more efficiently.
 - C. Adults who consume caffeine regularly were not necessarily coffee drinkers as teenagers.
 - D. Eighty percent of caffeine consumed by teenagers is consumed in the form of soda and other caffeinated non-coffee beverages.
2. Which of the following is a significant flaw in the Garret Ricci's argument?
- A. The author assumes that teenagers have less self-control than adults, without any evidence.
 - B. The author claims that sleeping during class is caused by caffeine consumption, while it may be that caffeine consumption is a result of sleepiness.
 - C. The author associates sleep and mood with health, without explaining the connection.
 - D. The author uses anecdotal evidence from parents and teenagers, rather than a substantial body of research.
3. On which point do Garret Ricci and Lisa Browning most clearly disagree?
- A. the ability of teenagers to make reasonable judgments about their own health
 - B. the usefulness of coffee as a replacement for sleep
 - C. the effects of coffee on the human brain and body
 - D. the prevalence of coffee in a variety of cultural and commercial settings
4. It can be inferred that Lisa Browning would **most likely** agree with which of the following statements?
- A. The School Board should not be allowed to make decisions about anything that affects the daily life of students.
 - B. The job of a class president is to protect the rights of students and represent their voices.
 - C. Parents who complain about coffee in the cafeteria have a negative view of teenagers.
 - D. Every high school student should enjoy the physical and mental benefits of coffee by drinking it daily.
5. Which of the following statements could be used as a counterargument to Garret Ricci's claim?
- A. Coffee needs to be available in high school cafeterias for the teachers and staff members who rely on it.
 - B. Because of its bitter taste, most teenagers are unlikely to consume coffee, whether or not it is served in their high school cafeterias.
 - C. Teenagers will be exposed to coffee elsewhere, so it is important that they learn to consume it in school, with self-control and moderation.
 - D. It is the parents' job, not the school's, to determine whether their teenagers should consume caffeine.

DOCUMENT : CRITIQUE-AN-ARGUMENT

ARGUMENT

Law-enforcement agencies depend heavily on eyewitnesses to identify suspected criminals. Indeed, it is estimated that 77,000 people nationwide are put on trial each year because of eyewitness identification. Traditionally, eyewitnesses are asked to identify suspects in a police “lineup” where suspected criminals are presented along with known innocents, called fillers, in a simultaneous (all at once) lineup. However, nowadays the lineups typically involve photos, not actual people. New research conducted in a well-controlled laboratory setting suggests that presenting photographs in a sequential (one at a time) lineup significantly reduces eyewitnesses’ identification of fillers from 18% in simultaneous lineups to 12% in sequential ones. It is clear that the sequential lineup is far superior to the simultaneous one, and it is imperative that law-enforcement agencies change the way in which eyewitnesses identify criminal suspects. This will greatly reduce the number of innocent people put on trial.

QUESTIONS: CRITIQUE-AN-ARGUMENT

1. Which of the following is the strongest argument against the speaker’s position that law-enforcement agencies need to change eyewitness identifications from simultaneous to sequential lineups?

- A. Simultaneous lineups have traditionally been used and have always worked well, so it does not make sense to change things.
- B. Eyewitnesses using a sequential lineup may not be better at ruling out fillers because the rate of misidentification between the two groups is not that large.
- C. It is easier for eyewitnesses to rule out fillers in a simultaneous lineup because they are seeing everyone at the same time.
- D. People should have faith in the legal system because there are many steps in the judicial process to prevent an innocent person from going on trial.

2. The speaker states that the study was conducted in a well-controlled laboratory setting. The speaker probably intended this statement to

- A. establish that a laboratory study is better than a study that was conducted in the field because it is free of competing explanations for the difference between the two lineups.
- B. illustrate that a laboratory setting is one in which a placebo must be in place in order for researchers to draw an accurate conclusion about the two lineups.
- C. demonstrate that both real-world and scientific experiments can be conducted in laboratory settings because laboratory settings are neutral environments.
- D. reveal that the results of the study are not accurate because studies conducted in a laboratory setting are contrived and not a reflection of what happens in the real world.

3. Which of the following research results would best strengthen the case for law-enforcement agencies using sequential lineups instead of simultaneous ones?

- A. The same percentage of suspects was found guilty by juries regardless of whether a sequential or simultaneous lineup was used.
- B. Eyewitnesses presented with a sequential lineup made fewer overall selections than those presented with a simultaneous lineup.
- C. Eyewitnesses presented with a sequential lineup feel more confident about their choices than those presented with a simultaneous lineup.
- D. Fewer fillers were identified as criminals by eyewitnesses presented with a sequential lineup than those presented with a simultaneous one in real-life cases.

4. What assumption does the speaker make when stating that law-enforcement agencies can reduce the number of innocent people sent to prison if they use sequential lineups?

- A. Eyewitnesses could identify fillers as criminal suspects who then could be incorrectly put on trial and ultimately sent to prison.
- B. If the simultaneous lineup is less accurate at identifying suspects, then more fillers are misidentified and incorrectly tried than if law-enforcement agencies only use sequential lineups.
- C. If the sequential lineup is better at increasing the number of correctly identified suspects, then the fillers will no longer be needed, leading to fewer people being incorrectly put on trial.
- D. People who act as fillers in multiple lineups could be incorrectly identified as suspects in one lineup but not in another.

5. Eyewitnesses from multiple cases were recruited to participate in a follow-up study where they were randomly assigned to one of two groups. Which one of the following research designs could be used to test the hypothesis that an officer's body language influences eyewitnesses' ability to correctly identify a suspect in a lineup?

- A. Have officers with knowledge of the cases present images in a sequential lineup to one group of eyewitnesses and in a simultaneous lineup to the other group.
- B. Have officers with no knowledge of the cases present images in a sequential lineup to one group of eyewitnesses and in a simultaneous lineup to the other group.
- C. Have officers with knowledge of the cases present images to one group of eyewitnesses and officers with no knowledge of the cases present images to the other group.
- D. Two officers, one with and one without knowledge of the cases, present images to one group of eyewitnesses and another officer with knowledge of the cases presents images to the other group.