

HANDOUT 3.2A Model Evidence Rankings

For each claim, rank the provided evidence from 1 to 5, with 1 being the *most powerful* evidence to support the claim and 5 being the *least powerful* evidence to support the claim. Be prepared to explain what makes each piece of evidence more or less powerful. Our reasons for justifying what makes the strongest evidence will be put into semantic scales for evaluating evidence that we will use throughout the year.

1. Claim: The Beatles are the most innovative musical group of all time.

Audience: Friendship group

- ___A. At one point, they held the top five spots on the Billboard Top 100 chart—a feat never repeated by anyone else.
- ___B. They originally went by the name of The Quarrymen.
- ___C. Music critic Richie Unterberger writes: “They synthesized all that was good about early rock and roll and changed it into something original and even more exciting—they are the greatest and most influential band of the modern era.”
- ___D. *Rolling Stone* magazine lists The Beatles as having the greatest album (*Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*) ever and eleven of the top 500 albums—and no other band comes close.
- ___E. They fused rhythm and blues with early rock, wrote in the Mixolydian mode, used orchestral arrangements and unique instruments like the sitar, and generally made innovation part of what they did.

2. Claim: I need to have an increase in my allowance.

Audience: Your parents or caregivers

- ___A. All the kids in my class get more allowance than I do.
- ___B. The prices of the things I buy with my allowance have gone up quite a lot due to inflation.
- ___C. As reported in *US News and World Report*, parenting experts agree that earning allowances in return for chores teaches a strong work ethic, financial literacy, fiscal responsibility, a sense of what it takes to run a household, and a sense of familial belonging.
- ___D. A recent poll of 2,505 teens showed that the average allowance for thirteen- to fifteen-year-olds was over \$13, and I only get \$5.
- ___E. According to Kaitlyn Laurie, a child and adult psychotherapist in Madison, WI, if kids’ allowances aren’t enough, it gives kids “the impression things come too hard.”

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3. **Claim:** Our school should allow us to choose what books we want to read for summer reading instead of giving us a required list.

Audience: The principal

- ___A. According to Michael W. Smith and Jeffrey Wilhelm in their award-winning book *“Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys”: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*, young people do significantly more reading on their own and enjoy it more when they are allowed to choose what they read.
- ___B. Adults get to choose what they want to read, and school should be teaching us how to do what adult experts do.
- ___C. If you read the assigned books too early in the summer, you’ll forget them by the time school starts, so athletes who want to do the reading before practice starts during the summer are at a disadvantage.
- ___D. Most students hate the summer reading books that our school chooses.
- ___E. On their website, the Waterford Education Group (Waterford.org) reports that allowing learners to choose their own books “improve[s] comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency.” Further, they assert that choosing one’s own reading promotes decision making, independence, and confidence.

SOURCE: Adapted from Smith et al. (2012).

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