

Dale Carnegie Project

Due Date:

The following project consists of 10 reading comprehension and critical thinking tasks. Read each task below and carefully respond in complete sentences. Since you will NOT be graded on grammar accuracy or writing style (as long as your answers are easily understood), you do NOT need to follow a paragraph format. The project must be submitted to your instructor by the deadline or you will receive a zero on this project. There are **NO EXCEPTIONS** to this deadline! It is thus strongly recommended that you finish and submit your project BEFORE the deadline. It is also strongly encouraged that you read through the chapter before Friday, August 7th in case you have any questions for your instructor.

Every persuasive text consists of arguments and conclusions. An important component of advanced reading skills is the ability to analyze and examine written arguments to determine how well they support a text's conclusion. If an argument is objectively **sound**, then the conclusion must be true. Unfortunately, we live in a world where it is very difficult to make conclusions with 100% certainty, and so we must rely on evidence to inform our opinions and lead us to **tentative conclusions**. Evidence can be classified as weak or strong, depending on how strongly it leads to a conclusion.

Complete the tasks below.

1. Identify the conclusion of the chapter.
2. Look at a biography of Dale Carnegie, the author. List at least 3 possible motivations that Dale Carnegie **might** have for writing and publishing this book.
3. How organized is this chapter? (Is it very well-organized, somewhat organized, or mostly disorganized?) Is there an organization type (from the 6 organization patterns that we have studied) that clearly dominates the chapter? If so, what is it?
4. In persuasive arguments, authors strive to use logical arguments to prove the truth of their conclusion with 100% certainty. When an author is unable to depend solely on logic, he seeks out objective scientific data. When there is no scientific data, the author seeks out examples or quotes. The only way to be 100% certain about a conclusion is if the argument only consists of logic. Scientific data (that is based on many measurements) can present strong evidence, but **sometimes scientific data can lead to an incorrect conclusion**. Examples are considered to be

weak evidence because **individual examples can often lead to an incorrect conclusion**. Quotes are generally considered to be very weak evidence unless the source is a well-educated or widely-experienced expert or a famously-trustworthy source. What does the author of this chapter most rely on: logic, scientific data, or individual examples and quotes? Based on the evidence, how confident should the author be about his conclusion? Does he accurately inform the readers of how confident they should be of the conclusion?

5. In this chapter, the author lists many examples. When critically evaluating a persuasive essay, it is very important to determine if each example is 'good' or 'bad.' For the purposes of the project, a 'good example' comes from a trustworthy, verifiable source, and the example should be a normal representation (and not an extreme case).

For instance: If someone tries to argue that cigarettes are harmful...

A bad example: "My aunt's neighbor said that her friend smoked 3 cigarettes, developed lung cancer, and died the next month." (Should you be expected to trust a stranger with no expertise in the subject? Of course not. Is this a normal representation of how cigarettes affect the body? No, this example is very extreme, and the lung cancer is probably a coincidence in this particular case.)

A good example: "An oncologist working at Chicago Memorial Hospital spoke at a conference a man who smoked 30 cigarettes every day for 30 years, developed lung cancer, and died 2 years later." (Can medical doctors be trusted when they speak about medical problems? Yes. Is this example normal or extreme? Normal. Thus, this is a good example)

5a. List all of the examples from the author's **personal** experience.

5b. List all of the examples that the author claims were directly told to him.

5c. List all of the examples that did not happen to the author and that were not told to the author. Identify the source of each of these examples, if the author indicated how he discovered them. If the source of an example is not indicated, write "No source."

6. List all scientific evidence that the author includes, if any. How does this contribute to the strength of the argument?

7. From the chapter, list a possible example of each of the following logical fallacies:

a. Hasty Generalization

b. False Dichotomy

c. Correlation vs. causation

d. Confusing lack of evidence with falsity

8. **IMAGINE** that you had the ability to design a scientific sociology experiment in order to provide evidence to support Carnegie's argument. Describe the experiment in detail. (Hint: there is more than one possible answer.)

9. Carnegie mentioned that some people do not follow his advice. How does he describe them? Are all of them unsuccessful in their lives?

10. After completing Steps 1-9, you have become knowledgeable about the argument style of Dale Carnegie. Based on your analysis of this chapter, does Dale Carnegie present a strong argument? If his argument is convincing, should you accept his conclusion? Alternatively, if his argument is unconvincing, then should his conclusion be accepted, rejected, or remain undecided?