

Reading Workshop: Persuasive Essay

DIRECTIONS Read the passage. Then read each question about the passage. Choose the correct answer. Mark the space for the answer you have chosen.

An Electric Car in Your Future?

Some environmentalists predict that today's middle school students will someday sit behind the wheels of electric cars. I say, "Don't count on it!" Electric cars will not be the practical answer to the problem of pollution caused by cars.

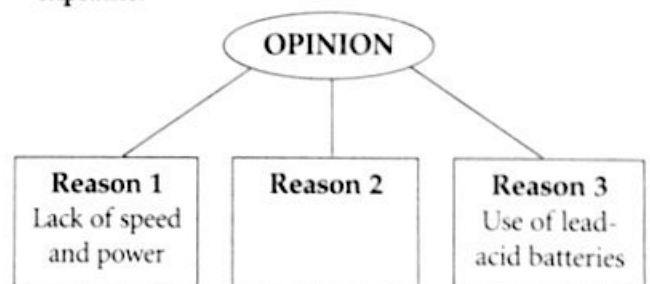
Electric cars have just too many problems. They are powered by batteries, but the batteries hold only enough power to drive about one hundred miles. After that short distance, the battery has to be recharged for three hours. Another problem is that electric cars do not have the same power to climb hills and accelerate that gasoline-powered cars do. Imagine chugging along, straining to get up hills, and worrying about whether you have enough power left to get where you are going. This is not carefree driving. The situation's not likely to improve in the future. According to Art MacCarley, professor of electrical engineering, "It is doubtful that electric cars will ever enjoy the range or performance advantages to which auto users have become accustomed with petroleum-fueled engines." I simply do not think people will be willing to put up with slower, less powerful cars for the sake of the environment.

Are electric cars as good for the environment as some would have us believe? These so-called zero-emission vehicles are supposed to reduce or eliminate harmful emissions into the air. Researcher Michael Quanlu Wang believes that the cars, in fact, may do a different kind of damage to the atmosphere. He admits that use of electric cars would reduce several kinds of pollution. Wang points out, however, that emissions of sulfur oxide would actually increase with widespread use of electric cars. Sulfur oxide is a major cause of acid rain. In other words, choose your poison!

Another reason to question the use of electric cars as a solution to air pollution is concern about lead. Most electric cars are powered by lead-acid batteries. One study shows that electric cars release sixty times more lead into the air than gasoline-powered cars do. Lead can cause serious problems in the human nervous system, especially in those of young children. This is the reason leaded gasoline is no longer sold. This problem is not likely to be solved simply by using a different kind of battery, because the alternatives are expensive.

While some may be enthusiastic about the future of electric cars, I predict these cars will go the way of the dinosaur. They cannot compete in our fast-paced world. In addition, they pose risks for the health of young children and others. I believe we need to put our efforts into finding other, more practical, and yes, more environmentally friendly means of transportation for the future.

- 1 What is the function of the last sentence in the first paragraph?
- A to appeal to logic
B to give proof
C to state an opinion
D to appeal to feelings
- 2 The statement that electric cars do not have the power nor the acceleration of gasoline-powered cars —
- F provides a fact
G appeals to emotions
H furnishes an anecdote
J introduces an opinion
- 3 Which word in paragraph 2 appeals most to the emotions?
- A imagine
B worrying
C hills
D future
- 4 The quotation by Art MacCarley is —
- F an emotional appeal
G an expert opinion
H an author's opinion
J statistical information
- 5 What kind of persuasive statement is "In other words, choose your poison"?
- A a supporting illustration
B expert knowledge
C an appeal to common sense
D an emotional appeal
- 6 To which feeling does the author appeal with the words "chugging" and "straining"?
- F reluctance
G comfort
H annoyance
J patience
- 7 In paragraph 4, the words "Lead can cause serious problems in the human nervous system" is an example of —
- A a belief
B an opinion
C evidence
D common sense
- 8 The author most likely includes the phrase "especially in those of young children" in order to —
- F offer an explanation
G correct a misunderstanding
H provide an anecdote
J appeal to the emotions
- 9 The sentence "One study shows that electric cars release sixty times more lead into the air than gasoline-powered cars do" is an example of —
- A an expert opinion
B an anecdote
C a reason
D a statistic
- 10 This chart shows three reasons the author explains.



Which of these reasons belongs in the middle box?

- F Danger of increased sulfur oxide pollution
G Helpfulness of zero-emission cars
H Reduced carbon monoxide pollution
J Performance advantages

DIRECTIONS The following persuasive essay by a student was written for a parent newsletter. Read the essay (which may contain some errors) and answer the questions that follow. Be sure to fill in the bubble next to the answer you choose. Mark like this not like this . You may look back at the passage as you answer the questions.

Get Kids Off the Internet

- 1 Parents and teachers used to be concerned about the overuse of television by teenagers.
2 Now, they should worry about the hours students spend on the Internet. There is a study
3 that showed that two thirds of people between the ages of nine and seventeen prefer the
4 Internet to television.
- 5 Kids spend excessive time playing on the Internet, and they hinder the jobs of some adults. A
6 study showed that people aged nine to eleven are on the Internet at least three times per
7 week to play games, write notes, and download music. People between fifteen and seven-
8 teen years old are online an average of five times each week. As a person whose mom makes
9 a living on the computer, I see her constantly suffer the frustrating experience of delays in
10 getting on the Internet. It takes forever to get from site to site once she has finally succeeded
11 in getting online. She has noticed a dramatic difference in how much more crowded and
12 slow access to the Internet is after school hours and on weekends when students are not at
13 school. The information highway is too busy these days. Someone must get out of the way,
14 and it should not be those who are using the Internet for their jobs.
- 15 My reasons for wishing to limit kids' use of the Internet are not entirely selfish, though.
16 There is potential harm to teenagers. First, there are psychological problems and safety
17 issues. Who knows what kinds of harmful sites a teenager may visit during those long hours
18 in front of the computer? Also, physical injury is a very real prospect.
- 19 It is acceptable to me when kids use the computer for worthwhile purposes. Use of com-
20 puters for school and homework should not be discouraged. On the other hand, I am very
21 annoyed by kids who take up valuable time on the Internet as they play games and chat
22 with friends.

GO ON 

1 Which of the following sentences is preferable to the one beginning, *There is a study . . .* in lines 2–4?

- There is one study that showed that two thirds of people between the ages of nine and seventeen like the Internet better than TV.
- There is a study that showed a preference for Internet over television by people between the ages of nine and seventeen.
- A study showed that two thirds of people between the ages of nine and seventeen prefer the Internet to television.
- People between the ages of nine and seventeen prefer the Internet to television; there is one study that shows this.

2 Which of the following sentences should be added at the end of paragraph 1 as an opinion statement? (line 4)

- It is amazing to think that the Internet has become so popular with teenagers.
- It is important to realize, however, that this means some still prefer television.
- I believe adults should limit the time people under age seventeen spend on the Internet each day.
- This does not mean, however, that we should not continue to discourage overuse of television.

3 Which of the following sentences is preferable to the one beginning, *Kids spend . . .* in line 5?

- Kids play on the Internet, spending excessive time, and hinder the jobs of some adults.
- When kids spend excessive time playing on the Internet, they hinder the jobs of some adults.
- When kids hinder the jobs of some adults, they are spending excessive time playing on the Internet.
- Some adults' jobs are hindered when kids spend excessive time on the Internet.

4 Which of the following sentences is preferable to the one beginning, *It takes forever . . .* in lines 10–11?

- It takes forever to get from site to site once she has finally been successful.
- Once she has finally succeeded in getting online, it takes forever to get from site to site.
- It takes forever to get from site to site after she has finally succeeded in getting online.
- She feels that it takes forever to get from site to site once she has finally made it online.

5 Which of the following should be added before the sentence that begins, *The information highway . . .* in line 13?

- When schools were closed during a recent blizzard, my mom had to stop working because the Internet was jammed with kids chatting and surfing.
- The time young people spend on the Internet is unfair to adults who work on weekends.
- One school day last month, she was trying to complete a major project and had a hard time getting onto the Internet at 10 A.M.
- My mom uses the Internet every day of the week.

6 Which of the following changes should be made in line 16?

- Change **potential** to **sudden**
- Change **harm** to **trouble**
- Change **There is** to **I am angry about**
- Change **There is** to **Evidence shows**

- 7** Which of the following changes should be made in line 16?
- Change **First** to **Maybe**
 - Change **there are** to **experts have found**
 - Change **there are** to **some teenagers make**
 - Change **psychological** to **mental**
- 8** Which of the following sentences should be added after the sentence beginning, *Also, physical injury . . .* in line 18?
- Physical injury is a serious consideration that is associated with excessive use of the Internet by young people.
 - It is true that many other activities of young people are more likely to result in bodily harm than the use of computers.
 - Many kids are already pointing and clicking their way to carpal tunnel syndrome, a wrist injury caused by repetitive motion.
 - One student's computer was broken when she dropped it at computer camp.
- 9** In order to vary sentences beginnings, which of the following sentences is preferable to the one beginning, *It is acceptable . . .* in line 19?
- Kids can use computers for worthwhile purposes, and when they do, it is acceptable.
 - To me, some computer use by kids is probably worthwhile and acceptable.
 - I think some kids use the computer for worthwhile purposes, which is acceptable.
 - When kids use the computer for worthwhile purposes, it is acceptable to me.
- 10** Which of the following sentences is preferable to the one beginning, *On the other hand, . . .* in lines 20–22?
- However, this does not change the fact that computer use by kids annoys many parents.
 - It is possible that computer use, even for entertainment, would improve kids' communication skills in general.
 - However, parents should set Internet time limits for the sake of their children and out of consideration for professional users.
 - In summary, some parents will probably take seriously the issue of limiting Internet use by kids, but some will not.