

**1 Learn the Skill**

When an author writes to **persuade**, he or she tries to convince readers to agree with his or her point of view or to do something. **Argument** is a type of persuasion that uses logic and evidence to persuade. Persuasive writing usually starts with a **claim**, or a statement about an issue or a problem. The claim reflects the author's **position**, or point of view. Often, arguments present a **counterclaim**, or response to an opposing view. Counterclaims show that the author has considered both sides of an argument.

Authors use **evidence** to support their claims. Evidence may be facts, opinions, examples, or other reliable information. Authors also try to persuade by appealing to an audience's emotions, such as fear or anger. The writing ends with a **conclusion** that asks readers to do something or think in a particular way.

**2 Practice the Skill**

By practicing the skill of analyzing elements of persuasion and argument, you will improve your study and test-taking abilities, especially as they relate to the GED® Reasoning Through Language Arts Test. Read the passage below. Then answer the question that follows.

**SUPPORTING INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

You might take the subway to work or hop on the bus to run errands. Trains may be part of your daily commute. Yet, even if trains, buses, and subways are not part of your daily experience, you likely benefit from them nonetheless. Investment in public transportation generates jobs and boosts the economy.

Thousands of workers are engaged in building buses, repairing and maintaining rail lines, and so on. These jobs are located not only in the areas served by mass transit but also in regions throughout the country. In Imlay City, Michigan, for example, workers build buses that are used across the United States.

And jobs are not created merely in industries directly related to public transportation. Transportation workers and riders spend money throughout a mass transit network, enabling businesses to expand and hire. Although some think we cannot afford public investment in mass transit, the American Public Transportation Association estimates that for every dollar spent in such investment, approximately six dollars are generated in jobs and public benefits. Support legislation to develop mass transit, and help yourself to a better future.

**a** The terms **public transportation** and **mass transit** refer to buses, trains, subways, and other means of transportation operated for the benefit of the public.

**b** Here, the author responds to the **opposing viewpoint** that investment in mass transit is not affordable.

**TEST-TAKING TIPS**

Take enough time to read the question and all the answer choices very carefully. Even wrong answers can relate to information in the passage or can include language from the passage.

1. Which sentence **best** states the passage's call to action?
- A. Take public transportation whenever you can.
  - B. Encourage government investments in public transportation.
  - C. Get a job in mass transit in order to have a secure future.
  - D. Invest in mass transit projects only if you will benefit directly.

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the passage, read each question, and choose the **best** answer.

## FOSTER YOUTH AND HEALTH CARE

1 What I hope would be neither partisan nor divisive is one small but important provision [of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act]: because of the Act, former foster youth may continue to have Medicaid coverage until they turn 26.

2 Why does this matter?

3 These are young people for whom we—and by this I mean all of civil society—have taken responsibility. They have been removed from their homes primarily because they could no longer live there safely. Some are fortunate enough to find a permanent, loving home where they can thrive. But others are not: they grow up in foster care or group homes.

4 Every year, some 26,000 young people who live in foster homes or group homes turn 18 (or in some states, 21) and “age out” of the system. Overnight, crucial support vanishes. Gone is the financial support paid to their foster parents or group homes on their behalf. Gone is any consistent, responsible adult presence or guidance. Gone is their health care coverage.

5 These youth face incredibly long odds if they have to try [to] succeed on their own during their late teens and early 20s. The label “former foster youth” makes it hard for them to get jobs or rent apartments. For them, there is a high risk of becoming homeless. We know these young people have a low rate of college entry, and even if they are admitted to college, many do not complete a degree.

6 It is both compassionate and less expensive for taxpayers to ensure that young adults who grew up in foster care have some basic support during this crucial formative period. One key to this support is health care coverage.

From the huffingtonpost.com article THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: GOOD NEWS FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH by Michael Piraino, accessed 2013

2. Why does the author pose the question “Why does this matter?”

- A. to introduce supporting evidence and reasons
- B. to express frustration with opposing viewpoints
- C. to invite readers to draw their own conclusions
- D. to create a sense of tension in the passage

3. Which statement **best** expresses the author's main claim?

- A. Society is responsible for supporting former foster youth.
- B. Foster youth face problems when trying to rent apartments.
- C. Extending Medicaid is an important way of helping former foster youth.
- D. Providing employment is the best solution to the problem of homelessness.

4. In paragraph 5, the author explains the challenges former foster youth face. How does this paragraph support the author's claim?

- A. It contrasts the lives of former foster youth with the lives of those in permanent homes.
- B. It explains why former foster youth are more likely to need health care services.
- C. It shows how not having health insurance affects former foster youth.
- D. It emphasizes that extending Medicaid is one way to help former foster youth.

5. The author assumes that readers will feel sympathy and compassion for former foster youth. The author appeals to these feelings by

- A. scolding readers for not doing more to help former foster youth.
- B. detailing the overwhelming lack of support former foster youth face.
- C. providing facts about the expenses of taking care of former foster youth.
- D. calculating the costs of providing Medicaid to former foster youth.