

- RI.4.8** Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.
- SL.4.5** Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.
- W.4.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.  
**d.** Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- CCR.R.8** Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

## Understand the Standards

When you read, an author often has an opinion on the topic. If so, it's important to keep track of the **arguments**, or claims, he or she makes. What reasons are given to support the author's claims? Identifying the reasons and evidence in a piece of informational writing is a good way to be an active reader. It helps you to make sense of and recall what you read.

### Words to Know

arguments  
relevant  
sufficient  
valid

Here are three questions to ask regarding the evidence in a piece of writing:

1. **Is it relevant?**

If evidence is **relevant**, it pertains to the topic. If an article maintains that a certain type of dog food is best for puppies, but the dog owners quoted all have older dogs, you know the evidence isn't relevant. It doesn't support the main idea.

2. **Is it sufficient?**

If the evidence is **sufficient**, it means that there is enough evidence to support the author's claim. To prove that "most studies" show that students prefer to work collaboratively, you would need to see the results of a number of different studies. To be convinced that one store in town has the best prices on school supplies, you'd want to compare prices from a number of other stores, not just one.

3. **Is it valid?**

If the evidence is **valid**, it means that it seems to be true. Many times an author will provide references that tell where he or she got the information. The author may use statistics or other data as proof, or quote a knowledgeable source. Other times, the author's logical reasoning makes the argument seem valid. When you find information on the Internet, it's especially important to know the source.

Writers use precise language and specific topic-related terms to present their arguments and evidence. Look for those terms when you read.



**Guided Instruction**

This informational passage wants to persuade people your age to save money. Read this passage carefully, thinking about the arguments presented. Are they relevant? Are they sufficient? Are they valid? Then answer the questions that follow.



**Develop the Savings Habit!**

Some people grow up thinking that they will begin to save money when they have more to save, maybe next month or next year. Sadly for many people, the day to start saving money never comes. It's just too easy to find places to spend money. But, if you do get in the habit of saving even a little money early in life, a number of positive things happen.



First, you get in the savings habit. Banks note that people who begin the habit of saving early in life are more likely to create a lifelong pattern of saving and managing their money. If you get an allowance, you save a little of it every month. If you walk your neighbor's dog, you save one week's worth of the money you earn each month. You might save for something special that you want to buy, or you might just save it to see the money (and interest earned) build up.

Either way you get to see the money you save build up. It doesn't take long for a few dollars to build up to many more dollars. It helps if you have a passbook and get reports on the interest that accrues. If you open a special kids' savings account at your local bank or credit union, you may receive extra prizes and incentives for saving.

Third, you experience the excitement of setting a goal and then reaching it! Say that you want to save \$100 for the trip you will take with your grandparents next summer. It seems like a lot of money to save now, but when next summer comes and you have reached your goal, you'll be proud and happy! Your success will also make it that much easier to set a new goal.

**Guided Questions**

What is the purpose of the opening paragraph? Why might the writer think it is important to say this?

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What words and phrases specific to the topic of money and savings do you find in paragraph 2? Why does the writer use them?

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When saving money becomes a lifelong habit, you can sustain the practice. Maybe you'll start saving for major things like college, a car, or a house payment. You'll be more likely to save up for big-ticket items instead of borrowing money to buy them.

So start today! Set a goal, start saving even a little, and watch your money grow!

**Guided Questions**

Answer and discuss these questions about the passage. Hints for thinking about and answering questions are given in parentheses.

- 1. What kind of evidence does the author use?

*(Remember: Asking questions as you read is one way of being an active reader.)*

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- 2. In your opinion, was the evidence presented relevant, sufficient, and valid enough?

*(Hint: Ask yourself whether you're convinced. Think about what added evidence would convince you.)*

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## On Your Own

The author uses reasoning as well as facts to explain details about a creature of the deep ocean. Think about each paragraph as you read. Pay attention to the evidence presented, new questions you may have, and inferences you can make.



### Creatures of the Deep: Giant Tube Worms

You may be familiar with the ocean, but very few people have seen what some scientists have discovered in the deep ocean. “Deep ocean” means at least a mile down. It’s so far from the surface that no sunlight reaches these depths. The water pressure has been compared to having 50 gigantic airplanes stacked on top of you! If you had the courage and the right equipment, you could be among the first to explore at these depths.

About one mile deep on the Pacific Ocean floor, volcanic thermal vents spew chemicals. Few animals could survive in such a harsh, toxic environment. Scientists were surprised to find whole ecosystems living amid the boiling-hot chemical soup of acids and gases around these vents, including giant tube worms.

These huge creatures can reach over eight feet in length. Their plumes reach frigid water that is just above freezing. The bottom of the worm stands in hot water. They live their lives in utter darkness without oxygen. They have no eyes. They don’t have a mouth or a digestive system either. Instead, they use bacteria inside them to meet their energy needs. Their distinctive red plumes supply nutrients to the bacteria inside them. They also provide a tasty snack for the shrimp and crab that nibble off bits of the plumes.

Thanks to researchers and new technologies that include submersibles, cameras, and other tools, thousands of new species like the giant tube worm have been identified in the deep ocean. Scientists say that it is by far the largest habitat for life on Earth. At present it is also the most unknown area of the sea.

Answer the questions based on the passage.

- 1 What comparison does the author use to help readers understand the pressure of the water at one mile deep?

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**Elevate**

- 2** On the basis of the evidence in this passage, why do you think giant tube worms have no eyes, mouth, or digestive system? What inference and new question might you make about other species?

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- 3** According to the passage, what flows out of thermal vents deep in the ocean?

- A** deep-ocean creatures without eyes
- B** toxic chemicals, acids, and gases
- C** many kinds of bacteria
- D** giant red plumes full of nutrients

- 4** What surprised scientists about deep-ocean life around the vents?

- A** Thick toxic soup oozes out and covers everything.
- B** Vents allow scientists to explore underwater volcanoes.
- C** Whole ecosystems live around these toxic deep-ocean vents.
- D** Bacteria may be hazardous to scientists exploring the area.

- 5 What evidence convinces you that it isn't easy to survive in the deep ocean?

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**Critical  
Thinking**

- 6 Work with a partner. On a separate piece of paper, each of you should analyze what you would like the author to cover in a follow-up article on the subject. Tell what you would like to know about in more detail and what new related topics the author might explore. Then combine your two papers. Choose the best parts of each. Make sure the final paper makes sense. After you are done, present your suggestions to the class. Find and use some audiovisual materials, including photographs and videos from the Web, that would add interest to your presentation.