YEAR 11 READING

Argument Analysis

Analyse how an author's argument and language position readers

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Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Score:** _____ / 9

Opinion: Our Beaches Are Not a Rubbish Tip

Last Sunday, I walked the length of Mordialloc beach at sunrise. It should have been glorious. Instead, I counted 214 pieces of plastic in under a kilometre: bottle caps, chip packets, a child's sandal, and dozens of those small, cheerful balloons that turn into lethal ribbons for seabirds.

We like to think of ourselves as a nation of beach lovers. Our postcards and tourism campaigns are full of golden sand and sparkling water. But love, as any parent will tell you, is measured by what you do, not what you say.

Container deposit schemes have shown what's possible. In states where they've been introduced, drink container litter has fallen sharply. Yet balloon releases remain legal in several states, and single-use plastics still fill our supermarket shelves.

The response from some industry groups is predictable: education, not regulation. But we have been 'educating' for thirty years. The tide of rubbish has only risen.

It's time for our state government to ban balloon releases outright and to fast-track the phase-out of single-use plastics. Not next decade. Now.

Because if we truly love our beaches, we need to start acting like it.

Choose the best answer.

1. The opening anecdote is effective mainly because it...
   (a) is humorous (b) introduces an expert (c) gives first-hand, specific evidence

2. 'small, cheerful balloons that turn into lethal ribbons' uses contrast to...
   (a) describe a party (b) reveal hidden harm behind innocent objects
   (c) advertise balloons

3. The analogy to parental love positions readers to...
   (a) have children (b) visit the beach
   (c) judge Australians by their actions, not words

4. 'The tide of rubbish has only risen' is...
   (a) a metaphor linked to the beach setting (b) a statistic (c) an appeal to authority

5. The short sentences 'Not next decade. Now.' create...
   (a) urgency (b) uncertainty (c) humour

Analyse the argument.

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Argument Analysis

Analyse how an author's argument and language position readers (continued)

6. What is the writer's contention and what two actions are proposed?

7. How does the writer rebut the 'education, not regulation' argument?

8. Who is the target audience and how is the language suited to them?

9. Write an analytical paragraph on how the writer appeals to national identity.

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Choose the best answer.

1. c) gives first-hand, specific evidence
2. b) reveal hidden harm behind innocent objects
3. c) judge Australians by their actions, not words
4. a) a metaphor linked to the beach setting
5. a) urgency

Analyse the argument.

6. Australians must act to protect beaches; the government should ban balloon releases and fast-track phasing out single-use plastics.
7. By pointing out thirty years of education have failed: the rubbish problem has worsened.
8. General readers and voters, especially beach-loving Australians; it uses inclusive 'we' and national identity.
9. Answers will vary. Example: The writer appeals to Australians' self-image as 'a nation of beach lovers', then challenges it. By contrasting postcard imagery of 'golden sand' with the reality of 214 pieces of plastic, the writer exposes hypocrisy. Readers are positioned to feel uncomfortable and to support government action so that their actions match their values.

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