**11AP**

**Second-Hand Evidence**

**Second-hand evidence** is evidence that is accessed through research, reading, and investigation. It includes factual and historical information, expert opinion, and quantitative data. Anytime you cite what someone else knows, not what you know, you are using second-hand evidence. While citing second-hand evidence may occasionally appeal to pathos and certainly may establish a writer’s ethos, the central appeal is to logos – logic and reason.

**Historical Information**

A common type of second-hand evidence is historical information – verifiable facts that a writer knows from research. This kind of information can provide background and context to current debates; it can also help establish the writer’s ethos because it shows that he or she has taken the time and effort to research the matter and become informed. One possible pitfall is that the historical events are complicated. You’ll want to keep your description of the events brief, but be sure not to misrepresent the events. In the following paragraph from Hate Speech: The History of an American Controversy (1994), author Samuel Walker provides historical information to establish the “intolerance” of the 1920s era.

*The 1920s are remembered as a decade of intolerance. Bigotry was as much a symbol of the period as Prohibition, flappers, the stock market boom, and Calvin Coolidge. It was the only time when the Ku Klux Klan paraded en masse through the nation’s capital. In 1921, Congress restricted immigration for the first time in American history, drastically reducing the influx of Catholics and Jews from southern and eastern Europe, and the nation’s leading universities adopted admission quotas to restrict the number of Jewish students. The Sacco and Vanzetti case, in which two Italian anarchists were executed for robbery and murder in a highly questionable prosecution, has always been one of the symbols of the ant-immigrant tenor of the period.*

QUESTIONS:

1. What is Walker’s claim?

2. How does he support his claim?

Historical information is often used to develop a point of comparison or contrast to a more contemporary situation. Read the following paragraph from Charles Krauthammer’s op-ed “The 9/11 “Overreaction’? Nonsense” and explain how the political commentator does exactly that.

*True, in both [the Iraq and Afghanistan] wars there was much trial, error and tragic loss. In Afghanistan, too much emphasis on nation-building. In Iraq, the bloody middle years before we found our general and our strategy. But cannot the same be said of, for example, the Civil War, the terrible years before Lincoln found his general? Or the Pacific campaign of World War II, with its myriad miscalculations, its often questionable island-hopping, that cost infinitely more American lives?*

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**Expert Opinion**

Most everyone is an expert on something. And how often do we bolster our viewpoint by pointing out that so-and-so agrees with us? Expert opinion is a more formal variation on that common practice. An expert is someone who has published research on a topic or whose job experience gives him or her special knowledge. Sometimes, you might cite the viewpoint of an individual who is an “expert” in a local matter but who is not widely recognized. If, for instance, you are writing about school policy, you might cite the opinion of a teacher or student government officer. The important point is to make sure that your expert is seen as credible by your audience so that his or her opinion will add weight to your argument.

Following is an excerpt from “Just a Little Princess” by Peggy Orenstein in which she critiques what she calls “the princess culture” that Disney promotes.

*The princess as superhero is not irrelevant. Some scholars I spoke with say that given its post­9/11 timing, princess mania is a response to a newly dangerous world. “Historically, princess worship has emerged during periods of uncertainty and profound social change,” observes Miriam Forman-­Brunell, a historian at the University of Missouri-­Kansas City. Francis Hodgson Burnett’s original “Little Princess” was published at a time of rapid urbanization, immigration and poverty; Shirley Temple’s film version was a hit during the Great Depression. “The original folk tales themselves,” Forman­-Brunell says, “spring from medieval and early modern European culture that faced all kinds of economic and demographic and social upheaval — famine, war, disease, terror of wolves. Girls play savior during times of economic crisis and instability.” That’s a heavy burden for little shoulders. Perhaps that’s why the magic wand has become an essential part of the princess getup. In the original stories — even the Disney versions of them — it’s not the girl herself who’s magic; it’s the fairy godmother. Now if Forman­-Brunell is right, we adults have become the cursed creatures whom girls have the thaumaturgic [miraculous] power to transform.*

QUESTIONS:

1. What concept(s) is Orenstein commenting on in this excerpt?

2. How does she add credibility to her argument?

**Quantitative Evidence**

Quantitative evidence includes things that can be represented in numbers: statistics, surveys, polls, consensus information. This type of evidence can be persuasive in its appeal to logos. This may need not be all percentages and dollar figures, however. Read this excerpt from Fareed Zakaria’s article on American education, “When Will We Learn?” in which he compares the education situation of the United States with that of other countries. Underline where he cites quantitative data.

*U.S. schoolchildren spend less time in school than their peers abroad. They have shorter school days and a shorter school year. Children in South Korea will spend almost two years more in school than Americans by the end of high school. Is it really so strange that they score higher on tests?*

*If South Korea teaches the importance of hard work, Finland teaches another lesson. Finnish students score near the very top on international tests, yet they do not follow the Asian model of study, study and more study. Instead they start school a year later than in most countries, emphasize creative work and shun tests for most of the year. But Finland has great teachers, who are paid well and treated with the same professional respect that is accorded to doctors and lawyers. They are found and developed through an extremely competitive and rigorous process. All teachers are required to have master’s degrees, and only 1 in 10 applicants is accepted to the country’s teacher-training programs.*