Identifying the Strongest Piece of Evidence

1

Understand the Question

Ask yourself:

- What exactly is this question asking me to do? How can I put this question in my own words?
- Are there any keywords I should focus on, such as "cite," "best," or "strongest"?
- How many pieces of evidence or support are needed to answer all parts of the question?

2

Gather Evidence

After establishing a claim, prepare to annotate the text and ask yourself:

- What parts of the text seem to answer the question?
- Which quotes or details from the text could help me explain my answer?

3

Study the Evidence

After collecting 2–5 pieces of evidence, analyze each. Ask yourself:

- Does this provide specific details (names, dates, locations, statistics, etc.)?
- Is this the most relevant piece of information, or are there others that are more closely tied to my answer?

NO → **This evidence is not relevant to this specific claim. Remove from list.**

4

Determine Strength

Ask yourself:

- Is this evidence specific and clear?
- Do the specific details provide additional support for the claim rather than restating the claim?
- Does this evidence reappear throughout the text, perhaps in different words?

NO → **This evidence is not the strongest. It could be used to cite specific details in the claim, but does not elaborate upon the claim.**

5

Select the Strongest Evidence

Ask yourself:

- How important is this piece of evidence to the overall argument I'm making?
- Does it carry more weight than other evidence because it answers key parts of the question?
- Is there anything in this evidence that contradicts or challenges the other parts of the text I've selected?

6

Justify Your Choice

Ask yourself:

- Why is this the best piece of evidence?
- How does this piece of evidence directly support my answer, and why is it stronger than the other options?
- Have all aspects of the question been answered?

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