In the **Support and Evidence** category, you have achieved a rating of **Advanced**.

Though you’ve already achieved an advanced score, consider revising your essay to explore ways in which your evidence can be integrated more effectively or your reasoning can be explained more thoroughly or artfully.

**Step 1**

Use the table from the entry ticket to examine the support already in your essay. Use the table and the questions below to plan your revision.

**Examine Your Reasons**

Start by examining the reasons you sketched in the first column. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Does each reason support my claim?
2. Are there other reasons I could add to support my claim?

On your table, cross out any reasons that don’t support your claim and fill in empty cells with new reasons you can support with evidence. You will make these changes to your essay when you revise.

**Improve Your Evidence**

Next, look at the evidence you described in the second column. Think about each piece of evidence in your essay. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. **Is my evidence clearly stated and relevant?** “Relevant” means that the evidence is related to the topic, appropriate, and meaningful to the audience. Relevant evidence is easily connected to the claim.
2. **Is my evidence the most appropriate?** Examine each piece of evidence. Is there more appropriate evidence in the text to support your reason and claim?
3. **Can my evidence withstand scrutiny?** In other words, does my evidence hold up to the counterclaims of others?

Make notes on your table describing where you should strengthen your evidence.

**Explain Your Reasoning**

Next, make sure you include logical reasoning that demonstrates your full understanding of the topic or text(s). Reasoning explains how your evidence proves your claim.

Check the last column in your table. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are there places where I should add or improve my reasoning?
2. Will I add new reasons and evidence that I will need to explain?
3. Can I make my reasoning clearer so that it better connects my evidence to my claim?

Make notes on your table to show where you need to add or improve the reasoning in your essay.

**Fully Address Counterclaims**

A counterclaim is what someone might say when challenging your argument. The counterclaim might be addressed to your overall claim, or it might just challenge a single reason. Make sure the counterclaim is clearly distinguished from your own central claim.

An advanced essay acknowledges counterclaims, cites relevant evidence to support them, and cites strong evidence to respond.

Use transition words to clearly acknowledge and disprove counterclaims. For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Acknowledge the Counterclaim** | **Disprove the Counterclaim** |
| * “Although…”
* “Despite...”
* “While…”
* “Some argue...”
 | * “However…”
* “Contrarily…”
* “On the other hand…”
* “Evidence shows that…”
 |

Make notes on your table where you will try to add or enhance counterarguments.

**Step 2**

**Use the notes on your table to plan your revision**.

Now, revise your essay to improve its support and evidence.

**Need Help Getting Started?**

Here’s an example of how you might improve the strength and style of a support paragraph.

**Claim:**

While some people argue that cats make better pets than dogs, dogs are clearly the better pets for people.

**Reason and Evidence with Reasoning and Acknowledgement of the Counterargument:**

Some people think the fact that cats don’t need to go outside makes them better pets, because they are easier for the owner. Dogs, they say, are too much trouble because they cause people to have to go outside to take their dogs for a walk. It is true! People who have dogs walk 22 minutes more per day than people who don’t have dogs. That means people who own dogs are healthier because they are walking outside more than people who have cats that don’t need to go outside. That means that dogs make better pets because they help their owners stay healthy.

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| **Support and Evidence (Level 3—Proficient Description)** |
| The essay uses clear, relevant evidence and explains how the evidence support the claim. The essay demonstrates logical reasoning and understanding of the topic or text(s). Counterclaims are acknowledged but may not be adequately explained and/or distinguished from the essay's central claim. |
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**Reason and Evidence with Reasoning and Fully Developed Counterargument:**

Some people think the fact that cats don’t need to go outside makes them better pets, because they are easier for their owners. Dogs, they say, are too much trouble because they cause people to have to go outside to take their dogs for a walk. But easier isn’t always better. It is true that cats are less work, but they also don’t have as much positive impact on our lives as dogs! People who have dogs walk 22 minutes more per day than people who don’t have dogs. That means people who own dogs are physically healthier because they are walking outside more than people who have cats. Another study of the impact of dog ownership on senior citizens showed that, “Owners of dogs, in particular, were buffered from the impact of stressful life events on physician utilization.” That means that dogs help their owners’ mental health and help them avoid going to the doctor.

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| **Support and Evidence (Level 4—Advanced Description)** |
| The essay cites the most relevant, appropriate, and valid evidence to support its claim. The essay fully explains how the evidence cited and reasons support the claim*.* The essay demonstrates reasoning and full understanding of the topic or text(s). Counterclaims are acknowledged and/or distinguished from essay's central claim. |
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**Vocabulary Supports**

**Argument**—an attempt to persuade or convince others to accept an opinion or position on an issue

**Claim**—an arguable position on an issue

**Counterclaim**—a different position on an issue that opposes the writer’s claim

**Evidence**—details such as facts, statistics, or quotations that support the writer’s claim

**Focus**—the set of related ideas used by a writer to support an argument; an argument that lacks focus, presents unrelated ideas, or goes off topic

**Prompt**—the information and instructions students are responding to when writing an argument

**Reason**—a statement explaining why a writer takes a particular position in an argument

**Reasoning**—an explanation of how a reason and its supporting evidence connect to the claim