
Instructions

Write a critique discussing the logical reasoning of the below stated argument. Keep the following points in mind:

- You have 30 minutes to analyze the argument and compose a critique
- Read the argument carefully and identify its key features
- Do not discuss *your* views on the topic
- Only analyze the argument's line of reasoning
- Critically evaluate assumptions and evidences
- Consider evidences that would support or disprove the claim
- Develop your ideas in an organized manner
- Use relevant examples and reasons to support your critique
- Express your ideas using appropriate words and expressions
- Set aside a few minutes to read the finished response and make edits, if required

Topic

The following appeared in an announcement issued by the publisher of *The Mercury*, a weekly newspaper:

"Since a competing lower-priced newspaper, *The Bugle*, was started five years ago, *The Mercury's* circulation has declined by 10,000 readers. The best way to get more people to read *The Mercury* is to reduce its price below that of *The Bugle*, at least until circulation increases to former levels. The increased circulation of *The Mercury* will attract more businesses to buy advertising space in the paper."

Original Essay

The announcement in *The Mercury* concludes that the best way to increase the number of readers and to attract more businesses is to lower its price. However, this conclusion is based on several questionable assumptions and therefore not logically sound. Without considering other possibilities, *The Mercury* implicitly assumes that the lower price of *The Bugle* is the main cause for the decline in subscription of *The Mercury*. They also assume that increasing the circulation will automatically lead to an increase in attractiveness for advertisements.

First of all, *The Mercury* claims that the appearance of the lower-priced paper *The Bugle* is the main cause of the decline in *The Mercury's* circulation. However, this claim is not supported by firm evidences. In other words, it is not directly shown that the 10,000 readers who quit taking *The Mercury* did so because they started taking *The Bugle*. It is entirely possible that other media, such as TV or the Internet, took over and people became less interested in subscribing to newspapers. In this case, competing against *The Bugle* by lowering *The Mercury's* price will not be a sufficient strategy. In order to assess the effect of other media, *The Mercury* has to investigate the number of people subscribing to *The Bugle*.

Second, even if some readers of *The Mercury* did change to subscribe to *The Bugle*, the lower price of *The Bugle* might not be the main reason for the people to switch. Price could be one aspect, but there are other possible differences which might be important. For example, contents of the two papers could have been the critical aspect. Maybe *The Bugle* offers a more up-to-date information which the readers are looking for. If this is the case, just lowering the price without changing *The Mercury's* contents will not attract the readers.

Lastly, even if lowering the price lead to an increase in the circulation of The Mecury, it is not clear whether this will lead to attracting more businesses who wants to put advertisements. Companies decide whether to put an advertisement on a newspaper or not by considering many aspects. Not only the number of readers but also the type of readers might be important for them. Thus, increase in the number of circulation does not nessesarily mean it will attract more businesses.

To conclude, advantages of lowering the price is not justified from the evidences given. It cannot be said that the appearance of the lower-priced newspaper The Bugle is the only cause of the decline of The Merculy's circulation . The Mercury has to consider influence of other media and the differences in contents between two newspapers. In addition, they have to provide stronger evidence that increase in circulation will attract more businesses. Lowering the price without considering the points above will most likely to be ineffective.

SAMPLE

Below is your edited essay with an explanation of the existing strengths of your writing with suggestions for improvement.

Insertions: Red; Deletions: Strikethroughs in blue

The idioms and idiomatic structures have been highlighted

~~The~~In the announcement, ~~the publisher of~~~~in~~ The Mercury concludes that the best way to increase the number of readers and to attract more businesses is to lower ~~its~~~~the~~ newspaper's price. However, this conclusion is based on several questionable assumptions and, therefore, ~~is~~ not logically sound. Without considering other possibilities, ~~The Mercury~~the argument ~~implicitly~~ assumes that the lower price of The Bugle is the main cause for the decline in ~~the~~ subscription of The Mercury. ~~They~~It is also assumed that increasing the circulation will automatically lead to an increase in ~~attractiveness~~the demand for advertisements ~~space~~¹.

First of all, The Mercury claims that the appearance of the lower-priced paper, The Bugle, is the main cause of the decline in The ~~Mecury's~~Mercury's circulation. However, this claim is not supported by firm evidences. In other words, it is not directly shown that the 10,000 readers who quit taking The ~~Mecury~~Mercury did so because they started ~~taking~~reading The Bugle. It is entirely possible that other media, such as ~~the TV~~television or the Internet, took over, and people became less interested in subscribing to newspapers. In ~~this~~that case, competing against The Bugle by lowering The ~~Mecury's~~Mercury's price will not be a sufficient strategy. In order to assess the effects of other media, The ~~Mecury~~Mercury has to investigate the number of people subscribing to The Bugle².

Second, even if some readers of The ~~Mecury~~Mercury did change to subscrib~~ing~~ing to The Bugle, the lower price of The Bugle might not be the main reason for the ~~switch in~~ people's choice ~~to~~switch. Price could be one aspect, but there are other possible differences ~~which~~that might be important. For example, ~~the~~ contents of the two papers could have been the critical aspect ~~in the people's decision to read~~ The Bugle. Maybe, The Bugle offers ~~a~~ more up-to-date information which the readers are looking for. If this is the case, just lowering the price without changing The Mercury's contents will not attract the readers³.

Lastly, even if lowering the price leads to an increase in the circulation of The ~~Mecury~~Mercury, it is not clear whether this will ~~lead to~~attracting more businesses who wants to put advertisements. Companies decide whether to put an advertisement ~~on~~in a newspaper or not by considering many aspects. Not only the number of readers but also the type of readers might be important ~~for~~to them. Thus, ~~an~~ increase in ~~the number of~~ circulation does not ~~nessesarily~~necessarily mean it will attract more businesses⁴.

To conclude, ~~the~~ advantages of lowering the price ~~is~~are not justified ~~from~~by the evidences given. It cannot be said that the appearance of the lower-priced newspaper, The Bugle, is the only cause of the decline ~~of~~in The ~~Mecury's~~Mercury's circulation-. The ~~Mecury~~argument has to consider ~~the~~ influence of other media and the differences in ~~the~~ contents ~~between~~of the two newspapers. In addition, ~~they~~the publisher ~~have~~has to provide stronger evidence that ~~an~~ increase in circulation will attract more businesses. Lowering the price without considering the ~~above~~ points ~~above~~will most likely ~~to~~be ineffective⁵.

COMMENTS	
1 Introduction	<p>Strengths: Your evaluation of the validity of the argument is clearly stated.</p> <p>The implicit assumption—the lower price of <i>The Bugle</i> is responsible for the drop in <i>The Mercury's</i> circulation—is claimed to be flawed.</p> <p>Focus areas: This is an effective introduction. Very Good!</p> <p>There are a few grammatical and word choice errors.</p> <p>How to improve: Here, the errors in grammar and stylistics do not affect the meaning; however, a strong control over grammar and ease in using effective vocabulary are features of a high-scoring essay.</p> <p>Edits like, "In the announcement, the publisher of..." and "the newspaper's price" increase clarity. It is awkward to say that "<i>The Mercury</i> concludes"; the edit, "<u>In the announcement, the publisher of <i>The Mercury</i>,</u>" conveys the complete meaning.</p>
2 Body paragraph 1	<p>Strengths: The lack of evidence in support of the claim that <i>The Mercury's</i> subscribers switched to reading <i>The Bugle</i> is pointed out.</p> <p>An alternative reason for the drop in the circulation is adequately analyzed.</p> <p>The suggestions for validating the claim—studying the number of <i>Bugle</i> subscribers—are provided.</p> <p>Focus areas: You do not demonstrate how your suggestion to examine <i>The Bugle's</i> circulation will provide any valid evidence.</p> <p>"<i>Mercury</i>" is frequently misspelled.</p> <p>How to improve: You should show how the examination of <i>The Bugle's</i> subscribers will help to assess the drop in <i>The Mercury's</i> circulation.</p> <p>Rather than saying: <i>In order to assess the effects of other media, <u>The Mercury</u> has to investigate the number of people subscribing to <u>The Bugle</u>.</i></p> <p>It is appropriate to suggest that: <i>Changes in factors like the increase in the popularity of the television or the Internet would affect <u>The Bugle</u> as well. Thus, analyzing the subscribers of <u>The Bugle</u> to observe the growth/decline trends in <u>The Bugle's</u> circulation will help to verify if <u>The Bugle</u> did in fact cause <u>The Mercury's</u> circulation to decline.</i></p> <p>Frequent typographical errors are immediately noticed. Ensure that you are able to devote a few minutes of the 30-minute time frame for proofreading the final essay.</p>
3 Body paragraph 2	<p>Strengths: You highlight another flaw in the argument—even if <i>The Mercury's</i> reader base switched to reading <i>The Bugle</i>, price may not have been the deciding factor.</p>

		<p>An alternative possibility that explains why people prefer <i>The Bugle</i> over <i>The Mercury</i> is provided.</p> <p>Focus areas: You do not provide an example that clarifies your analysis and shows that people’s choice of a newspaper is not based on the price alone.</p> <p>How to improve: Use examples that provide concrete evidence in support of your analysis. Here, you could discuss as follows: <i>It could be possible that the readers who switched over to The Bugle did so because the newspaper delivered news that was of special interest to them. If The Bugle, for example, covered the business and financial news with greater detail than The Mercury, people interested in such news would naturally decide to subscribe to The Bugle. Thus, if the subscribers for The Mercury did indeed switch to The Bugle, the reason for this switch needs to be examined.</i></p>
4	Body paragraph 3	<p>Strengths: You correctly point out that circulation is not the only basis for companies to place advertisements in a newspaper.</p> <p>Focus areas: You do not specifically elaborate on how the “type of readers” affects a company’s decision to advertise in a newspaper.</p> <p>How to improve: As in the earlier example, you could describe how a company will not advertise in <i>The Mercury</i> if a majority of the paper’s reader base comprises people who do not normally purchase the company’s product/service.</p> <p>Language tips</p> <p>Edited: Lastly, even if lowering the price leads to an increase in the circulation of The Mercury<i>Mercury</i>, it is not clear whether this will lead to attracting more businesses who wants to put advertisements.</p> <p>Subject-verb agreement: The noun “businesses” is in the plural form and is the subject of the verb “wants.” However, “wants” is in the singular form. Since the verb should match the subject of the sentence, I have edited the singular verb “wants” to its plural form “want.”</p> <p>Edited: Thus, an increase in the number of circulation does not nessesarily<i>necessarily</i> mean it will attract more businesses.</p> <p>Redundancy: “Circulation,” with respect to newspapers, means “the usual number of copies of a newspaper that are sold each day, week, etc.” <i>Example: In the last two years, the <u>circulation</u> of The Daily News has declined by 15%.</i> Since “circulation” refers to the <u>number</u> of copies sold, the phrase “the number of” is not required.</p>
5	Conclusion	<p>Strengths: The conclusion reasserts that the argument’s evidences do not justify the decision to lower <i>The Mercury’s</i> price.</p> <p>The conclusion highlights your ability to conduct a valid evaluation of the argument’s logic. Well done!</p>

	<p>Edited: To conclude, the advantages of lowering the price isare not justified fromby the evidences given.</p> <p>Definite article: The phrase "of lowering the price" post-modifies the noun "advantages." Consequently, "advantages" becomes unique and identifiable in the given context. As per article rules, the definite article is placed before nouns post-modified by a prepositional phrase.</p> <p><i>Example: The boy <u>in the red shirt</u> is the class topper. (The prepositional phrase "in the red shirt" makes the noun "boy" identifiable and unique here.)</i></p> <p>I have, therefore, added "the" before the unique noun "advantages."</p>
Time	<p>You should complete the GMAT argument task within 30 minutes. Spend the first five minutes ideating and organizing your stance. Complete the task in the next 20 minutes. In the last five minutes, proofread your writing for inadvertent grammar, spelling, or mechanical errors. Strictly adhere to the time division as it enables you to write conclusively in the given time.</p>

Essay Rating

Parameter	Rating
Identification and analysis of features	Very Good
Development of ideas	Good
Supporting the critique	Good
Expression of ideas	Good
Grammar and mechanics	Satisfactory

Your essay's grade: **A**

In the announcement, the publisher of The Mercury concludes that the best way to increase the number of readers and to attract more businesses is to lower the newspaper's price. However, this conclusion is based on several questionable assumptions and, therefore, is not logically sound. Without considering other possibilities, the argument assumes that the lower price of The Bugle is the main cause for the decline in the subscription of The Mercury. It is also assumed that increasing the circulation will automatically lead to an increase in the demand for advertisement space.

First of all, The Mercury claims that the appearance of the lower-priced paper, The Bugle, is the main cause of the decline in The Mercury's circulation. However, this claim is not supported by firm evidences. In other words, it is not directly shown that the 10,000 readers who quit taking The Mercury did so because they started reading The Bugle. It is entirely possible that other media such as the television or the Internet took over, and people became less interested in subscribing to newspapers. In that case, competing against The Bugle by lowering The Mercury's price will not be a sufficient strategy. In order to assess the effects of other media, The Mercury has to investigate the number of people subscribing to The Bugle.

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Lastly, even if lowering the price leads to an increase in the circulation of The Mercury, it is not clear whether this will attract more businesses who want to put advertisements. Companies decide whether to put an advertisement in a newspaper or not by considering many aspects. Not only the number of readers but also the type of readers might be important to them. Thus, an increase in circulation does not necessarily mean it will attract more businesses.

To conclude, the advantages of lowering the price are not justified by the evidences given. It cannot be said that the appearance of the lower-priced newspaper, The Bugle, is the only cause of the decline in The Mercury's circulation. The argument has to consider the influence of other media and the differences in the content of the two newspapers. In addition, the publisher has to provide stronger evidence that an increase in circulation will attract more businesses. Lowering the price without considering the above points will most likely be ineffective.