Critical Thinking:

Drawing Conclusions

Proving Ground Overview

Everywhere we look, we are bombarded by marketing messages and a plethora of possible choices. Becoming a thoughtful consumer requires both the ability and the willingness to scrutinize the evidence and use our powers of logic and reasoning to evaluate it -- and to draw conclusions based on multiple sources of information. Sometimes what is not said explicitly is even more important than what is said directly.

Proving Ground Directions

You have been thinking for a while that you need a new cell phone -- and you wonder if you could do better than your current phone plan. It is almost time for your annual visit to your grandmother in Mexico City, where it is very expensive to send and receive texts under your the plan you have now. There's nothing really wrong with your phone, but it seems to run out of juice very quickly and the screen has a hairline crack. You could get it fixed relatively cheaply at ScreenShack, but that would void the warranty, which still has 6 months left. On the other hand, if you take the phone back to the maker for repairs, it will cost half as much as a new phone. Besides, there seem to be lots of great deals out there. And anyway, don't you *deserve* a new phone?

Based on this scenario and the information provided below, what looks like the best option for you – and why? Be as clear as possible about the different considerations and any tradeoffs involved. Note that there may be more than one good answer.

- Bill from current carrier
- Ads for different plans
- Tips to increase battery life

Education Design Lab

Rubric:

Criterion	Description	Yes	Not Yet
Identifies key details in scenario	*You read the scenario carefully*		
Identifies key issues to consider	*You explained the different things to keep in mind in deciding what to do*		
Analyzes information in light of key considerations	*You kept the key considerations in mind when you examined the information you were given*		
Draws conclusion supported by evidence	*You made a recommendation and explained why it was the best course of action*		