

Activity: Reasons and conclusions

Activity

Identify the main argument, reasons and conclusions for the following passages. It may help to highlight the reasons and conclusions with a marker pen.

Passage 3.18

According to Csikszentmihalyi, fundamental unhappiness arises in today's world because we are too ruled by the way the world is, rather than the way it ought to be. Although most of us know we gain from being kind, supportive and considerate, we forget this very quickly. We act to satisfy our wants, even though we know there are people who have nothing. We consider them to be far away or less important than ourselves and so we buy another television or CD rather than give money to strangers. We often ignore basic rules which help to keep the environment in balance. For example, we know carbon-based resources are in short supply and yet we use coal, gas and oil as if they were limitless. When we do this, there are consequences which bring unhappiness. In our everyday lives, we often focus on instant rewards and short-term gains, without thinking of the long-term consequences for human happiness. The challenge facing humans is to find a way of acting more co-operatively with each other and more in harmony with our universe.

Answers to activities in Chapter 3 (continued)

Passage 3.18

Main argument: We are unhappy because we focus too much on how the world is and on the gratification of short-term objectives, rather than thinking about how we could live more in harmony with other people and the environment over the longer term.

Reasons that support the argument:

- **Reason 1:** We forget to be kind and supportive.
- **Reason 2:** We satisfy our wants first without thinking of people who have greater needs.
- **Reason 3:** We ignore what we know about the needs of the environment.
- **Reason 4:** We focus on instant gratification and short-term gains rather than considering the longer-term consequences.

Conclusion: The challenge facing humans is to find a way of acting more co-operatively with each other and more in harmony with our universe.

B2c

The passage below is a summary of Passage 3.18 on p. 45.

Example

Csikszentmihalyi argues that there is unhappiness around because we do not focus enough on how we want the world to be. Because of this, we act selfishly and focus on short-term gains, ignoring the longer-term consequences for other people and the environment. His answer is to live more in harmony with the wider world around us.

