

# CRITICAL THINKING AND ANALYSIS

## Practice task

**PURPOSE OF TASK:** To give you an opportunity to critically analyse a short piece of text, with particular reference to the evidence presented by the writer.

### THE TASK

1. Read the passage below carefully.
2. Identify the kinds of evidence the writer uses, for example statistics, findings from surveys, anecdotes or case studies.
3. Evaluate this evidence according to the following criteria:

**Does the writer use up-to-date data?**

**Does he/she use reliable sources, for example official ones? What are these?**

**What makes you think that they are reliable or unreliable?**

**What statistics are used? Are these likely to give a true and full picture?**

### THE PASSAGE

#### ROCHBOROUGH HEALTH

Outdoor play has beneficial effects for children in terms of both their health and their levels of social interaction. According to clinical trials carried out by Rochborough's Health Council Advisory Body in September this year, children who played outside for over 50 days in the year had a 20% higher lung capacity, and a 30% lower incidence of asthma and bronchial conditions than children who played indoors. Children who played outdoors also reported having more friends than those who played indoors. A survey of 30 families by Rochborough Social Amenities Committee found that parents were more likely to let their children play outdoors if they had their own gardens or if there were supervised play areas nearby. Mr Arkash of Milton Road said his children did not feel safe playing on the Children's Meadow on the outskirts of Rochborough, as his son had been frightened by a fox there in the past. His little son looked quite tearful as his father spoke. "He often cries because he has nowhere to play", said his father. Supervised play areas can be expensive to provide. However, only 18% of homes in Rochborough have gardens. Therefore, to improve the health of its children, Rochborough needs to provide more supervised outdoor play areas.

From the *Rochborough Playcouncil Newsletter*