**Unit 3 Handout 5: EOC A Debrief**

**A. EOC A Document**

From “Sweatshops Benefit Children”  
by Radley Balko (*Capitalism Magazine*, May 11, 2003)

Two reporters [Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn] relay this anecdote from Thailand:

One of the half-dozen men and women sitting on a bench eating was a sinewy, bare-chested laborer in his late 30’s named Mongkol Latlakorn. . . . Mongkol mentioned that his daughter, Darin, was 15, and his voice softened as he spoke of her. She was beautiful and smart, and her father’s hopes rested on her.

“Is she in school?” we asked.

“Oh, no,” Mongkol said, his eyes sparkling with amusement. “She’s working in a factory in Bangkok. . . . She’s making clothing for export to America.” . . .

In 2000 the BBC did an exposé on sweatshop factories in Cambodia with ties to both Nike and the Gap. The BBC uncovered unsavory working conditions, and found several examples of children under 15 years of age working 12 or more hour shifts. After the BBC exposé aired, both Nike and the Gap pulled out of Cambodia under public pressure. Cambodia lost $10 million in contracts, and hundreds of Cambodians lost their jobs.

Third World Countries Need the Advantage of Cheap Labor

In truth, every prosperous country on the planet today went through an industrial period heavily reliant on sweatshop labor. The United States, Britain, France, Sweden and others all rode to modernity on the backs of child laborers. The choice was simple: kids worked, or they went hungry. It wasn’t a terribly rosy set of choices, but at least the choicewasavailable.Anti-globalizationactivistsaredoingtheirdamnedesttomakesurechoice*isn’t*availableto those living in today’s fledgling economies.

Critics counter that unlike in the early 20th century, western companies today are wealthy enough to pay “living” wages, to establish comfortable working conditions, and to protect third world environments. They may be right. But then, what advantage would there be to investing in the developing world in the first place? Cheap labor is the only chit the third world has to lure much-needed western investment. Take it away, and there’s no reason for western corporations to incur the costs of putting up factories, shipping, security and the bevy of other expenses that come with maintaining plants overseas. . . .

How Free Trade Beats Sweatshops

The best way to lessen the plight of sweatshop workers is more free trade, not less. If workers make 75 cents per day in factory A—the only plant in town—the best thing that could happen to them would be for a second factory to open up. If Factory B pays less than 75 cents, it won’t attract any workers. If it offers exactly 75 cents, it might attract a few workers who couldn’t get jobs at factory A. If it pays more than 75 cents, however, it might attract the best and brightest from factory A. Factory A then must decide whether to up its wages, or look for new labor—which means more jobs. . . .

Sweatshops Lead to Success

Recent history teems with examples of how sweatshop labor has helped poor economies leap to prosperity. . . .

China—home to millions of sweatshop workers—doubles its per capita GDP every ten years. . . . Kristof and WuDunn write, “. . . video arcades and computer schools have opened to cater to workers with rising incomes . . . a hint of a middle class has appeared.” . . .

Swedish economist Johan Norberg . . . predicts that all of South and East Asia will be prosperous enough to ban child labor entirely by 2010.

But that’s just it. A country must be able to *afford* to ban child labor before child labor is pulled out from under it.

By Radley Balko

**B. Question 1: Identify the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis**

The authors argument, main idea or thesis is:

**C. Question 2: Explain the author’s line of reasoning by identifying the claims used to build the argument and the connections between them.**

*Use the following template:*

The author’s first claim is The evidence used is

The author’s second claim is The evidence used is

The author makes this the second claim because (why isn’t this claim first?)

The author’s third claim is The evidence used is

The author makes this the third claim because (why isn’t this claim first or second?)

**D. Question 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of the evidence the author uses to support the claims made in the argument.**

Overall, the author’s evidence is ineffective. One piece of evidence was

However, this piece of evidence is not reliable because: *no date, no author, not an expert, the study is too old,* bias*, vested interest* (pick at least one). This is shown by

Another piece of evidence was

However, this piece of evidence is not reliable because: *no date, no author, not an expert, the study is too old,* bias*, vested interest* (pick at least one). This is shown by

Contrary, one piece of evidence which was effectivewas This piece of evidence was effective because: *reputation of the author or publisher, no vested interest, a clear expertise, neutrality* (pick at least one)

