

The Great Hunting Debate

To the Editor:

Part 1

There have been several letters in your newspaper that have criticized hunting. I feel that they have been biased and narrow-minded. Like most hunters, I believe hunting is an important tool for wildlife protection and conservation. Hunting helps keep nature in balance.

Part 2

Letters like the ones you have been printing argue that hunting is cruel. But what these well-meaning people forget to tell you is that nature can also be cruel. If there is not enough food, death by starvation and disease is slow and painful. Hunters keep the animal population under control by quick and clean killing. That is surely a much kinder way to die than by a long, drawn-out, and painful death!

Here's a good example of this. One year, heavy rains caused floods in the Florida Everglades. As a result, thousands of deer became stranded. The state considered having a deer hunt to reduce the size of the herd. That would have saved many other deer from starvation. Groups that were opposed to hunting spoke out. They said the hunts were cruel. They even got the courts to stop the hunt. And what was the result? More than 1,200 deer starved to death that year. Was that really being kind to the deer?

Part 3

Many years ago, hunting made it possible for people to survive. Such arguments as the ones you have been printing would have been unthinkable. In my opinion, the people who criticize hunting today would have supported it years ago because they would have needed hunters to bring them food!

The urge to hunt is still a part of us. Hunting is no free-for-all, however. Strict rules limit the use of weapons, hunting seasons, and the number of animals killed.

Hunting is an important form of recreation for millions of people. Hunters respect the rights of others not to hunt. So why should those people who oppose hunting force their beliefs on hunters?

Lewis Stratton

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Resource Links

1 RDI Book 1: p. 393

SAM Keywords: Viewpoint



The Great Hunting Debate *(Continued)*

This letter was written in reply to the previous letter.

To the Editor:

Part 1 I do not at all agree with the letter written by Lewis Stratton in your last issue. He says that hunters do not impose their beliefs on other people. But I live in an area where there is lots of hunting. And let me tell you, I am affected by hunting every single day of the hunting season. I cannot go for a walk in the woods near my house without being afraid that I'll be shot by a careless hunter. I am afraid to let my dog run free in the wilderness, because I don't want her to be shot, either. The sounds of hunters and their gunshots spoil my peaceful afternoons.

Many hunters would have you believe that hunting is a sport. Sport implies that the two competing sides are equal. But hunters with powerful weapons hunt defenseless animals. How can that be a sport?

Part 2 Hunting is just plain cruel. Perhaps, in the past, people had to kill in order to live. That is not true any longer. Too many hunted animals are only wounded. They suffer greatly before dying. I have seen several dead animals in the woods. These animals were clearly shot by hunters. They were not killed in a quick and clean way. They were wounded, and must have wandered away, only to die a slow and painful death. No one ate their meat or made use of them in any way. "Killing for fun" is a human trait that does not need to be encouraged.

Part 3 Unlike an animal's natural enemy, human hunters don't attack only the weakest animals. Instead, they go for the biggest and strongest. That leaves only the weaker animals to breed, which weakens the species in the long run.

There are other problems with hunting. Although hunters say that they care about wildlife, many break hunting regulations. They shoot more animals than the legal limit allows. They damage private property. And every year, accidental shootings kill or hurt hunters and non-hunters alike.

Hunting does not keep nature in balance. It throws it out of balance. And the balance of nature does not include species that kill for the fun of it.

Mary Chalmers

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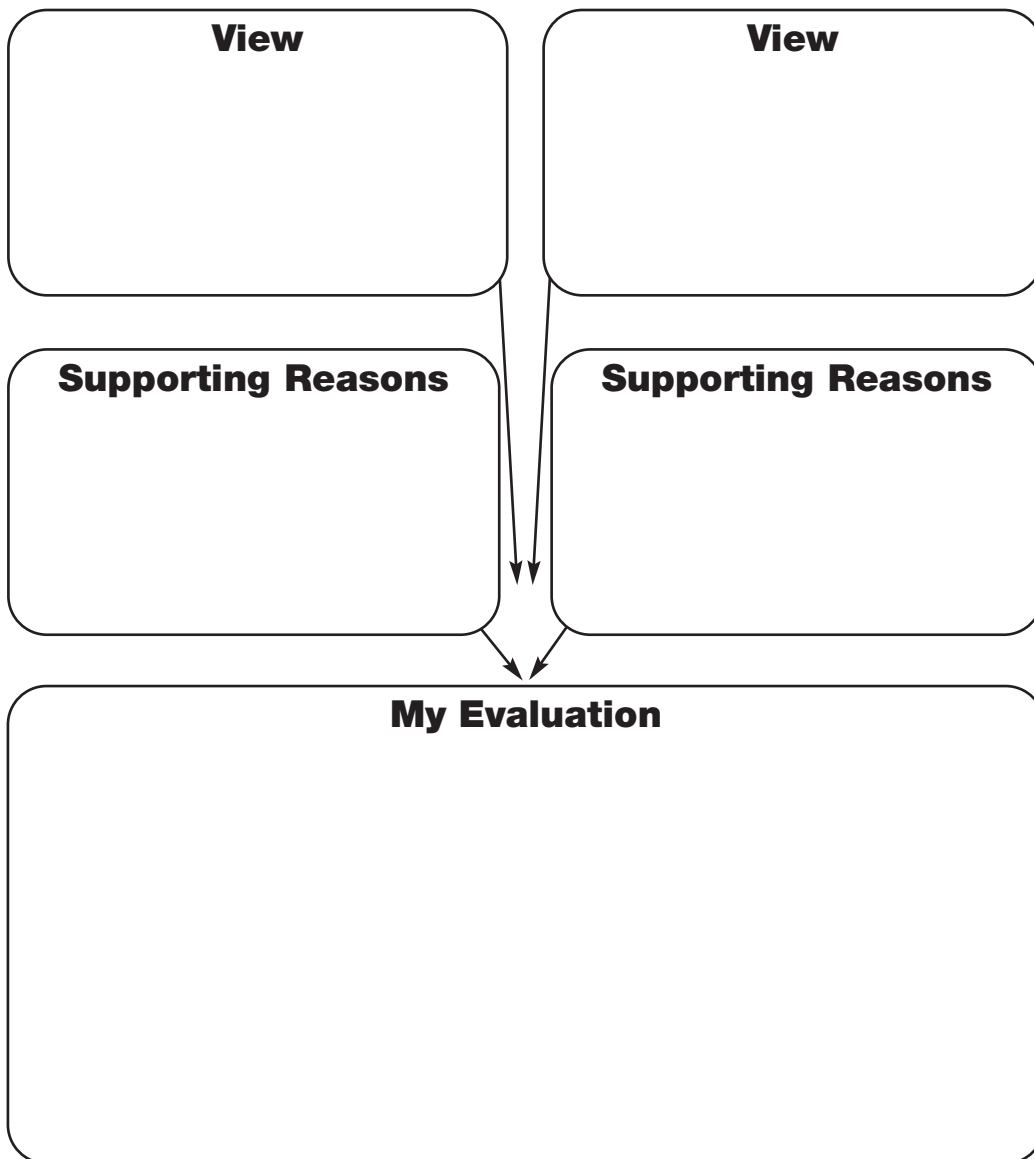
Resource Links**1** RDI Book 1: p. 394**SAM** Keywords: Viewpoint

Evaluate Author's Viewpoint

When you read a passage, you can evaluate the information and judge the author's viewpoint. Use the following questions to help you.

- What is the author's viewpoint?
- What reasons support this viewpoint?
- What does the author want me to believe?
- What do I know that can help me evaluate the information?

Passage: _____



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