The following appeared as part of an article in a magazine on lifestyles. " Two years ago, City L was listed 14th in an annual survey that ranks cities according to the quality of life that can be enjoyed by those living in them. This information will enable people who are moving to the state in which City L is located to confidently identify one place, at least, where schools are good, housing is affordable, people are friendly, the environment is safe, and the arts flourish." Discuss how well reasoned... etc. The author concludes that City L has good schools, affordable housing, friendly people, flourishing arts and a safe environment. To support this claim the author cites an annual survey that ranks cities according to quality of life. Two years ago City L was listed 14th in this survey. As it stands this argument is unconvincing. First, the author fails to indicate what individual characteristics of cities were used as criteria for the ranking. To the extent that the criteria used in the survey were the same as the features listed by the author in the conclusion, the conclusion would be warranted. On the other hand, if the survey employed entirely different criteriafor example, outdoor recreational opportunities or educational achievement levels of adult residentsthen the author' s conclusion would be wholly unwarranted. Secondly, the author provides no indication of how each characteristic was weighted in the ranking. For example, City L may have far and away the most flourishing arts

scene among the cities surveyed, but it may have poor schools, unfriendly people, and an unsafe environment. The extent to which the survey accurately reflects City L's overall quality of life in this case would depend largely on the relative weight placed on the arts as a factor affecting quality of life. Thirdly, the author fails to indicate how many cities were included in the survey. Th more cities included in the survey, the stronger the argumentand vice versa. For example, if 2,000 cities were surveyed, then City L would rank in the top one percent in terms of quality of life. On the other hand, if only 14 cities were surveyed then City L would rank last. Finally, the author's conclusion depends on the questionable assumption that the conditions listed by the author have remained unchanged in City L since the survey was conducted two years ago. Admittedly, had ten years elapsed the argument would be even weaker. Yet two years is sufficient time for a significant change in the overall economy, the city's fiscal policies, its financial condition, or its political climate. Any of these factors can affect the quality of schools, the extent to which art is flourishing, or the cost of housing. In conclusion, the author does not adequately support the conclusion. To strengthen the argument, the author must show that the criteria used in the survey were the same as the features listed in the conclusion and were weighted in a way that does not distort the picture in City L. To better assess the argument, we would also need more information about the cities included in the survey, as well as what changes in City L have occurred during the past two years. 100Test

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