What does “Disconnected” “prove” about computers?

Choose the best response to answer the following questions:

SA--strongly agree
SOA--somewhat agree
UN—uncertain
SOD-- Somewhat Disagree
SD--Strongly Disagree.

1. “Disconnected” convinced me that I’d rather give up computers than my cell phone for 3 weeks.

2. “Disconnected” proved to me that books are still more important than on-line resources as sources of information for school.

3. After watching the film, I’d give the edge to computers over video games as a way of filling up my free time.

4. Computers have become too important for communicating with schools, banks, libraries and other official institutions.

5. Computers will never replace musical instruments as a source of physical and intellectual challenge and pleasure.

6. Computer use is inferior to video cameras as a means to self-reflection and understanding.

7. You can call it a blog, or you can call it a journal. It is still a means of self-expression that few people other than the writer care about.

8. Computers are great storage “albums” for our favorite pictures.
Does “Disconnected” “prove” something about computers?

Instructions for Teachers:

“Disconnected” raises a surprising and difficult question: What are computers REALLY good for? We live in a culture in which computers are assumed to be indispensable for work and play. Yet one could argue that “Disconnected” makes the case that life for Andrew, Caitlin and Chel goes on pretty much as it had before they unplugged.

In “Disconnected,” computers “take the gold” in head to head competition with clunky old-fashioned typewriters. But otherwise, the film asks us to wonder: What kind of tool is the computer? What skills does this tool have? Why do I place such value on those skills? What are computer really good at?

This lesson asks viewers to think about the strengths and weaknesses of computers relative to other technologies and cultural artifacts in their lives: cell phones, books, video games, musical instruments and video cameras.

This lesson also requires students to think about “Disconnected” as not just “telling three interwoven stories.” It asks students to consider the possibility that the documentary is “making an argument.”

In other words, the guiding questions are something like: Is “Disconnected” trying to change our minds about computers? Is the documentary attempting to convince us that we overvalue computers? Misuse computers? Unwittingly displace other valuable activities in favor of unimportant computer use? That we’re confused and often surprised by our overreliance on computers? That our writing skills diminish when we can’t use computers?