When asked to evaluate a conclusion these are some things you could look for.

Note they will not apply to every situation. Use the information that you are given.

1. Use table or graph to find a piece of data / trend that supports conclusion. Quote figures.
2. Use table or graph to find a piece of data / trend that does not support conclusion. Quote figures.
3. Was a statistical test carried out? If not, should there have been?
4. Is standard deviation / standard error data provided? If so – a large SD shows a large spread of data so mean is less reliable. Look for overlaps – if there is an overlap the means are not significantly different.
5. Was the sample size in the investigation adequate? Was the experiment repeated?
6. Was a control group set up / control experiment carried out?
7. Were the scientists using an animal model to investigate something relevant to humans?
8. If there is a correlation – remember correlation does not necessarily mean causation and other factors may be important.