A Strip of Change

Trace how evidence supports a school proposal

9.CL.9.c "Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning, relevant and sufficient evidence, transitions, and a concluding statement or section that follows from the information presented."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB As you read, underline the claim, number two pieces of evidence that support different reasons, circle transitions, and box the concluding sentence. Use your marks to trace how the argument develops.

A Better Use for the Fence Line

(1) At many schools, a narrow strip of grass runs along a fence where no one plays. Our school should replace such a strip with native flowering plants. This change would give a small, overlooked space a useful purpose without taking away the field. Bees and butterflies visit flowers for nectar, while some butterfly caterpillars depend on particular plants for food. Closely cut lawn grass rarely offers those resources because mowing prevents many flowers from blooming. A garden designed with plants native to our region could provide food at different times of the growing season, not just on planting day.

(2) Moreover, a planted strip could reduce some routine lawn care. Grass kept short needs repeated mowing throughout the growing season; replacing that grass would eliminate mowing on that strip. Plants suited to local conditions often need less watering after they become established, although new plants still need attention. Those details matter because a school garden is only useful if someone can maintain it. Students in a science club could help choose species that suit the site and record when they bloom. That work would turn the space into a place to observe seasonal change, rather than just a patch of landscaping.

(3) Some people may object that planting and weeding take time, and that concern is fair. The proposal would begin with one short strip, not the whole lawn. Students could mulch around the plants to limit weeds, but a staff member would still need to approve a maintenance plan before planting. A small trial would show whether the school can care for the garden before expanding it. Because the strip would support insects, spare a portion of lawn from mowing, and allow students to observe plants over time, trying one carefully planned native-plant strip is a reasonable next step.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the writer's claim? How does one detail about insects support it?

2. How does the mowing detail support a different reason for the proposal? What detail keeps the maintenance argument realistic?

3. What objection does the writer address, and how does the response strengthen the argument?

4. Why does the final sentence follow from the reasons in the passage rather than introduce a new proposal?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Argue for or against adding a clearly labeled lost-and-found shelf near your school's main entrance. In 5 to 7 sentences, include a claim, two specific observations or realistic examples, reasoning that connects them to your claim, a transition, and a conclusion.

ANSWER KEY

A Strip of Change

GRADE 9 · 9.CL.9.c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

As you read, underline the claim, number two pieces of evidence that support different reasons, circle transitions, and box the concluding sentence. Use your marks to trace how the argument develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's claim? How does one detail about insects support it?	**The writer claims the school should replace a narrow grass strip with native flowering plants. The detail that bees and butterflies visit flowers for nectar supports the claim by showing how the change could provide food for insects.**
2	How does the mowing detail support a different reason for the proposal? What detail keeps the maintenance argument realistic?	**Removing grass from the strip would eliminate mowing there. The writer also admits that new plants need attention, so the proposal does not suggest the garden would maintain itself.**
3	What objection does the writer address, and how does the response strengthen the argument?	**The objection is that planting and weeding take time. Starting with one short strip and requiring an approved maintenance plan makes the proposal more manageable.**
4	Why does the final sentence follow from the reasons in the passage rather than introduce a new proposal?	**It recommends a small, planned trial and brings together the earlier reasons: food for insects, less mowing on the strip, and opportunities for students to observe plants.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should put a clearly labeled lost-and-found shelf near the main entrance. For example, a student who leaves a sweatshirt in the cafeteria could check one known place instead of asking in several rooms. This would save time because the shelf would give misplaced items a predictable destination. In addition, students pass the main entrance each day, so a visible shelf would remind owners to look for missing belongings. Although someone would need to sort the shelf, a student volunteer could do that once a week. Therefore, one organized shelf could make lost items easier to recover without requiring a new room.

Accept other passage-based evidence when the student explains its connection to the claim. For the open task, look for two distinct, relevant examples and a conclusion that follows from the reasoning.