Voices at the Market

Build an argument about the benefits and tensions of linguistic diversity.

SS24.HG.6b "Develop an argument supporting the position that linguistic diversity creates both cultural richness and conflict."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show cultural richness, circle two details that show conflict, and number one proposed response that addresses both.

More Than One Language at Harbor Street Market

1 At the fictional Harbor Street Market, shoppers hear Spanish, Arabic, and Vietnamese beside English. Vendors explain recipes in the languages they learned at home, while neighbors trade translations so others can try new foods. When a vendor describes how her family prepares a holiday dish, the original words carry memories and meanings that a brief English label may miss. Multilingual conversations can also bring customers and sellers together across generations. This is more than a lively soundscape: different languages help people share knowledge, preserve family ties, and encounter traditions outside their own.

2 Yet the same market has a problem when the city posts an emergency closing notice only in English. Some vendors may miss the deadline to move their stalls, even though the rule applies to everyone. A proposal to translate every notice sparks another dispute: translations cost money, and officials worry that a delayed notice could create safety risks. Residents also disagree about which languages to include. If only the three most common languages appear, speakers of less common languages might feel excluded. The conflict is not caused by any language being inferior; it grows from unequal access and limited resources.

3 Some residents argue that using only English would make public notices faster and simpler. That approach, however, would leave some vendors without information they need to follow the rules. A stronger policy would post urgent notices in the languages most requested at the market, provide a phone number for interpretation in other languages, and ask vendors regularly which translations they need. The city would still have to plan for costs and speed. Even so, this approach treats linguistic diversity as a public asset while reducing avoidable disputes over who receives information. Richness and conflict can exist in the same place.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What two details support the claim that the market's languages add cultural richness?

2. How does the English-only closing notice support the claim that linguistic diversity can create conflict?

3. Why might translating notices into only the three most common languages solve one problem but create another?

4. How does the proposed policy answer the argument for English-only notices while recognizing a real limit?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a town museum collecting oral histories in several languages but able to translate only some recordings. In one paragraph, argue how this language mix could enrich the exhibit and cause conflict, then propose a fair response and acknowledge a cost or limit.

ANSWER KEY

Voices at the Market

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HG.6b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show cultural richness, circle two details that show conflict, and number one proposed response that addresses both. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two details support the claim that the market's languages add cultural richness?	**Vendors share family recipes in their home languages, preserving meanings an English label might miss. Neighbors translate for one another so more people can try new foods.**
2	How does the English-only closing notice support the claim that linguistic diversity can create conflict?	**Vendors who cannot understand the notice may miss the deadline, even though they must follow the same rule as everyone else.**
3	Why might translating notices into only the three most common languages solve one problem but create another?	**It would give more vendors access to notices, but speakers of less common languages might still be excluded.**
4	How does the proposed policy answer the argument for English-only notices while recognizing a real limit?	**It offers notices in requested languages and interpretation for others, so more vendors can get information. The city must still manage the cost and speed of translation.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Recordings in several languages would let visitors hear how people tell their own stories, including expressions that might lose meaning in translation. They could also help families recognize their histories in the museum. But visitors who do not understand a recording may feel left out, and contributors could disagree about which stories receive translated captions. The museum could ask contributors which recordings need captions first and provide short summaries for the others. That would widen access, though staff time and the number of available translators would still limit how quickly every recording could be translated.

Accept other passage-based details that support both claims. For the open task, look for a clear argument, a specific source of conflict, a workable response, and an acknowledged limit.