

Three Views, One Disaster

Compare how purpose directs evidence in three accounts of one disaster.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 "Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details each author emphasizes. Circle one phrase in each paragraph that reveals the author's purpose or audience, then label the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3.

After the 1906 Earthquake

- ① In the days after the April 18, 1906, earthquake, a San Francisco newspaper editor described a city under pressure but not defeated. The editor's account stressed organized action: soldiers guarded streets, relief stations distributed food, and residents cleared debris. The editor criticized officials who delayed clear information about the fires, yet focused on civic recovery. The account noted that thousands had lost homes, but presented tents in Golden Gate Park as evidence that people could rebuild. Writing for readers who needed news and direction, the editor emphasized public order, practical aid, and the city's future.
- ② Writing in a letter to her sister, a San Francisco resident focused on what the disaster felt like inside a family. She described sleeping outdoors after the earthquake, carrying water from a public tap, and listening for news of relatives. Unlike the editor, the resident gave little attention to soldiers or city plans. Instead, she emphasized uncertainty: smoke hid familiar streets, aftershocks kept people awake, and rumors spread quickly. Her letter also mentioned neighbors sharing bread and blankets. Because she wrote to someone far away, her account made the catastrophe personal, showing daily fear alongside small acts of care.
- ③ An engineer assessed the same disaster in a report for a rebuilding committee. He concentrated on physical causes and choices that might reduce future damage. The engineer explained that strong shaking broke water mains, making it harder to fight fires, and he urged stronger building rules and better emergency water supplies. His report did not dwell on individual losses or kindnesses between neighbors. Instead, it compared damaged streets and utilities, treating the earthquake as a problem to study. By emphasizing systems rather than emotions, the engineer aimed to help officials plan a safer city.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- 1** Compare the editor's and the resident's central focus. Use one detail from each account to support your answer.

- 2** How does the resident's audience shape her account differently from the editor's audience? Include details each author emphasizes.

- 3** What details does the engineer include that the other authors do not emphasize, and what do those details show about the engineer's point of view?

- 4** Which author gives the most immediate hopeful view of recovery? Compare that author's treatment of the disaster with the resident's treatment.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose two authors from the passage. Write a four-sentence comparison that names each author's point of view, uses one specific detail from each account, and explains how each author's purpose shapes what that author emphasizes.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline two details each author emphasizes. Circle one phrase in each paragraph that reveals the author's purpose or audience, then label the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare the editor's and the resident's central focus. Use one detail from each account to support your answer.	The editor focuses on public recovery and order, shown by soldiers guarding streets or relief stations giving out food. The resident focuses on family uncertainty and personal care, shown by listening for relatives or neighbors sharing bread and blankets.
2	How does the resident's audience shape her account differently from the editor's audience? Include details each author emphasizes.	Because the resident writes to her sister far away, she emphasizes personal fear, relatives, and daily survival. Because the editor writes for readers needing news and direction, the editor emphasizes public order, aid, and recovery.
3	What details does the engineer include that the other authors do not emphasize, and what do those details show about the engineer's point of view?	The engineer emphasizes broken water mains, building rules, and emergency water supplies. These details show a practical, systems-focused view aimed at preventing future damage.
4	Which author gives the most immediate hopeful view of recovery? Compare that author's treatment of the disaster with the resident's treatment.	The editor gives the most immediate hopeful view by presenting tents in Golden Gate Park as evidence that people could rebuild. The resident instead emphasizes uncertainty, fear, and the search for relatives, although she also notes neighborly care.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The resident presents the earthquake as a family's frightening and uncertain experience. Her detail about listening for relatives shows why she emphasizes personal worries and neighborly care. The engineer presents the disaster as a city problem that officials can analyze and prevent. His focus on broken water mains shows that his report emphasizes safer systems rather than individual feelings.

Accept accurate comparisons that identify different viewpoints, supported by relevant details from both accounts. For Part 3, responses should include two authors, one detail from each, and an explanation of how purpose affects emphasis.