Light Where Needed

Analyze how an editorial turns a lighting policy into a public appeal.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.6 "Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline sentences that reveal what the author wants city leaders to do. Circle three words or phrases that make the argument vivid or urgent, and number the paragraph where each appears.

Let the Night Return

1 At midnight, our town's brightest public square is not the courthouse steps but the cloud above them. Light spills from unshielded fixtures, strikes windows, washes over treetops, and climbs into the sky. The result is a pale dome that hides most stars from people standing only a few blocks from open fields. This is not a call to make streets dim or unsafe. It is a call to aim light where it is needed: on sidewalks, crosswalks, and doorways. A lamp that sends half its glow upward is like a faucet running into the street.

2 Better lighting is already within reach. Fully shielded fixtures direct illumination downward, so the same sidewalk can be lit with less wasted glare. Choosing bulbs with a lower color temperature also reduces the blue-rich light that scatters readily in the atmosphere and can disturb some nighttime wildlife. Yet our current policy treats brightness as if it were safety itself. Is a driver safer when a bare bulb creates a blinding patch beside a dark curb? Is a pedestrian safer when bedroom windows shine all night? Good design does not flood every corner. It lets the eye see what matters.

3 City leaders should adopt a lighting code that requires shielding for new public fixtures, sets reasonable limits on unnecessary upward light, and invites residents to report troublesome glare. The cost of inaction is easy to overlook because it drifts away silently, watt by watt, star by star. But a town is more than its pavement. It is the sleep behind its curtains, the moths circling its gardens, the child who has never seen the Milky Way clearly. We can keep streets visible without turning the night into a billboard. Let our lights serve the ground, and let the sky belong to everyone again.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the author's central purpose? Use one phrase from the passage as evidence.

2. How does the opening comparison between the courthouse steps and the cloud above them support the author's point of view?

3. How do the two rhetorical questions in paragraph 2 challenge the idea that brighter lighting automatically means safer lighting?

4. Explain how the repetition "watt by watt, star by star" and the list of people and living things in paragraph 3 strengthen the passage's persuasiveness.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 90 to 120 word public-comment paragraph that urges a specific improvement at your school or in your community. State a clear position, include one comparison and one rhetorical question, use concrete details, and end with a specific action the decision-makers should take.

ANSWER KEY

Light Where Needed

HIGH SCHOOL · RI.11-12.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline sentences that reveal what the author wants city leaders to do. Circle three words or phrases that make the argument vivid or urgent, and number the paragraph where each appears. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the author's central purpose? Use one phrase from the passage as evidence.	**The author aims to persuade city leaders to adopt better outdoor-lighting policies, especially shielding and limits on upward light. Evidence includes, "City leaders should adopt a lighting code."**
2	How does the opening comparison between the courthouse steps and the cloud above them support the author's point of view?	**It shows that light is being wasted in the sky instead of serving people on the ground, making the current lighting seem misguided and excessive.**
3	How do the two rhetorical questions in paragraph 2 challenge the idea that brighter lighting automatically means safer lighting?	**They make readers consider how glare can create blinding contrast for drivers and shine into homes, suggesting that excessive brightness can reduce comfort and visibility rather than improve safety.**
4	Explain how the repetition "watt by watt, star by star" and the list of people and living things in paragraph 3 strengthen the passage's persuasiveness.	**The repetition makes the loss feel gradual but serious, while the list expands the effects beyond pavement to sleep, wildlife, and children's experiences. Together, they make the policy issue feel personal and shared.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should add covered bicycle racks near each main entrance. On rainy mornings, students arrive with soaked backpacks and leave bicycles leaning against railings, where handlebars block the walkway. A bike rack without a roof is like a bus stop without a shelter: it exists, but it does not fully serve the people who need it. Why ask students to choose a cleaner way to travel, then leave their equipment exposed? The school board should install covered racks before next fall, using a design that keeps paths clear and makes cycling a practical choice.

Accept equivalent statements of the author's purpose if they identify advocacy for shielded, carefully directed outdoor lighting. Strong responses explain how a specific stylistic choice, such as comparison, rhetorical questions, repetition, or imagery, advances that purpose.