Shade at Stops

Analyze how a public comment builds a practical case.

ELA.12.C.1 "Communicating Through Writing"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's central claim and requested action. Circle concrete details used as support, then write C beside the counterargument and R beside the response to it.

Public Comment to the Transit Board

1 Members of the transit board, I urge you to fund shade structures at the busiest bus stops before next summer. Riders often wait beside wide roads with no trees or shelter, and heat can turn a short delay into a health risk. This is not simply a comfort issue. When stops feel unsafe or punishing, people who can afford another option may drive instead, adding traffic to streets the city already struggles to manage. A modest shelter program would show that the board treats reliable transit as a public service, not merely a route on a map.

2 Last July, I stood at the Central Avenue stop for twenty minutes while a late bus approached. Four riders shifted between a utility pole's narrow shadow and the curb, and one parent held a jacket above a child's head. That observation cannot measure every stop, but it illustrates a condition the board can verify through a site audit. The first phase should prioritize stops with high ridership, long transfer waits, and little existing shade. Publishing those criteria would help residents see why some locations are served first. It would also let the board measure whether the program reaches riders who spend the most time exposed.

3 Some residents may argue that shelters invite litter or cost money better spent on buses. Those concerns deserve planning, not dismissal. The board can select durable designs, include trash bins where maintenance crews can service them, and report installation and upkeep costs publicly. Because this request concerns a capital improvement, I am asking the board to place a phased shelter program on its October agenda and direct staff to return with sites, costs, and a timeline. That decision would not solve every transit problem, but it would make a daily public service safer and more usable for the people who depend on it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the writer's central claim, and what specific action does the writer ask the transit board to take?

2. Identify one concrete detail from paragraph 2 that supports the claim. Explain how that detail strengthens the writer's reasoning.

3. What counterargument does the writer acknowledge in paragraph 3, and how does the writer respond to it?

4. How does the writer adapt the message for a transit board rather than for a group of friends? Use two details from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 100-130-word public comment to your school board requesting a change that would improve students' learning environment. State a clear claim, use two specific reasons or examples, acknowledge one reasonable concern, respond to it, and name the action you want the board to take.

ANSWER KEY

Shade at Stops

GRADE 12 · ELA.12.C.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's central claim and requested action. Circle concrete details used as support, then write C beside the counterargument and R beside the response to it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's central claim, and what specific action does the writer ask the transit board to take?	**The writer argues that the board should fund shade structures at busy bus stops. The writer asks the board to place a phased shelter program on its October agenda and direct staff to provide sites, costs, and a timeline.**
2	Identify one concrete detail from paragraph 2 that supports the claim. Explain how that detail strengthens the writer's reasoning.	**Possible answer: Four riders shifted between a utility pole's narrow shadow and the curb. This detail shows that riders lacked adequate shade while waiting, supporting the need for shelters.**
3	What counterargument does the writer acknowledge in paragraph 3, and how does the writer respond to it?	**The writer acknowledges that shelters may invite litter or cost money that could be spent on buses. The writer responds by proposing durable designs, serviceable trash bins, and public reporting of costs.**
4	How does the writer adapt the message for a transit board rather than for a group of friends? Use two details from the passage.	**The writer directly addresses the transit board and requests agenda action. The writer also proposes site audits, selection criteria, public cost reporting, and a timeline, which are practical details for decision makers.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Members of the school board, please approve a pilot program that provides secure phone-charging lockers in the library and cafeteria. Students use digital passes, assignments, and transportation apps throughout the day, yet many cannot charge devices between classes. In my chemistry class, two students recently shared one outlet during a lab because their phones were nearly dead. Some may worry that lockers would create maintenance costs or encourage students to linger. A small pilot, placed near staffed areas and funded through the technology budget, would test those concerns before a wider purchase. Add the pilot to next month's agenda and ask staff to report usage, costs, and student feedback.

Accept equivalent statements of the claim, evidence, counterargument, response, and audience-aware choices. For the open response, accept varied school issues if the writing meets the word range and includes all requested argument elements.