Shade Under Scrutiny

Evaluate how evidence builds an informational argument and how it could be strengthened.

ELA.12.R.2.2 "Evaluate how an author develops the central idea(s), identifying how the author could make the support more effective."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that best states the author's overall position. Circle each piece of evidence that supports it, then number the evidence pieces in the order the author uses them.

Trees, Heat, and Fair Access

1. On a July afternoon, pavement can hold far more heat than a shaded park path. Urban trees reduce that burden by blocking sunlight and releasing water vapor through their leaves. Researchers measure this effect with surface temperatures, air temperatures, and energy use in nearby buildings. Satellite images and street-level sensors repeatedly show cooler surfaces and air under tree cover, although the amount of cooling varies by neighborhood and climate. Trees are not a complete answer to dangerous heat, but they can make outdoor spaces and homes less stressful during heat waves.

2. Yet the cooling is not shared evenly. In many United States cities, neighborhoods shaped by past redlining have fewer mature trees and more dark, heat-absorbing surfaces. In a study of 108 U.S. urban areas, researchers found that formerly redlined areas were hotter than non-redlined areas on average. This comparison connects present-day heat exposure to earlier housing policy rather than treating tree gaps as accidental. The evidence also suggests that planting plans should consider where shade is scarce, not simply where empty planting sites are easiest to find.

3. Still, counting newly planted saplings can exaggerate a program's success. Young trees need watering, pruning, protection from damage, and enough soil for roots to grow. A city that announces thousands of plantings but does not report survival rates cannot show how much lasting shade it created. The passage's evidence builds a case for treating trees as public-health infrastructure: it explains a physical process, introduces comparative research, and identifies an implementation problem. Its argument would be stronger with local maps showing canopy and heat by neighborhood, plus several years of survival data for publicly funded plantings.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What overall position does the author develop about urban tree programs?

2. How does the first paragraph develop the author's position? Identify the types of support the author uses and explain what they establish.

3. How does the comparison of formerly redlined and non-redlined areas strengthen the second paragraph's claim?

4. What two additions does the author propose to make the support more effective, and why would each addition help?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences that propose an evidence plan for a city tree program. State one central idea from the passage, name one existing type of evidence that supports it, and propose one new source or set of data that would show where the program should act.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 12 · ELA.12.R.2.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that best states the author's overall position. Circle each piece of evidence that supports it, then number the evidence pieces in the order the author uses them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What overall position does the author develop about urban tree programs?	**Urban tree programs should be treated as public-health infrastructure, with fair placement in hot neighborhoods and long-term care for planted trees.**
2	How does the first paragraph develop the author's position? Identify the types of support the author uses and explain what they establish.	**It explains how trees cool areas by blocking sunlight and releasing water vapor, then uses measurements and observations from sensors and images to establish that tree cover is linked to cooler conditions.**
3	How does the comparison of formerly redlined and non-redlined areas strengthen the second paragraph's claim?	**It supports the claim that unequal heat exposure is connected to past housing policy, not merely to accidental differences in tree cover.**
4	What two additions does the author propose to make the support more effective, and why would each addition help?	**Local maps of canopy and heat by neighborhood would show where shade is most needed. Several years of survival data would show whether public plantings created lasting shade.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

One central idea of the passage is that urban tree programs should reduce heat fairly and maintain trees over time. The comparison of formerly redlined and non-redlined areas supports the need for fair placement. A citywide map that layers summer temperatures, tree canopy, and household income would reveal which blocks need shade most.

Accept equivalent statements of the central idea that address cooling, equity, and long-term tree care. For the open response, accept a plausible new evidence source if the student explains specifically what it would reveal and why it would improve the program's support.