

Shade on the Street

Analyze how an editorial builds and advances an argument.

ELA.12.R.3 "Reading Across Genres"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the editorial's main claim, circle evidence or examples, and put a star beside one rhetorical choice, such as a question, contrast, or counterargument, that helps advance the argument.

Shade Is Infrastructure

- ① On a July afternoon, a bus stop without shade can feel less like public service than a test of endurance. Pavement absorbs sunlight, and neighborhoods with few trees often become hotter than nearby parks or leafy streets. Heat is not merely uncomfortable, it can endanger older adults, outdoor workers, and people waiting for transit. Cities regularly treat sidewalks, drainage pipes, and streetlights as infrastructure. They should treat tree canopy the same way. A planted, maintained tree can cool a block, shelter pedestrians, and make a route to school or work more usable.
- ② New York City's MillionTreesNYC initiative reached its goal of planting one million trees in 2015, showing that large-scale planting can be organized rather than wished for. Still, a sapling is not instant shade, and a tree without watering or protection may not survive. That limitation strengthens, rather than weakens, the argument for a public plan: fund pruning, watering, and replacements alongside planting. Prioritize blocks near transit stops, schools, and apartment buildings with little green space. If public money can repair a cracked curb before someone falls, why should it ignore heat before someone becomes ill?
- ③ Some residents may object that trees cost money and compete with parking or utility space. Those tradeoffs deserve public discussion, but doing nothing also carries costs: hotter walks can discourage transit use, and extreme heat strains households and public services. The choice is not between a flawless green city and an expensive mistake. It is between planning for shade and accepting avoidable exposure. City councils should map low-canopy corridors, publish a maintenance budget, and invite residents to identify the stops and crossings that need protection first. Shade should be treated as a basic part of a safe street.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What is the author's central claim? Explain how the opening paragraph frames that claim.

2 How does the MillionTreesNYC example contribute to the author's reasoning?

3 What is the purpose of the rhetorical question about repairing a cracked curb and ignoring heat?

4 How does the author use the counterargument in the third paragraph to advance the editorial's purpose?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 90 to 110 word editorial paragraph about one change your school or community should make. State a claim, include one specific fact or example, acknowledge and answer a counterargument, and use one rhetorical question.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the editorial's main claim, circle evidence or examples, and put a star beside one rhetorical choice, such as a question, contrast, or counterargument, that helps advance the argument. 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 claim? Explain how the opening paragraph frames that claim.	The author claims that cities should treat tree canopy as infrastructure. The opening connects shade to public safety and usable travel, like other city services.
2	How does the MillionTreesNYC example contribute to the author's reasoning?	It provides an example showing that a large-scale tree-planting effort can be organized and completed.
3	What is the purpose of the rhetorical question about repairing a cracked curb and ignoring heat?	It compares a familiar safety expense with heat protection to argue that cities should prevent heat-related harm before people become ill.
4	How does the author use the counterargument in the third paragraph to advance the editorial's purpose?	The author acknowledges costs and competition for space, then argues that inaction also has costs, making planned shade investment seem more reasonable.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

High schools should begin at 8:30 a.m. or later. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 or later because adolescents need adequate sleep for health and learning. Some families would need to adjust transportation or work schedules, and schools should plan those changes carefully. Yet an early bell does not make tired students more prepared. If a schedule routinely conflicts with teenagers' biological sleep patterns, is convenience really the best measure of success? A later start would show that the district values alert, healthy learners.

Accept equivalent statements of the claim, evidence, and rhetorical purposes when they are supported by the passage. For the open response, check for all four required elements and a logical relationship between the claim, support, counterargument, and rhetorical question.