Shade for Cities

Track how details build a central idea in an informational text.

ELA.7.R.2 "Reading Informational Text"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail in each paragraph that develops the author's central idea. Number your underlined details 1, 2, and 3 to show how the idea develops across the passage.

Trees and Urban Heat

1 On a hot afternoon, a city block with little shade can feel much warmer than a nearby park. Dark roofs and pavement absorb sunlight, then release stored heat into the air. This urban heat island effect can raise temperatures, especially after sunset. Trees help because their leaves block some sunlight before it reaches sidewalks and buildings. Their roots also help rain soak into soil instead of rushing across hard surfaces. For city planners, planting trees can be one tool for making neighborhoods safer during heat waves.

2 Yet a young tree does not cool a street immediately. It needs water, healthy soil, and protection from damage while it grows. As its canopy spreads, shade covers a larger area, and leaves release water vapor through transpiration. That process uses heat energy and can cool the surrounding air. City workers may choose species that can handle local weather and have room for roots beneath the sidewalk. By linking planting with long-term care, a city increases the chance that its trees will provide lasting cooling.

3 Tree planting alone, however, does not guarantee equal benefits. In many cities, neighborhoods with fewer trees often become hotter than leafier areas. A city can map canopy cover and surface temperatures to identify places where shade is scarce. Residents can also help select planting sites, since they know which bus stops, playgrounds, and walkways are hardest to use in the heat. These steps show that urban trees are more than decoration. Careful planning, community input, and maintenance can turn them into a practical response to rising temperatures.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the central idea of the passage?

2. How does paragraph 1 introduce the central idea?

3. Choose one detail from paragraph 2. Explain how it develops the central idea.

4. How does paragraph 3 refine the central idea developed in the first two paragraphs?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence central-idea analysis of the passage. State the central idea in sentence 1, then use details from two different paragraphs to explain how the author develops it.

ANSWER KEY # Shade for Cities

GRADE 7 · ELA.7.R.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail in each paragraph that develops the author's central idea. Number your underlined details 1, 2, and 3 to show how the idea develops across the passage. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the central idea of the passage?	**Urban trees can help reduce city heat, but they need thoughtful planning, care, and fair placement to provide lasting benefits.**
2	How does paragraph 1 introduce the central idea?	**It explains that pavement and roofs create extra heat in cities, then introduces trees as a tool that can provide shade and help make neighborhoods safer.**
3	Choose one detail from paragraph 2. Explain how it develops the central idea.	**The detail that young trees need water, healthy soil, and protection shows that planting alone is not enough, because trees need care before they can provide lasting cooling.**
4	How does paragraph 3 refine the central idea developed in the first two paragraphs?	**It adds that cities must place and maintain trees carefully so cooler conditions reach neighborhoods with the greatest need for shade.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The passage explains that urban trees can reduce city heat when communities plan and care for them. The first paragraph connects pavement and lack of shade to the heat problem that trees can help address. The final paragraph adds that mapping, resident input, and maintenance help deliver cooling where it is needed most.

Accept equivalent statements of the central idea that include both cooling benefits and the need for planning or care. Students should use accurate passage details and explain how those details develop, extend, or refine the central idea.