Lights Above Us

Track how language shapes a public claim.

ELA.7.R.3.4 "Explain the meaning and/or significance of rhetorical devices in a text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each rhetorical question, circle repeated words or phrases, and number each comparison, personification, or contrast. In the margin, write a few words about the effect of each mark.

Aim Light Wisely

1 At the edge of town, the observatory opens its dome each Friday night. Yet many visitors see a sky washed pale by streetlights and glowing signs. Light that points upward does not make sidewalks safer, it only brightens empty air. Why should our brightest lamps shine where no one walks? The stars have not vanished. They are waiting behind a curtain of wasted light. A better design can protect both people and the night at once.

2 Shielded fixtures aim light down, like a flashlight aimed at a book instead of a window. They use less energy because less light escapes into the sky. When homes and stores choose these fixtures, the town saves money, the town saves energy, and the town saves its view of the stars. This is not a choice between safety and darkness. It is a choice between thoughtful light and careless glare. A well-lit path welcomes walkers, while an unshielded lamp can throw harsh light into a neighbor's bedroom.

3 Some residents say brighter is always better. But is a floodlight blazing all night really useful when a motion sensor could light the same driveway only when needed? We can light the door, not the clouds. We can light the path, not the treetops. We can light the park, not every sleeping window. Small changes, repeated across a town, can give owls, insects, and people a darker, calmer night. The next time you look up, what do you want to see?

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What rhetorical question appears in paragraph 1? Explain how it supports the writer's claim.

2. What does the phrase "waiting behind a curtain of wasted light" mean? Explain why the writer gives the stars a human action.

3. Which words are repeated in paragraph 3? What idea does this repetition emphasize?

4. How does the contrast between "safety and darkness" and "thoughtful light and careless glare" strengthen the writer's argument?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences about a school or community issue. Use one rhetorical question and one repeated word or phrase, then explain in your third sentence how those devices affect your reader.

ANSWER KEY # Lights Above Us

GRADE 7 · ELA.7.R.3.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each rhetorical question, circle repeated words or phrases, and number each comparison, personification, or contrast. In the margin, write a few words about the effect of each mark. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What rhetorical question appears in paragraph 1? Explain how it supports the writer's claim.	**"Why should our brightest lamps shine where no one walks?" It makes readers question the waste of sending light upward instead of toward places people need to see.**
2	What does the phrase "waiting behind a curtain of wasted light" mean? Explain why the writer gives the stars a human action.	**It means the stars are hidden by artificial light, not gone. Saying the stars are "waiting" makes them seem ready to be seen again if people reduce wasted light.**
3	Which words are repeated in paragraph 3? What idea does this repetition emphasize?	**The words "We can light" are repeated. The repetition emphasizes that people can use practical, targeted lighting instead of lighting the whole sky.**
4	How does the contrast between "safety and darkness" and "thoughtful light and careless glare" strengthen the writer's argument?	**The contrast reframes the issue. It shows that the choice is not between being safe or being in darkness, but between using light carefully or wasting it.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Should our school send mountains of usable paper to the recycling bin each week? We can print less, we can reuse scraps, and we can share digital copies. The repeated words "we can" make the actions sound possible for everyone, and the question makes readers consider their own choices.

Accept any accurate identification and explanation of how a device shapes the reader's thinking or strengthens the claim. For Part 3, check for exactly three sentences, a rhetorical question, repetition, and a clear explanation of both devices' effects.