Built to Persuade

Study how a proposal guides a decision-making audience.

10.T.SS.1.a "Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of a text's organizational structure to meet the needs and expectations of the target audience or serve a specific purpose. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that establishes the need for action, circle facts that help a decision maker judge feasibility, and number the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 to show the proposal's order.

A Safer Route to School

1 Each morning, students at Riverton High cross four lanes of traffic to reach the bus stop on Maple Avenue. During the last school year, families reported 18 near misses involving cars that turned without noticing pedestrians. The current crossing has faded paint, no countdown signal, and only one curb ramp. These details matter to the school board because it is deciding how to spend funds from a state safety grant. A new crossing would protect students, but the board must also consider cost, traffic flow, and construction time.

2 First, the proposed design adds a raised crosswalk, bright signs, and a pedestrian signal that gives walkers a 25-second crossing phase. A raised crosswalk slows vehicles as they approach, while the signal makes the crossing time visible to drivers and students. The plan also moves the bus stop 60 feet north, so waiting students will not crowd the corner. Engineers estimate that the work will cost $140,000. Because the grant can cover $110,000, the district would need to supply the remaining $30,000 from its transportation budget.

3 Some neighbors worry that a raised crosswalk will delay morning traffic. However, the engineering report predicts an average delay of 12 seconds per vehicle during the busiest fifteen minutes. Construction would take place in July, when school is out, and one lane would remain open. The board can reduce disruption further by announcing detours two weeks before work begins. For these reasons, the district should approve the project at its May meeting. The board can protect students while keeping costs and disruption within a manageable range.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Who is the proposal's target audience? Use one detail from the passage to support your answer.

2. How does paragraph 1 prepare the audience for the information in paragraph 2?

3. Why are the cost, grant amount, and remaining district expense placed in paragraph 2?

4. How does placing traffic and construction concerns in paragraph 3, just before the recommendation, make the proposal more effective for the board?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine the district is writing about the same crossing project for students and families instead of the school board. Create a four-step outline for that message, then write two sentences explaining how your order meets this new audience's needs.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 10 · 10.T.SS.1.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that establishes the need for action, circle facts that help a decision maker judge feasibility, and number the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 to show the proposal's order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who is the proposal's target audience? Use one detail from the passage to support your answer.	**The target audience is the Riverton school board. Paragraph 1 states that the board is deciding how to spend a state safety grant.**
2	How does paragraph 1 prepare the audience for the information in paragraph 2?	**Paragraph 1 establishes the safety problem and the board's decision criteria, while paragraph 2 presents the proposed solution, its features, and its cost.**
3	Why are the cost, grant amount, and remaining district expense placed in paragraph 2?	**They appear with the plan details so the board can judge whether the specific solution is financially feasible.**
4	How does placing traffic and construction concerns in paragraph 3, just before the recommendation, make the proposal more effective for the board?	**It addresses likely objections before asking for approval, showing that the proposal considers disruption as well as student safety.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

1. Describe the Maple Avenue crossing danger and show the safer route. 2. Explain how the raised crosswalk and signal will help students cross safely. 3. Share the July construction schedule, detour, and bus stop change. 4. Provide a way for families to ask questions. Families need practical travel information before budget details because they may need to change their routines during construction. This order moves from the safety benefit to the actions families may need to take.

Accept supported answers that identify the school board and explain how the sequence moves from need, to plan and cost, to concerns and recommendation. For Part 3, accept any logical four-step organization that clearly reflects students' and families' practical needs.