

Shade the Argument

Analyze how a public speech uses language to persuade a city council.

10.T.SS.2.b "Use literary devices, figurative language, rhetorical language, and/or rhetorical appeals to create a variety of effects, as appropriate to intended purpose and target audience. (C)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each image or comparison, circle each question or direct request to council members, and number the facts or practical reasons that support the speaker's request.

Speech for Street Trees

- ① Members of the city council, picture our neighborhood on a July afternoon. The sidewalk shimmers, bus riders wait without shade, and playground slides burn like skilletts. Trees are not decorations planted at the edge of a budget. They are green umbrellas, cooling streets and giving birds places to nest. A mature tree can shade a home, which may reduce the need for air conditioning. When we remove healthy street trees for a wider parking lot, we trade a living shield for more heat. Is that the future we want for children walking home?
- ② Tonight, I ask you to fund a tree-maintenance plan and require replacement trees when construction removes public trees. This is a practical investment, not a wish. According to the U.S. Forest Service, trees can help lower surface and air temperatures through shade and evaporation from leaves. Their roots also slow stormwater runoff, helping soil absorb water during heavy rain. Our city already pays to repair heat-damaged pavement and manage flooded intersections. Why spend more reacting to problems when trees can help prevent them? A planned canopy protects property, public health, and the shared spaces that make a neighborhood livable.
- ③ Some may say that parking brings customers, and businesses deserve access. Yet customers cannot shop comfortably on a sidewalk that feels like a griddle, and workers need safe routes from bus stops. We do not have to choose between commerce and trees. We can design parking areas with planted islands, protect trees during construction, and add shaded walking paths. Council members, choose streets that welcome people instead of baking them. Choose a budget that sees beyond next year. If we plant and protect trees now, what kind of city will grow with us? Let us leave children cooler blocks, cleaner air, and a place to gather.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does the comparison "playground slides burn like skillets" suggest, and how does it affect the audience?

2 Which source does the speaker name in paragraph 2, and how does naming that source strengthen the argument?

3 What practical problems does the speaker connect to heat and heavy rain, and what evidence is used to show that trees can help?

4 How does the speaker answer the concern that parking helps businesses? Include the repeated word or phrase and its effect.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 75 to 90 word appeal to your principal about one school improvement. Use one simile or metaphor, one rhetorical question, one credible fact or practical reason, and a direct call to action.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each image or comparison, circle each question or direct request to council members, and number the facts or practical reasons that support the speaker's request. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the comparison "playground slides burn like skillets" suggest, and how does it affect the audience?	It compares hot playground slides to skillets. The comparison makes the heat seem vivid and unsafe, especially for children.
2	Which source does the speaker name in paragraph 2, and how does naming that source strengthen the argument?	The speaker names the U.S. Forest Service. Naming an expert source makes the claim about cooling temperatures more credible.
3	What practical problems does the speaker connect to heat and heavy rain, and what evidence is used to show that trees can help?	The speaker connects heat to damaged pavement and heavy rain to flooded intersections. The speech explains that shade and leaf evaporation can lower temperatures, while roots slow runoff and help soil absorb water.
4	How does the speaker answer the concern that parking helps businesses? Include the repeated word or phrase and its effect.	The speaker says the city does not have to choose between commerce and trees, then suggests planted parking islands, protected trees, and shaded paths. Repeating "Choose" creates urgency and gives the council a clear call to action.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Principal Lee, our hallways need water-bottle refill stations. By lunchtime, the line at the single fountain coils like a rope, and students often choose disposable bottles instead. Refill stations provide filtered water quickly and help reduce plastic waste from single-use bottles. Why should hydration depend on waiting in a crowded hallway? Please add stations near the gym and cafeteria in next year's facilities plan. This practical change would make water easier to reach and our campus cleaner.

Accept other accurately identified examples of figurative language, rhetorical questions, direct appeals, facts, and practical reasons from the passage. For the open response, check that the student addresses a principal, stays within 75 to 90 words, and uses all four required persuasive choices.