Whose Voices Count?

Trace how a narrative develops a socially relevant theme.

10.T.T.1.c "Analyze and evaluate how a text's theme has social relevance and is developed across a text, comparing passages within and across texts, providing both reasoning and supportive textual evidence. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail in each paragraph that shows how people respond to the market plan. Number your underlined details 1, 2, and 3 to trace how the passage develops an idea about whose voices count in public decisions.

The Last Notice

1 On Monday, a red notice appeared on the door of the Mercado Rivera, a small market where Elena's father worked. The city planned to replace the block with luxury apartments, and residents had ten days to comment. At dinner, Elena watched her father fold the notice into his pocket. "They already decided," he said. Elena thought of the market's bulletin board, crowded with babysitting offers, lost-cat posters, and flyers in Spanish, Arabic, and English. The official notice, however, used only dense English paragraphs. Under streetlights, Elena copied its deadline into her notebook.

2 By Wednesday, Elena had carried her notebook to the bus stop, the laundromat, and the basketball court. She asked neighbors what the market meant to them, then wrote down their words. Mr. Hassan remembered finding work through a flyer there. Ms. Ortiz bought familiar foods when money was tight. At first, several people waved her away, saying complaints disappeared into city offices. Elena showed them the comment rule printed at the bottom of the notice. That evening, the bulletin board held translated summaries, a meeting time, and a sign-up sheet. By morning, it was covered with names.

3 At the hearing, Elena expected officials to glance at the papers and move on. Instead, her father read the names aloud, pausing after each one. Neighbors added stories about jobs, meals, and friendships that began at the market. The planning board delayed its vote and required a translation table at future hearings. The market was not saved that night, and Elena knew one meeting could not erase the city's power. Still, when she saw the bulletin board the next day, she noticed a new column titled "Who needs to know?" The question made the block feel less like a plan drawn over them and more like a place they could shape.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What theme begins to emerge in paragraph 1? Use one detail from the paragraph as evidence.

2. Compare paragraphs 1 and 2. How does the community's response to the plan change, and what causes that change? Use evidence from both paragraphs.

3. How does paragraph 3 develop and complicate the theme instead of giving the community a complete victory? Use two details.

4. What social issue makes the passage's theme relevant beyond this neighborhood? Explain how the passage connects the issue to the theme.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In 5 to 7 sentences, compare this passage with another narrative you have read. Name both texts, explain how they develop related or contrasting socially relevant themes, use one specific detail from each text, and explain why each theme matters today.

ANSWER KEY

Whose Voices Count?

GRADE 10 · 10.T.T.1.c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail in each paragraph that shows how people respond to the market plan. Number your underlined details 1, 2, and 3 to trace how the passage develops an idea about whose voices count in public decisions. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What theme begins to emerge in paragraph 1? Use one detail from the paragraph as evidence.	**A possible theme is that people can be shut out of decisions that affect them. Elena notices that the official notice uses only dense English, while the market serves people who use several languages.**
2	Compare paragraphs 1 and 2. How does the community's response to the plan change, and what causes that change? Use evidence from both paragraphs.	**In paragraph 1, Elena's father believes the city has already decided, and people are not yet organized. In paragraph 2, Elena shares the comment rule and translated information, so neighbors sign up to speak.**
3	How does paragraph 3 develop and complicate the theme instead of giving the community a complete victory? Use two details.	**The community gains some influence because the board delays the vote and requires translation tables. However, the market is not saved that night, showing that speaking up can create change without immediately overcoming unequal power.**
4	What social issue makes the passage's theme relevant beyond this neighborhood? Explain how the passage connects the issue to the theme.	**The passage connects to fair access to public decisions, including language access and redevelopment that can displace local businesses. The dense English notice limits participation, while translations help more residents make their voices heard.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In “The Last Notice” and Langston Hughes's “Thank You, Ma'am,” people gain dignity when someone treats their needs as worthy of attention. Elena helps residents make their concerns visible by posting translated summaries and a sign-up sheet, so the theme grows from private discouragement into collective action. In Hughes's story, Mrs. Luella Jones brings Roger home, feeds him, and gives him money for blue suede shoes, showing that respect can open a different path for a young person. Both texts connect to social issues because language access and compassionate support affect who can participate safely and confidently in a community. The first text emphasizes changing public systems, while the second emphasizes one person's choice to offer trust.

Accept varied theme statements if students explain how the theme develops across the three paragraphs and support their reasoning with accurate details. For Part 3, accept any appropriate narrative comparison that names both texts, includes specific evidence from each, and addresses social relevance.