

How Explanations Work

Analyze how evidence, sequence, and comparisons shape clarity.

11.T.T.2.a "Evaluate and critique expository techniques and organizational patterns and their effect; evaluate clarity of information. (I)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each main claim, circle each example or piece of evidence, and number the three major shifts in the explanation. Use your marks to judge how the author organizes information and makes it clear.

Cooling a Hot City

- ① On a summer afternoon, pavement can make a city feel hotter than nearby fields. Dark roofs and streets absorb sunlight, then release heat slowly after sunset. This urban heat island effect matters because high nighttime temperatures can keep homes warm and raise the risk of heat illness. The problem is not shared equally. Neighborhoods with fewer trees and more paved surfaces often have less shade, while residents may also have limited access to air conditioning. To explain why city heat deserves attention, planners first need to connect temperature measurements to the daily conditions people experience.
- ② Researchers often show the pattern with paired measurements. In Los Angeles, for example, a tree-shaded sidewalk can be far cooler at the surface than nearby sunlit asphalt, although the exact difference changes with weather and time of day. Satellite images add a wider view by mapping land-surface temperatures across entire neighborhoods. These examples move from a person standing on one block to a map of a city. That scale shift helps readers see that a hot bus stop is not only an inconvenience. It can be part of a larger design pattern. Still, surface temperature and air temperature are different measures, so a report should name which one it uses.
- ③ Cities can respond in several ways, but each choice has limits. Planting street trees supplies shade and can improve a block's appearance, yet young trees need water and years of care before their canopies grow large. Cool roofs reflect more sunlight than conventional dark roofs, but they mainly lower heat entering a building rather than shade a pedestrian outside. The most useful plans combine strategies and explain who will maintain them. This final comparison is important because it prevents a list of solutions from sounding equally effective in every setting. By ending with trade-offs, the explanation gives readers a basis for judging which response fits each street, building, or budget.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What organizational pattern connects the three paragraphs? Explain how this sequence helps the reader understand the topic.

2 How do the paired measurements and satellite images in paragraph 2 work together as an expository technique?

3 Why does the author state that surface temperature and air temperature are different measures?

4 Evaluate the effect of the final comparison of trees and cool roofs. Why is it more useful than simply listing both ideas?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence mini-explanation about a school or community issue. Use a problem-solution, cause-effect, or comparison pattern, include one concrete detail or example and one transition, then name your pattern and explain why it makes the information clear.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each main claim, circle each example or piece of evidence, and number the three major shifts in the explanation. Use your marks to judge how the author organizes information and makes it clear. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What organizational pattern connects the three paragraphs? Explain how this sequence helps the reader understand the topic.	The passage moves from the problem and its stakes, to evidence showing its scale, to a comparison of possible responses. This sequence helps readers understand the issue before judging solutions.
2	How do the paired measurements and satellite images in paragraph 2 work together as an expository technique?	The paired measurements give a concrete, street-level example, while satellite images show the broader citywide pattern. Together, they connect personal experience to larger evidence.
3	Why does the author state that surface temperature and air temperature are different measures?	The statement improves clarity by warning readers not to treat two different kinds of temperature data as the same thing.
4	Evaluate the effect of the final comparison of trees and cool roofs. Why is it more useful than simply listing both ideas?	The comparison shows the benefits and limits of each strategy. It prevents readers from assuming that either solution works equally well in every situation.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Late buses can make students miss the first minutes of class. For example, a route that arrives after the bell leaves riders choosing between being late and skipping breakfast with friends. Therefore, the district could post live arrival times and adjust routes that are repeatedly delayed. I used a problem-solution pattern because it makes the need for each response easy to follow.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the passage's problem-evidence-solutions sequence and its use of examples, scale shift, comparison, and qualification. For Part 3, check for four sentences, a recognizable organizational pattern, a concrete detail, a transition, and an accurate explanation of clarity.