

A Case for Shade

Analyze how a public comment persuades a local decision-making audience.

12.P.AC.2.a “Integrate literary, expository, and opinion (grades K-5) or rhetorical (grades 6-12) elements to appeal to target audiences and achieve specific purposes. (I/C)”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer’s main request, circle one image meant to create an emotional response, and number three pieces of evidence or reasoning that support the request. These choices show how the writer appeals to the Parks Commission.

Public Comment to the Parks Commission

- ① Members of the Parks Commission, our city’s summer heat is not an abstract forecast to the families who wait for buses beside the bare asphalt on Jefferson Avenue. At 3:30, children press notebooks over their heads, and older riders search for the thin shadow of a signpost. I am asking you to fund shade structures at the five busiest bus stops before next June. This modest project would make a daily trip safer and more dignified for people who cannot choose a cooler route. A bus stop should connect neighbors to opportunity, not leave them exposed while they wait.
- ② Evidence supports the urgency. The Environmental Protection Agency explains that shaded surfaces can be 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit cooler than unshaded surfaces, a meaningful difference on pavement that absorbs solar energy. Our transit department’s public schedule lists more than 1,200 weekday boardings at the five stops proposed for improvements. Those riders include workers, students, and residents traveling to medical appointments. The commission already budgets for routine stop maintenance, so adding durable canopies during scheduled repairs can limit installation disruption. When we use public funds, we should spend them where a practical design change serves many residents every day.
- ③ Some may argue that shelters cost too much or clutter sidewalks. Yet the choice is not between perfect streets and useful ones, it is between leaving riders in direct sun and giving them a basic layer of protection. Begin with the five high-use stops, publish the costs, and review rider feedback after one summer. That pilot would let the commission measure results before expanding the program. Commissioners, please place this item on next month’s agenda and direct staff to prepare a cost estimate. A city that plans for hotter days shows its residents that public space belongs to everyone, including those waiting for the bus.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Who is the target audience, and what specific action does the writer want that audience to take?

2 What image in the first paragraph appeals to readers' emotions, and what response is it meant to create?

3 Identify two pieces of evidence or practical reasoning the writer uses to show that the proposal is worthwhile.

4 How does the writer address a possible objection in the final paragraph, and why does this strengthen the argument?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 90-110-word email to your school board urging it to install water-bottle refill stations in an older school wing. Address the board, state a clear action, include one concrete observation, one reason or piece of evidence, a counterargument with a response, and a closing call to action.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's main request, circle one image meant to create an emotional response, and number three pieces of evidence or reasoning that support the request. These choices show how the writer appeals to the Parks Commission. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who is the target audience, and what specific action does the writer want that audience to take?	The target audience is the Parks Commission. The writer wants it to fund shade structures at the five busiest bus stops and direct staff to prepare a cost estimate.
2	What image in the first paragraph appeals to readers' emotions, and what response is it meant to create?	The image of children holding notebooks over their heads and older riders seeking a signpost's shadow is meant to create concern for people waiting in heat.
3	Identify two pieces of evidence or practical reasoning the writer uses to show that the proposal is worthwhile.	The EPA states that shaded surfaces can be 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit cooler, and the transit schedule lists more than 1,200 weekday boardings at the five proposed stops. The writer also notes that canopies could be added during scheduled maintenance.
4	How does the writer address a possible objection in the final paragraph, and why does this strengthen the argument?	The writer acknowledges concerns about cost and sidewalk clutter, then proposes a limited pilot with published costs and rider feedback. This makes the proposal seem practical and accountable.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Members of the School Board, please approve refill stations in the science wing before next school year. At lunch, students cluster around one aging fountain and watch their bottles fill in a slow trickle. The line steals minutes from lunch and leaves some students without time to refill. A station would offer faster access to water and reduce the need for disposable bottles. Although installation has a cost, durable equipment can serve students for years. Request bids this spring, then add the stations to the summer maintenance plan. Reliable water should not depend on which hallway a student uses.

Accept equivalent responses that accurately identify the audience, request, emotional appeal, evidence, and counterargument in the passage. For the open response, accept varied positions and wording if the response is 90-110 words and includes each required rhetorical element.