

# Authority in Action

Study how precise public language earns trust.

**12.T.SS.2.c** “Build credibility through a consistent formal, authoritative tone indicative of a confident and knowledgeable expert. (C)”

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline words or phrases that create a formal, confident tone. Circle details that make the writer sound informed and accountable.

### Planning for Extreme Heat

- ① Extreme heat is not merely an uncomfortable weather condition. It is a public-health hazard that requires organized municipal action. The National Weather Service identifies heat as a leading weather-related cause of death in the United States, particularly when high temperatures persist overnight. A city heat plan should therefore identify cooling centers, publish transit access, and notify residents before dangerous conditions arrive. These measures are practical because risk rises when people cannot cool their homes, travel safely, or obtain timely information. Clear procedures allow agencies to direct resources where they are most needed.
- ② Effective plans also depend on evidence rather than reassurance. Health departments can map emergency calls, electricity outages, and neighborhood temperatures to locate areas of greatest exposure. Officials must distinguish between a citywide forecast and the conditions residents actually experience on shaded or unshaded blocks, in upper-floor apartments, and at bus stops. That distinction supports equitable decisions about extended library hours, mobile water stations, and wellness checks. A plan that names responsible departments, deadlines, and communication channels demonstrates that the city has considered implementation, not simply announced concern.
- ③ Public communication must match the seriousness of the plan. Advisories should state the expected hazard, the hours when services operate, and the actions residents should take. Phrases such as “stay cool” are too vague when a notice can specify a nearby cooling location, a transit route, or symptoms that require medical attention. Officials should use direct, measured language and avoid exaggerated promises. Credibility grows when each notice gives verifiable details, acknowledges limits, and directs readers to an accountable public agency. In heat emergencies, precision is an essential form of care.

**2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE** \_\_\_\_\_ Use the passage

**1** Copy one sentence from paragraph 1 that makes a firm claim about extreme heat. What feature of its wording makes the claim sound authoritative?

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**2** What three kinds of data does paragraph 2 say health departments can map, and what purpose does this data serve?

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**3** How does naming responsible departments, deadlines, and communication channels build the writer's credibility?

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**4** Why does paragraph 3 reject the phrase "stay cool" as public guidance? Give two features of the stronger guidance described in the paragraph.

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**3 YOUR TURN** \_\_\_\_\_ Your own words

Write a 90-110-word city advisory about a cooling center. Include every detail: the Eastside Library cooling center is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Route 14 stops across the street, and people with chest pain, fainting, or confusion should call 911. Use a clear directive, precise details, and formal, measured language without slang or exaggerated promises.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline words or phrases that create a formal, confident tone. Circle details that make the writer sound informed and accountable. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                                                                        | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Copy one sentence from paragraph 1 that makes a firm claim about extreme heat. What feature of its wording makes the claim sound authoritative? | <b>"It is a public-health hazard that requires organized municipal action." The direct declaration and formal term "public-health hazard" create authority.</b>                        |
| 2 | What three kinds of data does paragraph 2 say health departments can map, and what purpose does this data serve?                                | <b>Emergency calls, electricity outages, and neighborhood temperatures. The data helps identify areas of greatest exposure.</b>                                                        |
| 3 | How does naming responsible departments, deadlines, and communication channels build the writer's credibility?                                  | <b>It shows that the city has planned for implementation and accountability, not merely expressed concern.</b>                                                                         |
| 4 | Why does paragraph 3 reject the phrase "stay cool" as public guidance? Give two features of the stronger guidance described in the paragraph.   | <b>"Stay cool" is vague. Stronger guidance gives specific, verifiable details such as a cooling location, a transit route, service hours, or symptoms requiring medical attention.</b> |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

Residents without reliable cooling should use the Eastside Library cooling center during periods of dangerous heat. The center will operate from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Route 14 stops across the street. Plan travel before temperatures peak, carry water if possible, and monitor household members who may be affected by heat. Call 911 immediately if anyone experiences chest pain, fainting, or confusion. This service provides a designated indoor location, but residents should continue to follow official heat advisories and seek medical care when symptoms require professional attention. Use this resource during the stated operating hours.

Accept supported explanations that connect formal diction, direct claims, specific evidence, and accountable details to credibility. For Part 3, require all provided facts, a consistent formal tone, and concrete guidance rather than vague or exaggerated language.