Words for Urgency

See how purpose, audience, and situation shape a public alert.

7.P.ST.1.c "Explore how context shapes the author's decisions and the audience's responses during the interpretation and construction of texts. (I/C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three details that show choices Lena made as a writer. Circle two details that reveal what her readers needed or how they responded.

The Sandbag Alert

1 When the river near Pine Street rose after days of rain, the town's youth council needed volunteers to fill sandbags before nightfall. Lena, the council's student writer, first planned a long online article explaining flood stages and city budgets. Then she learned that many readers would be families checking phones between work and dinner. The immediate context changed her purpose. Instead of trying to explain every detail, Lena needed to help people quickly decide whether, where, and when to assist.

2 She wrote a short alert with a bold heading, "Sandbag Help Needed by 6 P.M." The first line named the meeting place, the middle gave the needed clothing, and the last line listed a phone number for questions. Lena used bullets because hurried readers could scan them. She did not include dramatic phrases such as "disaster is coming," since the river forecast was uncertain and panic could make traffic worse. Her calm, specific language showed that she wanted readers to act safely, not merely feel alarmed.

3 By late afternoon, neighbors shared screenshots of the alert in local group chats. Several people arrived with gloves and boots, while others called to ask whether teenagers could help. At the site, a volunteer said the message was useful because it answered her first questions without making the situation sound hopeless. Another resident ignored a longer article posted by a different group, saying he had no time to search for the meeting place. These responses show how the readers' situation shaped what information they noticed and trusted.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What parts of Lena's situation caused her to change from writing a long article to writing an alert?

2. How did Lena's audience influence her decision to use bullets?

3. Why did Lena avoid dramatic language, and what response did she want instead?

4. How did the volunteer's response differ from the other resident's response? What does this comparison show about readers' needs?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a school event that needs volunteers. Write a 45 to 60 word alert for a named audience, then add exactly two sentences explaining two choices you made for that context and how the audience will probably respond.

ANSWER KEY

Words for Urgency

GRADE 7 · 7.P.ST.1.c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three details that show choices Lena made as a writer. Circle two details that reveal what her readers needed or how they responded. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What parts of Lena's situation caused her to change from writing a long article to writing an alert?	**The river was rising, volunteers were needed before nightfall, and many readers were busy families checking phones between work and dinner.**
2	How did Lena's audience influence her decision to use bullets?	**She used bullets because hurried readers could scan the information quickly.**
3	Why did Lena avoid dramatic language, and what response did she want instead?	**The forecast was uncertain, and dramatic language could cause panic and worsen traffic. She wanted readers to act safely.**
4	How did the volunteer's response differ from the other resident's response? What does this comparison show about readers' needs?	**The volunteer valued the short alert because it quickly answered her questions, while the resident ignored the longer article because he could not quickly find the meeting place. The comparison shows that busy readers notice and trust clear, easy-to-find information.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Library volunteers, meet at the east entrance at 3:30 Thursday to sort donated books. Bring a water bottle and wear closed-toe shoes. Sign in with Mr. Ortiz before lifting boxes. If you cannot stay until 5:00, tell him when you need to leave so he can plan teams. I used times, a place, and safety details because students may read quickly after school. This audience will likely bring needed items and arrive at the correct time.

For Questions 1 through 4, accept answers that connect Lena's choices to the urgent situation, her busy audience, or readers' responses. For Your Turn, accept a 45 to 60 word alert with a clear audience and two explanation sentences that connect writing choices to context and an expected audience response.