# Creek Words Matter

Analyze how language choices shape a request to local leaders.

**8.T.SS.2.a** "Analyze how figurative language, connotative language, and/or literary device choices are used strategically to achieve specific purposes for target audiences. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline each figurative phrase and circle each word or phrase with a strong positive or negative feeling. In the margin, label each mark V for shows value, U for creates urgency, or A for pushes action, based on its likely effect on council members.

### A Request for Riverside Creek

1 Members of the Riverside Town Council, our creek is more than a ribbon of water behind the ball field. It is a silver path where herons hunt, children skip stones, and rain carries leaves toward the river. Last spring, volunteers pulled tires, bottles, and tangled fishing line from its banks. By July, new trash had gathered near the footbridge. Each bag tossed aside becomes a small warning flag, telling visitors that this place can be ignored.

2 Funding a cleanup crew and covered bins would not be a luxury. It would be a shield for the creek and for the families who use the trail. We can choose to be spectators, watching the problem spread, or caretakers, working together before the next storm. A monthly cleanup, clear signs, and bins at both entrances could change the scene. Let us give the creek a cleaner future, not another season of excuses for our town.

3 Council members, when visitors see cans floating beneath the footbridge, what do they learn about Riverside? They do not see a town that values its river. They see a town that looks away. Please place creek restoration on the next budget agenda. A modest investment now can prevent larger cleanup costs later and show that Riverside protects the places its residents share. The creek's future is in your hands, and the next step is clear.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What picture does the phrase "silver path" create, and why might that picture matter to the council?

2. How does the phrase "warning flag" affect the tone of the first paragraph? What purpose does it serve?

3. How does the contrast between "spectators" and "caretakers" support the writer's request?

4. Why does the writer repeat "They" in the sentences about what visitors see? Consider the writer's audience.

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences to your principal asking for a bottle filling station. Use one figurative comparison and one contrast to make your request persuasive.

**ANSWER KEY**

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**GRADE 8 · 8.T.SS.2.a**

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each figurative phrase and circle each word or phrase with a strong positive or negative feeling. In the margin, label each mark V for shows value, U for creates urgency, or A for pushes action, based on its likely effect on council members. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | What picture does the phrase "silver path" create, and why might that picture matter to the council? | **It makes the creek seem bright, valuable, and worth traveling along. This image can encourage council members to see the creek as a place worth protecting.** |
| 2 | How does the phrase "warning flag" affect the tone of the first paragraph? What purpose does it serve? | **It creates a concerned, urgent tone. It suggests that litter is a signal of a growing problem that needs attention.** |
| 3 | How does the contrast between "spectators" and "caretakers" support the writer's request? | **The contrast presents a choice between passively watching the problem and taking responsibility. It pushes council members toward supporting action.** |
| 4 | Why does the writer repeat "They" in the sentences about what visitors see? Consider the writer's audience. | **The repetition emphasizes how neglect can damage Riverside's image. It pressures council members to avoid appearing careless about the river.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Principal Lee, please install a bottle filling station, a fresh spring in our busy hallway. Students can choose refillable bottles, not overflowing trash cans. This practical change would help our school care for its shared spaces.

Accept responses that use a clear figurative comparison and a meaningful contrast to persuade the principal. The response should make a specific request and maintain exactly three sentences.