Purpose Detectives

Read how one topic changes when the writer's purpose changes.

9.T.C.1.a "Use knowledge of texts' distinct disciplinary, personal, or technical purposes to aid comprehension. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two words or phrases in each paragraph that reveal its purpose, then write a two- or three-word purpose in the margin beside each paragraph.

One Eclipse, Three Reasons

1 On April 8, 2024, a total solar eclipse crossed parts of North America. At sites within the narrow path of totality, the Moon completely covered the Sun's bright surface for a few minutes. Astronomers used observations from this event to study the Sun's outer atmosphere, called the corona, which is easier to see during totality. Outside the path, viewers saw only a partial eclipse. This overview distinguishes totality from a partial eclipse so readers can interpret reports and maps of the event accurately and compare locations.

2 When the eclipse began, I stood with my grandfather in a park in southern Illinois. The daylight faded, and the air felt cooler. He had traveled there because our town lay near the path of totality. For a brief time, the Sun's bright disk disappeared behind the Moon, and people around us gasped. I wrote this memory to hold onto the surprise we shared and to explain why that afternoon matters to me. Years later, I can still picture his gloved hand pointing toward the darkened sky.

3 To view the partial phases of a solar eclipse, use eclipse glasses that meet the ISO 12312-2 international safety standard. Put glasses on before looking toward the Sun, and keep them on until you look away. Do not use sunglasses, a camera viewfinder, or homemade filters as eye protection. If you use a telescope, binoculars, or camera, attach a proper solar filter to the front of the device. These directions reduce the risk of serious eye injury for all viewers during partial phases of an eclipse.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does paragraph 1's purpose help a reader understand eclipse reports? Use two details from the paragraph.

2. What purpose does paragraph 2 serve that paragraph 1 does not? Give two language features that support your answer.

3. Who would most need paragraph 3, and what is the writer trying to help that reader do?

4. How does the word choice in paragraph 3 fit its purpose differently from the word choice in paragraph 2? Give one example from each paragraph.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence message about viewing a solar eclipse for one named audience. Choose either a personal purpose, such as sharing an experience, or a technical purpose, such as giving safety directions, then add a fourth sentence that names your purpose and explains two language choices that fit it.

ANSWER KEY

Purpose Detectives

GRADE 9 · 9.T.C.1.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two words or phrases in each paragraph that reveal its purpose, then write a two- or three-word purpose in the margin beside each paragraph. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does paragraph 1's purpose help a reader understand eclipse reports? Use two details from the paragraph.	**It gives accurate background for interpreting reports and maps. It explains that totality occurs in a narrow path when the Moon covers the Sun's bright surface, while places outside the path see only a partial eclipse.**
2	What purpose does paragraph 2 serve that paragraph 1 does not? Give two language features that support your answer.	**Paragraph 2 preserves and shares a personal experience. It uses first-person language, such as "I stood," and sensory or emotional details, such as fading daylight, cooler air, and people gasping.**
3	Who would most need paragraph 3, and what is the writer trying to help that reader do?	**People planning to view an eclipse, especially during its partial phases, would need it. The writer is helping them protect their eyes and use viewing equipment safely.**
4	How does the word choice in paragraph 3 fit its purpose differently from the word choice in paragraph 2? Give one example from each paragraph.	**Paragraph 3 uses commands and technical terms to give safety directions, such as "Do not use" and "ISO 12312-2." Paragraph 2 uses personal and sensory language, such as "I" and "the air felt cooler," to reflect on an experience.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear Maya, I watched the eclipse with my grandfather from a park near the path of totality. When daylight faded, the quiet crowd and darkening sky made me feel amazed. I will remember sharing that unusual afternoon with him. My purpose is personal, so I used first-person words and feeling details instead of commands.

Accept equivalent statements of purpose when students support them with accurate passage evidence. For the open task, accept either a personal or technical message if it has three message sentences, names an audience, and explains two appropriate language choices in a fourth sentence.