Beyond the Tree Count

Trace how details deepen an idea about urban shade.

RI.9-10.2 "Determine central ideas of a text and analyze in detail their development over the course of a text, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail in each paragraph that changes what successful tree planting means. Number your choices 1, 2, and 3 to show how the idea develops.

Who Gets the Shade?

1 At a bus stop on a hot afternoon, a person standing beneath a tree may feel cooler than someone waiting beside bare pavement. A canopy blocks sunlight before it heats the ground, and leaves release water that can cool nearby air. These effects help explain why cities plant trees along streets and around public spaces. Yet the relief is local: a tree shading one sidewalk cannot cool every block in a city. Looking at where shade falls, rather than simply counting trees, is a first step toward understanding who benefits.

2 That question becomes urgent when shade is unevenly distributed. In many cities, streets with little tree cover also have broad areas of pavement that absorb sunlight during the day and release heat later. People who walk to school, wait for buses, or work outdoors may spend long stretches in those exposed spaces. Planting the same number of trees in every neighborhood might sound fair, but equal numbers do not address unequal starting conditions. A neighborhood with few shaded walking routes may need more attention than one where mature trees already cover the sidewalks.

3 Even a carefully chosen planting site does not guarantee lasting shade. Young trees have small crowns, so their cooling effect grows over time if the trees survive. Roots need room, and young trees often need watering during dry periods. A sapling placed under power lines may later be cut back, limiting the canopy it can provide. Cities therefore have to consider species, space, and long-term care alongside the location of each planting. The goal is not a high planting total on the day of a ceremony. It is useful shade that reaches people over many summers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What idea about trees does paragraph 1 introduce, and which detail limits that idea?

2. How do the details about pavement and daily activities in paragraph 2 develop the question of who benefits from shade?

3. How does paragraph 3 refine the idea that cities should choose planting locations carefully? Use two details.

4. How does the passage's central idea change from paragraph 1 through paragraph 3?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In four sentences, recommend how a city planner should judge a tree-planting project five years later. Use one detail from paragraph 1 and one from paragraph 3 to explain why the number of trees planted would be an incomplete measure.

ANSWER KEY

Beyond the Tree Count

HIGH SCHOOL · RI.9-10.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail in each paragraph that changes what successful tree planting means. Number your choices 1, 2, and 3 to show how the idea develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What idea about trees does paragraph 1 introduce, and which detail limits that idea?	**Trees can cool places where people spend time, but their relief is local: a tree shading one sidewalk cannot cool every block.**
2	How do the details about pavement and daily activities in paragraph 2 develop the question of who benefits from shade?	**Pavement can hold heat, while people walking, waiting for buses, or working outdoors spend time in exposed spaces. These details show why shade matters most where people face that heat.**
3	How does paragraph 3 refine the idea that cities should choose planting locations carefully? Use two details.	**Location alone cannot ensure lasting shade. Young trees need time to grow, and they may need watering or enough room for their roots to survive.**
4	How does the passage's central idea change from paragraph 1 through paragraph 3?	**Paragraph 1 establishes that trees provide local cooling. Paragraph 2 shows that shade should reach people in exposed places, and paragraph 3 adds that trees must survive and grow to provide that shade over time.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Five years after planting, the city should check whether trees shade places where people wait, such as bus stops. Paragraph 1 shows that a tree cools a nearby space, not every block. The city should also check whether young trees survived and grew, since paragraph 3 explains that their cooling effect increases as their crowns grow. A planting total alone would show neither where people receive shade nor whether that shade will last.

Accept different accurate details if students explain how the passage moves from local cooling to the placement and long-term survival of trees. For Part 3, look for a measurable recommendation supported by details from both specified paragraphs.