The Message Between Modes

Analyze how sound, images, and words shape a video's argument.

10.7.R "Students will analyze and evaluate the techniques used in a variety of multimodal content and how they contribute to meaning."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two sound choices and circle two on-screen details. Write the same number beside one sound choice and one on-screen detail that work together to shape the video's message.

The Last Bus

1. A student-made video called "The Last Bus" argues that the city should add a later bus trip on Route 6. It opens on a black screen with the sound of a bus engine fading away. Then a wide shot shows an empty stop at dusk, while a phone screen in the corner reads 9:04 p.m. A caption says, "Last bus: 9:00 p.m." No one speaks for five seconds. The silence after the engine fades makes the missed ride feel immediate, while the time and caption let viewers work out what happened without a narrator telling them.

2. The next scene shifts to a close view of a grocery worker's hands counting coins beside a work badge. Her voice says, "My shift ends at nine. The walk home takes forty minutes." As she speaks, small white words repeat "forty minutes" at the bottom of the screen. A low drumbeat begins, matching her footsteps as the camera follows her along a sidewalk. The badge and coins suggest her work and limited options, but they do not prove that every late worker faces the same trip. The repeated words make one detail hard to miss.

3. At the end, the beat stops and the screen shows a plain request: "Ask the transit board about a 9:30 p.m. trip." Beneath it, smaller text says, "Based on one worker's route; check schedules for your stop." A voice reads the request aloud, but not the smaller text. The clear spoken request gives listeners a next step, including those who cannot see the screen. Yet the quiet, visual-only caution may escape them. The video is persuasive because its sound, images, and words work together, but its final design gives the claim more attention than its limit.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the fading engine sound, the phone time, and the caption work together in the opening?

2. What do the close view of the worker's hands and her spoken words add to the argument? What can these details not establish?

3. How do the repeated words "forty minutes" and the drumbeat affect the way viewers experience the walk?

4. Evaluate the decision to speak the final request aloud but leave the caution as small, unspoken text. Who might receive an incomplete message?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a different ending for the video that uses at least two modes, such as sound and on-screen words. Describe what viewers would see and hear, then explain how your choices would make the message clearer or fairer.

ANSWER KEY

The Message Between Modes

GRADE 10 · 10.7.R

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two sound choices and circle two on-screen details. Write the same number beside one sound choice and one on-screen detail that work together to shape the video's message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the fading engine sound, the phone time, and the caption work together in the opening?	**The engine sound suggests a bus leaving. The 9:04 phone time and 9:00 last-bus caption show that the bus has already gone, making the missed ride immediate and clear.**
2	What do the close view of the worker's hands and her spoken words add to the argument? What can these details not establish?	**The badge, coins, and spoken account make the effect on one worker concrete. They do not establish that every late worker has the same trip or options.**
3	How do the repeated words "forty minutes" and the drumbeat affect the way viewers experience the walk?	**The repeated words emphasize the length of the walk, while the beat matching her footsteps gives the walk a steady, pressing rhythm.**
4	Evaluate the decision to speak the final request aloud but leave the caution as small, unspoken text. Who might receive an incomplete message?	**Speaking the request makes the action clear to listeners, but people who cannot see or read the small text may miss that the video describes only one worker's route.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would show the words "Proposed 9:30 p.m. trip" on screen instead of showing a new bus arriving. A voice would say, "Ask the transit board about this proposed trip. Check the schedule for your stop." I would leave out the drumbeat so both sentences are easy to hear. The spoken warning would help listeners understand that the later trip does not exist yet.

Accept different interpretations when students connect a specific sound, image, or text choice to its effect and support that connection with passage details. For the open task, look for two described modes and a clear explanation of how their combination changes the message.