Shade the Claim

Use evidence and limits to shape a defensible thesis.

11.6.W.2 "Students will develop a clear, concise, defensible thesis statement."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the two draft claims and circle details that could support a narrower claim. Number one objection and one limitation that a defensible thesis should address.

A Claim for the Courtyard

1 At fictional Harbor High, the student council must choose how to make its paved courtyard usable at lunch. The courtyard has eight tables, but none has shade. On sunny days, students crowd under the narrow roof by the cafeteria doors, leaving several tables empty. A proposal would place two movable shade canopies over four tables. In my notebook, I first wrote, "Our courtyard needs change." That sentence names a place but offers no decision a reader can debate. The details about tables and the roof give me a narrower question: Should the school buy the canopies?

2 I tried a second claim: "Two canopies will make outdoor lunch perfect for everyone." That sounds decisive, yet my notes cannot prove it. Four tables would still have no shade, and a canopy does not fix rain or winter cold. The council also has to consider storage and the work of setting the canopies up. A stronger argument would name the limited benefit instead of promising perfection. It could focus on giving more students a shaded place to sit on sunny days, when the crowd beneath the roof shows that shade is in demand.

3 A student who prefers planting trees raises a fair objection: trees can provide shade without being moved each day. But young trees may take years to shade the tables, while canopies can be used as soon as they are installed. That difference matters if the council's goal is to improve lunch this semester. I can support buying two canopies for that immediate purpose without claiming that trees are a bad idea. A thesis that states that choice and its reason would guide an argument; the storage question belongs in the argument as a cost to address, not a reason to hide.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Turn the first notebook sentence into a one-sentence thesis that names a specific action and a reason supported by the passage.

2. Rewrite the “perfect for everyone” claim so it states how many tables would gain shade without promising too much.

3. Write a one-sentence thesis in favor of canopies that answers the tree advocate's objection without dismissing trees entirely.

4. Write a one-sentence thesis that supports canopies but qualifies the recommendation with the practical cost of storage or setup.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

At another school, students need a quiet place to study at lunch, but the library is closed then. An unused classroom is available, and a teacher can supervise it twice a week. Write one concise, defensible thesis recommending a plan and acknowledging its limit.

ANSWER KEY

Shade the Claim

GRADE 11 · 11.6.W.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the two draft claims and circle details that could support a narrower claim. Number one objection and one limitation that a defensible thesis should address. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Turn the first notebook sentence into a one-sentence thesis that names a specific action and a reason supported by the passage.	**Harbor High should buy two movable canopies because students crowd beneath the cafeteria roof for shade on sunny days.**
2	Rewrite the “perfect for everyone” claim so it states how many tables would gain shade without promising too much.	**Harbor High should buy two movable canopies to shade four courtyard tables on sunny days.**
3	Write a one-sentence thesis in favor of canopies that answers the tree advocate's objection without dismissing trees entirely.	**Although trees could provide shade later, Harbor High should use canopies to improve courtyard seating this semester.**
4	Write a one-sentence thesis that supports canopies but qualifies the recommendation with the practical cost of storage or setup.	**Harbor High should buy two canopies for immediate shade if the council can arrange storage and setup.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Although it would be available only twice a week, the school should open the unused classroom as a supervised study space so students have a quiet place to work when the library is closed at lunch.

Accept varied wording when a thesis makes a specific, arguable recommendation supported by the given facts. Qualified claims should describe a real limit without making an unsupported promise.