Visible Windows

Study how evidence, structure, and imagery support an informative argument.

12.3.W.2 "Students will compose informative essays, reports, or technical writing that: • objectively introduce and develop topics • include a defensible thesis • incorporate evidence (e.g., specific facts, details, charts and graphs…"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the thesis, circle two supporting facts, number the paragraphs to track how the argument develops, and box the repeated metaphor.

When Glass Misleads Birds

1 On bright mornings, the windows of a school can reflect the trees beside them. A bird approaching the building may see what appears to be open habitat rather than a pane of glass. Transparent glass poses a similar problem when a bird can see vegetation through a building. These collisions are not simply the result of careless flight; they arise when a material designed for human sight sends misleading signals to wildlife. Schools should mark large areas of exposed glass and reduce unnecessary nighttime lighting because both measures address predictable hazards without requiring the removal of windows.

2 A window can become a false doorway, but a visible pattern can close it. The American Bird Conservancy recommends applying exterior markings in a pattern with gaps no wider than two inches. Closely spaced dots or lines make the whole surface visible to birds; one isolated bird-shaped decal leaves most of the glass unmarked. Placing the pattern on the outside matters because reflections can conceal markings attached inside. Schools can begin with panes facing trees or other vegetation, where reflections may suggest a path through the building. This approach changes the signal birds receive while preserving daylight indoors.

3 Lighting deserves a separate response. Many birds migrate at night, and artificial light can attract or disorient them, especially around buildings. Turning off unneeded lights after school hours therefore addresses a hazard that window markings cannot solve. Neither step guarantees that every collision will stop: glass placement, nearby habitat, and building use differ from campus to campus. A school should review which panes pose risks and which lights must remain on for safety before choosing a plan. The false doorway will not disappear, but making it visible and reducing needless light can make the building less hazardous.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the passage's thesis, and why is it a defensible claim rather than a statement of fact?

2. Which specific recommendation supports the case for window markings, and how does it address the problem described in the first paragraph?

3. How does the order of the three paragraphs help develop the thesis? Describe the purpose of each paragraph.

4. How does the repeated "false doorway" metaphor clarify the argument without taking the place of evidence?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one formal paragraph of 85 to 105 words arguing whether your school should add water bottle refill stations. Use these facts: stations fill reusable bottles, fill counters record refills but cannot prove how many disposable bottles were avoided, and filters require regular maintenance; include a defensible thesis, at least two of the facts, a practical limit, and a restrained metaphor that clarifies your point.

ANSWER KEY

Visible Windows

GRADE 12 · 12.3.W.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the thesis, circle two supporting facts, number the paragraphs to track how the argument develops, and box the repeated metaphor. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the passage's thesis, and why is it a defensible claim rather than a statement of fact?	**Schools should mark exposed glass and reduce unnecessary nighttime lighting. This is a defensible claim because the passage gives reasons for a course of action that readers could evaluate or challenge.**
2	Which specific recommendation supports the case for window markings, and how does it address the problem described in the first paragraph?	**The American Bird Conservancy recommends exterior markings with gaps no wider than two inches. A closely spaced pattern makes glass visible to birds that might otherwise mistake it for open habitat.**
3	How does the order of the three paragraphs help develop the thesis? Describe the purpose of each paragraph.	**The first explains the hazard and states the thesis. The second develops the case for exterior markings with a specific recommendation. The third addresses nighttime lighting and qualifies the claim by noting limits and safety needs.**
4	How does the repeated "false doorway" metaphor clarify the argument without taking the place of evidence?	**It conveys how glass can appear to offer birds a clear path. The passage also provides concrete support, including the marking recommendation and the effect of nighttime lighting.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A school should add water bottle refill stations in high-traffic areas, provided it budgets for filter maintenance. Stations offer students a convenient way to fill reusable bottles during the day. Their counters record refills, which can help staff assess use, but those numbers cannot establish how many disposable bottles students avoided. A station is a doorway to a more practical refill routine, not proof that every student has changed habits. Before installation, the school should assign responsibility for replacing filters and checking equipment. This measured plan offers access to drinking water while keeping claims about environmental benefits honest.

Accept different defensible positions in the final paragraph if they use at least two supplied facts accurately, acknowledge a practical limit, and maintain a formal style. The metaphor should clarify the claim rather than serve as its only support.