A Garden Argument

Study how a writer builds a clear, evidence-based claim.

6.3.W.3 "Students will compose argumentative essays that: • introduce precise claims • organize claims and evidence in a logical sequence • provide relevant evidence to develop arguments..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's claim, number the two pieces of source evidence in the order they appear, and circle words that show how much lawn the plan would use. These marks will help you trace how the argument develops.

A Small Garden by the Fence

1. At recess, the strip of grass beside our school fence is mostly a place for lost soccer balls. Our school should turn one small section of that lawn into a garden of plants native to our area. This change would give local pollinators food and shelter while keeping most of the grass open for games. A small garden is a realistic first step: students could help choose plants with a local garden expert, and the school could place a sign explaining why those plants belong here.

2. First, a native plant garden would support animals that help flowers make seeds. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service explains that native plants offer pollinators food and shelter. Bees and butterflies need places to feed, but a neatly mowed patch of grass offers few flowers. Next, the garden could make careful use of water. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense program says plants suited to a region's climate can need less extra watering once established. These sources give two practical reasons to replace part of the lawn.

3. Some students might worry that a garden would take away space to play. That concern matters, so the plan should use only the narrow strip by the fence, not the open field. The garden would also need a clear path around it and a schedule for weeding. These details do not erase the work, but they make the plan more realistic. Because the garden offers pollinator habitat without taking over the playground, our school should test a small native planting this spring.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What exact change does the writer ask the school to make? What limit makes the claim precise?

2. Why does the writer give pollinator evidence before water evidence? Explain how each supports the claim.

3. Name one source in the passage. Which part of the argument does its information support?

4. Which words in the final paragraph limit how much lawn the garden would use? Why are they clearer than saying "some space"?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 5- to 7-sentence argument for adding labeled recycling and compost bins at school, with a precise claim, evidence in a logical order, and varied sentence beginnings. Use these source notes: the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says recycling reduces waste sent to landfills, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture says compost adds nutrients to soil.

ANSWER KEY

A Garden Argument

GRADE 6 · 6.3.W.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's claim, number the two pieces of source evidence in the order they appear, and circle words that show how much lawn the plan would use. These marks will help you trace how the argument develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What exact change does the writer ask the school to make? What limit makes the claim precise?	**Turn one small section of lawn by the fence into a native plant garden, while keeping most grass open for games.**
2	Why does the writer give pollinator evidence before water evidence? Explain how each supports the claim.	**The pollinator evidence shows what the garden would help. The water evidence then shows a practical benefit of choosing plants suited to the area.**
3	Name one source in the passage. Which part of the argument does its information support?	**The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service supports the point that native plants offer pollinators food and shelter. Also accept WaterSense for the point about watering.**
4	Which words in the final paragraph limit how much lawn the garden would use? Why are they clearer than saying "some space"?	**"Only the narrow strip by the fence, not the open field" identifies both the proposed space and the play space that would remain.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should put clearly labeled recycling and compost bins beside the cafeteria trash cans. First, recycling bins could collect items accepted by our local recycling program. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says recycling reduces waste sent to landfills. Compost bins would serve a different purpose: they could collect food scraps if our school has a composting plan. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, compost adds nutrients to soil. With clear labels and a plan for emptying the bins, our school could put more of its waste to use.

Accept equivalent wording that accurately connects each cited source to the claim. For Part 3, look for a specific proposal, both source notes used accurately, a logical sequence, and varied sentence openings.