Trees, Three Voices

Read three perspectives on trees along city streets.

8.3.R.1 "Students will analyze works written on the same topic from a variety of historical, cultural, ethnic, and global perspectives and analyze the methods the authors use to achieve their purposes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one phrase in each voice that shows why trees matter to that writer. Circle one phrase in each voice whose wording may help persuade its audience.

Room for Roots

1. Fictional 1912 letter from a Chicago factory worker to a city council member: "At noon, I walk home beneath a sun that seems to press the bricks closer together. On our block, the few trees are mostly near the larger houses. Why should my children cross three streets to find a patch of shade? I ask the council to plant trees along the workers' blocks as well. The city can pave our streets, so surely it can leave room for roots. Let the next summer be kinder to every doorstep."

2. Fictional 2024 diary entry by a street vendor in Ahmedabad, India: "Before the lunch rush, I roll my cart beside a neem tree. The leaves shake above my customers while scooters hum beyond the curb. When the shade moves, so does the line of people waiting for lime water. Last month, workers marked this tree for removal to widen the road. A wider road might speed traffic, but where will my customers stand at noon? My cart has wheels. The tree does not. I hope the planners notice us both."

3. Fictional 2024 speech by a Tohono O'odham student in Phoenix, Arizona, to a neighborhood planning board: "My grandmother showed me how to gather mesquite pods, which can be ground into flour. Now I watch cars idle beside a bare bus stop where students wait for rides home. Plant native mesquite there. Its branches could offer shade, and its pods could remind us that a street can grow more than traffic. When you decide what belongs along our sidewalks, will you leave space for a tree that carries both food and memory?"

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the Chicago worker want the council to do? How does the question about the worker's children support that request?

2. How does the vendor's description of the moving shade show what the tree means to the vendor's work?

3. Why does the student mention a grandmother and mesquite pods when asking the board to plant a tree?

4. Compare the worker's letter with the vendor's diary entry. How does each writer use a different kind of detail to show that street trees matter?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one excerpt and name a different audience for its message. Write 2 to 3 sentences adapting that message for your audience, then write 2 to 3 sentences explaining how your method differs from the original writer's and why it fits your audience.

ANSWER KEY

Trees, Three Voices

GRADE 8 · 8.3.R.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one phrase in each voice that shows why trees matter to that writer. Circle one phrase in each voice whose wording may help persuade its audience. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the Chicago worker want the council to do? How does the question about the worker's children support that request?	**The worker wants trees planted on workers' blocks. The question about children crossing three streets shows that nearby shade is not shared equally.**
2	How does the vendor's description of the moving shade show what the tree means to the vendor's work?	**The customers move with the shade, showing that the tree gives them a place to wait and may help the vendor keep their business.**
3	Why does the student mention a grandmother and mesquite pods when asking the board to plant a tree?	**The student connects mesquite to family knowledge and food, giving the board a reason beyond shade to plant it.**
4	Compare the worker's letter with the vendor's diary entry. How does each writer use a different kind of detail to show that street trees matter?	**The worker points to children crossing three streets for shade to argue for fair access. The vendor describes customers following the shade to show how one tree affects daily work.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would adapt the vendor's message for customers who visit the cart. Please tell the road planners that you need a shaded place to wait at noon. Ask them to keep the neem tree when they widen the road. The vendor's diary uses a scene of people moving with the shade to show what could be lost. My version asks customers to take action because their requests could reach the planners.

Accept other supported interpretations of each writer's purpose and methods. For Part 3, look for a changed audience, an adapted message, and a specific comparison with the chosen excerpt.