Marsh or Pavement

Trace how a public argument builds its case.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.6 "Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two statements that reveal the author's position, then circle three rhetorical choices, such as a question, contrast, vivid image, or repeated words, that make the position persuasive.

A Letter to the Council

1 Willow Marsh holds stormwater, shelters herons, and gives families paths beside cattails. The council proposes draining part of it for parking. I urge members to reject this plan. A parking lot may make one afternoon easier, but the marsh works every day. When we trade a living wetland for pavement, what do we gain, and what do we lose? We lose a natural neighbor that cannot be rebuilt overnight.

2 Nearby shops need convenient parking; that concern deserves attention. Yet convenience is not necessity: an underused municipal lot stands two blocks away, while the marsh has no substitute. Wetlands slow and store stormwater. Picture summer rain rushing across roofs and streets toward basements, with less wetland left to hold it. The choice is between a short walk today and a safer, healthier town for years.

3 Preserving the marsh is worth delaying construction. Better signs and a crosswalk could direct customers to existing spaces without destroying the place that protects our streets. Let us choose solutions that serve shoppers and safeguard homes. Let us keep the marsh for runners, birds, children, and the next hard rain. Council members should reject the drainage plan and study existing parking before approving more pavement.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the author's purpose in this letter, and what point of view does the author express?

2. What effect does the rhetorical question in paragraph 1 have on the reader?

3. How does the author use the supporters' concern about customer parking in paragraph 2 to advance the argument?

4. How does the repeated phrase "Let us" in paragraph 3 support the author's purpose?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a school or community issue. Write a 90-110-word message that takes a clear position and uses at least two rhetorical techniques, such as a rhetorical question, contrast, repetition, vivid language, or a concession. After your message, start a new paragraph and write one sentence that names the two techniques and explains how they support your position. Count only the message in the 90-110-word limit.

ANSWER KEY

Marsh or Pavement

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two statements that reveal the author's position, then circle three rhetorical choices, such as a question, contrast, vivid image, or repeated words, that make the position persuasive. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the author's purpose in this letter, and what point of view does the author express?	**The author aims to persuade the council to reject the drainage plan. The author believes preserving Willow Marsh is more valuable than adding a new parking lot. Accept equivalent statements of purpose and point of view connecting marsh preservation with rejecting the parking plan.**
2	What effect does the rhetorical question in paragraph 1 have on the reader?	**It asks readers to weigh what the town would lose by replacing the wetland with pavement, making the loss seem serious and personal.**
3	How does the author use the supporters' concern about customer parking in paragraph 2 to advance the argument?	**The author acknowledges that shops need convenient parking, then distinguishes convenience from necessity: an underused lot already exists, while the marsh has no substitute.**
4	How does the repeated phrase "Let us" in paragraph 3 support the author's purpose?	**The repetition includes readers in the decision and creates a shared call to protect the marsh while supporting local businesses.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should add more covered tables to the courtyard. On sunny days, students either crowd indoors or eat quickly under direct sun. A few sturdy shade structures would give students a place to talk, read, and recharge between classes. Why should fresh air be available only to students who can tolerate the heat? Covered tables are not a luxury. They are a practical way to make the courtyard useful in more kinds of weather. Let us create a campus that welcomes students outside, not one that sends them back into crowded hallways.

The rhetorical question challenges unfair access, while the contrast between welcoming students outside and sending them into halls emphasizes the proposal's benefit.

For rhetorical analysis, accept supported explanations of how a technique influences readers or strengthens the argument. For Your Turn, accept any chosen school/community issue with a clear position, at least two identifiable rhetorical techniques and a 90–110-word message. Require the separate explanatory sentence to name two techniques and explain their effects; do not require a marsh or parking topic.