Attention by Design

Analyze how text choices fit readers and goals.

9.P.AC.3 "Text Design: Consider the impact of text design on audience and purpose when consuming and producing texts across modes and genres."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three design choices that shape attention, and label each one in the margin with A for audience, P for purpose, or A/P for both.

One Message, Different Designs

1. At 6:10 a.m., the fictional City of Riverton issued a boil-water advisory after a water main break reduced pressure in several neighborhoods. Residents needed one clear action: boil tap water for one minute before drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, or preparing food. The city shared the same safety message in several forms because people would encounter it in different places. Text design includes choices such as headings, type size, color, spacing, icons, links, and the amount of detail. These choices can guide a reader's attention and help the message fit its audience and purpose.

2. First, the city sent a phone alert to residents in the affected area. Its top line read, "BOIL WATER NOW," in capital letters. Beneath it, a red water-drop icon appeared beside a single sentence: "Use bottled or boiled water until officials say the advisory is over." The alert used large type and no map, background explanation, or long list of exceptions. On a phone screen, people may be walking, working, or anxious. The alert's brief design made the urgent action easy to notice, but it could not answer every question.

③ Later, the city posted a web page for residents who needed details. A blue heading, “Water Advisory Questions,” introduced a map of affected streets. Below the map, short question-and-answer sections explained how to boil water, when to discard ice, and where to pick up bottled water. Blue underlined links led to updates in Spanish and to a sign-up page for email notices. Unlike the alert, the page used white space, headings, and links so readers could locate specific information. Its calmer design supported careful reading, although it would be less useful than an alert during an immediate emergency.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Identify two design choices in the phone alert. Explain how they help the alert achieve its purpose.

2. Why does the phone alert leave out a map and background explanation?

3. How does the web page's design differ from the alert's design, and why is that difference useful for its audience?

4. What is the likely impact of including links to Spanish updates and email notices on the web page?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Create a 40- to 60-word paper notice telling students that the library will close at 3:30 p.m. Monday for inventory and reopen at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday. Include a clear heading, one visual cue such as an icon or boxed line, and spacing or short lines, then write one sentence explaining how your design fits busy student readers.

ANSWER KEY

Attention by Design

GRADE 9 · 9.P.AC.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three design choices that shape attention, and label each one in the margin with A for audience, P for purpose, or A/P for both. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Identify two design choices in the phone alert. Explain how they help the alert achieve its purpose.	**The capital-letter headline, red water-drop icon, large type, and one short sentence make the urgent safety action quick to notice and understand.**
2	Why does the phone alert leave out a map and background explanation?	**People may be viewing it quickly on a phone while busy or anxious, so the alert focuses on the immediate action instead of details.**
3	How does the web page's design differ from the alert's design, and why is that difference useful for its audience?	**The web page includes a map, question-and-answer sections, white space, headings, and links. These features help readers who need detailed information find specific answers.**
4	What is the likely impact of including links to Spanish updates and email notices on the web page?	**The links make the information more accessible to Spanish-speaking readers and help residents receive later updates.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

LIBRARY CLOSED AFTER 3:30 P.M. MONDAY

The library closes at 3:30 p.m. Monday for inventory and reopens at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Return books in the outdoor drop box.

Need a book tonight? Use the e-book catalog.

Teachers may request materials by email before noon Monday.

The large all-caps heading and boxed request line catch busy students' attention, and the short lines make the time and alternatives easy to scan.

Accept other accurately identified design choices when students explain a reasonable effect on the intended audience or purpose. For the open task, look for a clear audience, essential closure information, and design choices that make the notice quick to scan.