The Case for Shade

Trace how a writer's goal shapes an experiment report.

11-12.RST.6 "Analyze how the author's purpose or point of view shapes the style and content when providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's request to the school board, circle two details chosen to support it, and number two places where the writer limits what the measurements can show.

A Cooler Route to the Bus

1 At noon in September, the blacktop outside our school cafeteria can feel like a griddle. I am asking the school board to add shade along the route students use to reach the bus loop. My case begins with a small test, not a dramatic photograph: pavement in direct sun can be much hotter than the same pavement beneath a tree. That difference matters because students wait on the blacktop after dismissal. I will describe how we measured surface temperature so the board can judge the evidence rather than simply take my word for it.

2 Two students used an infrared thermometer, which estimates a surface's temperature from the radiation it emits. On a clear day, they measured blacktop in full sun and blacktop shaded by the same tree, keeping the thermometer the same distance from each spot. They took three readings at each spot within ten minutes, then calculated an average. The sunlit readings averaged 49°C; the shaded readings averaged 33°C. We compared the same material to avoid confusing a change in shade with a change in surface type. Those measurements describe pavement, not the air students breathe.

3 A sixteen-degree difference is a reason to investigate shade, not a promise that one tree will cool the entire bus loop. This was one clear day at one location; clouds, time of day, and the amount of shade could change the result. Our board should test several waiting spots before choosing where to plant or build a canopy. Still, the numbers give a practical starting point: prioritize the places where students stand on exposed pavement. I have left out stories about uncomfortable shoes because a decision about spending deserves measurements and their limits.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the writer's request to the school board shape the opening paragraph?

2. Why does the writer explain that both measurements came from blacktop and that the thermometer stayed the same distance from each spot?

3. How do the limits stated in the final paragraph affect the tone and strength of the writer's request?

4. The writer includes temperature averages but leaves out stories about uncomfortable shoes. How does that choice serve the writer's purpose?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence note from a board member who wants more evidence before funding shade. Include the reported temperatures, request a specific follow-up test, and use a measured tone that fits your purpose.

ANSWER KEY

The Case for Shade

HIGH SCHOOL · 11-12.RST.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's request to the school board, circle two details chosen to support it, and number two places where the writer limits what the measurements can show. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the writer's request to the school board shape the opening paragraph?	**The writer begins with a familiar place students use, then introduces a test as evidence for adding shade rather than relying on a dramatic photograph.**
2	Why does the writer explain that both measurements came from blacktop and that the thermometer stayed the same distance from each spot?	**These procedure details make the comparison more credible for a board deciding whether the temperature difference supports action.**
3	How do the limits stated in the final paragraph affect the tone and strength of the writer's request?	**They give the request a cautious tone. The writer presents the results as a reason to test more locations, not proof that one tree will cool the whole route.**
4	The writer includes temperature averages but leaves out stories about uncomfortable shoes. How does that choice serve the writer's purpose?	**The averages provide measurable evidence for a spending decision, while leaving out the stories keeps the case focused on results the board can evaluate.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The reported blacktop averages of 49°C in sun and 33°C in shade suggest shade may matter at this site. Because these readings come from one clear day, I cannot recommend a project based on them alone. Please repeat the measurements at three bus-loop waiting spots on several school days, recording conditions each time. Those results would help us decide where shade would be most useful.

Accept answers that connect specific choices in wording or evidence to the writer's goal and audience. For the open task, look for four sentences that use both reported averages, propose a specific test, and maintain a measured tone.