One Topic, Many Forms

Trace how a writer chooses formats, audiences, and time frames.

11-12.W.10 "Write routinely over extended time frames (for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each writing format, underline its intended audience, and label each writing project S for a short time frame or E for an extended time frame. Use your marks to see how the writer makes different choices for the same topic.

The Lamp That Started Three Pieces

1. On Saturday, I carried a broken desk lamp to a neighborhood repair café. A volunteer showed me how to check its switch before replacing anything. I chose the visit as my writing topic because the lamp had belonged to my grandfather, and I wanted to understand why repairing it mattered to me. That evening, I wrote a brief journal entry for myself about the moment the bulb lit up. I had only twenty minutes, so I focused on the smell of hot dust and the volunteer's surprised laugh rather than explaining how switches work.

2. On Monday, I decided the same visit could become an article for our school newspaper. My classmates might want to know whether the repair café saves money or simply feels satisfying. Over two weeks, I interviewed two volunteers, checked the café's posted hours, and compared the cost of a replacement switch with a new lamp. My first draft led with my grandfather's lamp, but a classmate said the practical information arrived too late. I moved the hours and repair costs near the beginning, then kept the personal story as a brief ending.

3. Before submitting the article, I reread it with one question: Could a student use this information to decide whether to bring something in? I cut a long paragraph about my family's attic and added what kinds of items the volunteers would examine, based on my interview notes. On the train home, I tried another format, a six-line poem for myself, purely for enjoyment. It described the lamp's circle of light on my notebook, not the café's services. The article took weeks and several revisions; the poem took one ride. Both began with a topic I had chosen.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did the writer choose the repair café visit as a topic for a personal piece?

2. How did the writer change the format and time frame when writing for classmates instead of for themself?

3. Name two changes the writer made to the article. How would those changes help its intended readers?

4. Why did the writer choose a poem rather than another article for the train ride?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a topic from your own life or community, not the repair café. In 80 to 110 words, plan one short piece and one extended piece about it. For each, state its format, audience, purpose, and time frame, then describe a research or revision step for the extended piece.

ANSWER KEY

One Topic, Many Forms

HIGH SCHOOL · 11-12.W.10

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each writing format, underline its intended audience, and label each writing project S for a short time frame or E for an extended time frame. Use your marks to see how the writer makes different choices for the same topic. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did the writer choose the repair café visit as a topic for a personal piece?	**The lamp had belonged to the writer's grandfather, and the writer wanted to understand why repairing it mattered.**
2	How did the writer change the format and time frame when writing for classmates instead of for themself?	**The writer moved from a journal entry written in twenty minutes to a school newspaper article researched and revised over two weeks.**
3	Name two changes the writer made to the article. How would those changes help its intended readers?	**The writer moved the hours and costs near the beginning and added the kinds of items volunteers would examine. These details help students decide whether to bring something in.**
4	Why did the writer choose a poem rather than another article for the train ride?	**The writer wanted to write for personal enjoyment about the lamp's light, not explain the café's services, and had only one train ride.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would write about the empty lot beside our apartment building. In one sitting, I would write a short personal reflection for my cousin about why I miss the trees that grew there. Its purpose would be to share a memory. Over three weeks, I would write a reported letter to the city council asking for shade trees along the sidewalk. I would interview neighbors and check the city's planting rules before drafting. After a neighbor reads my draft, I would revise the letter so its request is clear and supported by evidence.

Accept different topics and formats if the response identifies an audience, purpose, and time frame for each piece. The extended piece must include a specific research or revision step.