More Than Shade

Trace how an informational text develops its central idea.

8.RI.2 "Determine a central idea(s) of a text. Analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas. Provide an objective summary of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail in each paragraph that adds to the text's central idea. Number your marks 1, 2, and 3 to show how the idea develops from benefits to challenges.

What City Trees Do

1 At the end of a summer day, two sidewalks can feel surprisingly different. One is exposed to the sun; the other lies under the spreading branches of an older tree. Its leaves block some sunlight from reaching pavement, which can store heat and warm the surrounding air. The tree also releases water vapor through its leaves, a process that helps cool the air nearby. These effects make mature trees more than decorations: they can make a walk to school or a bus stop more comfortable.

2 The same tree matters when heavy rain arrives. Leaves and branches catch some of the falling water, while roots help soil absorb water that might otherwise flow across pavement toward a storm drain. Trees also provide places for birds and insects to feed or shelter. A newly planted tree can offer these benefits someday, but its small crown cannot shade as much pavement as a large one can now. Protecting established trees, therefore, can preserve services that a replacement may take years to provide.

3 Keeping trees healthy in a city takes more than leaving them alone. Roots need space and water, but sidewalks, roads, and buried pipes can limit where they grow. A damaged tree may need careful pruning, and a tree that poses a serious safety risk may have to be removed. City workers must also decide where to plant new trees so that more neighborhoods receive their benefits. Shade and rain protection are valuable, but they depend on planning, maintenance, and enough room for trees to thrive.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What central idea connects all three paragraphs?

2. How do the details about sunlight and water vapor in paragraph 1 develop that central idea?

3. How does the comparison between a new tree and an established tree in paragraph 2 strengthen the central idea?

4. How does paragraph 3 change or add to the idea developed in the first two paragraphs?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence objective summary of the passage. State the central idea, include two different benefits, and explain a challenge from the final paragraph without adding your opinion or copying a full sentence.

ANSWER KEY

More Than Shade

GRADE 8 · 8.RI.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail in each paragraph that adds to the text's central idea. Number your marks 1, 2, and 3 to show how the idea develops from benefits to challenges. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What central idea connects all three paragraphs?	**City trees provide important benefits, but preserving and expanding those benefits requires care and planning.**
2	How do the details about sunlight and water vapor in paragraph 1 develop that central idea?	**They show two ways trees cool their surroundings and make city streets more comfortable.**
3	How does the comparison between a new tree and an established tree in paragraph 2 strengthen the central idea?	**It shows that protecting an established tree can preserve benefits that a smaller replacement may take years to provide.**
4	How does paragraph 3 change or add to the idea developed in the first two paragraphs?	**It adds that trees need space, maintenance, safety decisions, and thoughtful planting for their benefits to continue.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Mature city trees make streets more comfortable by blocking sunlight and releasing water vapor. Their leaves and roots also help manage rainfall, and trees provide food or shelter for some animals. Because young trees are smaller, replacing an established tree may not restore all of its benefits quickly. Cities must give trees room and care, address safety risks, and choose planting locations thoughtfully to maintain these benefits.

Accept central ideas that connect the trees' benefits with the need to protect and care for them. For the summary, look for four objective sentences that include two distinct benefits and a challenge from the final paragraph.