# Beyond the Tree Count

Trace how an idea about street trees becomes a more specific plan.

**9-10.RI.2.a** "Analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it is introduced, built, and refined by specific details."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline the sentence in each paragraph that best states its main claim, and circle details that make the claim more specific as you read.

### When Does a Street Tree Make a Difference?

1 At a bus stop on a July afternoon, the difference between standing under a tree and standing beside it can be startling. Leaves block sunlight before it strikes a person's skin or the pavement, so shade can make a wait more bearable. Trees also release water vapor through their leaves, which can cool nearby air. These benefits explain why cities often celebrate the number of trees they plant. But a count of new trunks tells little about whether people will actually feel relief. A useful tree program must be measured by the shade it provides where people need it.

2 A tree planted on a wide lawn may cool that spot, yet it does little for someone crossing an exposed intersection. In many cities, blocks with little tree cover also contain large areas of pavement, which absorb sunlight and release stored heat. Residents walking to a bus stop or waiting outside a clinic encounter that heat directly. This contrast makes the first paragraph's promise more precise: planting locations matter as much as planting totals. A city seeking relief should look at routes and gathering places with little existing shade, not simply the easiest open ground to plant.

3 Even the right location does not guarantee future shade. A newly planted sapling casts a small shadow, and a young street tree may struggle if its roots have too little room or if it goes without water during dry spells. Older trees already have broad canopies, so protecting them can preserve shade while new trees grow. The goal, then, is not only to put trees on the hottest routes. It is to keep enough of them healthy long enough to form useful cover, while protecting the canopy people rely on today. A planting tally cannot capture that long-term work.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the bus-stop scene introduce the passage's main idea? What later detail in paragraph 1 challenges the idea that a planting count measures success?

2. How do the lawn and exposed intersection in paragraph 2 develop the claim about measuring a tree program?

3. How do the details about saplings and older trees in paragraph 3 refine the recommendation from paragraph 2?

4. Trace the claim from paragraph 1 to paragraph 3. How does the measure of a successful program change? Use one detail from paragraph 2 and one from paragraph 3.

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence note to a school board planning a walking route on hot streets. Apply the passage's developing idea: start with a benefit of trees, then use a detail about where shade matters and a detail about what trees need over time to make a specific recommendation.

**ANSWER KEY**

# Beyond the Tree Count

**HIGH SCHOOL · 9-10.RI.2.a**

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence in each paragraph that best states its main claim, and circle details that make the claim more specific as you read. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How does the bus-stop scene introduce the passage's main idea? What later detail in paragraph 1 challenges the idea that a planting count measures success? | **The bus-stop scene shows that shade can make a hot wait more bearable. The author then points out that a count of new trees does not show whether people receive shade where they need it.** |
| 2 | How do the lawn and exposed intersection in paragraph 2 develop the claim about measuring a tree program? | **The contrast shows that a tree can provide shade without helping people in an exposed place. Where trees are planted matters as much as how many are planted.** |
| 3 | How do the details about saplings and older trees in paragraph 3 refine the recommendation from paragraph 2? | **Planting in needed locations is not enough: saplings provide little shade at first and need suitable growing conditions. Protecting older trees preserves shade while new ones grow.** |
| 4 | Trace the claim from paragraph 1 to paragraph 3. How does the measure of a successful program change? Use one detail from paragraph 2 and one from paragraph 3. | **Success shifts from counting planted trees to providing useful shade in the right places over time. Paragraph 2 points to exposed routes and gathering places; paragraph 3 adds that young trees need water and root space to survive.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Trees could make a school walking route more comfortable by keeping sunlight off students and the pavement. Choose planting spots along its most exposed stretches, rather than on open lawns away from walkers. Protect any broad-canopied trees already on the route, since young saplings cast only small shadows. Give new trees enough root space and water during dry spells so they can eventually shade the route.

Accept different wording when students explain how the claim grows from useful shade to strategic placement and long-term care. For Part 3, look for a specific recommendation for the school route, supported by accurate details from the passage.