

Cooler City Streets

Study how a model informational essay builds one clear idea.

6.11.B “compose informational texts, including multi-paragraph essays that convey information about a topic, using a clear controlling idea or thesis statement and genre characteristics and craft.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the controlling idea, circle the first sentence of each paragraph, and number 1 and 2 beside two details that support the controlling idea.

How Shade Trees Cool a City

- ① Trees can help neighborhoods stay cooler during hot weather. Their shade blocks sunlight from sidewalks, playgrounds, and building walls, so these surfaces absorb less heat. This cooling effect matters most in places with many paved areas and few parks. Planting and caring for shade trees is a practical way for cities to make outdoor spaces safer and more comfortable in summer. Trees do not end every heat problem, but they can lower temperatures where people walk, wait, and play.
- ② First, tree canopies create shade that changes the temperature of nearby surfaces. On a sunny day, dark pavement can become much hotter than the air, but a shaded path receives less direct solar energy. Trees also cool the air through transpiration, a process in which water leaves their leaves as vapor. As the water changes to vapor, it uses heat from the surrounding air. For this reason, a line of healthy trees can make a bus stop or schoolyard feel less harsh.
- ③ Cities can increase these benefits by choosing tree species that fit local conditions and by protecting young trees. A newly planted tree needs water, room for roots, and protection from damage while it grows. City planners can place trees near walking routes, transit stops, and areas with little shade. Residents can help by watering new public trees when programs allow and reporting damaged branches. With thoughtful planting and care, shade trees become long-lasting tools that help communities handle hotter days.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What is the essay's controlling idea?

2 Give two details from paragraph 2 that support the controlling idea.

3 How does each paragraph help develop the informational essay?

4 What does the transition word "First" tell the reader about paragraph 2?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a titled, three-paragraph informational essay about one school improvement, such as refill stations, a garden, or safer walking routes. Write 120 to 160 words, state a clear controlling idea in the first paragraph, develop it with relevant facts and details, and end with a concluding paragraph that returns to the idea.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the controlling idea, circle the first sentence of each paragraph, and number 1 and 2 beside two details that support the controlling idea. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the essay's controlling idea?	Planting and caring for shade trees is a practical way for cities to make outdoor spaces safer and more comfortable in summer.
2	Give two details from paragraph 2 that support the controlling idea.	Tree canopies reduce direct solar energy on surfaces, and transpiration uses heat from the surrounding air as water becomes vapor.
3	How does each paragraph help develop the informational essay?	Paragraph 1 introduces the topic and states the controlling idea. Paragraph 2 explains how trees cool surfaces and air. Paragraph 3 explains how cities and residents can increase the benefits through planting and care.
4	What does the transition word "First" tell the reader about paragraph 2?	It signals that paragraph 2 begins the first main explanation or supporting point.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Refill Stations Save Resources Schools should provide water bottle refill stations because they give students easy access to water and reduce plastic waste. A refill station has a spout designed to fill reusable bottles quickly. When students can refill bottles near classrooms or the cafeteria, they may be more likely to choose water during the day. Refill stations can also reduce the number of single-use bottles thrown away. Plastic bottles may be recycled, but recycling does not happen everywhere, and making new bottles uses energy and materials. Using one durable bottle many times creates less trash than using a new disposable bottle each day. Schools need to maintain refill stations and clean them regularly. They can also post signs showing where stations are located. By making reusable bottles practical, refill stations support students' access to water and help schools cut plastic waste.

Accept equivalent statements of the controlling idea and evidence that accurately explains how shade trees cool outdoor areas. For the writing task, accept a focused three-paragraph informational essay within the word range that includes a title, a clear controlling idea, relevant development, and a conclusion.