

# Trees at Work

Identify a controlling idea and trace the evidence that supports it.

**6.8.D.i** “the controlling idea or thesis with supporting evidence;”

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline the sentence that states the passage's controlling idea, then number three details that support it. This helps you see how an author builds a central claim with evidence.

### Why Street Trees Matter

- ① City leaders should treat street trees as essential public infrastructure, not as decoration. On a hot summer day, a tree-lined sidewalk can feel cooler than a nearby block of bare pavement. Trees shade roads, homes, and people from direct sunlight. Their leaves also release water vapor, which helps cool the air. Researchers measure this effect with surface temperatures: shaded pavement may be much cooler than pavement in full sun. During heat waves, these cooling effects can make neighborhoods safer and more comfortable.
- ② Street trees also help cities manage rainwater. A mature tree can intercept rainfall on its leaves and branches, slowing the water before it reaches storm drains. Its roots help water soak into soil. This process can reduce runoff, which carries litter, oil, and other pollutants into streams. Trees do require pruning, watering when young, and room for roots. However, these needs are reasons to plan carefully. They do not outweigh the protection that well-planned trees can provide during heavy rain.
- ③ Street trees can also support daily life in ways that are easy to overlook. A 2019 study of more than 20,000 residents in Toronto found that people living on streets with more trees reported better health perceptions. Trees can provide habitat for birds and insects, and their branches can make walking routes more pleasant. These benefits do not appear equally everywhere. Low-income neighborhoods often have less tree cover, so city planting plans should use maps and community input to bring shade and other benefits where they are needed most.

**2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE** \_\_\_\_\_ Use the passage

**1** What is the controlling idea of the passage?

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**2** Give two details from paragraph 1 that support the controlling idea.

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**3** How does paragraph 2 support the controlling idea? Use one detail about rainwater in your answer.

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**4** How does the evidence in paragraph 3 strengthen the author's controlling idea?

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**3 YOUR TURN** \_\_\_\_\_ Your own words

Write a three-sentence proposal about one improvement your school or community should make. Sentence 1 must state a controlling idea, and sentences 2 and 3 must each give a specific fact, observation, or example that supports it.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline the sentence that states the passage's controlling idea, then number three details that support it. This helps you see how an author builds a central claim with evidence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                          | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | What is the controlling idea of the passage?                                                      | <b>City leaders should treat street trees as essential public infrastructure, not as decoration.</b>                                                                          |
| 2 | Give two details from paragraph 1 that support the controlling idea.                              | <b>Trees provide shade that cools roads, homes, and people, and their leaves release water vapor that helps cool the air.</b>                                                 |
| 3 | How does paragraph 2 support the controlling idea? Use one detail about rainwater in your answer. | <b>It shows that trees intercept rainfall and help water soak into soil, which can reduce polluted runoff entering streams.</b>                                               |
| 4 | How does the evidence in paragraph 3 strengthen the author's controlling idea?                    | <b>It adds evidence that trees support health, wildlife habitat, and pleasant walking routes, while showing why planting should reach neighborhoods with less tree cover.</b> |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

Schools should install more refill water stations. A station lets students refill reusable bottles instead of using a new disposable bottle each time they need a drink. When water is easy to reach, students can get a drink between classes without waiting in a long cafeteria line.

Accept controlling ideas that make a clear claim about a school or community improvement. Supporting sentences should give specific, relevant evidence or examples that explain why the improvement is needed.