Lights With Purpose

Analyze how a community letter develops purpose and message.

7.9.A "explain the author's purpose and message within a text;"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show what the author wants readers to understand or do. Write P beside one sentence that reveals the author's purpose and M beside one sentence that best conveys the message.

A Darker Night Helps More Than Stars

1 At night, the lights around our town make streets safer, but some lights shine where no one needs them. Lamps aimed upward send light into the sky instead of onto sidewalks. This extra glow, called light pollution, hides many stars. It can also affect animals that depend on darkness. Migrating birds may become confused by bright buildings, and insects may gather around lamps instead of finding food or mates. Our town can keep needed light without wasting it.

2 Simple changes could make a real difference. The town could place shields on streetlights so light points down, where drivers and walkers need it. Parks could use timers or motion sensors for lights that are not needed all night. Homeowners could close curtains and choose porch bulbs with lower brightness. These choices would save electricity and reduce glare. They would also give night creatures clearer signals about when to travel, feed, and rest. Better lighting is not more lighting, it is smarter lighting.

3 Some people may worry that dimmer lights will make public spaces unsafe. However, well-designed lighting can direct a steady beam onto paths and crossings while limiting light that spills into windows and the sky. The town council is reviewing next year's park improvements soon. Residents should ask council members to include shields, timers, and careful bulb choices in that plan. By speaking up now, we can protect nighttime wildlife, see a darker sky, and use energy wisely. A safer town and a healthier night can exist together.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the author's main purpose for writing this letter?

2. In paragraph 2, how does the suggestion to place shields on streetlights support the author's purpose?

3. What message does the author communicate about safety and darker nights?

4. Why does the author mention the concern that dimmer lights could be unsafe in paragraph 3?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 60-80 word note to your school community that urges one practical action to improve the school. Then write one Purpose sentence and one Message sentence that explain your note.

ANSWER KEY

Lights With Purpose

GRADE 7 · TEKS 7.9.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show what the author wants readers to understand or do. Write P beside one sentence that reveals the author's purpose and M beside one sentence that best conveys the message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the author's main purpose for writing this letter?	**To persuade residents and town leaders to use smarter outdoor lighting that reduces light pollution while keeping public spaces safe.**
2	In paragraph 2, how does the suggestion to place shields on streetlights support the author's purpose?	**Shields direct light onto sidewalks and streets where it is needed, reducing wasted light and helping protect the night sky and animals.**
3	What message does the author communicate about safety and darker nights?	**A town can keep public spaces safe while also reducing unnecessary nighttime lighting.**
4	Why does the author mention the concern that dimmer lights could be unsafe in paragraph 3?	**The author acknowledges a possible concern and then explains that well-designed lighting can still keep paths and crossings safe.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Each day, students buy bottled water, then toss the empty bottles into trash cans. Bring a reusable water bottle to school instead. You can refill it at a water fountain during the day, and you will not need a new plastic bottle at lunch. If many students make this one switch, our school will send less plastic waste to landfills each day. Purpose: My purpose is to persuade students to bring reusable water bottles. Message: One daily switch can reduce plastic waste at school.

Accept equivalent explanations of the author's persuasive purpose and central message when they are supported by passage details. For the open response, accept any 60-80 word note with a clear action, a matching purpose, and a message supported by the note.