

Pressure or Proof?

Examine how a campaign tries to influence readers without enough evidence.

8.12.H.ii "faulty reasoning such as bandwagon appeals, repetition, and loaded language;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline bandwagon appeals, circle repeated words or phrases, and box loaded language. Write B, R, or L in the margin beside each mark to show how the writer tries to influence readers without enough evidence.

The Locker Campaign

- ① At Monday's student council meeting, Jordan introduced a proposal for phone-charging lockers near the cafeteria. Jordan said, "Nearly everyone at school wants these lockers, so the council should approve them today." He pointed to a quick online poll with 46 responses, although the school has more than 800 students. Jordan also called the current wall outlets "a dangerous, embarrassing mess." His proposal did not explain how many lockers the school needs, what they would cost, or whether existing outlets are unsafe.
- ② Later, a flyer supporting the proposal appeared on cafeteria tables. Its headline read, "Charge Up, Charge Up, Charge Up!" The flyer repeated that phrase three more times and promised that lockers would make lunch "smooth, calm, and stress-free." It gave no source for those predictions. The flyer also stated, "Students are choosing chargers everywhere. Do not be the one school left behind." It did not say which students were choosing them or compare charging lockers with less expensive options, such as adding monitored power strips.
- ③ During public comments, Maya asked the council to slow down. She said the school should learn whether students need chargers during lunch, how long devices would need to charge, and who would maintain the lockers. The principal said no purchase decision had been made. He asked the council to gather a larger survey, price estimates, and safety information from the maintenance staff. Jordan replied, "We need chargers now, now, now." The meeting ended with the council planning to review evidence at its next session.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What evidence does Jordan give for his claim that nearly everyone wants charging lockers? Why does that evidence not support his claim?

2 What loaded language does Jordan use to describe the wall outlets? Explain how this wording may influence readers even though he gives no safety evidence.

3 How many times does the flyer use the phrase "Charge Up"? Why is repetition not evidence that lockers will make lunch stress-free?

4 Which statement in paragraph 2 uses a bandwagon appeal? What information requested in paragraph 3 could help evaluate that appeal?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write three sentences about a fictional school proposal on a topic different from the passage. In sentence 1, use one bandwagon appeal, loaded phrase, or repeated phrase. In sentence 2, quote and explain the faulty reasoning, and in sentence 3, revise the claim using specific evidence.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline bandwagon appeals, circle repeated words or phrases, and box loaded language. Write B, R, or L in the margin beside each mark to show how the writer tries to influence readers without enough evidence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What evidence does Jordan give for his claim that nearly everyone wants charging lockers? Why does that evidence not support his claim?	He gives an online poll with 46 responses. A poll of 46 people cannot show what nearly everyone in a school of more than 800 thinks.
2	What loaded language does Jordan use to describe the wall outlets? Explain how this wording may influence readers even though he gives no safety evidence.	He calls them “a dangerous, embarrassing mess.” The words can make readers feel alarmed or ashamed without proving that the outlets are unsafe.
3	How many times does the flyer use the phrase “Charge Up”? Why is repetition not evidence that lockers will make lunch stress-free?	The phrase appears six times. Repeating it may make the idea memorable, but it does not prove that lockers will make lunch stress-free.
4	Which statement in paragraph 2 uses a bandwagon appeal? What information requested in paragraph 3 could help evaluate that appeal?	“Students are choosing chargers everywhere. Do not be the one school left behind.” A larger survey could show how many students actually support charging lockers.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Everyone is choosing the amazing new courtyard speakers, so our school must buy them. The words “Everyone is choosing” are a bandwagon appeal because they do not show how many students support the speakers. A stronger claim would be, “In a survey of 500 students, 320 supported courtyard speakers, and the council should compare their cost with other needs.”

For the open response, accept any school-related topic that includes a clear faulty technique, an accurate explanation, and an evidence-based revision.