City Trees, Stronger Streets

Find the controlling idea and trace the evidence that supports it.

8.8.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 author's controlling idea. Circle three details that support it, and number the circles 1 through 3 to show where you found them.

Why Cities Need Trees

1 On a summer afternoon, a shaded sidewalk can feel far cooler than the pavement beside it. Because they cool neighborhoods, reduce stormwater problems, and improve daily life, city trees are essential infrastructure rather than decoration. Their benefits matter most in dense areas, where dark roofs and streets absorb sunlight and where many people lack private yards. Planting and protecting urban trees can make cities safer and more comfortable during increasingly hotter summers in more neighborhoods.

2 Trees lower temperatures in two ways. Their leaves block sunlight before it heats asphalt, walls, and playground equipment. They also release water vapor through tiny openings in their leaves, a process called transpiration, which cools the surrounding air. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that shaded surfaces may be 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit cooler than unshaded surfaces. Cooler streets can lessen heat stress, especially for older adults, young children, and outdoor workers during summer heat waves.

3 Tree roots provide another service when rain falls quickly. Soil around healthy roots can absorb water that might otherwise rush into storm drains, helping to reduce flooding and polluted runoff. Yet tree cover is not spread evenly across many cities. Neighborhoods shaped by past disinvestment often have fewer mature trees and hotter streets. For that reason, effective planting plans must include long-term watering, pruning, and community input, rather than simply placing seedlings wherever land is available.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Copy the sentence that states the author's controlling idea.

2. Give one supporting detail from paragraph 2 and one supporting detail from paragraph 3. Explain how each detail supports the controlling idea.

3. Why does the author include the EPA's numerical information about shaded surfaces? Explain how this evidence strengthens the controlling idea.

4. What concern leads the author to argue that planting plans need watering, pruning, and community input? Use evidence from paragraph 3.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a school or community change that is different from the passage topic. Write exactly four sentences: underline a controlling idea in the first sentence, then write three numbered sentences with specific evidence that supports it and explains why it matters.

ANSWER KEY

City Trees, Stronger Streets

GRADE 8 · TEKS 8.8.D.i

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the author's controlling idea. Circle three details that support it, and number the circles 1 through 3 to show where you found them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Copy the sentence that states the author's controlling idea.	**Because they cool neighborhoods, reduce stormwater problems, and improve daily life, city trees are essential infrastructure rather than decoration.**
2	Give one supporting detail from paragraph 2 and one supporting detail from paragraph 3. Explain how each detail supports the controlling idea.	**Paragraph 2 explains that trees block sunlight and can make shaded surfaces 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit cooler, supporting the idea that trees cool neighborhoods. Paragraph 3 explains that roots absorb rainwater and reduce runoff, supporting the idea that trees reduce stormwater problems.**
3	Why does the author include the EPA's numerical information about shaded surfaces? Explain how this evidence strengthens the controlling idea.	**The numerical information gives measured evidence that shade from trees greatly lowers surface temperatures. It strengthens the claim that trees are important infrastructure because they provide a practical cooling benefit.**
4	What concern leads the author to argue that planting plans need watering, pruning, and community input? Use evidence from paragraph 3.	**Tree cover is uneven, and neighborhoods affected by past disinvestment often have fewer mature trees and hotter streets. Long-term care and community input can help planting efforts serve those neighborhoods instead of placing seedlings wherever land happens to be open.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

__Middle schools should start at 8:30 a.m. or later because later schedules better match adolescents' sleep needs.__ (1) The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 8:30 a.m. or later for middle and high schools, supporting a schedule designed for adolescent health. (2) During puberty, many adolescents' body clocks shift later, so an earlier start can cut short needed sleep. (3) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that students who do not get enough sleep are more likely to have problems with attention and behavior, showing that start times can affect learning.

Accept equivalent statements of the controlling idea and relevant evidence from any paragraph. For Part 3, accept a clear, arguable controlling idea and three accurate, specific pieces of evidence that each connect to that idea.