

Shade Matters

Identify how evidence and language reveal an author's purpose and message.

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

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline statements that reveal what the author wants readers to do, circle facts or examples used to persuade, and write M beside the sentence that states the central message.

A Cooler Campus Plan

- ① On summer afternoons, the pavement around Eastview Middle School can feel like a griddle. The school's courtyard has only three young trees, while its large blacktop parking area absorbs sunlight all day. Students waiting for buses crowd beneath a narrow awning. During a recent heat advisory, the principal measured the courtyard temperature at 96 degrees, even though a nearby shaded park was 11 degrees cooler. The difference was not a mystery. Trees and soil cool places that pavement overheats.
- ② A student environmental team has proposed a practical change: replace part of the parking area with rain gardens, plant native shade trees along the bus line, and cover several parking spaces with solar canopies. Rain gardens are shallow planted areas that soak up stormwater, helping reduce puddles and runoff. Native trees usually need less water after they are established than imported species. Solar canopies can produce electricity while casting shade. Together, these changes would make the campus safer during heat and more useful during heavy rain.
- ③ The project would cost money, and mature trees cannot appear overnight. Still, doing nothing also has a cost when students stand in dangerous heat or when rainwater rushes across the blacktop. The school board should study the plan this year, invite students to help choose locations, and seek local grants for the first phase. A cooler campus is not a luxury decoration. It is a decision about whose health, time, and learning conditions deserve protection.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

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

2 What central message does the author communicate about improving the campus?

3 Choose two details from the passage that help the author persuade readers. Explain how each detail supports the author's purpose.

4 How does the phrase "not a luxury decoration" strengthen the author's message?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence mini-editorial that urges a school decision maker to make one improvement. Make your purpose clear, communicate a focused message, and use two concrete details to support it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline statements that reveal what the author wants readers to do, circle facts or examples used to persuade, and write M beside the sentence that states the central 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 passage?	To persuade the school board to consider and support a plan that adds shade, rain gardens, and solar canopies to the campus.
2	What central message does the author communicate about improving the campus?	School design should protect students' health and learning conditions, not treat cooling improvements as unnecessary decorations.
3	Choose two details from the passage that help the author persuade readers. Explain how each detail supports the author's purpose.	Possible details: the courtyard was measured at 96 degrees while a shaded park was 11 degrees cooler, showing the need for shade; rain gardens reduce puddles and runoff, showing the plan has benefits during heavy rain; solar canopies provide electricity and shade, showing multiple benefits.
4	How does the phrase "not a luxury decoration" strengthen the author's message?	It contrasts the plan with something optional or merely attractive and emphasizes that the author sees it as necessary for student well-being.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The school should install a water bottle filling station near the gym. Athletes often finish practice thirsty, and the nearest fountain has a slow, low stream. Easy access to cold water would show that student health matters during busy school days.

Accept equivalent statements of the purpose and message when students support them with accurate passage evidence. For Part 3, look for a clear request, a focused message, and two relevant concrete details.