Frames and Fares

Compare how media choices shape a local debate.

10.C.4.B "Analyze, compare, and contrast visual and verbal media messages for content (e.g., word choice and choice of information), intent (e.g., persuasive techniques, including but not limited to ad hominem, red herring, and strawman)..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words and visual details that make the pilot seem appealing, circle details that make it seem risky, and write M beside three features that misrepresent the plan, attack a person, or divert attention from the proposal.

A Debate About Bus Fares

1. At a city council meeting, students proposed a six-month pilot that would let residents ages 14 through 18 ride city buses free after school and on weekends. The plan would use a portion of parking-fee revenue and would end unless the council renewed it. In response, the student newspaper printed a photograph of crowded bus steps beside the headline, "A Ride Home Should Not Be a Luxury." Its caption featured Maya Ortiz, who said she sometimes walks 45 minutes after practice. The article included the pilot's cost estimate, $180,000, but did not report possible effects on other city services.

2. That evening, a neighborhood group posted a video against the pilot. Its opening image showed an empty classroom, while a voice said, "The bus plan will make every ride free forever and drain the school budget." A narrator added, "Ortiz's polished shoes prove she cannot understand working families." Before the final slide, viewers saw a photograph of the mayor's new office rug with the words, "Ask why City Hall bought this." The video did not mention the pilot's age limits, its six-month length, or its proposed funding source. It urged viewers to email council members before the vote.

3. Two days later, the newspaper's online poll asked, "Should the pilot be tried?" Of 620 readers who chose to respond, 72 percent said yes. The neighborhood group's poll, shared below its video, asked, "Should taxpayers fund unlimited free bus rides?" Among 410 respondents, 61 percent said no. Comments on the newspaper praised the photograph and Ortiz's story. Comments on the video repeated concerns about schools and City Hall spending. Neither poll reported how respondents were selected, their ages, or whether they lived in the city. The conflicting results gave both sides material to share, especially on social media.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the newspaper's photograph and headline frame the bus pilot? What important information does the article leave out?

2. What does the neighborhood group's video claim about the plan, and which two details from the proposal conflict with that claim?

3. Identify the ad hominem and the red herring in the video. Explain why each one shifts attention away from evaluating the actual proposal.

4. Why do the two poll results not provide a reliable comparison of citywide opinion? Use two details from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Design a balanced social-media slide about the pilot in 2 or 3 sentences. Name one visual and write a caption of 12 words or fewer, then explain how the visual and caption include accurate information and could affect viewers differently from either message.

ANSWER KEY

Frames and Fares

GRADE 10 · 10.C.4.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline words and visual details that make the pilot seem appealing, circle details that make it seem risky, and write M beside three features that misrepresent the plan, attack a person, or divert attention from the proposal. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the newspaper's photograph and headline frame the bus pilot? What important information does the article leave out?	**They frame the pilot as a needed way for students to get home, using crowded bus steps and the phrase "A Ride Home Should Not Be a Luxury." The article leaves out possible effects on other city services.**
2	What does the neighborhood group's video claim about the plan, and which two details from the proposal conflict with that claim?	**The video claims the plan will make every ride free forever and drain the school budget. The actual plan lasts six months, serves residents ages 14 through 18 after school and on weekends, and would use parking-fee revenue.**
3	Identify the ad hominem and the red herring in the video. Explain why each one shifts attention away from evaluating the actual proposal.	**The ad hominem is the claim that Ortiz's polished shoes prove she cannot understand working families. It attacks Ortiz rather than the plan. The red herring is the photograph of the mayor's office rug. It shifts attention to unrelated City Hall spending instead of the bus pilot.**
4	Why do the two poll results not provide a reliable comparison of citywide opinion? Use two details from the passage.	**The polls ask differently worded questions, including the inaccurate phrase "unlimited free bus rides," and they use different groups of voluntary respondents. Neither poll reports how respondents were selected, their ages, or whether they live in the city.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would show a teen boarding a bus after practice with the caption, "Six-month after-school bus pilot funded by parking fees." The visual recognizes a rider's need, while the caption gives the time limit and funding source, so viewers receive context rather than a promise of unlimited rides or a personal attack.

Accept equivalent analyses that accurately distinguish information choices, persuasive intent, and likely audience effects. For the open task, accept varied visuals and captions if the caption is 12 words or fewer, the plan details are accurate, and the explanation compares the likely effect with one of the passage's messages.