Signals That Matter

Analyze how source, format, audience, content, and purpose shape emergency communication.

11.C.3.B "Demonstrate understanding of multimodal literacy by identifying and evaluating elements such as authorship, format, audience, content, and purpose."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words that show authorship or authority, circle each communication format, and label each format with its audience and purpose in the margin. Use your marks to compare how the same warning changes across formats.

A Warning in Several Forms

1 During coastal emergencies, the National Weather Service uses several formats to communicate a tsunami warning. An alert sent to mobile phones is brief: it names the threatened area and tells people to move away from beaches and harbors. The same agency posts a longer web update with a map, expected arrival times, and links to local instructions. A radio message repeats the urgent safety direction for listeners who may not be looking at screens. Although each format carries the same central warning, its design changes what people can notice and use quickly.

2 The authorship matters because the National Weather Service is a government weather agency responsible for forecasts and official hazard alerts. Its messages can be useful for immediate safety decisions, but readers should still check local emergency managers for road closures, evacuation routes, and shelter locations. The color, icons, and map on a web update can help a hurried reader locate a risk area. Yet a map without a time stamp could mislead someone who assumes that conditions have not changed. Evaluating the message means considering both its source and the information missing from a particular version.

3 Audience changes how a warning should be presented. A mobile alert is aimed at people near the coast who need a fast, direct instruction, so it avoids background detail. A web update serves residents, travelers, and reporters who need locations and timing, so its map and links add context. Radio reaches drivers, workers, and households during power or internet disruptions, making repeated spoken directions valuable. None of these formats replaces personal judgment. People should follow directions from local officials and avoid shorelines after a warning. Comparing the formats helps readers decide which message best fits their situation and whether the available information is current enough to act on.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Who authored the warning messages, and what evidence in the passage supports that source's authority?

2. Compare the mobile alert and the web update. How does each format fit its intended audience and purpose?

3. Why should a reader be cautious about using a map that has no time stamp?

4. Which format would be most useful for a driver during an internet disruption, and why?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a real school safety or community announcement. Create a two-format communication plan that identifies the author, audience, purpose, key content, and formats, then explain which format people should use first in an urgent situation and why.

FORMAT	AUTHOR	AUDIENCE	PURPOSE	KEY CONTENT

ANSWER KEY

Signals That Matter

GRADE 11 · 11.C.3.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline words that show authorship or authority, circle each communication format, and label each format with its audience and purpose in the margin. Use your marks to compare how the same warning changes across formats. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who authored the warning messages, and what evidence in the passage supports that source's authority?	**The National Weather Service authored them. It is described as a government weather agency responsible for forecasts and official hazard alerts.**
2	Compare the mobile alert and the web update. How does each format fit its intended audience and purpose?	**The mobile alert gives people near the coast a quick safety instruction. The web update gives residents, travelers, and reporters maps, timing, and links for more detailed planning.**
3	Why should a reader be cautious about using a map that has no time stamp?	**Conditions may have changed, so the map may no longer show current risk information.**
4	Which format would be most useful for a driver during an internet disruption, and why?	**Radio, because it can reach drivers and provides repeated spoken directions when internet access is disrupted.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Author: Lincoln High School's principal. Audience: students and families. Purpose: announce a water-service interruption that closes the building on Friday. A text alert would state, "School is closed Friday because water service is unavailable. Check email for updates." An email would give the closure date, meal details, and learning plans. In an urgent situation, families should use the text first because it delivers the essential action quickly; the email provides fuller context.

Accept equivalent evidence-based explanations that connect a format's features to a specific audience and purpose. For the open task, require all five elements and a justified judgment about which format works best first.