

Messages at Work

Compare how images and words shape audience response.

11.C.4.C “Analyze, compare, and contrast visual and verbal media messages for content (e.g., word choice and choice of information), intent (e.g., persuasive techniques), impact (e.g., public opinion trends), and effectiveness (e.g....”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words or phrases that reveal each message’s intent, circle details showing what information each message includes, and number evidence about impact or effectiveness.

A Cafeteria Campaign

- ① To reduce lunchroom waste, Harbor High launched “Take What You’ll Eat,” a two-week campaign. Its main visual was a poster near the serving line: a photograph of a tray piled with untouched pizza and fruit beside an almost empty trash bin. Large orange type asked, “Will this be tomorrow’s lunch?” A smaller caption stated that discarded food wastes the water, labor, and money used to produce it. The image made waste visible before students chose food, while the question invited them to picture their own trays. The poster did not list rules or statistics about the school’s waste.
- ② During morning announcements, the student council used a verbal message instead. A 45-second script explained that students could request smaller portions, return for more food, and place unopened items in a share table where school policy allowed it. The speaker repeated the phrase “choose, finish, share” and described waste reduction as a practical habit, not a reason for guilt. Unlike the poster, the announcement named specific actions and acknowledged that appetite changes. It used an orderly list and repetition to make the choices memorable. However, listeners who arrived late or talked during announcements could miss details.
- ③ After the campaign, volunteers weighed cafeteria trash for five comparable lunch days and found 18 percent less discarded edible food than during five days before it. In an anonymous survey of 240 students, 62 percent said the poster made them notice portion choices, while 71 percent said the announcement taught them an action they could take. These results suggest different strengths, not proof that one message alone caused the change. The poster may have reached students at the decision point, and the announcement may have changed opinions by offering options. Together, their emotional image and practical language likely made the campaign more effective than either message by itself.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What useful information does the announcement provide that the poster leaves out? What does the poster provide that the announcement does not?

2 Identify one persuasive technique used in the poster and one used in the announcement. Explain the intended response to each technique.

3 Which message was connected to the higher survey percentage? What does the difference suggest about the messages' reported impact?

4 Why should a reader avoid claiming that the announcement alone caused the 18 percent reduction in discarded food? Use two details from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school issue. Create a visual-media message and a verbal-media message, 20 to 30 words each. Then write two sentences comparing their likely audience impact and explaining which message would be more effective.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline words or phrases that reveal each message's intent, circle details showing what information each message includes, and number evidence about impact or effectiveness. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What useful information does the announcement provide that the poster leaves out? What does the poster provide that the announcement does not?	The announcement gives specific actions, such as requesting smaller portions, returning for more food, and using a share table. The poster provides a visual image of wasted food and a caption about resources used to produce food.
2	Identify one persuasive technique used in the poster and one used in the announcement. Explain the intended response to each technique.	The poster uses a striking photograph and a rhetorical question to make students reflect on their own food choices. The announcement uses repetition and an orderly list to make practical actions memorable.
3	Which message was connected to the higher survey percentage? What does the difference suggest about the messages' reported impact?	The announcement was connected to the higher percentage, 71 percent compared with 62 percent for the poster. More students reported learning an action from the announcement, while the poster made students notice portion choices.
4	Why should a reader avoid claiming that the announcement alone caused the 18 percent reduction in discarded food? Use two details from the passage.	Both the poster and announcement were part of the campaign, so their effects cannot be separated. The evidence is a five-day before-and-after comparison and student survey responses, not an isolated test of the announcement.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Visual message: A photo shows an empty library shelf. Bold text reads, "Return your book today, so another reader can discover a new world tomorrow." Verbal message: Please return borrowed library books by Friday. Quick returns keep popular titles moving, reduce waiting, and let more students find sources and stories. The visual message uses an empty shelf and hopeful language to create urgency and empathy. The verbal message is more effective for students who need a deadline and clear reasons to return books.

Accept equivalent comparisons that accurately distinguish the poster's emotional visual appeal from the announcement's practical directions. For impact and effectiveness, accept claims supported by the survey, the trash data, and the passage's caution against proving a single cause.