

Speak for Shade

Analyze how a speaker uses rhetoric to make a clear public proposal.

12.C.2.A.iii "Report orally on a topic or text or present an opinion. This includes: Incorporating various rhetorical devices to enhance purpose and strengthening clarity of ideas."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the speaker's main claim, circle each rhetorical question, and number the repeated or parallel word patterns. Marking these choices will help you see how the speech builds a clear, persuasive message.

A Plan for Cooler Streets

- ① Members of the council, our city's hottest blocks are not merely uncomfortable, they are unsafe. On a July afternoon, pavement can hold heat long after the sun drops, while bus riders and children wait beside bare sidewalks. Trees offer more than a pleasant view. Their shade lowers surface and air temperatures, and their leaves cool surrounding air as water evaporates. When we decide where to plant, we are deciding who gets relief. A map of tree cover makes the choice visible: neighborhoods with fewer trees often face more heat. We should begin where shade is scarce and need is greatest.
- ② Some may say that planting trees costs too much. But what costs more: a young tree and regular care, or another summer of overheated stops, higher cooling bills, and emergency visits? We cannot plant every street this year, nor should we promise instant change. We can set a clear first step. Fund a neighborhood tree inventory, consult residents about species and maintenance, and protect new trees with watering plans. Plant carefully, plant fairly, plant now. This is not a choice between beauty and practicality. A healthy canopy is public infrastructure, as necessary to daily life as a safe crossing or a working bus shelter.
- ③ Picture the first day of school in August. Students cross a parking lot that radiates heat, then enter classrooms already working hard to stay cool. A tree will not solve every heat problem, but it can change the walk, the wait, and the block. That is why I ask you to approve a three-year shade plan for school routes and transit stops. Publish the planting map, measure survival each season, and report progress publicly. If we measure what we plant, we can improve what we protect. Let us replace bare routes with living shade, one priority block at a time.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What is the speaker's main request, and which places does the request prioritize?

2 Copy the rhetorical question in paragraph 2. How does it respond to the concern about cost?

3 What effect does the line "Plant carefully, plant fairly, plant now" have when spoken aloud?

4 How does the sentence beginning "A tree will not solve every heat problem" strengthen the clarity of the speaker's argument?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 130-160-word script for a 60-90 second oral opinion about one improvement your school or community should make. State a precise claim, give two concrete reasons, and use at least three rhetorical devices, including one rhetorical question and one purposeful repetition or parallel structure.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the speaker's main claim, circle each rhetorical question, and number the repeated or parallel word patterns. Marking these choices will help you see how the speech builds a clear, persuasive message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the speaker's main request, and which places does the request prioritize?	The speaker asks the council to approve a three-year shade plan that prioritizes school routes and transit stops.
2	Copy the rhetorical question in paragraph 2. How does it respond to the concern about cost?	"But what costs more: a young tree and regular care, or another summer of overheated stops, higher cooling bills, and emergency visits?" It reframes the cost issue by comparing tree care with the greater costs of heat.
3	What effect does the line "Plant carefully, plant fairly, plant now" have when spoken aloud?	Its repeated structure makes the recommendation memorable and urgent while emphasizing thoughtful, equitable action.
4	How does the sentence beginning "A tree will not solve every heat problem" strengthen the clarity of the speaker's argument?	It acknowledges a limit, then clearly explains the specific benefits trees can provide, which makes the claim more credible.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Members of the school board, install two bottle-filling stations in the older classroom wing this year. Students spend long periods there, yet the nearest refill option may be several hallways away. Why should carrying a reusable bottle be convenient in one part of school and inconvenient in another? First, nearby stations make it easier for students to drink water during a full day of classes. Second, they give students a practical alternative to buying single-use bottled drinks. This proposal is not about adding a luxury. It is about providing basic access where students already learn. We need water that is reachable, water that is reliable, water that fits the school day. Place the stations near the science corridor and library entrance, then post their locations on campus maps. Small changes can remove daily barriers. Approve this plan, and make the healthier choice the easier choice.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect a rhetorical choice to clarity, credibility, urgency, or audience impact. For the oral script, accept varied topics when the response meets the word count and includes a clear claim, two concrete reasons, a rhetorical question, and purposeful repetition or parallelism.