Values Behind the Vote

Infer purpose from what an argument includes, emphasizes, and concedes.

12.C.4.A "Defend hypotheses about an author's underlying values, viewpoints, and purposes and reflect on how they shape the content."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two statements that reveal what the writer values. Circle one phrase that states or shows the writer's purpose, then number two details the writer uses to support the viewpoint.

The Last Bus Is a Public Service

(1) When Riverton's transit board proposed ending buses after 9:00 p.m., it described the change as a practical way to balance its budget. That description leaves out the people who close restaurants, clean offices, stock shelves, or attend evening classes. A route is not useful only when every seat is filled. It is also a promise that workers can get home without paying for a costly ride or walking along poorly lit roads. Public transportation should be judged by the freedom it gives residents, especially when their choices are limited.

(2) Board members may reply that ridership counts matter because money spent on one service cannot be spent twice. They are right to examine costs, but counting passengers alone treats riders as totals on a spreadsheet. The board could publish late-route data, ask night workers which trips they need, and adjust schedules before removing service entirely. Those steps would respect both careful budgeting and the knowledge of people who depend on the system. A city that funds parks, streets, and emergency services already accepts that some public goods serve citizens unevenly on any single day.

(3) Keeping late buses will not solve low wages or make every commute easy. Still, the proposal asks the board to decide what kind of community Riverton wants to be. If the board measures success only by immediate fare revenue, it will favor riders whose schedules fit conventional hours. If it considers safety, access to work, and shared responsibility, it will keep a modified late service while reviewing it publicly. The purpose of this argument is not to deny financial limits. It is to insist that a budget reveals priorities, and that priorities deserve public debate.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What underlying value does the writer most strongly support? Defend your hypothesis with two details from the passage.

2. How does the writer's viewpoint shape the information included about late buses?

3. What is the writer's main purpose, and how does the final paragraph make that purpose clear?

4. How does the writer treat the opposing concern about costs, and why does that choice strengthen the argument?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 120 to 150 word editorial about a school or community policy. Take a clear position, reveal at least two underlying values through your reasoning, acknowledge one reasonable counterargument, and use one concrete detail. Then add one sentence that states your purpose.

ANSWER KEY

Values Behind the Vote

GRADE 12 · 12.C.4.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two statements that reveal what the writer values. Circle one phrase that states or shows the writer's purpose, then number two details the writer uses to support the viewpoint. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What underlying value does the writer most strongly support? Defend your hypothesis with two details from the passage.	**The writer values equitable access to essential public services. The writer emphasizes workers with limited choices and argues that safety and access to work matter alongside fare revenue.**
2	How does the writer's viewpoint shape the information included about late buses?	**The writer includes the needs of night workers, safety concerns, and access to jobs, while treating ridership counts as incomplete evidence rather than the only measure of value.**
3	What is the writer's main purpose, and how does the final paragraph make that purpose clear?	**The purpose is to persuade the transit board to keep a modified late service and debate its priorities publicly. The final paragraph contrasts measuring success by fare revenue with considering safety, access, and shared responsibility.**
4	How does the writer treat the opposing concern about costs, and why does that choice strengthen the argument?	**The writer acknowledges that money cannot be spent twice and that financial limits are real. This concession makes the argument appear balanced while supporting alternatives to ending the service entirely.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should keep the library open during both lunch periods. Some students need a quiet place to finish lab reports, read, or use a computer when home internet is unreliable. Last Tuesday, every table near the printers was occupied by students revising scholarship applications. The library should not become a reward only for students who can complete work elsewhere. I understand that supervision costs money and that staff members need lunch breaks. The school could schedule trained volunteers or rotate duty among adults instead of closing the space. This plan values fair access and serious learning while recognizing practical limits. My purpose is to persuade the principal to protect a shared workspace that helps students use their time and resources well.

Accept defensible hypotheses about the writer's values, viewpoint, and purpose when students support them with accurate passage evidence. For Part 3, accept varied policy positions if the response meets the length requirement and includes a position, two values, a counterargument, a concrete detail, and a purpose sentence.