Speak for Trees

Read a model claim and track the evidence that makes it convincing.

7.C.2.A.ii "Report orally on a topic or text or present an opinion. This includes: Providing evidence to support the main ideas, including pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the speaker's main idea. Then number three details, facts, or examples that support that idea.

Why Street Trees Matter

1. When a city adds trees along its streets, residents gain more than shade. Trees cool pavement and nearby buildings by blocking sunlight and releasing water vapor from leaves. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explains that shaded surfaces may be 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit cooler than unshaded surfaces. Cooler sidewalks can make walking more comfortable on hot days. For this reason, planting and caring for street trees is a practical way for neighborhoods to prepare for hotter summers.

2. Street trees can also help manage rainwater. During a storm, leaves and branches slow falling rain, while roots help water soak into soil. This process can reduce the amount of water rushing into storm drains at one time. In Philadelphia, the city has planted thousands of trees as part of its Green City, Clean Waters program, which uses natural features to reduce stormwater pollution. Trees do not prevent every flood, but they can be one useful part of a larger plan.

3. Finally, street trees can support urban wildlife. Many birds use trees for nesting, resting, or finding insects to eat. Flowering trees may provide nectar for pollinators such as bees and butterflies. A single tree will not create a complete habitat, especially if it is poorly cared for. However, a connected network of trees, shrubs, and other plants gives more species food and shelter. Investing in street trees therefore improves human spaces while strengthening local ecosystems.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the speaker's main idea? Give two details from the passage that support it.

2. A speaker wants to show that trees can make hot-day walking more comfortable. Which numerical fact from the passage is the strongest evidence, and why is it pertinent?

3. How does the Philadelphia example support the claim that street trees can help manage rainwater?

4. What limitation does the speaker acknowledge about trees and wildlife, and how does this make the presentation stronger?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one improvement your school or community should make. Prepare a 45 to 60 second oral presentation and deliver it aloud to a partner or small group, stating a clear claim and using three relevant pieces of evidence, including a specific fact or detail and an example.

ANSWER KEY

Speak for Trees

GRADE 7 · 7.C.2.A.ii

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the speaker's main idea. Then number three details, facts, or examples that support that idea. 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 idea? Give two details from the passage that support it.	**Main idea: Communities should invest in planting and caring for street trees because trees benefit people and ecosystems. Supporting details may include that shaded surfaces can be 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit cooler and that roots help rainwater soak into soil.**
2	A speaker wants to show that trees can make hot-day walking more comfortable. Which numerical fact from the passage is the strongest evidence, and why is it pertinent?	**Shaded surfaces may be 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit cooler than unshaded surfaces. This directly supports the claim that trees can cool sidewalks.**
3	How does the Philadelphia example support the claim that street trees can help manage rainwater?	**Philadelphia has planted thousands of trees through a program that uses natural features to reduce stormwater pollution. This is a real example of a city using trees as part of rainwater management.**
4	What limitation does the speaker acknowledge about trees and wildlife, and how does this make the presentation stronger?	**The speaker acknowledges that one tree cannot create a complete habitat, especially if it is poorly cared for. This makes the claim more precise and supports the need for connected plant networks.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Delivered aloud to a partner: Our school should place clear recycling labels above the bins in the cafeteria. During lunch Tuesday, I saw three students pause at bins and ask where to put empty bottles. The bins are beside the cafeteria exit, where students carry trays and move quickly. A label with pictures of bottles, cans, and paper would give students a quick answer. For example, a student holding a juice bottle could match it to the bottle picture instead of guessing. Labels are a small change, but they would make sorting faster and help our school waste less.

Accept equivalent statements of the main idea and any accurate supporting details from the passage. For the oral task, listen for a clear claim, three pertinent supporting pieces of evidence, and actual spoken delivery to the assigned audience.