Messages on Oak Street

Analyze how media choices shape a community debate.

7.C.4 "Examining Media Messages Explain persuasive/informative techniques used in media to sway the audience (e.g., innuendo, card stacking, bandwagon, and appeal to emotions). Analyze media messages for facts, opinions, persuasive messages..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one claim that could be checked, circle two word groups meant to create feelings or group pressure, and number the three message formats 1, 2, and 3. Use your marks to compare how each message tries to influence residents.

A Debate About a Bike Lane

(1) Riverbend is deciding whether to build a protected bike lane on Oak Street, near Lincoln Middle School. A postcard from Move Riverbend says, "Oak Street had 18 reported bicycle crashes from 2021 through 2023," and lists the city traffic report in small print. On the back, it says, "Every sensible family knows the lane is overdue." The postcard shows a helmeted child beside cars moving quickly. It asks residents to attend the council meeting on May 14.

(2) That afternoon, listeners hear a 20-second radio spot paid for by the Oak Street Business Alliance, whose members own shops along the route. A child's voice says, "I want to ride to school without my dad worrying." Then a narrator adds, "Thousands of neighbors are choosing safer streets. Join them." Bicycle-bell sounds play under the words. The spot does not name a crash report or give a website. It ends by telling listeners to text SAFE to receive a link to a petition.

(3) Later, a two-minute video from Oak Street Neighbors Against the Lane appears on a social media page. It shows empty-looking curb spaces at noon and a shop owner saying deliveries could become harder. Large text asks, "Who benefits when your parking disappears?" The video never says that businesses will close, but it ends with, "Protect our local shops. Tell the council no." Unlike the postcard and radio spot, it gives no dates, report titles, or numbers. All three messages want residents to act before the vote.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which claim in the postcard could be checked using a source named in the passage? Name the claim and the source.

2. Find one opinion in the postcard. What word or phrase shows that it is an opinion rather than a proven fact?

3. The radio spot and postcard both support the bike lane. How does the radio spot try to persuade differently from the postcard? Give one detail from each message.

4. Which message is likely to be more effective for a resident worried about local shops, the postcard or the video? Explain with two details from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a school improvement. Create a short written post and a plan for a 15-second audio or visual message that support the same viewpoint. Include one checkable fact, one clearly marked opinion, one persuasive technique, and the message's creator and purpose.

ANSWER KEY

Messages on Oak Street

GRADE 7 · 7.C.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one claim that could be checked, circle two word groups meant to create feelings or group pressure, and number the three message formats 1, 2, and 3. Use your marks to compare how each message tries to influence residents. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which claim in the postcard could be checked using a source named in the passage? Name the claim and the source.	**The claim that Oak Street had 18 reported bicycle crashes from 2021 through 2023 could be checked in the city traffic report.**
2	Find one opinion in the postcard. What word or phrase shows that it is an opinion rather than a proven fact?	**"Every sensible family knows the lane is overdue" is an opinion. The word "sensible" judges people who may disagree, and the statement gives no evidence.**
3	The radio spot and postcard both support the bike lane. How does the radio spot try to persuade differently from the postcard? Give one detail from each message.	**The radio spot uses a worried child's voice, bicycle-bell sounds, and the idea that "Thousands of neighbors" are joining. The postcard uses a crash-number claim linked to a city traffic report and an image of a child near moving cars.**
4	Which message is likely to be more effective for a resident worried about local shops, the postcard or the video? Explain with two details from the passage.	**The video is likely more effective because it includes a shop owner discussing harder deliveries and asks about losing parking. Its ending also directly tells viewers to protect local shops.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Written post, created by the Student Green Team: "Fact: A refill station provides drinking water for reusable bottles. Opinion: It would make our cafeteria cleaner. Choose the refill station." Audio plan: Play water-filling sounds, then say, "Bring your bottle and join the refill team." The purpose is to persuade students to support a refill station.

Accept answers that identify checkable claims, opinions, persuasive techniques, and media details accurately. For the open task, accept varied school topics when the response includes all required parts and shows a clear viewpoint.