

Features That Focus

Analyze how text features guide understanding in an informational article.

8.RI.2.A "Evaluate an author's use of text features (e.g., boldface and italics; type set in color; underlining; indentation; sidebars; illustrations, graphics, and photographs; headings and subheadings..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the three headings, circle the bold or italic key terms, and box the indented recommendation, sidebar, and photograph caption. Write 1, 2, or 3 beside each feature to show the paragraph it supports.

City Trees at Work

- ① **WHY PAVEMENT HOLDS HEAT** On sunny days, asphalt and dark roofs absorb energy from the sun. After sunset, they release stored heat slowly. This pattern contributes to an urban ****heat island****, a built-up area that is warmer than nearby rural land. [Graphic: Two surface-temperature readings, 128°F for sunlit pavement and 88°F for shaded grass. Readings can vary by place and time.] The numbers describe surface temperature, not air temperature. Surface temperatures can vary because of weather, materials, and shade.
- ② **SHADE AT THE BUS STOP** A tree's ***canopy***, its leaves and branches, blocks some sunlight before it reaches a sidewalk or bench. Shade can lower surface temperatures, although the amount depends on tree type, weather, and time of day. Plant trees where people wait, walk, and cross streets. City crews must also leave room for roots, underground pipes, and wheelchair access. In older neighborhoods, crews may choose smaller species beneath power lines. Careful placement can make shade useful without blocking a sidewalk.
- ③ **BENEFITS BEYOND COOLING** Trees affect water as well as heat. Their leaves catch some rainfall, and roots help water soak into soil. [SIDEBAR: During heavy rain, no single tree can prevent flooding. Drains, wetlands, and pavement design also matter.] [Photograph caption: A young maple shades a playground beside a storm drain.] City planners may select species based on available space, soil conditions, and nearby utilities. A tree planted near a storm drain can support rainwater management while also shading people.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How do the heading “WHY PAVEMENT HOLDS HEAT” and the graphic work together to help readers understand the first paragraph?

2 Why is the word “canopy” italicized and then explained in the same sentence? How does this feature help a reader?

3 Evaluate the indented sentence in paragraph 2. How does its placement affect the reader’s attention to the author’s recommendation?

4 What does the sidebar add to the final paragraph, and why is that addition useful?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 3-sentence informational mini-passage about one useful improvement for your school. Include a heading and one additional text feature, such as a bold term, sidebar, caption, or indented recommendation, then add a fourth sentence explaining how both features help readers.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the three headings, circle the bold or italic key terms, and box the indented recommendation, sidebar, and photograph caption. Write 1, 2, or 3 beside each feature to show the paragraph it supports. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the heading “WHY PAVEMENT HOLDS HEAT” and the graphic work together to help readers understand the first paragraph?	The heading introduces the focus on heat from pavement, and the graphic gives a numerical contrast between sunlit pavement and shaded grass.
2	Why is the word “canopy” italicized and then explained in the same sentence? How does this feature help a reader?	The italics signal that canopy is an important term, and the explanation tells readers that it means a tree’s leaves and branches.
3	Evaluate the indented sentence in paragraph 2. How does its placement affect the reader’s attention to the author’s recommendation?	Indentation separates the recommendation from the surrounding facts, making the practical action easier to notice and remember.
4	What does the sidebar add to the final paragraph, and why is that addition useful?	It explains that trees alone cannot prevent flooding and that other systems also matter. This gives readers a more balanced understanding of trees’ role.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

QUIETER LUNCHROOMS Soft panels on walls can absorb some sound in a cafeteria. ****Noise level**** means how loud a space is. Staff can add panels near tables where many students talk. The heading names the setting, and the bold term helps readers find a key idea.

Accept reasonable evaluations when students identify a feature, describe its effect on attention or understanding, and support the claim with passage details. For the open task, accept any accurate school-improvement topic with a heading, an additional purposeful feature, and a clear explanation of both features.