Heat, Evidence, Trust

Analyze how an expert builds a case for cooler city spaces.

8.RI.2.B "Analyze how an author's word choice, organizational pattern, language structure, viewpoints, and qualifications impact meaning and credibility of a text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two words or phrases that reveal the author's viewpoint, circle the author's qualifications, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside the main job each paragraph does. Use your marks to judge how the author builds meaning and credibility.

Cooling a City Block

1 On July afternoons, a blacktop playground can feel like a skillet under bare feet. I am Lena Ortiz, an urban ecologist who measures neighborhood temperatures for the Metro University Heat Lab. In our city, blocks with few trees often stay warmer after sunset than nearby leafy blocks. This difference, called the urban heat island effect, matters because high nighttime temperatures can make heat waves more dangerous, especially for older adults and people without air conditioning.

2 Last August, our team placed temperature sensors on six school grounds at 3 p.m. and again at 10 p.m. The paved areas were usually hotter than shaded soil during the day, and some stayed warmer at night. These readings do not prove that one new tree will solve every heat problem. However, they show why shade, light-colored roofs, drinking water, and cooling centers work best as a connected plan. The measurements move the discussion from a complaint about "hot streets" to evidence city planners can test.

3 Because I study heat data, I favor spending public money first on shade in the hottest neighborhoods. That viewpoint is not neutral, but it is based on temperature records and on reports from residents who wait for buses in direct sun. City leaders should also ask health workers, transit riders, and maintenance crews what will last. A map can identify hot blocks, yet it cannot explain every daily need. Combining measurements with local experience creates a fairer, more credible decision.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the comparison of the playground to "a skillet" affect the meaning of paragraph 1?

2. How is paragraph 2 organized, and how does that organization make Ortiz's claim more credible?

3. Which qualification and which viewpoint does Ortiz state in the passage? Explain how each affects a reader's trust in her.

4. In paragraph 3, how does the word "yet" shape the meaning of the sentence about a map?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence mini-analysis of how Ortiz builds a credible argument. Explain the passage's organization, discuss either her qualification or viewpoint, and include one exact word or phrase from the passage as evidence.

ANSWER KEY

Heat, Evidence, Trust

GRADE 8 · 8.RI.2.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two words or phrases that reveal the author's viewpoint, circle the author's qualifications, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside the main job each paragraph does. Use your marks to judge how the author builds meaning and credibility. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the comparison of the playground to "a skillet" affect the meaning of paragraph 1?	**It creates a strong image of intense heat, making the problem feel immediate and uncomfortable.**
2	How is paragraph 2 organized, and how does that organization make Ortiz's claim more credible?	**It gives measurement results, states a limitation, and then connects the evidence to several solutions. This sequence shows that the recommendation is based on evidence and is not an oversimplified claim.**
3	Which qualification and which viewpoint does Ortiz state in the passage? Explain how each affects a reader's trust in her.	**Her qualification is that she is an urban ecologist who measures temperatures for the Metro University Heat Lab, which supports her expertise. Her viewpoint is that public money should first fund shade in the hottest neighborhoods, which shows she has a position rather than being fully neutral.**
4	In paragraph 3, how does the word "yet" shape the meaning of the sentence about a map?	**"Yet" creates a contrast between what a map can do and what it cannot do. It shows that temperature data are useful but must be combined with local experience.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The passage begins with a vivid playground image, then presents sensor readings before offering a recommendation. This order makes the argument more credible because the suggestion follows evidence and the limit that one tree will not "solve every heat problem." Ortiz's work at the Metro University Heat Lab gives readers reason to trust her knowledge, although her support for shade shows a viewpoint.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect a specific passage detail to meaning or credibility. For Question 2, students should identify evidence followed by a limitation and a connected-plan claim; for Question 4, they should explain the contrast between what a map can and cannot do.