

Shade for Riverton

Analyze how a model argument builds and supports a position.

8.W.2 "Organization and Composition Generate and organize ideas using the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing) to develop multi-paragraph texts..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the writer's position and the sentence that closes the argument. Circle transition words or phrases, then number three details that support the position.

A Cooler Courtyard

- ① Riverton Middle School should plant more shade trees along its blacktop courtyard. At lunch, the open pavement absorbs sunlight and radiates heat, leaving students with few comfortable places to sit or move. Trees would make the courtyard safer and more useful while improving the campus over time. Although planting requires planning and money, the long-term benefits outweigh those challenges. A tree-planting project, paired with regular care, is a practical investment in students' daily school experience.
- ② First, shade changes how the courtyard feels during hot weather. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explains that trees and vegetation cool surrounding air through shade and evapotranspiration, the release of water vapor from leaves. On Riverton's blacktop, volunteers could plant native trees in soil beds beside the fence and place benches beneath future canopies. As the trees grow, their shade would reduce direct sun on seating areas. Consequently, students could use the courtyard more comfortably during lunch and outdoor lessons.
- ③ Some people may argue that the school should spend its limited funds only on indoor needs, because young trees do not provide full shade immediately. However, a staged project can control costs: the school could seek a community grant, plant a few trees each year, and organize supervised watering. This approach begins the work without ignoring other priorities. In conclusion, Riverton should turn part of its bare courtyard into a shaded gathering space. Careful planning now can create a cooler, more welcoming campus for years.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What position does the writer take in the first paragraph?

2 Name two transition words or phrases from the passage. What relationship does each one signal?

3 What evidence does the writer use to show that trees could make the courtyard cooler? Explain how that evidence supports the position.

4 What counterclaim does the writer address? How does the writer respond, and what final position does the conclusion state?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a three-paragraph argument of 120 to 160 words explaining one school improvement you support. State a clear position, give two reasons with specific details, use at least two transitions, address one counterclaim, and end with a conclusion.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the writer's position and the sentence that closes the argument. Circle transition words or phrases, then number three details that support the position. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What position does the writer take in the first paragraph?	Riverton Middle School should plant more shade trees along its blacktop courtyard.
2	Name two transition words or phrases from the passage. What relationship does each one signal?	Answers may include "First," which signals the first reason, and "Consequently," which signals a result. Other valid examples include "However," for contrast, and "In conclusion," for the closing section.
3	What evidence does the writer use to show that trees could make the courtyard cooler? Explain how that evidence supports the position.	The writer cites the EPA's explanation that trees and vegetation cool surrounding air through shade and evapotranspiration. This supports the position because shade would reduce direct sun on courtyard seating areas.
4	What counterclaim does the writer address? How does the writer respond, and what final position does the conclusion state?	The counterclaim is that limited funds should go only to indoor needs and that young trees will not provide full shade right away. The writer responds with a staged project, grants, yearly planting, and supervised watering. The conclusion says Riverton should create a shaded gathering space in part of the courtyard.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should install a covered bike rack near the main entrance. A roofed rack would protect bicycles from rain and give riders a clear place to lock them. This change would make biking to school a more practical choice. First, a covered rack helps students keep seats and handlebars drier during wet weather. A rider who finds a dry bicycle is less likely to track water through hallways or wait for a ride home. In addition, racks with separate spaces can keep bicycles from leaning into the sidewalk, so students can enter the building safely. Some people may say that a roofed rack costs too much. However, the school could begin with a small rack and ask a local hardware business to donate materials. In conclusion, a covered bike rack is a sensible improvement because it protects bicycles and keeps the entrance orderly. The project would support students who choose an active way to travel.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect the writer's evidence, transitions, counterclaim, and conclusion to the position. For the open response, look for three organized paragraphs, a consistent formal point of view, relevant support, a counterclaim response, and a concluding statement.