

Messages Under Pressure

Analyze how media messages shape an audience's response.

9.C.4.B "Analyze the persuasive techniques used in diverse media formats (e.g., name calling, innuendo, glittering generalities, card stacking, bandwagon, testimonials, appeal to prestige, snobbery or plain folks, appeal to emotion)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle words or phrases that try to influence an audience, and number places where a message selects or leaves out evidence. In the margin, label each mark with a persuasive technique, such as bandwagon, card stacking, name calling, appeal to emotion, or snobbery.

Three Messages, One Plan

- ① At a town meeting, residents received a social media graphic from Save Cedar Park, a group opposing a fictional plan to replace part of Cedar Park with a parking lot. The graphic showed children beside a creek and carried the headline, "Protect Our Future, Stop the Asphalt Plan." Its caption stated, "Every caring neighbor stands with the park." It highlighted that 40 mature trees would be removed. However, the graphic did not mention the proposal's plan to plant 60 young trees along nearby streets or add a rain garden. The post ended with, "Join thousands of voices before it is too late."
- ② A local podcast then ran an ad paid for by ParkSmart, the company supporting the lot. A retired fire chief said, "I trust ParkSmart. During storms, its crews cleared blocked roads quickly." The ad followed with, "Do not let anti-parking activists trap families in traffic." It gave one number, claiming the lot would create 180 spaces, but it did not say how often the current lot is full or whether buses could reduce traffic. Soft music played under an account from a parent who said she once missed a medical appointment while searching for parking. The ad called the project "the smart choice for modern families."
- ③ At the library, a student-made flyer urged voters to reject both messages and study the proposal. Yet the flyer had its own slant. Across the top, it announced, "Real thinkers choose green space." It quoted a biology professor who called mature trees valuable habitat, then displayed a row of empty parking spaces photographed at 2:00 p.m. on a weekday. The flyer did not include the evening parking counts cited by ParkSmart. Near a drawing of a grandparent and child, it asked, "Can you bear to pave their favorite place?" A QR code linked to the full town planning report, which includes costs, tree plans, and traffic estimates.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 In the social media graphic, identify the glittering generality and the bandwagon appeal. Quote the words that show each technique.

2 How does the podcast ad use the retired fire chief and the phrase “anti-parking activists”? Name the persuasive technique used in each case.

3 Explain one example of card stacking in the social media graphic. What information does it include, and what relevant information does it leave out?

4 What two techniques appear in the flyer’s phrases “Real thinkers choose green space” and “Can you bear to pave their favorite place?” Explain how each phrase pressures the audience.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school issue that is different from the parking-lot debate. Write a 45- to 60-word social media post that uses exactly two persuasive techniques from this sheet, and label each technique in brackets.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle words or phrases that try to influence an audience, and number places where a message selects or leaves out evidence. In the margin, label each mark with a persuasive technique, such as bandwagon, card stacking, name calling, appeal to emotion, or snobbery. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In the social media graphic, identify the glittering generality and the bandwagon appeal. Quote the words that show each technique.	Glittering generality: "Protect Our Future." Bandwagon appeal: "Join thousands of voices" or "Every caring neighbor stands with the park."
2	How does the podcast ad use the retired fire chief and the phrase "anti-parking activists"? Name the persuasive technique used in each case.	The retired fire chief is a testimonial, and his respected role can add prestige. "Anti-parking activists" is name calling.
3	Explain one example of card stacking in the social media graphic. What information does it include, and what relevant information does it leave out?	It includes the loss of 40 mature trees but leaves out the plan to plant 60 young trees and add a rain garden.
4	What two techniques appear in the flyer's phrases "Real thinkers choose green space" and "Can you bear to pave their favorite place?" Explain how each phrase pressures the audience.	"Real thinkers" uses snobbery by suggesting intelligent people agree. "Can you bear" uses an appeal to emotion by making readers picture a grandparent and child losing a valued place.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

[Bandwagon] Join hundreds of students who already bring reusable bottles to school each day. [Appeal to emotion] Picture cafeteria trash cans overflowing after lunch and imagine litter blowing toward the creek behind campus. Ask the principal to install refill stations so fewer disposable bottles pile up beside the lunch tables.

Accept technique labels when students cite language or details that reasonably support the label and explain the likely effect on an audience. For the open task, check that the post stays within 45 to 60 words, addresses a different school issue, and clearly uses and labels exactly two techniques.