Persuasion in Action

Analyze how an editorial uses language to argue for a public change.

9.RI.2.B "Analyze an author's word choice and use of rhetorical devices to persuade or convince an audience."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three words or phrases that make the issue feel urgent or appealing. Circle and number three rhetorical moves, such as a question, repetition, contrast, or metaphor, then write a short label beside each one to show how the author tries to persuade you.

A Case for Shade

1 At noon in July, a treeless bus stop can feel like an oven. Riders wait on bare concrete while the sun presses down, and older neighbors or small children may have no cool place to stand. Our city can change that experience by planting shade trees along busy walking routes. A tree is not decoration alone. Its leaves block some sunlight, and water released from leaves can help cool the nearby air. When streets offer shade, a short walk becomes less punishing and more possible for everyone.

2 Consider what a shaded route says to residents: you belong outdoors, even when the weather is harsh. Do we want a summer sidewalk to be a test of endurance, or a path to the library, market, and park? We can plan for cooler corners. We can protect young trees with regular watering. We can choose species suited to local conditions. Together, these steps turn planting from a vague wish into a shared set of actions. They also present city leaders with a choice: invest now in living shade, or keep paying for streets that feel abandoned at midday.

3 Trees will not erase every heat risk. Pavement still stores heat, and a newly planted tree needs years to grow a broad canopy. Yet that is a reason to begin, not a reason to delay. A sapling is a promise with roots. If the city plants and cares for trees today, future residents can walk beneath branches instead of along a glare-filled corridor. The question is not whether one tree can transform a whole city overnight. The question is whether thousands of careful choices can make daily life safer, cooler, and more welcoming.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the words "oven," "presses down," and "punishing" in paragraph 1 support the author's argument?

2. What is the effect of the question that compares a sidewalk to a "test of endurance" or a path to community places?

3. Why does the author repeat "We can" three times in paragraph 2?

4. What does the metaphor "A sapling is a promise with roots" suggest, and how does it persuade the audience?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write 3 or 4 sentences arguing for one improvement at your school or in your community. Include one rhetorical question, repeat the same 2 to 4 words at the beginning of two consecutive sentences, and use at least one vivid word or phrase. Label each of those choices in parentheses.

ANSWER KEY

Persuasion in Action

GRADE 9 · 9.RI.2.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three words or phrases that make the issue feel urgent or appealing. Circle and number three rhetorical moves, such as a question, repetition, contrast, or metaphor, then write a short label beside each one to show how the author tries to persuade you. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the words "oven," "presses down," and "punishing" in paragraph 1 support the author's argument?	**They make the heat and discomfort of an unshaded walk seem intense, supporting the need for shade trees.**
2	What is the effect of the question that compares a sidewalk to a "test of endurance" or a path to community places?	**It pushes readers to view shaded sidewalks as important access to places such as the library, market, and park, not as a luxury.**
3	Why does the author repeat "We can" three times in paragraph 2?	**The repetition makes the plan sound practical and shared, showing that several specific actions can be taken.**
4	What does the metaphor "A sapling is a promise with roots" suggest, and how does it persuade the audience?	**It suggests that a young tree is an investment in the future, persuading readers to plant and care for trees even though they need time to grow.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Should students have to search for a quiet place to read during lunch? (rhetorical question) We need a calm corner in the library. (repetition) We need soft chairs, lamps, and a few plants to replace the noisy, crowded hallway. (repetition, vivid phrase) A reading space would turn lunch from a scramble into a pause. (vivid phrase)

For the open task, accept varied topics if the response has 3 or 4 sentences and includes all required, correctly labeled persuasive choices.