Sharper City Draft

Find places where precise language and details strengthen a draft.

9.W.3.A "Revise writing for clarity of content, accuracy, and adequate elaboration."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline vague or unclear words, circle claims that need a specific detail or reason, and number the three revisions you would make first.

City Trees: A Working Draft

1 On a July afternoon, a sidewalk beside an unshaded parking lot can feel much hotter than nearby grass. Dark pavement absorbs sunlight and releases stored heat, contributing to the urban heat island effect. Trees can help with this problem. Their leaves block some sunlight before it reaches pavement or building walls. Water moving from leaves into the air also cools the area through evapotranspiration. This process happens when water evaporates from leaf surfaces. For that reason, tree canopy can make outdoor spaces more comfortable during hot weather.

2 A city planting plan should put trees in useful places. For example, a canopy over a bus stop can shade people waiting for rides, while trees along a street can shade sidewalks and building walls. The right tree matters, too. A species must fit the available soil, space, and climate. Its roots should not crowd underground pipes or lift narrow sidewalks. Young trees need water and care while roots grow. This is important because they do better later. City workers can inspect trees for damage and prune branches when needed.

3 Trees also affect rainwater. During a storm, leaves and branches slow raindrops, and soil around roots can absorb water. These actions can reduce the amount of runoff rushing into storm drains, especially when soil is not compacted. However, a few trees cannot solve flooding across an entire city. Planners may pair tree planting with rain gardens, permeable pavement, and larger drainage systems. Those choices are good. A clear report would name the goal, describe the site, and explain how each feature helps manage heat or water.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. The phrase “this problem” is not precise. Rewrite the sentence that contains it so that it clearly names the problem.

2. What detail could you add after “The right tree matters, too” to make that claim more useful? Use information from paragraph 2.

3. Rewrite “This is important because they do better later” so that the word “This” has a clear meaning and the outcome is specific.

4. Rewrite “Those choices are good” as a specific claim that explains why the choices in paragraph 3 are useful.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly four sentences for a school newsletter proposing one way to reduce cafeteria waste. State a clear goal, include two accurate details that explain how the plan works, and end with a specific reason instead of a vague judgment such as “it is good.”

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 9 · 9.W.3.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline vague or unclear words, circle claims that need a specific detail or reason, and number the three revisions you would make first. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	The phrase "this problem" is not precise. Rewrite the sentence that contains it so that it clearly names the problem.	**Trees can help reduce the urban heat island effect.**
2	What detail could you add after "The right tree matters, too" to make that claim more useful? Use information from paragraph 2.	**A species must fit the available soil, space, and climate.**
3	Rewrite "This is important because they do better later" so that the word "This" has a clear meaning and the outcome is specific.	**Young trees need water and care while roots grow so they are more likely to survive and establish healthy root systems.**
4	Rewrite "Those choices are good" as a specific claim that explains why the choices in paragraph 3 are useful.	**Rain gardens, permeable pavement, and drainage systems can work with trees to reduce runoff and manage excess rainwater.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school could reduce cafeteria waste by placing clearly labeled compost bins near tray returns. Fruit peels, vegetable scraps, and other accepted food scraps can be composted instead of sent to a landfill. Reusable trays and water-filling stations would also reduce the number of disposable items students use. This plan is practical because clear bin labels can help students sort materials correctly, and compost can return nutrients to soil.

Accept revisions that accurately replace vague references with specific nouns and explain claims using details from the passage. For the open response, accept varied plans if they contain exactly four sentences, a clear goal, two accurate explanatory details, and a specific concluding reason.