

Practice with Hints

Use the Notes column to take notes and use SALSA™ strategies with this pair of passages. There are a few hints to get you started.

September 2, 2008

The Central Signpost

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The Candidates Speak: Marisa Williamson

My name is Marisa Williamson, and I'm running for Student Council President here at Central Middle School.

You may ask, "Why is the Student Council important? Why should I vote for you?" Many students think that because the Council lacks the power to make or change rules directly, it has no power at all. That is like saying that a coach, who neither plays nor referees, has no power.

The Student Council helps to steer the school in a direction. I was a Grade 6 Council member last year, so I can tell you that we advised Principal Rheiner on new rules and policies. We also worked on special events to improve life at school and elsewhere. For example, last year we organized the charity Walk-a-thon and Blood Drive, the Classic Film Series, and the Spring Dance.

That leads to my answer to the second question. Just as the Student Council steers the direction of the school, its President steers the Council. If I am elected President, I promise to use that influence to serve your interests responsibly by guiding Central to become more environmentally friendly. This will also save the school money that can be spent to benefit students directly.

We can achieve this goal in three steps. First, lower the thermostats this winter from 72 to 68 degrees to reduce heating expenses and conserve energy. Next, the school can begin using energy-efficient compact fluorescent lightbulbs. They are more expensive initially. However, they save money in the long run by using less electricity and lasting much longer than traditional incandescent bulbs. Finally, we can expand Central's recycling program to cover not just the main office but also the whole school. We are mature enough to put trash in the correct baskets. Because recycling combines lower costs with higher revenues from sales of the recycled materials, the school and the town can actually make a profit!

Thank you for your time, and please vote, no matter which candidate you choose!

Skim What do the header and title suggest about this passage?

Solve If you aren't sure what "environmentally friendly" means, then *Read Ahead*.

Look The first sentence is a clue that a list of steps in her plan is coming.

The Candidates Speak: Victor Moore

My name is Victor Moore, and I'm running for Student Council President.

My opponents have correctly pointed out that the Student Council exists to advise the school and represent the interests of its students. However, I am the candidate best suited to protect and advance those interests—*your* interests.

First, many of you know me personally from working together on a team, in a club, or just from hanging around. If you do, then you know that I am a good listener. I remember what people say and what they want. If I am elected President, I will not push the Council and the school where *I* think we should go, but where *you* want to go.

For example, my campaign website has received more than two dozen e-mails about the cafeteria menu. There have also been a number of questions about the fundraising efforts for the school library. If elected, I will bring your concerns to the ears that need to hear them. I will do my best to get them addressed, or at least bring back answers.

Second, I have demonstrated my qualifications for the job's organizational and fundraising aspects in ways that you may already know about. I organized the very successful and fun Spring Cleaning Fundraiser for the baseball team. I also organized the drama club's regular Readings for Literacy.

Third, I also have direct experience with the Student Council. Last year, I had the honor of being one of the elected Grade 7 representatives. I know how the Council works and how to get things done. With what I learned from that experience, I am ready to serve and represent *all* of the students here at Central Middle School.

Thank you for your support.



Skim Why are the words *I* and *you* in italics?

Ask Why would Victor use the word concerns?

Assemble Compare the passages and consider which one you find more convincing.

- 1** Victor's article uses the organizational pattern of—
- (A) describing important problems and what he will do to solve them.
 - (B) explaining the steps he has taken to become qualified for the job.
 - (C) asking a question and providing possible answers.
 - (D) listing evidence that supports his main idea.



Hint—How does Victor introduce his topic? How does he transition between ideas?

- 2** Which statement from Victor's passage is an OPINION?
- (F) "my campaign website has received more than two dozen e-mails..."
 - (G) "I also organized the drama club's regular Readings for Literacy."
 - (H) "I am the candidate best suited to protect and advance those interests..."
 - (J) "I also have direct experience with the Student Council."



Hint—What does each statement claim? How could Victor prove it?

- 3** Recycling probably leads to lower costs because—
- (A) recycling uses less electricity.
 - (B) it costs more to cart away and dispose of regular trash.
 - (C) people are willing to pay more to have their trash recycled.
 - (D) students bring their recyclables directly to the recycling center.



Hint—Which choice makes the most sense, based on what Marisa writes, and based on what you already know?

- 4** Which excerpt from Marisa's article signals the organizational pattern of her entire article?
- (F) "That leads to my answer to the second question."
 - (G) "The Student Council helps to steer the school in a direction."
 - (H) "Finally, we can expand Central's recycling program..."
 - (J) "Because recycling combines lower costs with higher revenues..."



Hint—More than one choice uses signal words. Scan the passage to see which phrase relates to the whole article instead of just one section.

- 5** Marisa and Victor differ mainly on the issue of—
- (A) whether the President should push her own ideas or those of the students.
 - (B) what the Student Council is supposed to do for the school.
 - (C) whether or not the Student Council should organize fundraisers.
 - (D) whether or not students should vote.



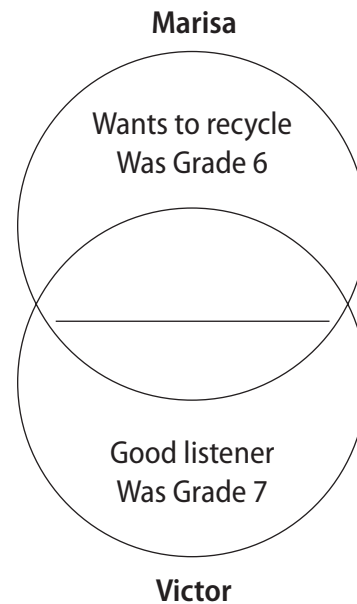
Hint—Draw It by putting your notes into a Venn diagram to compare and contrast their ideas.

- 6** Which source would probably be MOST helpful to a student who wants more information about what Student Councils do?
- (F) *The Journal of Educational Research*
 - (G) The website of the Virginia League of Student Councils
 - (H) A database of names of all former Central Middle School Student Council members
 - (J) A textbook about American government



Hint—What audience is each choice aimed at? What would those readers want to know?

- 7** Look at this chart of information from the articles.



Which choice belongs in the blank?

- (A) Wants to lower thermostats
- (B) Organized Spring Cleaning Fundraiser
- (C) Has a campaign website
- (D) On Student Council last year



Hint—What relationship does this chart demonstrate?