A Scene for Change

How a brief narrative can strengthen a policy argument

12.CL.11.a "Incorporate narrative techniques into other modes of writing as appropriate."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two moments that narrate Mara's experience, and circle the sentence in paragraph 2 that says what her story cannot prove. Number the proposal and the return to Mara's story in the order they appear.

A Later Closing Time?

1. Imagine this: On Tuesday at 6:00 p.m., the library doors clicked shut while Mara stood outside with job application instructions on her phone. Her apartment's internet connection had failed that afternoon, and she had walked to the library to use a computer. Through the glass, she could see the workstations she had hoped to use. She checked the deadline again: midnight. She could not shift her workday to make another visit. This imagined scene suggests how a public service can be unavailable precisely when someone needs it, without showing how often that problem occurs.

2. A two-evening pilot would test a practical response: keep one branch open until 8:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays for six weeks. Staff could record how many people use computers, study tables, and the help desk during the added hours, then compare those counts with staffing and utility costs. Mara's missed visit is a reason to ask a question, not evidence that the pilot will succeed. The argument rests instead on a limited test with a clear decision point. If usage is low or costs are too high, the library can revise the schedule rather than promise a permanent change.

3. Now picture the same Tuesday at 6:10 p.m., with the lights still on. Mara sits at a computer and uploads her application before the deadline. That ending is possible, not guaranteed; an open door cannot fix every barrier to employment. Yet placing this brief scene after the proposal makes the policy's purpose visible without presenting an imagined outcome as a measured result. The library board should authorize the pilot, publish the evening-use counts and costs, and invite residents to describe what the hours made possible. A decision about public time deserves both human context and evidence.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Identify one action in the opening scene. What problem with the library's hours does it make visible?

2. Which sentence in paragraph 2 limits what Mara's story can prove? How does that limit strengthen the argument?

3. How does the imagined ending in paragraph 3 support the proposal without presenting a result as fact?

4. Why does the writer place the pilot's usage and cost measures between two scenes about Mara?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one 80- to 110-word paragraph recommending a change to a school space other than the library. Include a brief imagined scene with a person and a specific moment, a feasible proposal, one way to evaluate it, and a sentence that distinguishes the scene from proof.

ANSWER KEY

A Scene for Change

GRADE 12 · 12.CL.11.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two moments that narrate Mara's experience, and circle the sentence in paragraph 2 that says what her story cannot prove. Number the proposal and the return to Mara's story in the order they appear. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Identify one action in the opening scene. What problem with the library's hours does it make visible?	**Mara checks her midnight deadline after finding the library closed. Her action shows why someone who arrives after closing may need later access.**
2	Which sentence in paragraph 2 limits what Mara's story can prove? How does that limit strengthen the argument?	**"Mara's missed visit is a reason to ask a question, not evidence that the pilot will succeed." The writer acknowledges that an imagined case cannot establish demand and proposes measuring actual use.**
3	How does the imagined ending in paragraph 3 support the proposal without presenting a result as fact?	**It shows how later hours might let Mara finish her application, while the writer states that this outcome is possible, not guaranteed.**
4	Why does the writer place the pilot's usage and cost measures between two scenes about Mara?	**The first scene raises the access problem, the measures provide a way to test the proposal, and the second scene shows its possible human effect.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At 12:35 p.m., Jordan reached the fountain near the gym and found six students waiting ahead of him. His next class began in three minutes, so he left with an empty bottle. The school should test a portable water dispenser near the gym for one month. Staff could record daily refills and supply costs, then ask students whether the line changed. Jordan's moment is imagined, not evidence that the dispenser will solve every delay. Still, the scene shows why a short wait can matter during a crowded passing period.

Accept other passage-supported explanations of how the scenes serve the proposal. For Part 3, look for an original scene integrated into a feasible recommendation, a way to evaluate it, and an explicit limit on what the scene proves.