

Words That Move

Analyze how public-comment features shape a persuasive message.

11.P.AC.3.a “Explore and create texts in various modes and genres, developing and applying knowledge of how specific features impact meaning, tone, style, purpose, and audience. (I/C)”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline phrases that identify the writer's audience and purpose, circle each contrast, and number the sentences that directly ask or urge the board to act. These choices show how a public comment builds a practical, persuasive tone.

A Route to Belonging

- ① Members of the Oakview School Board, I am asking you to fund one late bus route for students who stay after school. At 3:15, the corridors are still loud with rehearsals, robotics meetings, tutoring, and practices. At 4:30, however, the building empties quickly. Students without rides gather near the office, checking phones and calculating whether a walk home is safe before dark. A late bus would not simply extend the school day. It would make clubs, academic help, and team activities available to students whose families cannot pick them up.
- ② Some may see transportation as a small scheduling matter. It is not. A student who leaves immediately because a parent works an evening shift cannot attend debate practice, meet with a math tutor, or finish a lab with a partner. Meanwhile, students with reliable rides can remain until the final door is locked. That difference quietly decides who gets access to opportunities. We say that Oakview values participation. A bus route is one practical way to make that promise visible, rather than leaving it as a phrase on a poster.
- ③ Board members, you must weigh costs, routes, and driver availability, and those concerns deserve careful planning. Still, the question is straightforward: when an activity is offered to every student, can we call it open if transportation closes the door? Begin with a pilot route on two afternoons each week, then review ridership and student feedback after one semester. This measured step would let the district test a solution without committing to a full schedule at once. Please place the late-bus proposal on next month's agenda.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Which words identify the intended audience, and what action does the writer want that audience to take?

2 How does the contrast between 3:15 and 4:30 in paragraph 1 support the writer's purpose?

3 What effect does the short sentence "It is not." have after the writer calls transportation a "small scheduling matter"?

4 Why does the writer propose a pilot route instead of asking for a full late-bus schedule immediately?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a 100-130-word public comment to your principal asking for a change that would improve student access or participation. Make your audience and purpose clear, use one contrast, one sentence of five words or fewer, one direct question, and a realistic proposal.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline phrases that identify the writer's audience and purpose, circle each contrast, and number the sentences that directly ask or urge the board to act. These choices show how a public comment builds a practical, persuasive tone. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which words identify the intended audience, and what action does the writer want that audience to take?	The phrases “Members of the Oakview School Board” and “Board members” identify the audience. The writer wants the board to fund a late bus route and place the proposal on its agenda.
2	How does the contrast between 3:15 and 4:30 in paragraph 1 support the writer's purpose?	It shows that activities are still happening at 3:15, but students without rides must leave by 4:30. The contrast supports the need for late transportation.
3	What effect does the short sentence “It is not.” have after the writer calls transportation a “small scheduling matter”?	The short sentence firmly rejects the idea that transportation is a minor issue, creating a serious and urgent tone.
4	Why does the writer propose a pilot route instead of asking for a full late-bus schedule immediately?	A pilot route addresses the board's concerns about costs, routes, and drivers. It lets the district test the idea and review ridership and feedback before making a larger commitment.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Principal Chen, I am asking you to open the unused conference room as a quiet study space during lunch. The cafeteria is energetic and social, but it can be difficult for students to revise an essay, prepare for a retake, or simply regroup there. Quiet matters. Students who need calm should not have to spend lunch in a hallway or outside during bad weather. Could we reserve the room Monday through Thursday, with a staff member checking in once each period? Start with thirty seats and a sign-up sheet, then survey users after six weeks. This small change would give more students a workable place to learn.

Accept answers that connect specific features, such as direct address, contrast, sentence length, rhetorical questioning, and a practical proposal, to audience, tone, purpose, or meaning. For the writing task, accept varied school issues if the response meets the length and required feature constraints.