

# Before the Vote

Trace how a public message builds its case.

**11.P.ST.2.a** “Develop and apply knowledge of author, audience, and context to discern and establish the purpose of texts being interpreted or constructed and to evaluate the extent to which those texts achieve those purposes. (I/C)”

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline clues that reveal the author, circle clues that identify the audience, and number three details the writer uses to persuade readers. These marks will help you determine the letter's purpose and judge how well it meets that purpose.

### Public Comment on Library Hours

- ① To the members of the Riverton City Council: As president of the Eastside Neighborhood Association, I am asking you to keep the Maple Street branch library open for evening hours. Next month, the council will vote on a budget that would end hours after 6:00 p.m. at three branches. On Eastside, many residents finish work after that time. They use the library's computers to apply for jobs, complete online forms, and help children with homework. A building that closes before its neighbors arrive cannot fully serve its neighborhood.
- ② Council members may reasonably need to reduce costs, and the association supports careful budgeting. Yet cutting the only after-work hours shifts the burden onto people with the fewest flexible options. A recent sign-in tally at Maple Street showed that nearly half of weekday visitors arrived between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. Rather than eliminate those hours, the council could test a six-month schedule, track attendance, and review the results publicly. This limited trial would give officials evidence before making a permanent decision, while preserving access for residents who rely on the branch.
- ③ On October 14, the council will hold a public hearing at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall and stream it online. I urge council members to approve the trial, and I ask Eastside residents to share brief testimony about how evening library access affects their families. Personal accounts will show what a budget chart cannot: whether a student can research after practice or a parent can submit an application after a shift. The proposed trial is practical, reversible, and fair. It deserves a careful vote instead of a quick closure.

**2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE** \_\_\_\_\_ Use the passage

**1** Who most likely wrote this letter? Cite one detail that supports your answer.

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**2** Who is the letter's main audience? Give two clues from the passage that reveal this audience.

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**3** What situation caused the writer to send this letter?

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**4** What is the writer's main purpose, and how well does the letter achieve it? Use two details from the letter to support your evaluation.

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**3 YOUR TURN** \_\_\_\_\_ Your own words

Write an 80 to 100 word message to a specific school decision-maker about a proposed school change. Begin with a recipient line, make the context and your purpose clear, and include one piece of evidence plus one practical solution.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline clues that reveal the author, circle clues that identify the audience, and number three details the writer uses to persuade readers. These marks will help you determine the letter's purpose and judge how well it meets that purpose. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                                                                | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Who most likely wrote this letter? Cite one detail that supports your answer.                                                           | <b>The president of the Eastside Neighborhood Association wrote it. The opening identifies the writer as the association's president.</b>                                                                                                                     |
| 2 | Who is the letter's main audience? Give two clues from the passage that reveal this audience.                                           | <b>The main audience is the Riverton City Council. The letter opens with "To the members of the Riverton City Council," and it asks council members to approve a trial before their budget vote.</b>                                                          |
| 3 | What situation caused the writer to send this letter?                                                                                   | <b>The city council is about to vote on a budget that would end library hours after 6:00 p.m. at three branches, including Maple Street.</b>                                                                                                                  |
| 4 | What is the writer's main purpose, and how well does the letter achieve it? Use two details from the letter to support your evaluation. | <b>The writer's purpose is to persuade the council to keep evening access through a six-month trial. The letter largely achieves this purpose by acknowledging budget concerns, providing a sign-in tally, and offering a practical, reversible solution.</b> |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

To: Principal Chen Our school is considering closing the courtyard during lunch because of litter. I ask you to keep it open and add clearly labeled recycling bins near the doors. In a five-day count by the environmental club, the courtyard bins filled by noon on four days, while the cafeteria bins still had space. Closing the courtyard would crowd the cafeteria and remove a quiet place for students. Test the new bins for one month, then compare litter reports before making a permanent rule.

Accept reasonable evaluations of effectiveness when students connect their claims to specific choices in the passage. For the writing task, accept varied school issues and audiences if the response stays within the word count and includes a clear purpose, evidence, and a practical solution.