

Beyond the Pier

Tracing how a public comment connects evidence, audience, and action.

12.P.EICC.2 “Engagement & Intention: Engage in written or spoken dialogue as author and audience for a variety of tasks and purposes, making intentional connections within, between, and beyond texts.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number three places where the writer connects ideas within the letter, between sources, or beyond the sources to community experience, so you can trace how the writer builds dialogue with the audience.

A Pier's Future

- ① To the Riverton Harbor Commission: Your proposal to replace the old pier with a parking lot describes the structure as “underused.” That word overlooks what the pier has held. In the city archive, dockworker Lena Ortiz recalled waiting there in 1944 for news from her brother’s Navy ship. Her memory does not prove that every board must remain. It does show that the pier is more than a traffic problem. When a public document uses one practical label, readers should ask which histories that label leaves outside the frame.
- ② Some neighbors may answer that memory cannot pay for repairs. They are right to demand costs, and the commission’s engineering report estimates that stabilizing the pier would be expensive. Yet the report also identifies the pier as a place where residents gather during waterfront events. That detail connects the archive’s personal story to present public use. Rather than treating preservation and safety as opposites, the commission could compare a partial restoration with demolition. Publishing those options, their prices, and their effects on shoreline access would let residents respond to the same evidence instead of arguing from assumptions.
- ③ I am writing as a student who uses the waterfront, but I am also reading as someone who will live with the decision. I ask the commission to hold an evening hearing and post translated materials before the vote. A hearing would not make every comment equally persuasive, nor should it erase engineering limits. It would give the agency a record of concerns that its report may not measure, including access for people who fish, work nearby, or cannot attend daytime meetings. If the commission chooses demolition, it should explain how public testimony changed, confirmed, or challenged its reasoning. That explanation would turn consultation into dialogue rather than ceremony.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What practical label does the writer question in paragraph 1, and what does the writer say that label leaves out?

2 How does paragraph 2 connect the city archive with the engineering report?

3 What audience concern does the writer acknowledge, and what response does the writer propose?

4 Why does the writer ask the commission to explain how testimony affected its reasoning?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 130- to 170-word public comment about a school or community decision. Address a specific audience, connect two sources or pieces of evidence, link that evidence to an experience or need beyond the sources, acknowledge one reasonable concern, and ask for a response or action.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number three places where the writer connects ideas within the letter, between sources, or beyond the sources to community experience, so you can trace how the writer builds dialogue with the audience. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What practical label does the writer question in paragraph 1, and what does the writer say that label leaves out?	The writer questions “underused” and says it leaves out the pier’s histories, including personal memories connected to it.
2	How does paragraph 2 connect the city archive with the engineering report?	The archive offers a personal historical memory, while the report shows present public use. Together, they show that the pier matters beyond its practical function.
3	What audience concern does the writer acknowledge, and what response does the writer propose?	The writer acknowledges that repairs are costly. The writer proposes comparing restoration and demolition and publishing each option’s cost and effect on shoreline access.
4	Why does the writer ask the commission to explain how testimony affected its reasoning?	The explanation would show whether public comments influenced the decision and would make consultation a real dialogue rather than a ceremony.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

To the School Board: Please move the high school start time to 8:30. The district attendance report shows more first-period absences than absences later in the day, while the student council survey says many students sleep fewer than seven hours on school nights. Together, these sources suggest that the problem is not simply individual responsibility. I see its effects when classmates arrive after long bus rides and miss laboratory instructions, which can affect group work as well as grades. Families may worry that a later schedule will disrupt jobs, sports, and elementary bus routes. Before voting, publish two transportation plans and invite families, coaches, and student workers to compare them at an evening meeting. Then explain which concerns changed the final plan. That process would treat public comments as evidence, not as a formality.

Accept different valid marked locations if students identify a clear within-text, between-texts, or beyond-text connection. For the open response, look for purposeful audience awareness, two connected sources or pieces of evidence, an acknowledged concern, and a specific invitation to continue dialogue.