

Shape the Message

Notice how sentence choices shift for different readers.

9.P.AC.2.c “Make decisions about sentence structure and syntax in order to accommodate and influence the audience and achieve a specific purpose. (I/C)”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each paragraph, underline a sentence that most directly asks the reader to take action. Circle words that identify or directly address that reader, then notice how the sentence structure fits the audience.

A Courtyard Plan for Three Audiences

- ① Dear Principal Alvarez, our courtyard becomes hard to use during warm months because its benches sit in direct sun. Students leave the area at lunch, and some classes avoid outdoor work there. I am asking the school to add three shade sails above the seating area. This change would protect students from intense sunlight while making the courtyard more useful. The project could also support science lessons on heat and materials. Because the sails would attach to existing poles, installation may require fewer changes than building a permanent roof. Could we review costs and safety requirements at the next student council meeting?
- ② Students, picture a lunchtime courtyard where you can read, talk, or finish homework without squinting into the sun. Shade sails could make that space possible. Want to help? Bring your ideas to Room 214 on Thursday. The planning team needs sketches, cost comparisons, and volunteers who can survey classmates. You do not need construction experience, but you do need a useful observation. Which bench is hottest at noon? Where does rainwater collect? Your answers can shape the proposal before it reaches the school board. Come for ten minutes, or stay to plan. The courtyard belongs to all of us, so its redesign should include all of us.
- ③ Members of the school board, the shade-sail proposal offers a practical way to improve an existing student space. A survey can show which areas receive the strongest afternoon sun, while cost comparisons can help the school choose durable materials. The request is limited: approve planning funds for measurements, safety review, and price estimates. With this information, the board can judge the project responsibly before committing to installation. Students have identified a problem, and they are prepared to help study it. Please allow the planning team to present its findings during the October meeting. A careful first step now could lead to a courtyard that serves students for years.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 In paragraph 1, which sentence is written as a question? How does using a question suit the message's audience and purpose?

2 How do the short question "Want to help?" and the command that follows it influence the student audience in paragraph 2?

3 Which sentence in paragraph 3 uses a colon? How does the list after the colon help the writer address the school board?

4 Compare the call to action in paragraph 2 with the call to action in paragraph 3. What does each ask for, and why are the requests phrased differently?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school improvement idea. Write a two-sentence message to an administrator requesting approval, then write a two-sentence message to classmates asking them to participate. Use a formal declarative sentence and a specific request in the first message. Use one question and one command in the second message.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline a sentence that most directly asks the reader to take action. Circle words that identify or directly address that reader, then notice how the sentence structure fits the audience. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, which sentence is written as a question? How does using a question suit the message's audience and purpose?	"Could we review costs and safety requirements at the next student council meeting?" It respectfully invites the principal to consider a specific next step instead of demanding approval.
2	How do the short question "Want to help?" and the command that follows it influence the student audience in paragraph 2?	The short question grabs students' attention, and "Bring your ideas to Room 214 on Thursday" gives them a clear, immediate action.
3	Which sentence in paragraph 3 uses a colon? How does the list after the colon help the writer address the school board?	"The request is limited: approve planning funds for measurements, safety review, and price estimates." The list clearly defines the small, practical request, which helps the board evaluate it responsibly.
4	Compare the call to action in paragraph 2 with the call to action in paragraph 3. What does each ask for, and why are the requests phrased differently?	Paragraph 2 asks students to bring ideas and volunteer, using direct, energetic wording. Paragraph 3 asks the board to allow a presentation, using formal, respectful wording because the board can authorize the next step.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Administrator message: A quiet study corner in the library would give students a focused place to work between classes. Please approve a small planning team to measure the space and estimate costs. Classmate message: Need a calmer place to finish your work? Share your best design ideas at Friday's lunch meeting.

Accept different underlined requests or invitations when students can explain how the wording asks the audience to act. Accept explanations that connect sentence structure, tone, and level of detail to the principal, students, or school board.