Make Your Case

Read a persuasive letter and study its opening.

5.W.1.a "Clearly present a position in an introductory statement to an identified audience."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the opening sentence that tells the audience what the writer wants. Circle the words in that sentence that name the audience.

A Shelf for Seeds

1 Dear Library Director, please add a seed-sharing shelf near the library entrance this spring. Families could take a small packet of seeds to grow at home and leave extra seeds for others. A shelf by the entrance would be easy for visitors to spot as they walk in. I am writing to you because you help plan how the library uses its public spaces.

2 The shelf would help people try growing food without buying a full packet of seeds. Some neighbors have only a sunny windowsill, but that is enough room for a pot of herbs. A simple sign could tell visitors to take only what they need. Library books about plants could sit nearby, so visitors know where to find growing tips.

3 You might worry that loose seeds would make a mess. Small envelopes and a covered box could keep the shelf tidy. Your staff would not need to sort every seed; volunteers could check the box once a week. If you can spare one small space near the door, the library could help more neighbors plant something this spring.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Who is the audience named in the opening sentence?

2. What position does the writer clearly state in the opening sentence?

3. What details in the opening sentence tell the director where and when the writer wants the shelf?

4. Which words in the last paragraph show that the writer is still speaking directly to the director?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a two-sentence opening to your school principal asking for a quiet game area at recess. In the first sentence, name your audience and clearly state your position; in the second, give one reason the principal might care.

ANSWER KEY

Make Your Case

GRADE 5 · 5.W.1.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the opening sentence that tells the audience what the writer wants. Circle the words in that sentence that name the audience. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who is the audience named in the opening sentence?	**The library director.**
2	What position does the writer clearly state in the opening sentence?	**The writer wants the director to add a seed-sharing shelf near the library entrance this spring.**
3	What details in the opening sentence tell the director where and when the writer wants the shelf?	**Near the library entrance, this spring.**
4	Which words in the last paragraph show that the writer is still speaking directly to the director?	**Accept "Your staff" or "If you can spare one small space near the door."**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear Principal, please set aside a quiet game area during recess. It would give students who prefer calm activities a place to play.

For the marking job, students should underline the passage's first sentence and circle "Dear Library Director." For Your Turn, accept any two-sentence opening that names the principal, states a clear request for a quiet game area at recess, and gives a relevant reason.