Make the Case

Read, mark, and revise a letter to the principal.

5.W.4.a "Generate a draft by developing, selecting, and organizing ideas relevant to topic, purpose, and genre; revise to improve writing, using appropriate reference materials (e.g., quality of ideas, organization, sentence fluency, word choice)..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that support the writer's request, and circle one sentence that does not support it. Write R, E, or A beside each paragraph to show where the writer gives the request, evidence, or an action plan.

A Draft Letter to Principal Gray

(1) Dear Principal Gray, our class wants a water bottle filling station near the gym. Students finish practice thirsty, but the closest drinking fountain sends a thin stream of water. A filling station would make it easier to refill reusable bottles. This is a really good idea for our school. I hope you will consider our request before next year's sports season begins.

(2) Last Friday, our class counted 34 empty plastic water bottles in the gym trash cans after the basketball games. A filling station could help students choose reusable bottles instead of buying new ones. Students could fill their bottles before practice and again on their way home. The gym walls were painted green last summer. Keeping more plastic bottles out of the trash would also mean fewer overflowing cans.

(3) We know a new station would cost money, so we have a plan to help. Our class have offered to make posters that explain how to use the station and keep it clean. We could also ask the student council to help raise funds. Please tell us whether we may share our plan at the next school meeting. Thank you for considering our idea.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which sentence should the writer remove because it does not help make the case for a filling station? Explain why.

2. Why does the count of 34 bottles fit in the second paragraph instead of the third?

3. Replace “really good idea” with a more precise phrase that names a benefit described in the letter.

4. Rewrite the sentence beginning “Our class have offered” so its subject and verb agree.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence letter paragraph asking your principal for a different change at school. State your request, give two relevant details, explain one action students could take, and check your verbs and punctuation.

ANSWER KEY

Make the Case

GRADE 5 · 5.W.4.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that support the writer's request, and circle one sentence that does not support it. Write R, E, or A beside each paragraph to show where the writer gives the request, evidence, or an action plan. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which sentence should the writer remove because it does not help make the case for a filling station? Explain why.	**Remove "The gym walls were painted green last summer." The wall color does not support the request.**
2	Why does the count of 34 bottles fit in the second paragraph instead of the third?	**The count is evidence that supports the request. The third paragraph explains how students could help.**
3	Replace "really good idea" with a more precise phrase that names a benefit described in the letter.	**For example, "a way to cut plastic bottle waste."**
4	Rewrite the sentence beginning "Our class have offered" so its subject and verb agree.	**Our class has offered to make posters that explain how to use the station and keep it clean.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would like our school to add a covered bicycle rack near the front entrance. The current rack fills up by the first bell, leaving some riders to lock their bikes to the fence. When it rains, students return to wet seats and handlebars. Our class could survey riders to find out how many spaces a new rack needs. Please consider adding a covered rack before spring.

Accept other underlined details that directly support the request and other precise replacements for "really good idea" that name a benefit in the letter. For the open task, look for five sentences with a clear request, two relevant details, a student action, and correct conventions.