Words for the Moment

Compare quick writing with a draft developed over several days.

C.7.7 "Compose routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a variety of tasks, purposes and audiences."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline when the class message and letter were written, and circle each audience. Number four edits or additions to the letter in the order they happened.

A Puddle, Two Pieces of Writing

1 On Monday, I found a puddle beside the school entrance. Students stepped into the street to dodge it. I opened my writing notebook and jotted questions: Where does the water come from? Who could help fix this? That ten-minute entry was not meant to persuade anyone. It helped me choose a topic for a longer project. At lunch, I wrote a quick message for my classmates: "Watch your step near the front doors after rain. Please use the covered walkway." They needed a clear warning right away.

2 On Tuesday and Wednesday, I drafted a letter to the principal about the puddle. My first sentence read, "That huge puddle is so annoying!" I crossed it out after asking myself what the principal would need to decide on a solution. I replaced it with, "After rain, water collects beside the front entrance, where students walk to class." I added observations from three rainy mornings, but I did not claim to know why the water stayed there. Then I asked a friend to read the letter and point out missing details.

3 On Thursday, my friend asked, "How often is the walkway blocked?" I checked my notes and changed "always blocked" to "hard to pass on two of the three mornings I watched." On Friday, I finished the letter with a request: "Could the school check the entrance after the next rain and consider a way to keep the path clear?" I sent it to the principal. The class message took minutes because its job was urgent and simple. The letter took several days because I needed accurate details and a useful request.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What was the ten-minute notebook entry for? How was its purpose different from the class message?

2. Name two steps from different days that show the letter was developed over time.

3. Why did the writer replace the letter's first sentence? What did the new sentence tell the principal?

4. What claim did the writer change after the friend's question? Why was the new wording more useful?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a different school issue you have noticed. Write a one-sentence message classmates could use today, then draft a four- or five-sentence paragraph for a letter to school staff that you would revise later. Include a specific observation, a realistic request, and one detail you would check before sending the letter.

Words for the Moment

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline when the class message and letter were written, and circle each audience. Number four edits or additions to the letter in the order they happened. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What was the ten-minute notebook entry for? How was its purpose different from the class message?	**The entry helped the writer choose a topic for a longer project. The message warned classmates about the puddle right away.**
2	Name two steps from different days that show the letter was developed over time.	**For example, the writer drafted the letter on Tuesday and Wednesday, then checked notes and revised a claim on Thursday.**
3	Why did the writer replace the letter's first sentence? What did the new sentence tell the principal?	**The writer wanted to give the principal useful information instead of just expressing annoyance. The new sentence described where water collected and where students walked.**
4	What claim did the writer change after the friend's question? Why was the new wording more useful?	**The writer changed "always blocked" to "hard to pass on two of the three mornings I watched." The new wording gave a specific observation instead of an unsupported claim.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Classmates: Please put empty drink bottles in the recycling bin near the cafeteria door. Staff draft: On Tuesday at lunch, I saw several empty bottles placed in the trash beside the cafeteria door. The recycling bin was farther down the hall, and I did not see a sign pointing to it. Could we add a clear sign near the trash can to help students find the recycling bin? Before I send this letter, I will check whether that bin is available every lunch period.

For the marking job, accept the Monday lunch message, the Tuesday through Friday letter, classmates and the principal as audiences, and four edits or additions in passage order. For Your Turn, accept a different plausible school issue if the one-sentence message serves classmates and the staff draft includes all three requested details.