The Right Tone

Read a proposal that stays respectful and practical.

C.9-10.1.e "Establish and maintain a task-appropriate writing style."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read the proposal, then underline two phrases that sound respectful to the principal and circle three words that make suggestions rather than demands.

A Proposal for Library Hours

1. Dear Principal, I am writing to request a trial extension of library hours on one afternoon each week. The library closes at the end of the school day, which leaves little time for students to use its materials after their last class. A later closing time on Thursdays would give students a quiet place to complete assignments and use library materials. This proposal does not assume that every student can stay after school. Rather, it would provide another option for students whose schedules allow it, especially when a project requires books or a computer.

2. Keeping the library open longer would require staff time, so I suggest a four-week trial rather than an immediate permanent change. Before the trial begins, the school could ask students how they would travel home and confirm that a staff member is available to supervise. During the trial, staff could record how many students use the space and which resources they request. Those observations would help the school judge whether the added hour serves a clear need. They would also prevent the decision from resting only on my own experience.

3. If a four-week trial is possible, I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss its details with you and the library staff. The school could then review attendance and staff feedback before deciding whether to continue, adjust, or end the extension. I recognize that room availability and staffing may limit what is possible, and I do not want this request to overlook those concerns. My goal is a practical way to expand access to a useful school space while respecting the time and resources needed to keep it open. Thank you for considering this proposal.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which phrase in the opening sentence establishes a respectful style for the principal? Explain your choice.

2. How does suggesting “a four-week trial rather than an immediate permanent change” suit the purpose of this proposal?

3. Find two words in paragraph 2 that make the writer's suggestions sound flexible rather than demanding. Explain their effect.

4. How does the final paragraph maintain the respectful, practical style of the opening? Cite one phrase.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75 to 100 word email to a community center director proposing a new weekend activity for teens. Maintain a respectful, practical style, and include a reason for the activity, one possible constraint, and a specific next step.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Read the proposal, then underline two phrases that sound respectful to the principal and circle three words that make suggestions rather than demands. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which phrase in the opening sentence establishes a respectful style for the principal? Explain your choice.	**"I am writing to request" presents the proposal as a courteous request rather than a demand.**
2	How does suggesting "a four-week trial rather than an immediate permanent change" suit the purpose of this proposal?	**It acknowledges that the school needs to consider staffing and gather evidence before making a lasting decision.**
3	Find two words in paragraph 2 that make the writer's suggestions sound flexible rather than demanding. Explain their effect.	**"Could" and "would" present possible actions and outcomes without insisting that the school take them.**
4	How does the final paragraph maintain the respectful, practical style of the opening? Cite one phrase.	**"I recognize that room availability and staffing may limit what is possible" respectfully acknowledges a practical constraint.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear Director, I would like to suggest a Saturday board game hour for teens at the community center. A regular time to play would give students a low-cost way to meet neighbors and practice working together. I understand that staff availability may limit weekend programs, so a one-day pilot with an approved supervisor could be a manageable starting point. If this idea is possible, would you consider asking teens which games they would like to play? Their responses could help you decide whether to schedule the pilot. Thank you for considering this suggestion.

Accept other phrases that show respectful, measured language when students explain how those choices suit a proposal to a principal. For Part 3, check that the email stays respectful and practical throughout and meets the length and content requirements.