Make the Case

How a focused request shapes a letter

C.9-10.2.a "Produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's request, number two details that support it, and circle a proposed way to address a concern. Notice where each part appears in the letter.

A Room for Exam Week

(1) Dear Ms. Rivera, during the week before final exams, could the West Street Library keep its study room open until 8:00 p.m. instead of closing it at 6:00? Students who share crowded homes often need a quiet place to work, and the library already provides desks and dependable lighting. Last Tuesday, I arrived after soccer practice and had only twenty minutes before the room closed. I am writing as a student who uses that room regularly, not to request a permanent schedule change. A short trial during exam week would let students finish their work without asking the library to extend hours all year.

(2) Keeping the room open two extra hours would help students whose afternoons are already full. Some travel from school, work part-time, or care for younger siblings before they can begin homework. A quiet table also makes group review possible without disturbing anyone at home. For example, two classmates and I are preparing for our biology exam, but our schedules overlap only after 6:00 p.m. The regular closing time leaves us with no chance to compare notes there. Extending only the study room, rather than every service, would focus the request on the space students need.

(3) I know extra hours could require staff time and raise security concerns. The library could test the change for just five school nights and keep its usual sign-in rules for the study room. If staffing permits, one employee could supervise the room while other areas remain closed; if not, even one or two later evenings would help. A trial would show whether enough students use the space to justify the added time. Please consider announcing a decision before exam week so students can plan their study schedules. Thank you for considering a limited change that serves students without committing the library to a new permanent schedule.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does the writer state the request in the first sentence rather than wait until the end of the letter?

2. Choose one detail from the second paragraph. How does it help the writer make the case for later hours?

3. Why does the writer discuss staff time and security before asking for a decision?

4. How do the first and third paragraphs work together to keep the request limited?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an 85 to 110 word letter paragraph to a school decision-maker requesting a change other than longer library hours. State your request first, give a concrete example that supports it, address one realistic concern, and end with a specific action you want the reader to take.

Make the Case

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's request, number two details that support it, and circle a proposed way to address a concern. Notice where each part appears in the letter. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the writer state the request in the first sentence rather than wait until the end of the letter?	**The librarian can identify the proposed change immediately and read the following details as reasons to consider it.**
2	Choose one detail from the second paragraph. How does it help the writer make the case for later hours?	**The classmates' schedules overlap only after 6:00 p.m., showing why the current closing time prevents them from reviewing together in the study room.**
3	Why does the writer discuss staff time and security before asking for a decision?	**Those concerns matter to a librarian deciding whether to extend hours. The writer offers a short trial and possible staffing limits before making the final request.**
4	How do the first and third paragraphs work together to keep the request limited?	**The first paragraph proposes an exam-week trial rather than a permanent change. The third suggests five nights, or fewer if staffing is limited, and asks for a decision before exam week.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear Principal Chen, please test a labeled lost-and-found shelf outside the main office for two weeks. Last Friday, I spent most of lunch asking three offices about my missing sweatshirt because I did not know where found clothes went. A single shelf would give students one place to check before reporting an item missing. I know unattended items could pile up, so the office could collect anything left on the shelf each Friday. Please approve a short trial next month and ask office staff whether the shelf makes lost items easier to return.

Accept different supporting details when students explain how each helps the librarian evaluate the request. For the letter paragraph, look for an audience-appropriate request, relevant development, a response to a plausible concern, and a specific final action.