

Compost Case File

Study how a writer uses exact words to build an argument.

5W1.c "Use precise language and content-specific vocabulary while writing an argument."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the claim, circle five precise, content-specific words or phrases, then write 1 beside the waste-audit fact and 2 beside the bin-management details that support the claim.

A Case for Cafeteria Composting

- ① Our school should collect cafeteria scraps for composting. Composting is the controlled breakdown of food scraps and leaves by microorganisms. Instead of sending banana peels and vegetable trimmings to a landfill, the cafeteria could place them in labeled collection bins. This change would turn organic waste into nutrient-rich compost for the school garden each spring.
- ② During a five-day waste audit, student volunteers found 38 pounds of fruit and vegetable scraps in cafeteria trash. Those scraps are biodegradable, so they can decompose rather than remain buried in a landfill. A compost bin would reduce the volume of trash hauled away each week. It would also produce a soil amendment that helps garden beds retain moisture.
- ③ Some people may worry that compost bins would smell or attract pests. However, a well-managed system uses sealed containers, regular pickup, and a balance of food scraps with dry leaves. These procedures limit odors and discourage pests. The school should begin with one monitored bin near the cafeteria, then use the finished compost in garden beds.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Write the writer's claim exactly as it appears in paragraph 1.

2 What does the word biodegradable tell readers about the fruit and vegetable scraps?

3 How does the fact that volunteers found 38 pounds of scraps support the writer's claim? Use a precise word or phrase from the passage in your answer.

4 What concern does paragraph 3 answer? Name two specific procedures the writer gives as a response.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly four sentences arguing that the school should install a bottle-refill station near the gym. State a clear claim, use at least two content-specific words, and include one specific fact or realistic detail as evidence.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the claim, circle five precise, content-specific words or phrases, then write 1 beside the waste-audit fact and 2 beside the bin-management details that support the claim. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Write the writer's claim exactly as it appears in paragraph 1.	Our school should collect cafeteria scraps for composting.
2	What does the word biodegradable tell readers about the fruit and vegetable scraps?	It tells readers that the scraps can decompose.
3	How does the fact that volunteers found 38 pounds of scraps support the writer's claim? Use a precise word or phrase from the passage in your answer.	It shows that a large amount of organic waste was in the cafeteria trash, so composting could reduce waste sent to a landfill.
4	What concern does paragraph 3 answer? Name two specific procedures the writer gives as a response.	The concern is that bins could smell or attract pests. Procedures include sealed containers, regular pickup, and balancing food scraps with dry leaves.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should install a bottle-refill station near the gym. A filtered refill station would give athletes quick access to drinking water after exercise. If 60 players fill reusable bottles after practice, fewer single-use plastic bottles will enter trash cans. A flow sensor could measure the water used and estimate how many disposable bottles the station helps prevent.

Accept answers that accurately identify the claim, explain that biodegradable materials decompose, and connect the audit result to reduced landfill waste. For the open response, accept any four-sentence argument with a claim, at least two precise content-specific terms, and a relevant specific detail.