Behind the Words

Use speech and body language to form clarifying questions.

10.1.L.2 "Students will actively listen in order to analyze and evaluate speakers' verbal and nonverbal messages by asking questions to clarify purpose and perspective."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two statements you would ask about, circle a nearby nonverbal cue for each, and give each statement and cue a matching number.

Should the Library Open at Lunch?

1. At a student council meeting about opening the school library during lunch, facilities manager Mr. Reyes speaks first. "I can unlock the library, but we have only one staff member available to supervise it," he says. He places a hand on a stack of sign-up forms and looks toward the students waiting to speak. "If forty people arrive at once, we need a plan for the door and the tables." His voice stays level, but he taps the forms twice when he says "plan." The chair writes "library access" on the board and invites responses.

2. Amira, who eats lunch near the noisy gym, answers next. "Some of us need a quiet place to read or finish work," she says. "A sign-up limit might help, but I don't want someone turned away because they forgot a form." She glances at the forms under Mr. Reyes's hand, then folds her arms. When a council member suggests reserving the room only for students with missing assignments, Amira shakes her head. "Quiet should not have to be earned," she says. She looks back at the forms as another student raises a hand to speak.

3. The librarian, Ms. Chen, steps forward with a clipboard. "Last spring, we opened during lunch on Fridays, and students used the space for both group projects and silent reading," she says. She smiles at Amira, then points to a note on her clipboard. "I would like to try it again, but the room has to work for more than one kind of learner." When someone asks if tables could be divided by activity, she pauses before saying, "That depends on how loud the group work gets." The chair closes discussion before anyone asks what level of noise she considers acceptable.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Mr. Reyes taps the forms when he says the group needs a plan. What would you ask to clarify whether he wants sign-ups or another way to manage arrivals?

2. Amira says a sign-up limit might help, but she worries about forgotten forms. What would you ask to clarify her view of who should be admitted?

3. Amira shakes her head at the missing-assignments rule and says, "Quiet should not have to be earned." What would you ask to clarify whose needs she is speaking for?

4. Ms. Chen pauses before answering the question about dividing tables. What would you ask to clarify how her concern about noise affects her support for opening the library?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a different school decision. In two sentences, describe what a speaker says and one nonverbal cue, then write two questions you would ask: one to clarify the speaker's purpose and one to clarify their perspective. Refer to a detail you invented in each question.

ANSWER KEY

Behind the Words

GRADE 10 · 10.1.L.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two statements you would ask about, circle a nearby nonverbal cue for each, and give each statement and cue a matching number. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Mr. Reyes taps the forms when he says the group needs a plan. What would you ask to clarify whether he wants sign-ups or another way to manage arrivals?	**When you tap the sign-up forms and say we need a plan for forty arrivals, are you proposing sign-ups or another way to manage the door?**
2	Amira says a sign-up limit might help, but she worries about forgotten forms. What would you ask to clarify her view of who should be admitted?	**If the library has not reached its limit, would you admit a student who forgot a form?**
3	Amira shakes her head at the missing-assignments rule and says, "Quiet should not have to be earned." What would you ask to clarify whose needs she is speaking for?	**Are you speaking for all students who need a quiet space, including those without missing assignments?**
4	Ms. Chen pauses before answering the question about dividing tables. What would you ask to clarify how her concern about noise affects her support for opening the library?	**How loud could group work get before you would no longer support opening the library at lunch?**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At a meeting about moving the bus stop, Luis says, "The new stop is closer to the sports fields, but the sidewalk there is narrow." He points to his cane and waits while others consider the route. Are you mentioning the narrow sidewalk because you want the stop to stay where it is? When you point to your cane, are you speaking mainly from your own experience or about access for other riders too?

Accept questions that target the stated uncertainty and refer to relevant speech or nonverbal behavior. Students should not treat an inference about a speaker's intent as a confirmed fact.