A Claim That Holds

Read an argument, then build a defensible thesis.

12.6.W.2 "Students will develop a clear, concise, defensible thesis statement."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the writer's main claim. Circle the words that limit what the writer proposes so the claim can be defended.

What Should Happen to Library Fines?

1. At the end of the semester, a library book disappears into a backpack, not because its reader wants to keep it, but because returning it now means paying a fine. Some school libraries charge by the day for overdue books, hoping the fees will bring materials back. Yet a charge can make a student avoid the circulation desk altogether. Our school should stop charging daily overdue fines for ordinary books while keeping replacement charges for books that are lost or damaged. That change would make borrowing less risky without treating a missing book as harmless.

2. Without a daily fine, students would still have a due date. The library could send reminders, suspend new loans when a book is substantially overdue, and ask for a replacement if it never returns. These steps focus on getting the book back rather than collecting small penalties. They also protect access for the next reader, whose research project may depend on that title. A policy that simply erased every consequence would not solve the problem of missing books. Ending daily fines is a narrower claim: remove a barrier to returning books while preserving accountability for the collection.

3. The strongest objection is practical: if there is no daily penalty, some borrowers may keep books longer. That concern deserves an answer, not a promise that every book will return on time. Reminders and temporary borrowing limits can still signal that deadlines matter, and replacement charges can address books that do not return. The library should review how many books remain overdue after the change and adjust its reminders if needed. The proposal is worth testing because it removes a reason to avoid the library desk without asking the library to ignore the needs of other readers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which sentence in the first paragraph states the writer's policy claim rather than describing a problem? Copy it.

2. What two limits make the writer's claim more precise than a call to eliminate all library charges?

3. What objection must the claim withstand, and what response in the passage helps defend it?

4. Revise "Libraries should stop punishing students" into one clear, concise thesis supported by the passage. Include the policy's limit.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Your school is considering replacing every hallway bulletin board with digital screens. Write one clear, concise thesis that takes a position, gives a reason, and sets a practical limit on the proposal.

ANSWER KEY

A Claim That Holds

GRADE 12 · 12.6.W.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the writer's main claim. Circle the words that limit what the writer proposes so the claim can be defended. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which sentence in the first paragraph states the writer's policy claim rather than describing a problem? Copy it.	**Our school should stop charging daily overdue fines for ordinary books while keeping replacement charges for books that are lost or damaged.**
2	What two limits make the writer's claim more precise than a call to eliminate all library charges?	**The proposal ends daily overdue fines only for ordinary books, and it keeps replacement charges for books that are lost or damaged.**
3	What objection must the claim withstand, and what response in the passage helps defend it?	**Some borrowers may keep books longer without daily fines. Reminders and temporary borrowing limits would still encourage timely returns.**
4	Revise "Libraries should stop punishing students" into one clear, concise thesis supported by the passage. Include the policy's limit.	**Our school should end daily overdue fines for ordinary books but retain replacement charges for lost or damaged books to remove a barrier to returning borrowed materials.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should keep some hallway bulletin boards instead of replacing all of them with digital screens because paper notices remain visible during power outages, though screens could work well in high-traffic areas.

Accept equivalent wording in the short answers if it accurately preserves the proposed limits and the objection. For the open task, look for a specific position, a relevant reason, and a practical limit within one sentence.