Words That Work

Study how word choice shapes a request.

8.4.W.2 "Students will select language in writing to create a specific effect according to purpose."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline language that makes the problem feel real, circle language that addresses a possible concern, and write 1 beside a phrase that asks for a specific next step.

A Better Place to Refill

1 Dear Principal Rivera, after soccer practice, the hallway water fountain feels like the finish line of a race. Shoes squeak, teammates wait, and the thin stream takes forever to fill one bottle. By the time the bell rings, some students leave with bottles still half empty. A refill station near the gym would turn that slow trickle into a quick stop. I am asking you to consider adding one, not as a shiny extra, but as a useful fix for a daily problem.

2 The station could help students refill bottles between classes and after games. Putting it near the gym would serve teams without sending thirsty players to the far end of the building. It would also give students a reason to reuse the bottles they already carry, instead of reaching for a new disposable one. I know equipment costs money, so I am not asking for an instant purchase. Could the school first check the price and ask the custodian which location would be easiest to maintain?

3 If we wait until another season begins, the line at the fountain will still be there, one slow bottle at a time. A simple first step would move this idea from complaint to plan: please ask for an estimate this month. Then students could share when they need water most, and staff could decide whether the station fits the budget. I hope you will help us make the space outside the gym work better for everyone who uses it. Thank you for considering our request.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does “the finish line of a race” shape the principal’s view of the fountain after practice?

2. Why does the writer call the station “a useful fix” rather than “a shiny extra”?

3. How does “I am not asking for an instant purchase” help the writer persuade the principal?

4. What effect does “from complaint to plan” have on the request to ask for an estimate this month?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write 4 to 5 sentences asking your principal to create a quiet lunch area for students who want one. Use one vivid detail to show the need, one practical phrase that respects a school concern, and one clear, doable next step.

Words That Work

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline language that makes the problem feel real, circle language that addresses a possible concern, and write 1 beside a phrase that asks for a specific next step. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does "the finish line of a race" shape the principal's view of the fountain after practice?	**It makes reaching the fountain seem urgent and hard-earned, helping the principal understand why students need water after practice.**
2	Why does the writer call the station "a useful fix" rather than "a shiny extra"?	**The contrast presents the station as a practical solution to a daily problem, not an unnecessary purchase.**
3	How does "I am not asking for an instant purchase" help the writer persuade the principal?	**It acknowledges the cost and shows that the writer is proposing a careful first step.**
4	What effect does "from complaint to plan" have on the request to ask for an estimate this month?	**It frames the estimate as a specific, manageable action rather than just another complaint.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At lunch, the cafeteria hums so loudly that a student trying to read can lose the same sentence three times. A quiet lunch area would give those students a place to recharge. I know staff time is limited, so a once-a-week trial would be easier to plan than a daily change. Could you ask interested teachers whether one supervised room could be available next month?

Accept different quoted phrases in the marking task if students can explain how each serves the writer's purpose. For Part 3, look for a vivid detail, language that acknowledges a practical concern, and a specific next step.