A Claim That Holds

Read a model argument, then build a defensible thesis.

9.6.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 author's proposal, circle the reason in that sentence, and number two details elsewhere that could help defend it.

A Better Way Through the Lunch Line

1. At Harbor High, the lunch bell starts a race that nobody signed up for. Students from several hallways reach the cafeteria at once, but everyone buying lunch joins the same pickup line. On Tuesday, I watched two students receive their trays just as the warning bell rang. They sat down, took a few bites, and carried most of their food away. The problem is not that lunch tastes bad or that students walk too slowly. Harbor High should test a second lunch pickup station for one month because the current line leaves some students too little time to eat.

2. A second station would not require a second kitchen. During the trial, the cafeteria could place prepacked choices at a separate counter while hot meals remain at the usual window. Students who want a prepacked meal could use the new counter, making the original line shorter for everyone else. This plan would need careful supervision, since the cafeteria has a limited number of adults on duty. Before the trial begins, staff could decide whether they can watch both counters without leaving the dining area unsupervised. If they cannot, the test should wait.

3. The school should judge the trial by more than how the line looks. During a regular week and the test month, volunteers could record when the last student in line gets a tray. Students could also report whether they have enough time to finish lunch. These checks would show whether the extra station changes the part of lunch that matters: time to eat. If the lines move faster but students still leave meals unfinished, the school should look for another cause. A one-month test offers a way to learn before making a permanent change.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. A student summarizes the argument as “Lunch lines are annoying.” Rewrite that idea as a one-sentence thesis that names the author's specific proposal and reason.

2. Why is “Every school must build a second cafeteria” harder to defend than the author's thesis? Name two ways the author's claim is more limited.

3. Write a different one-sentence thesis supporting the one-month test. Use the passage's plan to check the results as your reason.

4. Write a one-sentence thesis against starting the test now. Base it on a concern raised in the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a school routine other than lunch lines. Write a one-sentence thesis proposing a specific change and giving a reason, then write two sentences describing observations or facts you would gather to test that reason.

ANSWER KEY

A Claim That Holds

GRADE 9 · 9.6.W.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the author's proposal, circle the reason in that sentence, and number two details elsewhere that could help defend it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	A student summarizes the argument as "Lunch lines are annoying." Rewrite that idea as a one-sentence thesis that names the author's specific proposal and reason.	**Harbor High should test a second lunch pickup station for one month because the current line leaves some students too little time to eat.**
2	Why is "Every school must build a second cafeteria" harder to defend than the author's thesis? Name two ways the author's claim is more limited.	**The author's claim applies only to Harbor High and proposes a one-month test of a pickup station, not construction of a cafeteria.**
3	Write a different one-sentence thesis supporting the one-month test. Use the passage's plan to check the results as your reason.	**Harbor High should test a second lunch pickup station for one month to find out whether it gives students more time to eat.**
4	Write a one-sentence thesis against starting the test now. Base it on a concern raised in the passage.	**Harbor High should not start the second-station test until staff can supervise both counters and the dining area.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should open the library for fifteen minutes before classes because students need a quiet place to prepare for the day. I would count how many students wait outside the locked library in the morning. I would ask students whether they have a quiet place to read or study before the first bell.

Accept thesis statements that name a specific, limited position and give a reason grounded in the passage. For the open task, the two proposed checks should relate to the student's stated reason.