Will They Attend?

Investigate a question about student participation

S.1.4 "Apply the scientific method of inquiry on the study of society, including developing a hypothesis, and identifying independent and dependent variables."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the testable prediction, circle what the council changes between groups, and write 1 beside what it measures. These marks will help you identify the parts of the investigation.

A Forum Attendance Study

1. At Westview High, student council forums are open to every student, yet only a few attend. Council members wonder whether a short email reminder would bring more students to the next forum. Their testable prediction is this: Students who receive a reminder the day before the forum will attend at a higher rate than students who do not receive one. The question concerns participation, a form of social behavior, rather than a student's memory or physical ability. Before collecting data, the council decides what to change and what to count so its prediction can be checked.

2. With permission from the school, the council invites 200 students who have school email accounts. It assigns them at random to two groups of 100. Both groups get the same initial invitation with the forum's time and place. Only one group gets a second email the day before: a brief reminder that repeats the time and place. The other group gets no second email. No student is required to attend, and no one is turned away. Keeping the initial invitation and forum details the same helps isolate the possible effect of the extra email.

3. At the forum, volunteers record attendance by group using a private check-in list; they do not publish students' names. For each group, they calculate the percentage of invited students who attend. A higher percentage in the reminder group would support the prediction, but a similar or lower percentage would not. Random assignment reduces the chance that one group starts with more students who already plan to attend. Still, a single forum at one school cannot show what would happen at every school. The council plans to report both percentages, even if the result disappoints them.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. State the council's hypothesis. What result would support it?

2. What is the independent variable? Name its two conditions.

3. What is the dependent variable, and how does the council measure it?

4. How does random assignment help the council test whether the reminder affects attendance?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a different school behavior to investigate. Write a directional hypothesis, identify an independent variable and its two conditions, explain how you would measure the dependent variable, and name one factor you would keep the same for both groups.

ANSWER KEY

Will They Attend?

HIGH SCHOOL · S.1.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the testable prediction, circle what the council changes between groups, and write 1 beside what it measures. These marks will help you identify the parts of the investigation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	State the council's hypothesis. What result would support it?	**Students sent a reminder will attend at a higher rate than students not sent one. A higher attendance percentage in the reminder group would support the hypothesis.**
2	What is the independent variable? Name its two conditions.	**The independent variable is whether students receive a second email. The conditions are receiving a reminder and receiving no reminder.**
3	What is the dependent variable, and how does the council measure it?	**The dependent variable is forum attendance, measured as the percentage of invited students in each group who attend.**
4	How does random assignment help the council test whether the reminder affects attendance?	**It reduces the chance that one group starts with more students who already plan to attend.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I predict that students offered a five-minute library tour will be more likely to borrow a book that week than students not offered a tour. The independent variable is whether a student is offered the tour. The two conditions are an offer of a tour and no offer. The dependent variable is the percentage of students in each group who borrow at least one book that week. I would keep library hours the same for both groups.

Accept other testable school behaviors if the hypothesis predicts a direction, the two conditions differ in one stated variable, and the outcome has a clear measure. For question 3, an attendance count is acceptable if the student also explains how the two groups would be compared.