

# Tone With Purpose

Analyze conventions in a formal school request.

**12.W.3.C** "Edit writing for appropriate conventions, style, and language in informal and formal contexts. (See Language Usage for grade level expectations)"

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Read three body paragraphs from a fictional formal request; its greeting and signature are omitted. Underline four words or phrases that create a formal, respectful tone. Circle words or phrases that connect ideas or signal order, and be ready to explain your choices. Draw a box around the sentence that uses a semicolon.

### Request for a Repair Café

- ① I am writing on behalf of the Environmental Action Council to request permission to host a monthly repair café in the school library's makerspace. During each session, students would bring damaged clothing, backpacks, or small household items and work with volunteers to repair them. This proposal supports the district's goal of reducing waste while giving students practical experience with tools, planning, and collaboration. Because the event would occur after school, we would reserve the space only after confirming staff supervision and library availability in advance.
- ② To prepare responsibly, the council would publish a sign-up form that lists each repair category and the available time slots. We would also ask a qualified adult to oversee tool use, since participants may need guidance with needles, adhesives, or hand tools. The café would not accept batteries, broken glass, or other hazardous materials; instead, students could receive information about local disposal options. In addition, volunteers would record the types of repairs completed. Those records could help us decide which supplies to purchase for future sessions and whether the café meets student interest.

- ③ Finally, we request approval to hold a one-session pilot on the first Thursday in October, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. The council will provide a volunteer list, a materials budget, and a plan for cleaning the makerspace before the library closes. If the pilot is approved, we will send families a clear description of the event and a permission form for students who need to remain after school. Thank you for considering this request. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the proposal at a convenient time.

**2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE** \_\_\_\_\_ Use the passage

- ① Copy one phrase from paragraph 1 that creates a formal tone. Explain why that phrase fits a request to a school administrator.

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- ② Why does the writer use “would” in paragraph 1 instead of making unconditional promises about the event?

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- ③ Which transition begins paragraph 3, and what does it tell the reader about the organization of the request?

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- ④ Why is a semicolon effective in the sentence about hazardous materials and disposal options?

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### 3 YOUR TURN

## Your own words

Write a 90-120 word formal email in three paragraphs to a school staff member requesting a realistic improvement. Include a greeting and closing, at least two transitions, and one correctly used semicolon. Avoid slang, text abbreviations, and contractions. Write a working draft, then edit its conventions, style and language for the formal audience. Produce an edited email and explain two specific edits. Count the three body paragraphs toward 90-120 words; keep the greeting and closing separate.

## 1. Working draft

Draft the complete email. Leave your first wording visible so your editing can be assessed.

[illegible]

## 2. Edited email

Check punctuation, sentence structure, spelling and formal language. Write your edited email with three body paragraphs, a separate greeting and a separate closing.

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## 3. Editing record

Give two before-and-after edits. Explain how one improves a convention and the other improves style or language for the staff member.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Read three body paragraphs from a fictional formal request; its greeting and signature are omitted. Underline four words or phrases that create a formal, respectful tone. Circle words or phrases that connect ideas or signal order, and be ready to explain your choices. Draw a box around the sentence that uses a semicolon. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                                                       | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Copy one phrase from paragraph 1 that creates a formal tone. Explain why that phrase fits a request to a school administrator. | <b>Example: "I am writing on behalf of the Environmental Action Council." It sounds respectful and identifies the group the writer represents.</b>            |
| 2 | Why does the writer use "would" in paragraph 1 instead of making unconditional promises about the event?                       | <b>The event has not been approved, so "would" appropriately describes a proposed or possible plan.</b>                                                       |
| 3 | Which transition begins paragraph 3, and what does it tell the reader about the organization of the request?                   | <b>"Finally" begins paragraph 3. It signals that the writer is moving to the concluding action or request.</b>                                                |
| 4 | Why is a semicolon effective in the sentence about hazardous materials and disposal options?                                   | <b>It joins two closely related complete ideas and clearly contrasts what the café will not accept with the alternative information students can receive.</b> |

### **PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

Dear Dr. Chen,

I am writing to request a covered bicycle rack near the east entrance. Several students ride to school, but current racks leave bicycles exposed to rain during the day. A covered rack would protect equipment and could encourage more students to choose cycling.

To begin, the school could ask the facilities team to identify an unused paved area. In addition, the Student Council could survey riders about location and capacity. The project would require planning; however, it could improve daily access for students who travel by bicycle.

Thank you for considering this proposal. I would be glad to share survey results or help present the request to the council.

Sincerely, Jordan Lee

Accept supported explanations of tone and punctuation. Assess the working draft, edited email and two specific before-and-after edits; a polished email alone does not demonstrate editing. Require 90-120 words in three body paragraphs, a separate greeting and closing, at least two transitions and a correctly used semicolon. Count the body separately from greeting, closing and editing record. The sample is a possible edited email, not a complete demonstration of the process. The fictional school request supplies a formal context; accept appropriate editorial choices for the audience. For example, changing a comma splice to a semicolon can improve conventions, while replacing a casual demand with a respectful request can improve style.