Words With Purpose

Analyze how a speaker adjusts language for a decision-making audience.

9.C.2.A.i "Report orally on a topic or text or present an opinion. This includes: Choosing vocabulary, language and tone appropriate to the topic, audience, and purpose."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three words or phrases chosen for a facilities committee. Circle two phrases that make the request sound respectful and practical.

A Proposal for a Cooler Schoolyard

1. Good afternoon, Principal Ortiz and members of the facilities committee. I am speaking for the Environmental Action Club to propose a small shade-tree pilot near the west entrance. At dismissal, students wait there in direct sun, and the pavement holds heat long after classes end. Three native trees could provide shade as they mature, while their roots could help slow stormwater runoff, or rainwater that flows across hard surfaces. This proposal is not a demand for a costly redesign. It is a practical first step that could make the entrance more comfortable and support the campus grounds over time.

2. Before asking for approval, I considered the committee's responsibility to balance benefits, safety, and maintenance. For that reason, I am requesting a site review rather than promising an instant solution. A grounds specialist can check underground utilities, select tree species suited to our region, and estimate watering needs. The club can map where students stand after school and share the results with the committee. By bringing observations and questions, not just complaints, we can help you decide whether the pilot deserves a place in next year's facilities plan.

3. I also want to be clear about the limits of this idea. Young trees need care, and their shade will not appear immediately. Still, planning now gives the school a chance to compare costs, locations, and long-term benefits before a larger project is needed. I ask the committee to place the pilot on its October agenda and invite the club to present its map. Thank you for considering evidence from students and for protecting both the budget and the people who use this entrance every day.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Who is the speaker's main audience, and which opening words show that?

2. Why does the speaker explain the term “stormwater runoff” after using it?

3. Identify one phrase that creates a respectful tone rather than a demanding tone. Explain how it affects the request.

4. What specific action does the speaker ask the committee to take, and why does that action fit the committee's role?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an 85-105-word oral proposal to your school's operations committee about one improvement you want at school. Use a respectful, practical tone, include one formal or technical word with a plain-language explanation, and make one specific request. Deliver the proposal to a partner acting as a committee member. Ask the listener to explain your technical term and request, and comment on whether your vocabulary and tone fit the audience. Clarify and repeat if needed; record brief feedback separately. Rehearsal and teacher support are welcome.

ANSWER KEY

Words With Purpose

GRADE 9 · 9.C.2.A.i

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three words or phrases chosen for a facilities committee. Circle two phrases that make the request sound respectful and practical. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who is the speaker's main audience, and which opening words show that?	**The main audience is Principal Ortiz and the facilities committee. The opening says, "Good afternoon, Principal Ortiz and members of the facilities committee."**
2	Why does the speaker explain the term "stormwater runoff" after using it?	**The explanation makes a formal environmental term clear for the audience by defining it as rainwater that flows across hard surfaces.**
3	Identify one phrase that creates a respectful tone rather than a demanding tone. Explain how it affects the request.	**Possible answer: "This proposal is not a demand for a costly redesign." It shows respect for the committee's authority and budget concerns.**
4	What specific action does the speaker ask the committee to take, and why does that action fit the committee's role?	**The speaker asks the committee to place the pilot on its October agenda and invite the club to present its map. This fits the committee's role because it can review plans, costs, safety, and maintenance.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Good afternoon, members of the operations committee. I am asking you to consider adding a water-bottle filling station near the gym. After practice, students often need water, and the nearest fountain can become crowded. A filling station with a filtration system, equipment that removes some particles from water, could make refilling bottles more convenient. I understand that installation requires planning and maintenance. Please ask the custodial supervisor to review possible locations and costs, then share that information with students. This careful review would help the school decide whether the improvement fits next year's budget.

Accept varied reasonable choices for the underlined and circled language when students connect each choice to audience, purpose, or tone. In the oral proposal, look for language suited to a school decision-making audience, a clear explanation of the formal term, and a specific respectful request. Observe actual supported delivery to the intended-audience role and the listener's understanding of the term and request. Check audience-appropriate vocabulary and tone as heard. The written proposal is preparation; delivery and feedback complete the task. Keep the 85–105-word target for the proposal only.