Make the Case

Study how a writer shapes a request for a specific audience.

11-12.W.4 "Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, style, voice, and tone are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade band specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the request, circle two phrases that show the writer considers school resources, and put a star beside the sentence that raises a possible objection.

A Quiet Place to Study

1 Dear Principal Alvarez, the library fills quickly after the final bell. Last Thursday, I watched three students close their notebooks as a club discussion grew louder beside them. Our school already offers a late bus on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but students who stay to study have no reliable quiet space once clubs begin meeting. I am writing on behalf of the student council to request a four-week trial of a reserved quiet area in the library on those two afternoons. This small change would let us test a solution before asking the school to make a permanent commitment.

2 During the trial, the tables beside the reference shelves could be set aside for quiet study from 3:15 to 4:15. Students who want to work together could still use the tables near the entrance. A sign at the library door would explain both options, so nobody would have to guess where to go. Student council members could record how many seats are used each day and collect brief comments from library visitors. Those records would give you evidence about demand and possible disruption, rather than leaving the decision to a few loud opinions.

3 You may worry that a reserved area would displace students who visit the library for other purposes. That concern matters, so the trial would use only one cluster of tables, and the sign would direct other visitors to open seats. I understand that staffing and safety must come first; this proposal does not ask for longer library hours or additional supervision. At the end of four weeks, you and the librarian could review the seat counts and comments before deciding whether to continue. Would you be willing to discuss this trial with the librarian and student council next week?

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the opening observation help the writer make a specific request rather than a general complaint?

2. Why does the writer propose collecting seat counts and visitor comments? Explain how that detail fits the principal's role.

3. How does the writer's response to a possible objection strengthen the organization of the letter?

4. Identify one phrase that gives the letter a respectful tone. Explain why that tone suits its audience.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your neighborhood grocery store has no food-pantry collection point. In one paragraph of 75 to 95 words, ask the store manager to try a donation basket, give a practical reason and a feasible detail, acknowledge a possible concern, and use a respectful tone.

ANSWER KEY

Make the Case

HIGH SCHOOL · 11-12.W.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the request, circle two phrases that show the writer considers school resources, and put a star beside the sentence that raises a possible objection. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the opening observation help the writer make a specific request rather than a general complaint?	**The students closing their notebooks show how club noise interferes with studying. The writer then requests a quiet area on the afternoons when students stay for the late bus.**
2	Why does the writer propose collecting seat counts and visitor comments? Explain how that detail fits the principal's role.	**The records would help the principal judge demand and disruption before deciding whether to continue the trial.**
3	How does the writer's response to a possible objection strengthen the organization of the letter?	**The writer raises the concern that other visitors could lose space, then explains that only one cluster of tables would be reserved and a sign would direct visitors to other seats.**
4	Identify one phrase that gives the letter a respectful tone. Explain why that tone suits its audience.	**For example, "I understand that staffing and safety must come first" acknowledges responsibilities the principal must consider.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear Store Manager, could you place a labeled food-pantry donation basket near the checkout for a one-month trial? Shoppers could add unopened, shelf-stable items while buying their own groceries, making it easy to contribute without a separate trip. A volunteer from the pantry could collect donations every Friday, so your staff would not need to sort them. I realize space near the registers is limited. A small basket at the end of the checkout area might keep the line clear, and the trial would let you decide whether the arrangement works.

Accept different passage phrases when students explain how they serve the writer's purpose or address the principal's responsibilities. For the original paragraph, look for a clear request, relevant support, a workable detail, an acknowledged concern, and a respectful tone.