One Quiet Table

Notice how sentence patterns shape a respectful proposal.

8.L.3.a "Maintain appropriate consistency in style and tone while varying sentence patterns for meaning and audience interest."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one short sentence and circle one longer sentence, then number two sentences with different patterns that both help the proposal sound respectful.

A Quieter Choice at Lunch

(1) At lunch, the cafeteria hums with conversation, trays, and chairs. For many students, that noise feels like part of the break. For others, it makes a needed pause hard to find. Our school could set aside one table for students who want a quieter lunch. No one would have to sit there, and friends could still eat together. A small sign could explain the choice: keep voices low and leave phones on silent. One table would not change the whole cafeteria, but it could change one student's day.

(2) Would a quiet table mean banning laughter? Not at all. The rest of the room would stay as it is, and students could choose a different seat each day. To make the idea work, the table should be away from the busiest door, where people line up and call to friends. Students could help choose the spot and suggest a sign that sounds welcoming rather than strict. A clear choice matters more than a long list of rules. It gives students room to decide what kind of break they need.

(3) We could try the table for two weeks before deciding whether to keep it. During that time, students could leave brief notes about what worked and what did not. If no one uses the table, we can move the sign or rethink the plan. If students do use it, we will have learned something simple but important: a good lunch break does not look the same for everyone. The proposal asks for little space and no new equipment. What might one quieter table offer a student who needs to reset before afternoon classes?

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, how do the similar openings of “For many students” and “For others” help the proposal keep a respectful tone?

2. In paragraph 2, what does the short answer “Not at all” add after the question about banning laughter?

3. Compare the longer sentence beginning “To make the idea work” with the shorter sentence beginning “A clear choice.” What does each sentence contribute?

4. How does the final question change the sentence pattern without changing the passage's respectful tone?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write five or six sentences proposing a different small change to the school day for students and staff. Keep a respectful, persuasive tone, and include both a short sentence and a longer sentence, plus either a question or an if sentence.

ANSWER KEY

One Quiet Table

GRADE 8 · 8.L.3.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one short sentence and circle one longer sentence, then number two sentences with different patterns that both help the proposal sound respectful. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, how do the similar openings of “For many students” and “For others” help the proposal keep a respectful tone?	**The matching openings give equal attention to students who enjoy the noise and students who want a quieter break.**
2	In paragraph 2, what does the short answer “Not at all” add after the question about banning laughter?	**It quickly addresses a possible worry. The brief answer changes the pace without making the tone harsh.**
3	Compare the longer sentence beginning “To make the idea work” with the shorter sentence beginning “A clear choice.” What does each sentence contribute?	**The longer sentence explains where the table could go and why. The shorter sentence emphasizes the proposal's main idea.**
4	How does the final question change the sentence pattern without changing the passage's respectful tone?	**It shifts from explaining the plan to inviting readers to consider its possible benefit, without demanding that they agree.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our hallways get crowded when classes change, so our school could mark a clear walking lane near the main stairs. Would that force everyone to hurry? No. Students could still move at a safe pace while leaving space for people coming the other way. If the lane causes confusion, we could change the signs after a one-week trial. A small test would let us hear what students and staff notice before making a permanent choice.

Accept answers that connect a specific sentence pattern to its effect on meaning or audience. For the writing task, look for five or six sentences with the required variety and a consistent, respectful tone.