Body Language Matters

Read a model oral presentation for purposeful body language.

6.C.2.A.v "Report orally on a topic or present an opinion. This includes: Using nonverbal skills, such as proper posture and stance, gestures, and eye movement to enhance the overall message."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each action that tells how Maya uses her posture, hands, or eyes while speaking. Number the underlined actions in the order they happen to see how they support her message.

Maya's Sea Otter Talk

1. At the science fair, Maya begins her short talk about sea otters. She stands with both feet planted about shoulder-width apart and keeps her shoulders relaxed. Looking at the audience instead of the floor, she says, "Sea otters are marine mammals that spend much of their lives in the ocean." Her steady stance helps her voice sound calm. When she names her topic, she lifts one open hand toward the photo behind her. The gesture guides listeners to the image without blocking it.

2. Next, Maya explains that sea otters often wrap themselves in kelp while resting. She holds her hands apart, then gently crosses them to show how kelp can keep an otter from drifting away. During this part, she looks first at students on the left, then at the center, and then at students on the right. Her eyes move slowly, so several listeners feel included. She does not wave her arms quickly, because hurried movements could distract from her explanation.

3. To end, Maya shares an opinion: protecting kelp forests matters because they provide homes and food for many ocean animals. She pauses after the word "matters" and faces the audience with her chin level. Then she points briefly to a chart showing animals that use kelp forests. Before her final sentence, she lets her arms rest at her sides. This quiet posture makes the ending feel important. Maya finishes by making eye contact with different listeners and saying, "Small choices, like reducing plastic waste, can help ocean habitats."

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which two details describe Maya's stance at the beginning of her talk, and how does that stance affect her message?

2. How does Maya's open-hand gesture help listeners when she introduces her topic?

3. Describe Maya's eye movement while she explains kelp. Why does she use it?

4. Why does Maya let her arms rest at her sides before her final sentence?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence opinion speech about one improvement your school should make. Add three parenthetical performance notes, one for posture or stance, one for a gesture, and one for eye movement, then read the speech aloud using the notes.

ANSWER KEY

Body Language Matters

GRADE 6 · 6.C.2.A.v

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each action that tells how Maya uses her posture, hands, or eyes while speaking. Number the underlined actions in the order they happen to see how they support her message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which two details describe Maya's stance at the beginning of her talk, and how does that stance affect her message?	**She plants both feet about shoulder-width apart and keeps her shoulders relaxed. Her steady stance helps her voice sound calm.**
2	How does Maya's open-hand gesture help listeners when she introduces her topic?	**It guides listeners to the photo behind her without blocking it.**
3	Describe Maya's eye movement while she explains kelp. Why does she use it?	**She looks left, then center, then right. Her slow eye movement helps several listeners feel included.**
4	Why does Maya let her arms rest at her sides before her final sentence?	**The quiet posture makes the ending feel important.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I think our school should add more refill stations for water bottles (stand with feet planted and shoulders relaxed). Refill stations could cut plastic waste (use an open-hand gesture toward an imagined bottle). They would also help students fill bottles quickly (look at listeners on the left, center, and right).

Accept answers that accurately connect Maya's nonverbal choices to their effects on listeners. For the open task, accept any clear school-related opinion with three sentences and usable notes for stance or posture, gesture, and eye movement.