

Common Ground Meeting

Read how students discuss a shared space with respect and evidence.

S.WG.h “engaging and communicating as a civil and informed individual with persons with different perspectives;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two places where a speaker shows understanding of another person's perspective. Circle two details that support a claim or help the council make an informed decision.

A Shared Space Decision

- ① At a student council meeting, Maya proposed using part of the unused lawn for a vegetable garden. She said the garden could provide herbs for cafeteria taste tests and a place for science classes to study soil. Jordan disagreed. He wanted the space kept open for informal games during lunch. Instead of calling his idea unimportant, Maya said, “You are concerned that students could lose a place to move around and relax.” Then she asked, “Which lunch activities need the most room?”
- ② Jordan answered that many students played four-square and tossed a foam football, but they did not need the whole lawn. He also explained that rain sometimes made the grass muddy. Maya listened without interrupting and wrote down his points. She replied, “It sounds as if a smaller open area, with a firm surface, might work better for games.” She shared a source for her own claim: the cafeteria manager had agreed to use herbs grown by students only if food-safety rules were followed.
- ③ Several council members supported each plan for different reasons. Maya did not claim that one group cared more about students than another. She asked Jordan whether he would help list space needs for games, and he agreed. Together, they suggested a garden along one edge of the lawn and a small paved activity area beside it. The council decided to check costs, accessibility, and maintenance needs before voting. Their discussion moved forward because participants listened, named concerns accurately, used relevant information, and looked for a solution that addressed more than one need.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What concern did Maya identify in Jordan’s position?

2 How did Maya show she understood Jordan’s perspective before asking her question?

3 What information did Jordan give that could help the group plan the space?

4 What three needs did the council decide to check before voting?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

A school is considering using an empty classroom for a quiet lunch room. Some students want it for a peer tutoring center. Write exactly four sentences: state one concern from each viewpoint accurately, ask one question to learn more, and propose a next step using information the school should check.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline two places where a speaker shows understanding of another person's perspective. Circle two details that support a claim or help the council make an informed decision. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What concern did Maya identify in Jordan's position?	She identified Jordan's concern that students could lose a place to move around and relax during lunch.
2	How did Maya show she understood Jordan's perspective before asking her question?	She stated that Jordan was concerned about students losing a place to move around and relax.
3	What information did Jordan give that could help the group plan the space?	He said students played four-square and tossed a foam football, but did not need the whole lawn. He also noted that rain could make the grass muddy.
4	What three needs did the council decide to check before voting?	The council decided to check costs, accessibility, and maintenance needs.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Students who want a quiet lunch room may need a calm place to eat or take a break. Students who support peer tutoring may need a space where classmates can get academic help. How many students would use each option during lunch? The school could collect sign-up information and explore whether both groups could use the room at different times.

Accept accurate statements of both viewpoints, a respectful information-seeking question, and a practical next step based on information to check. Student responses may propose different concerns, questions, and next steps if they remain civil and informed.