

Case 10: Whose job is it to fix the blocked route?

Content note

This case involves disability access on a city route. No student should share their own disability or health information, so keep the discussion on Sami’s trip.

This case explains general rules. It is not legal advice for your situation.

Overview

Students read a story in which construction blocks the curb ramp on Sami’s route to a city workshop, and the detour points to stairs. They examine the sign, the route map and the workshop flyer. They use the Department of Justice’s Title II guide to see which part of the ADA applies. They then audit the whole trip and write a message to the city’s ADA coordinator.

Before this case

- Students should already be able to:
- summarize a legal guide accurately without adding to it
 - write a memo for a named office
 - tell an observation from a legal conclusion

Objectives

- Students will be able to:
- report observations to the city department that runs a program, with no legal conclusion

Objectives, continued

- summarize what the Department of Justice Title II guide says a city program must do
- recommend two changes within the parks department’s control
- revise a flyer so it tells people how to request access

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B and C
- The Department of Justice guide “ADA Update: The ADA and City Governments”
- A memo template and a route audit: find, get there, enter, take part, leave

The task in this edition

Task: Write a memo to the parks department about its workshop series. Report what Sami’s trip showed, summarize what the Department of Justice Title II guide says a city program must do and recommend two changes. Add a revised flyer that tells people how to request access.

Students make: Memo, 300—400 words, plus a revised flyer of 60—100 words

Pacing

Opener (page 192): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Students read What happened on their own.

Pacing, continued

Key terms (pages 193 and 194): 4 min. Short on time: skip.

Look at the evidence (page 198): 8 min. Short on time: 7 min. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 199): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read the flyer aloud. Students fill in only its What it shows box.

Key idea (pages 200 and 201): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip In the news.

Sort the evidence (page 202): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 203): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 204 and 205): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (pages 206 and 207): 30 min. Short on time: 30 min.

Check your work (pages 208 and 209): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Students answer the check questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 210 and 211): 10 min. Short on time: 5 min. Discuss question 3 only.

Talk about this case at home (page 212): at home.

Periods: full chapter 103 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 10 plan, continued

Standards

Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for taking part in community life, including civic communication and working within community structures toward a civic aim. In this case: Students direct a request to the city department that runs the workshop (Civic Contexts/Structures).

Problem Solving VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for defining a problem, proposing and weighing solutions and checking the results. In this case: Students define the barrier along the whole route and propose changes the department can carry out (Define Problem; Propose Solutions/Hypotheses).

Written Communication VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for writing that fits its context and purpose, develops its content and uses sources and evidence. In this case: Students write a memo and a flyer for two different readers (Context of and Purpose for Writing).

Authority Is Constructed and Contextual A source's authority depends on its creator's expertise and on the question it is being used to answer. In this case: Students explain why the Department of Justice guide, not a photo or a detour sign, describes what a city program must do.

Codes of ethics

- **ASPA Code of Ethics:** 3. Promote democratic participation.
- **NPPA Code of Ethics for Visual Journalists:** Code of Ethics, standard 3
- **ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct:** Rule 3.1 Meritorious Claims and Contentions

Heat map

- ■ □ **Opener (page 192):** Medium
- □ □ **Key terms (pages 193 and 194):** Low
- □ □ **Look at the evidence (page 198):** Low
- □ □ **Look at the evidence (page 199):** Low
- □ □ **Key idea (pages 200 and 201):** Low
- ■ □ **Sort the evidence (page 202):** Medium
- ■ □ **Practice (page 203):** Medium
- □ □ **Your task (pages 204 and 205):** Low
- □ □ **Your draft (pages 206 and 207):** Low
- □ □ **Check your work (pages 208 and 209):** Low

Try it at your school

Find your city's ADA contact.

- With a trusted adult, search your city's website for "ADA coordinator" or "accessibility"
- Save how to report a blocked sidewalk or curb ramp (often 311 or a public works page)

Try it at your school, continued

- If you notice a barrier, note the location, date and time
- Ask the person affected what they want before reporting on their behalf

Who to ask: City ADA coordinator, 311 or public works, school transportation office for school routes

Safety: Don't film or post people with disabilities without clear permission. Stay out of construction zones.

Sources

- HISTORY, "When the 'Capitol Crawl' Dramatized the Need for Americans with Disabilities Act," July 24, 2020
- Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, "The Capitol Crawl," No date listed
- U.S. Department of Justice, "The ADA and City Governments," No date listed

Case 10: Whose job is it to fix the blocked route?

A construction detour sends Sami toward stairs on her way to a city workshop, and her bus comes in 12 minutes.

On your own Read What happened. Underline where the detour sign points. About 4 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who writes down the corner, the time and the sign before Mateo posts. **New skill:** Report a problem to the office responsible.



Sami, Jordy and Mateo plan with picture cards on a whiteboard.

What happened

It is Tuesday, 4:05 p.m., at the corner of Elm Street and 4th Avenue. Sami is on her way to a free community workshop run by the city's parks department. It starts at 5. Sami uses a manual wheelchair, and her bus comes in 12 minutes. Mateo is with her.

The curb ramp on the northeast corner is blocked by construction fencing. A sign reads "SIDEWALK CLOSED AHEAD. PEDESTRIAN DETOUR." Its arrow points to a path that begins with a flight of stairs. That detour does not work for Sami.

Your question: Whose job is it to fix the blocked route, and what should Sami and Mateo tell the city?

Mateo already has the sign on video, and his first idea is to post it. Sami asks whether the video gets her on the bus. It does not, so Mateo puts the camera down. He checks the other corners for a ramp while Sami looks up the next bus stop.

Later, they want to report the corner to the city. Mateo wonders whether the city is breaking the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). First, they need to know what one video can show and which office is responsible.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

✂ Short on time: 3 min. Students read What happened on their own.

💬 Say this

"Sami has 12 minutes. What does she need right now, and what can wait?" — Make two columns on the board: now and later.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students decide the city broke the law. **Listen for:** "That's illegal." **Then:** Ask what one corner at 4:05 can show. Write "We need more facts" under later.

📄 Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Show the route map in Evidence B before you read.

🔥 Heat check

■ ■ □ **Medium.** Students may share their own or a family member's disability.

Cool-down: Thank the student and return to Sami's trip. No one needs to share health information.

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example. Then write your first guess in the box. About 4 minutes.

Program access Program access is an ADA rule that a city's services, taken as a whole, must be usable by people with disabilities.

En español: acceso a los programas

In this case: The city runs the workshop. Program access asks whether Sami can reach and join the workshop, not only whether one ramp is open.

Barrier A barrier is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part.

En español: barrera

In this case: Fencing blocks the curb ramp at Elm Street and 4th Avenue, and the detour points to stairs. The flyer gives no way to request access.

ADA coordinator An ADA coordinator is the staff member a government names to handle disability access questions and complaints.

En español: coordinador de la ADA

In this case: Mateo plans to send the city's ADA coordinator the corner, the time, the sign and one question, if Sami agrees.

Who is involved



Sami

Trying to catch her bus to the workshop

"The sign says detour. The detour starts with stairs. So, no. Twelve minutes."



Mateo

Filmed the detour sign

"I had the sign on video before I even thought about it. Sami asked if that gets her on the bus. Fair. Camera down."

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

"Which key term explains why the whole trip matters, not only the ramp?" — Wait for program access.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students think program access means every door needs a ramp. **Listen for:** "Every building needs a ramp." **Then:** Reread the key idea: the program as a whole must be accessible. A city can move a service to an accessible place.

📌 Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- Spanish words from the case: ruta, barrera, rampa, desvío.
- **Cognates:** access (acceso), barrier (barrera), program (programa), route (ruta), ramp (rampa), coordinator (coordinador), construction (construcción), observation (observación).

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

🔑 Answer key

Any first guess is fine. Students return to it on the My take page.

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, whose job do you think it is to fix Sami's route?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

➤ My first guess is the city, since it runs the workshop, but I do not know who controls the work site.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

This page continues page 193. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 193.

Reading passage

Program access and the ethics of reporting a barrier

On your own Read the passage. At each Stop and think box, pause and answer the question in your head or with a partner. About 6 minutes.

Words to know

- **Program access:** Program access is an ADA rule that a city's services, taken as a whole, must be usable by people with disabilities.
- **Barrier:** A barrier is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part.
- **ADA coordinator:** An ADA coordinator is the staff member a government names to handle disability access questions and complaints.
- **Claim:** A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Jurisdiction:** A jurisdiction is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority.

The story: A detour that excludes

At 4:05 p.m. on a Tuesday, Sami, 23, and Mateo, 22, reach the corner of Elm Street and 4th Avenue on the way to a free parks department workshop that begins at 5. Sami uses a manual wheelchair. Her bus arrives in 12 minutes. The northeast curb ramp is fenced for construction, and the posted pedestrian detour begins with a flight of stairs.

The case opens with a small ethical sequence that many well-meaning allies get wrong. Mateo has already filmed the sign and offers to post it. Sami asks whether posting gets her on the bus. It does not. He stops filming, checks the other corners for a ramp and lets her look up the next stop. She is clear about consent. The ramp and the sign are fair to film. Filming her requires asking, and not in the middle of a missed bus. The advocacy can wait until the person most affected has what she needs.

Your role is to write down the corner, the time and the sign before anyone posts. That record is the raw material for everything that follows.

Stop and think. Why is an answerable question often more effective than an accusation?

From observation to an answerable question

Mateo's instinct is to ask whether the city is breaking the Americans with Disabilities Act.

⌚ Pacing

Reading: about 6 min (760 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

❓ Stop and think

1. **After “The story: A detour that excludes”:** Why is an answerable question often more effective than an accusation?
2. **After “From observation to an answerable question”:** How does program access differ from a rule that every building must be accessible, and why might the law choose that design?
3. **After “Law, history and professional norms”:** When does documenting a barrier become exploiting the person who faces it?

From observation to an answerable question, continued

Framed that way, the question is a **claim**, a statement that something is true that can be checked with evidence, and the evidence cannot carry it. One video establishes one fenced ramp and one sign on Tuesday at 4:05 p.m., posted since Monday. It does not establish whether an accessible alternative exists, how long the closure will last or how the city manages its program elsewhere. Mateo reaches that conclusion himself. He cannot call the whole route illegal from one corner.

The route map and flyer extend the analysis. Sami's trip has five stages, and the workshop entrance and room have not been checked. The flyer, "Free Community Workshop Series ... All welcome! Questions? Call the front desk," offers no information about accessible entrances or how to request access. A **barrier** is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part. The fence is a physical barrier, and the flyer's omission may be an informational one.

Program access is an ADA rule that a city's services, taken as a whole, must be usable by people with disabilities. The standard is structural rather than site-by-site. It generally does not require every older building to be accessible, and a city can meet it by relocating a service. Existing buildings and new construction are treated differently. What the standard does require is that the program, from information to arrival to participation, work for disabled residents.

The Case 9 concept of **jurisdiction**, the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority, identifies the responsible party. The city runs the workshop and controls the street. An **ADA coordinator** is the staff member a government names to handle disability access questions and complaints. Mateo's report is built to be answerable. It gives the corner, the time and the sign, then asks one question: is there an accessible detour, and how long will this stay blocked? It is sent only with Sami's agreement.

? Stop and think. How does program access differ from a rule that every building must be accessible, and why might the law choose that design?

Law, history and professional norms

The Department of Justice's guide for city governments explains Title II program access, curb ramps during street work and effective communication (U.S. Department of Justice, updated February 24, 2020). The law's history is inseparable from stairs. In the Capitol Crawl on March 12, 1990, activists climbed the Capitol steps to dramatize exclusion, and the ADA was signed that July (HISTORY, July 24, 2020). The protest was associated with ADAPT, which began as Americans Disabled for Accessible Public Transit (Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, March 1, 2015).

Implementation remains contested. Advocates continue to press the MTA over broken elevators that block subway routes (amNewYork, March 24, 2025). A North Bronx station is set to get elevators nearly a decade after an ADA lawsuit (THE CITY, October 3, 2025).

This page continues page 195. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 195.

Law, history and professional norms, continued

A federal audit found that little was known about compliance in ADA paratransit services (GAO, November 15, 2012).

Professional codes frame the duties on each side. ASPA asks public administrators to “respect and assist all persons in their dealings with public organizations” (ASPA Code of Ethics, 2013). NPPA asks visual journalists to “be complete and provide context when photographing or recording subjects” (NPPA Code of Ethics, no date listed). For lawyers, the ABA’s model rules require a basis in law and fact before bringing a claim, and they call for learning the facts first (ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct, 1983, as amended). A report sized to its evidence meets all three standards.

 **Stop and think.** When does documenting a barrier become exploiting the person who faces it?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Department of Justice | February 24, 2020

The ADA and City Governments

Real source | HISTORY | July 24, 2020

When the ‘Capitol Crawl’ Dramatized the Need for Americans with Disabilities Act

Real source | Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities | March 1, 2015

The Capitol Crawl

Real source | amNewYork | March 24, 2025

Elevator advocates push for better subway accessibility

Real source | THE CITY | October 3, 2025

North Bronx Subway Station to Get Elevators, Nearly a Decade After ADA Lawsuit

Real source | U.S. Government Accountability Office | November 15, 2012

ADA Paratransit Services: Demand Has Increased, but Little Is Known About Compliance (GAO-13-17)

Real source | American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) | 2013

ASPA Code of Ethics

Real source | National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) | No date listed

NPPA Code of Ethics for Visual Journalists

Real source | American Bar Association (ABA), Center for Professional Responsibility | No date listed

ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct

This page continues page 195. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 195.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Construction sign

The detour sign

The sign reads “SIDEWALK CLOSED AHEAD. PEDESTRIAN DETOUR.” Its arrow points to a path that begins with a flight of stairs. The sign went up on Monday. Mateo recorded it on Tuesday at 4:05 p.m.

Look closely: Where does the arrow point? Who could not use that path?

What it shows

➡ A posted detour that a wheelchair user cannot follow, up since Monday.

What it leaves out

➡ Any accessible alternative, and how long the closure lasts.

Evidence B | Route map

Sami and Mateo’s route map

1. Home to the corner of Elm Street and 4th Avenue: sidewalk clear. 2. Northeast curb ramp: blocked by construction fencing. 3. Bus stop: next bus in 12 minutes. 4. Bus to the parks department building. 5. Workshop entrance and room: not yet checked.

Look closely: Which stage is blocked, and which stage has nobody checked?

What it shows

➡ Five stages from home to the room. Stage 2 is blocked.

What it leaves out

➡ Whether stage 5, the entrance and room, is accessible.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: 7 min. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

💬 Say this

“Find the stage on the route map that nobody has checked. Why does it matter?” — Wait for stage 5, the workshop entrance and room.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the video as proof about the whole route. **Listen for:** “The video proves the city is breaking the law.” **Then:** Ask which stage the video shows. It shows stage 2, at one time.

📄 Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Provide a printed route map with the five stages labeled.
- **Cognates:** access (acceso), barrier (barrera), program (programa), route (ruta), ramp (rampa), coordinator (coordinador), construction (construcción), observation (observación).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask which barrier on the trip is about information, not concrete, and which document shows it.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Flyer

The workshop flyer

The flyer reads “Free Community Workshop Series. Tuesdays, 5–7 p.m., Parks Department Annex. All welcome! Questions? Call the front desk.” It gives no information about accessible entrances or how to request access.

Look closely: What does the flyer tell someone who needs to request access?

What it shows

🔍 “All welcome!” from a city program, with only a front-desk contact.

What it leaves out

🔍 How to request access, and whether the entrance is accessible.

What is still missing from the evidence?

🔍 Whether an accessible detour exists, how long the closure lasts, whether the entrance and room work, and how the ADA coordinator handles complaints.

Notes

🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: 4 min. Read the flyer aloud. Students fill in only its What it shows box.

💬 Say this

“Find the stage on the route map that nobody has checked. Why does it matter?” — Wait for stage 5, the workshop entrance and room.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the video as proof about the whole route. **Listen for:** “The video proves the city is breaking the law.” **Then:** Ask which stage the video shows. It shows stage 2, at one time.

📄 Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Provide a printed route map with the five stages labeled.
- **Cognates:** access (acceso), barrier (barrera), program (programa), route (ruta), ramp (rampa), coordinator (coordinador), construction (construcción), observation (observación).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask which barrier on the trip is about information, not concrete, and which document shows it.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Key idea: program access

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 10 minutes.

Program access is an ADA rule that a city's services, taken as a whole, must be usable by people with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Justice explains that Title II of the ADA covers state and local government programs and services. Program access generally does not require every older building to be accessible. For example, a city can relocate a service to an accessible place. Existing buildings and new construction have different requirements.

Access covers the whole visit: finding the information, getting there, going in, taking part and leaving. A **barrier** is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part. Sami meets one barrier at the curb ramp. The workshop flyer could be another, because it gives no way to request access. The Justice Department's guide for cities also covers curb ramps during street work.

One video of one corner cannot show whether a city is following the law. It can show what happened, where and when. An **ADA coordinator** is the staff member a government names to handle disability access questions and complaints. That office can say whether an accessible detour exists. Before you report a barrier someone else faces, ask them what they want said.

Professional standards

Real source | American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)

ASPA Code of Ethics: 3. Promote democratic participation

"respect and assist all persons in their dealings with public organizations"

In plain words: ASPA members in public service agree to help every person use public programs and services.

Question: The parks flyer says "All welcome!" with no access information. What should it add so Sami can request access?

Your answer

The flyer should add ____, so that ____.

➡ The flyer should add who handles access requests and whether the entrance is accessible, so that Sami does not have to guess.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 8 min. Skip In the news.

💬 Say this

"The ASPA code asks public servants to assist all persons. What would that look like on this flyer?" — Accept any addition that tells Sami how to request access.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the ASPA code as a law. **Listen for:** "The city broke the ASPA rule." **Then:** Say: "A code of ethics is a standard a profession sets for its own members. Here, the ADA is the law."

📄 Support

- Read the quotation aloud. Point out the label: a real source, quoted word for word.
- Draw two boxes: Title II for city programs and sidewalks, Title III for private businesses.

🔗 Stretch

- Use the NPPA row: which stages of Sami's route does Mateo's photo leave out?

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

A throwback to March 12, 1990, when activists climbed the Capitol steps to show what stairs do to access. The ADA was signed that July.



A lawsuit pushed a transit agency to add elevators, showing how the ADA makes access a public duty.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

This page continues page 200. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 200.

Sort the evidence

On your own Mark whether each piece of evidence supports or narrows each claim. Then write whose view is missing. About 6 minutes.

Sort what the evidence supports. Which claim can you make today, which one needs more facts, and who can supply them?

Evidence	Claim 1 The city is breaking the ADA.	Claim 2 On Tuesday, the posted detour did not work for a wheelchair user.
1 Photo: the northeast curb ramp blocked by fencing on Tuesday at 4:05 p.m.	Narrows	Supports
2 Detour sign points to a path that starts with stairs	Neither	Supports
3 DOJ: Title II requires program access, not every facility to be accessible	Narrows	Neither

Still open

- Is there another accessible route to the bus and the workshop? Ask the ADA coordinator.

Whose perspective is missing?

Whose view is missing from these documents? What would you ask them?

The view that is missing is _____. I would ask _____.

Whoever planned the detour. I would ask whether an accessible route was considered and how long the closure will last.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

“Which claim can you make today, and which one needs more facts?” — Model the photo row together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students mark the photo as supporting “The city is breaking the ADA.” **Listen for:** “The photo proves it.” **Then:** The photo supports the Tuesday claim and narrows the violation claim. Ask who could supply the missing facts.

Support

- Let students write S (supports) or N (narrows) in each box before writing sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can turn to students’ own access needs.

Cool-down: Keep answers about Sami, the city and the flyer. No student speaks for a group or shares health information.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Mateo should do and explain why. Then fix the two marked phrases. About 6 minutes.

Mateo wants people to know about the blocked corner. What should he do?

- ☐ A Post the video with a caption saying the city is breaking the ADA.
- ☒ B Send the ADA coordinator the corner, the time, the detour sign and one question, if Sami agrees.
- ☐ C Skip the report if Sami finds another bus stop that works today.

Why I chose it

➤ B. It sends a specific observation to the responsible office and respects Sami's choice. A overclaims, and C fixes one trip but not the detour.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

➤ 1 The city is breaking the ADA. There is construction blocking the ramp and a wheelchair user I know couldn't get to the bus. We were standing there for like ten minutes trying to figure out another way and the sign just pointed to stairs. My friend almost missed her workshop because of it. This is discrimination and completely illegal. Nobody even cares about this. You need to ➤ 2 fix every ramp in the neighborhood right away or we will post the photos everywhere.

Rewrite each marked phrase so it says only what the evidence supports.

Rewrite phrase 1

➤ On Tuesday at 4:05 p.m., the detour sign at this corner pointed to stairs.

Rewrite phrase 2

➤ How long will this ramp be blocked, and is there an accessible detour?

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

"Mateo has the video. What should he do with it?" — Vote before discussing.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students choose A because posting gets attention. **Listen for:** "Post it, then they'll fix it." **Then:** Ask whether Sami agreed. Point to her line: "Me, ask first."

📄 Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

🔥 Heat check

■ ■ □ **Medium.** Students may bring up real viral videos of disabled people.

Cool-down: Keep it about Mateo's video. Ask what Sami wants.

➤ Answer key

A revised version: Hello, I'm writing about the construction at the corner of Elm Street and 4th Avenue, by the bus stop. On Tuesday at about 4 p.m., the curb ramp on the northeast corner was blocked, and the detour sign pointed to a route with stairs. My friend, who uses a wheelchair and agreed to be mentioned, could not reach the bus stop that way. Could you tell us whether there is an accessible detour during construction, how it's marked and how long the ramp will be blocked? We'd also like to know how to report this if it happens again. Thank you.

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 12 minutes.

Write a memo to the parks department about its workshop series. Report what Sami's trip showed, summarize what the Department of Justice Title II guide says a city program must do and recommend two changes. Add a revised flyer that tells people how to request access.

Use: Case documents: the detour sign, the route map, the workshop flyer and Sami's and Mateo's statements. Real sources: the Department of Justice guide "ADA Update: The ADA and City Governments."

You'll make: Memo, 300—400 words, plus a revised flyer of 60—100 words

Time: 75 minutes

- 1 Complete a route audit of Sami's trip: find, get there, enter, take part, leave.
- 2 Separate what the sign, the video and the map show from what they cannot show.
- 3 Summarize what the Department of Justice guide says a city program must do.
- 4 Choose two changes the parks department can make.
- 5 Write a memo of 300 to 400 words on the Your draft page.
- 6 Rewrite the flyer in 60 to 100 words so it says how to request access.



Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

What we observed

📍 Tuesday, 4:05 p.m.: the northeast curb ramp at Elm Street and 4th Avenue was fenced off. The detour sign pointed to stairs.

Case 10 | Your task | College educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

✂ Short on time: 12 min.

💬 Say this

"The parks department runs the workshop, not the sidewalk. Which changes are in its control?" — Sort ideas into parks, public works and the ADA coordinator.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Memos speak for all disabled residents.

Listen for: "Disabled people can't get to any city program."

Then: Use Sami's own stated need. Speak for no one else.

📄 Support

- Memo template: purpose, what we observed, what the guide says, recommendations, contact
- Route audit from the workshop: find, get there, enter, take part, leave
- Chart comparing Title II and Title III

🔗 Stretch

- Separate what the sign, the photo and the route map show from what they cannot show. The route map marks the workshop entrance as not yet checked.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Your task, continued

What the evidence cannot show

- Whether an accessible detour exists, how long the closure lasts and whether the entrance and room are accessible.

What the guide says

☞ Under Title II, the program as a whole must be accessible. A city can move a service to an accessible place.

Two changes the parks department can make

1. Add access information and a contact to every workshop flyer. 2. Check the Annex entrance and room, and publish what it finds.

Notes

[illegible]

This page continues page 204.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric; Problem Solving VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

○ Answer key

A strong response:

- Reports observations with the location and date and states no legal conclusion
- Describes program access the way the Department of Justice guide does
- Recommends changes the parks department can make, such as access information on its flyers
- The revised flyer says how to request access and whom to contact
- Uses Sami's own stated need and does not speak for other disabled residents

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 30 minutes.

Your memo, 300 to 400 words

To: Parks Department, Community Workshop Series. **From:** Mateo. **Subject:** Access to the Tuesday workshops. **Purpose:** to report what we observed on the way to your workshop and to suggest two changes. **What we observed:** on Tuesday at 4:05 p.m., the northeast curb ramp at Elm Street and 4th Avenue was fenced off for construction. The detour sign pointed to a path that begins with stairs. Sami, who uses a wheelchair and agreed to be mentioned, could not use that detour to reach her bus. **We do not know whether an accessible detour exists. Nobody has checked the Annex entrance or room. What the guide says:** under Title II, a city program as a whole must be accessible, although not every older facility must be. A city can, for example, move a service to an accessible place. **Recommendations:** first, add access information and a contact for access requests to every workshop flyer. Second, check the Annex entrance and room and publish the results. **Contact:** we plan to ask the city's ADA coordinator about the detour.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

 Short on time: 30 min.

Say this

“Read the new flyer as Sami. Do you know how to ask for access before you leave home?” — Partners test each other's flyer with that question.

Watch for

Misconception: The Title II summary adds rules the guide does not state. **Listen for:** “The law says every door needs a ramp.” **Then:** Compare the sentence with the summary in the key idea. Cut what it does not say.

Heat check

 Low.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Reports an observation with the place and time.
2. States what the evidence cannot show instead of a legal conclusion.
3. Summarizes the guide without adding to it.
4. Recommends a change within the department's control.
5. The revised flyer says how to request access and whom to contact.

Revised flyer, 60 to 100 words

Notes

This page continues page 206. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 206.

Check your work

On your own Answer the Check your work questions and mark your level in each rubric row. Then write one change you made. About 8 minutes.

- Does your memo report observations with the place and time and no legal conclusion? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does your summary match what the Department of Justice guide says? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Are both recommendations within the parks department's control? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does your revised flyer say how to request access and whom to contact? ☒ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No location or time.	☐ General description.	☐ Specific location, time and observation.	☐ Specific observation plus what remains unknown.
Reasoning	☐ Declares a violation.	☐ Mixes observation and conclusion.	☐ Separates observation from legal question.	☐ Connects observation to program access and asks the right office.
Audience & purpose	☐ Threatening or vague.	☐ Polite but no clear request.	☐ Specific, answerable request to the right office.	☐ Request plus how to report future issues.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

 Short on time: 6 min. Students answer the check questions only.

Say this

“Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why.” — Ask for one added detail or one removed legal conclusion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students keep a sentence that declares a violation. **Listen for:** “The city is clearly violating the ADA.” **Then:** Point to the Reasoning row. Replace the sentence with a question for the coordinator.

Heat check

 Low.

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the Title II summary matches the Department of Justice guide and that the recommendations are within the department's control.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Specific location, time and observation.
- **Reasoning:** Separates observation from legal question.
- **Audience & purpose:** Specific, answerable request to the right office.
- **Revision:** Adds specifics and removes the legal conclusion.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone only.	☐ Adds specifics and removes the legal conclusion.	☐ Explains how each change helps the city act and respects Sami.

I changed ___ because ___.

Q I cut a recommendation to fix every curb ramp in the city, because the parks department does not control sidewalks.

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This page continues page 208. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 208.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then finish My take. About 10 minutes.

1 Which barrier on Sami's trip would a photo miss?

➤ Information barriers, like a flyer with no way to request access, and any stage nobody has checked, such as the workshop room.

2 What is the difference between recording a barrier and making Sami the content?

➤ The first serves the fix: the corner, the time and the sign. The second serves an audience and takes away Sami's choice about what is said about her.

3 Construction is temporary, but the detour affects people now. What should a city do to keep routes usable during repairs?

➤ Require a marked, accessible detour before work starts and name who answers questions. The trade-off is slower and costlier repairs.

My take

My claim: ____.

➤ The parks department should put access information on its flyers, and the city should answer the detour question.

The best evidence is ____, because ____.

➤ The flyer, because "All welcome!" with no access contact is a barrier the department can fix itself.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 5 min. Discuss question 3 only.

💬 Say this

"Answer with a detail from the evidence, not a story about someone you know." — Post the question numbers and take one answer per question.

➤ Stretch

- With an adult, find your city's ADA coordinator page and summarize how it takes complaints.
- Going further: Write a first description of Sami's trip. Then check one stage you skipped, such as the workshop entrance. Rewrite your description and note what changed.
- Going further: Suppose someone says the fix is to install a ramp. What problem does that fix assume? List two barriers from Sami's trip that a new ramp would not remove.
- Going further: Make a route guide for Sami's trip in two forms, such as a map and a numbered list. Check that each form works without color or a picture.
- Going further: With a trusted adult, search your city's website for "ADA coordinator" or "accessibility" pages. Save how to report a blocked sidewalk or curb ramp, often through 311 or a public works page. Ask the person affected before you report for them, and stay out of construction zones.
- Find your city's ADA coordinator page and summarize its complaint process
- Research how your city communicates construction detours

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ____.

- The flyer is a small problem next to a blocked ramp.

The limit of the evidence is ____.

- Nobody has checked the workshop entrance or room.

I would change my mind if ____.

☛ The Annex entrance and room turned out to be inaccessible, so the building would matter more than the flyer.

Notes

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This page continues page 210.

Heat check

■ ■ □ **Question 2: Medium.** Students may bring up online videos of disabled people or share their own experiences.

Cool-down: Keep the talk on Sami and Mateo. No one shares health or disability information. Reread Sami's line: "Me, ask first."

Talk about this case at home

Case 10: Whose job is it to fix the blocked route?

In this case, construction blocks a curb ramp on a young woman's route to a city workshop, and the detour points to stairs. Your student studied what one video can show, then wrote a question for the city office responsible for access.

Questions to talk about

- 1 Who in our town takes care of sidewalks and curb ramps?
- 2 What details make a report to the city easy to act on?
- 3 Why should you ask someone before you post a video of them?

Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.



See the case online.

Case 10 | Talk about this case at home | College educator edition

🕒 Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

💬 Say this

“Take this page home or read it with someone you trust.” —
Nobody needs to share health or disability information to complete it.