

Case 8: Is it a recommendation or an ad?

Content note

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

Overview

Students read a short story in which a publisher sends Gia a free novel to review. Her video tags the publisher but never says the copy was free. They compare the publisher’s email, the video script and Caio’s edit notes with the FTC’s disclosure guidance for social media. They then rewrite the video’s opening and caption so that a viewer watching with the sound off learns about the free copy.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- summarize a short source accurately
- tell an opinion from a fact that can be checked
- write a short text for a named audience

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify the free copy as a material connection
- revise a script so the disclosure is early, spoken and on screen
- explain why a tag in the caption is not a clear disclosure

Objectives, continued

- separate an honest opinion from a disclosed relationship in a note of about 100 words

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B, C and D
- The FTC’s Disclosures 101 page, or its summary in the key idea

The task in this edition

Task: Write a revised script and caption and a short note on why a tag alone isn’t enough.

Students make: Script (60–90 seconds) plus 100-word note

Pacing

Opener (page 140): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the group-chat excerpt.

Key terms (pages 141 and 142): 5 min. Short on time: skip. Define material connection and disclosure aloud in one minute.

Look at the evidence (page 146): 10 min. Short on time: 9 min. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 147): 6 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read Evidence D aloud; skip its boxes.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 148 and 149): 8 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read the first FTC row only. Skip In the news.

Sort the evidence (page 150): 7 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 151): 7 min. Short on time: 5 min. Take the vote. Skip Improve a draft.

Your task (page 152): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Students fill in only the checklist box.

Your draft (pages 153 and 154): 22 min. Short on time: 18 min. Students write the first three seconds and the caption in class and finish the note at home.

Check your work (pages 155 and 156): 8 min. Short on time: skip. Collect drafts and score them with the rubric yourself.

Questions to discuss (pages 157 and 158): 12 min. Short on time: skip.

Talk about this case at home (page 159): at home.

Periods: full chapter 98 minutes; one period 50 minutes.

Standards

RI.9-10.1 Support an analysis with solid, complete evidence from the text, both for what it states and for what it implies.

Case 8 plan, continued

Standards, continued

W.9-10.2 Write an explanatory text that presents complex ideas and information clearly and accurately.

W.9-10.5 Strengthen writing by planning, revising, editing or rewriting, focusing on what matters most for the purpose and audience.

SL.9-10.1.c Move a discussion forward with questions that connect it to larger ideas, bring others in and test ideas and conclusions.

SL.9-10.1.d Respond to different views, sum up where people agree and disagree, and adjust your view when the evidence calls for it.

D2.Civ.6.9-12 Critique the relationships among governments, civil society and markets. In this case: Students critique relationships among creators, platforms, brands and regulators.

D3.2.9-12 Judge a source's credibility by looking at how experts value it. In this case: Students evaluate the credibility of a recommendation given its source relationship.

Codes of ethics

- **FTC Endorsement Guides (16 CFR Part 255):** § 255.5 Disclosure of material connections
- **FTC Endorsement Guides (16 CFR Part 255):** § 255.0 Purpose and definitions, paragraph (f)

Codes of ethics, continued

- **PRSA Code of Ethics:** Free Flow of Information

Heat map

- **Opener (page 140):** Low
- **Key terms (pages 141 and 142):** Low
- **Look at the evidence (page 146):** Low
- **Look at the evidence (page 147):** Low
- **Key idea (pages 148 and 149):** Low
- **Sort the evidence (page 150):** Low
- **Practice (page 151):** Low
- **Your task (page 152):** Low
- **Your draft (pages 153 and 154):** Low
- **Check your work (pages 155 and 156):** Low

Try it at your school

Check the relationship before you trust the review.

- Next time you see a recommendation, look for a disclosure in the video itself
- If you post reviews, practice a clear spoken line like “They sent me this for free”
- Share a disclosure checklist with a school media club
- Don’t accuse real creators; practice on your own sample posts

Try it at your school, continued

Who to ask: School media or journalism advisor, a librarian, a digital citizenship teacher

Safety: Don’t share personal information to get free products. Talk with a trusted adult before accepting any brand deal.

Sources

- TikTok Newsroom, “BookTok and publishing,” September 2022
- Federal Trade Commission, “Disclosures 101 for Social Media Influencers,” No date listed
- Federal Trade Commission, “FTC’s Endorsement Guides: What People Are Asking,” No date listed
- Federal Trade Commission, “FTC explanatory video,” No date listed

Case 8: Is it a recommendation or an ad?

Gia loves a novel that a publisher sent her for free, and her video review does not mention the free copy yet.

On your own Read What happened. Underline what the publisher sent Gia and what it asked for. About 5 minutes.



Gia, Caio and Mari set up a camera in a bright studio.

Your role: You're the viewer with the sound off who checks the first three seconds. **New skill:** Spot and disclose a material connection.

What happened

At 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Caio finishes editing Gia's short video review of a new novel. Gia made the review for BookTok, where people recommend books on TikTok. She stayed up until 2 a.m. to finish the novel, and she loves it.

Two weeks ago, the book's publisher emailed Gia. The publicity team offered her a free copy of its spring novel for review. The email said she did not have to post, but it asked for a tag if she did. In the first cut, Gia never says the book was free. The only sign of the publisher is a tag in the caption below the video.

Your question: Do Gia's viewers need to know the book was free, and how should she tell them?

Caio wants to watch the cut the way a stranger would, on a phone with the sound off. He wants to know whether the first three seconds say the book was free. Gia wants to keep her honest opinion in the video. She also wants viewers to know how she got the book.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the group-chat excerpt.

💬 Say this

"Gia stayed up until 2 a.m. finishing this book. Does it matter how she got it?" — Take three answers. Do not settle it yet.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students decide a free copy makes the review a lie. **Listen for:** "She only likes it because it was free." **Then:** Ask what the evidence says about her opinion. Nothing shows it is false; the free copy is context.

📖 Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Explain BookTok in one sentence: people on TikTok recommending books.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example. Then write your first guess in the box. About 5 minutes.

Material connection A material connection is a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect.

En español: conexión material

In this case: The publisher sent Gia a free copy of its spring novel for review. That free copy is a material connection.

Disclosure A disclosure is a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know.

En español: divulgación

In this case: Gia's first cut has no disclosure. The tag in the caption names the publisher but never says the book was free.

Endorsement An endorsement is a message that shares someone's opinion or experience of a product to promote it.

En español: respaldo

In this case: Gia's video review promotes the novel with her own opinion: she stayed up until 2 a.m. to finish it.

Who is involved



Gia

Made the video review

"I stayed up till 2 a.m. finishing it. That part's real. The publisher sending it free is also real, and right now it's nowhere in the video."



Caio

Editing Gia's video

"The publisher's email literally says 'free copy for review.' That's the sentence. It's just not in the video yet."

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. Define material connection and disclosure aloud in one minute.

💬 Say this

"Which key term names the free copy? Which one names what Gia still has to add?" — Wait for material connection, then disclosure.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students hear "material" as physical stuff, like paper. **Listen for:** "The material is the book." **Then:** Reread the definition: a material connection is a relationship with a brand, such as a free product.

📖 Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- **Cognates:** connection (conexión), material (material), recommendation (recomendación), relationship (relación), product (producto), opinion (opinión), audience (audiencia), video (video).

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

🔑 Answer key

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

Before you look at the evidence, does Gia need to tell viewers the book was free?

➤ My first guess is that the tag is enough, because it shows the publisher's name.

[illegible]

This page continues page 141. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 141.

Reading passage

A tag is not a disclosure

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 5 minutes.

Words to know

- **Material connection:** A material connection is a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect.
- **Disclosure:** A disclosure is a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know.
- **Endorsement:** An endorsement is a message that shares someone's opinion or experience of a product to promote it.
- **Framing:** Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward.

The story: Watching on mute

Gia stayed up until 2 a.m. finishing a new novel, and the next day she filmed a review for BookTok, the part of TikTok where people recommend books. Her enthusiasm is real. On Saturday at 1:30 p.m., Caio finishes the edit and sends it back. Gia is ready to post.

Caio is not. He wants to watch the cut once the way a stranger would, on a phone with the sound off. His question is specific. In the first three seconds, where does it say the book was free?

The book was free. Two weeks earlier, the publisher's publicity team emailed Gia: "We'd be glad to send you a free copy of our spring novel for review. There's no obligation to post, but if you do, we'd appreciate a tag." The first cut opens with Gia saying, "You guys, I have to tell you about this book because I literally could not put it down!" There is no on-screen text. The caption reads "@publisher #booktok."

Gia points to the tag. Caio's edit notes answer her. A tag is a brand name, not a relationship. The caption also sits below the video, where most people will not open it. In this case, you are the viewer with the sound off who checks those first three seconds.

Stop and think. Caio says a tag is a brand name, not a relationship. What is the difference?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (595 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After “The story: Watching on mute”:** Caio says a tag is a brand name, not a relationship. What is the difference?
2. **After “Opinion, relationship and disclosure”:** Why does Gia cut “best book of the year” even though she loves the book?
3. **After “What the FTC and researchers say”:** Some viewers may treat a disclosed review as just an ad. How could Gia keep their trust?

Opinion, relationship and disclosure

An **endorsement** is a message that shares someone's opinion or experience of a product to promote it. Gia's review is one, and her opinion is honest. A **material connection** is a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect. The free copy is a material connection. Knowing about it gives viewers context. It does not prove that Gia's opinion is false.

A **disclosure** is a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know. Case 1 gave you the idea of **framing**, choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward. The first cut frames the review around Gia's excitement and leaves the relationship out of view. Caio proposes a three-second fix: "Quick heads-up, the publisher sent me this free." It is spoken and shown on screen, then followed by her hook.

Gia makes a second change that viewers might never notice. She had thought about calling it the best book of the year. Out of the ones she happened to read? She decides to say only what she can support: two nights, and she could not put it down. A disclosure answers one question, which is how she got the book. Viewers can still ask what supports her claims about the book itself.

Caio's test is simple. Someone who has not seen the video watches once, on mute. Then he asks, "Was the book free?" If they have to think about it, the edit is not done. A comment on another creator's review shows the risk of skipping this step: "wait was this sponsored?? kind of feels like an ad now."

? **Stop and think.** Why does Gia cut "best book of the year" even though she loves the book?

What the FTC and researchers say

The Federal Trade Commission's guidance for influencers says a video disclosure belongs in the video itself, ideally both spoken and on screen (Federal Trade Commission, updated December 3, 2024). In November 2023, the FTC warned two trade associations and a dozen influencers about posts promoting aspartame or sugar. The agency said disclosures must be in the video, not buried in a caption (Federal Trade Commission, November 14, 2023).

Research suggests disclosure helps young viewers. A study of 3,149 high school students in Taiwan found that full sponsorship disclosure helped teens recognize a post as an ad (Lin et al., PLOS One, May 27, 2026).

? **Stop and think.** Some viewers may treat a disclosed review as just an ad. How could Gia keep their trust?

This page continues page 143. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 143.

Disclosures 101 for Social Media Influencers

FTC Warns Two Trade Associations and a Dozen Influencers About Social Media Posts Promoting Consumption of Aspartame or Sugar

Effects of social media sponsorship disclosure on adolescents' advertising literacy and purchase intention

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 143. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 143.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 10 minutes.

Evidence A | Email

The publisher's email

"Hi Gia, we love your book reviews! We'd be glad to send you a free copy of our spring novel for review. There's no obligation to post, but if you do, we'd appreciate a tag. Best, the publicity team"

Look closely: What did the publisher give, and what did it ask for?

What it shows

➤ A free copy for review, and a request for a tag if she posts.

What it leaves out

➤ Whether Gia has any other relationship with the publisher.

Evidence B | Video script and caption

Gia's first cut

Spoken: "You guys, I have to tell you about this book because I literally could not put it down!" On-screen text: none. Caption below the video: "@publisher #booktok"

Look closely: Where in this video would a viewer learn about the free copy?

What it shows

➤ Real excitement on screen, and a publisher tag in the caption.

What it leaves out

➤ That the book was free. The video never names the publisher.

Case 8 | Look at the evidence | Grades 9–10 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 9 min. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

💬 Say this

"Put your finger on the start of Gia's script. Where does it say the book was free?" — Wait for "nowhere." Then find the tag in the caption.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students count the caption tag as a disclosure. **Listen for:** "She tagged them, so it's disclosed." **Then:** Ask what the tag tells a viewer. It names the publisher; it never says the book was free.

📄 Support

- Give each document on its own half-page, with the email's key sentence enlarged.
- Read Caio's notes aloud. Explain that 0:00–0:03 means the first three seconds.
- **Cognates:** connection (conexión), material (material), recommendation (recomendación), relationship (relación), product (producto), opinion (opinión), audience (audiencia), video (video).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask why Caio tests the video on mute, and which viewers a spoken-only disclosure would miss.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Edit notes

Caio's edit notes

"Watch once as a stranger, phone on mute. 0:00—0:03: does anything say free copy? Caption sits below the video; most people won't open it. Tag = brand name, not relationship."

Look closely: What does Caio want to test before uploading, and why the first three seconds?

What it shows

🔍 A test: watch 0:00—0:03 on mute, the way a stranger would.

What it leaves out

🔍 How many of Gia's viewers watch without sound.

Evidence D | Viewer comment

A comment on another creator's review

wait was this sponsored?? kind of feels like an ad now

Look closely: When does this viewer start to wonder about a sponsorship?

What it shows

🔍 A viewer who wonders about a deal after watching trusts the review less.

What it leaves out

🔍 Whether that review was sponsored. It is about another creator.

What is still missing from the evidence?

🔍 Whether Gia has any other relationship with the publisher, how many viewers watch without sound, and what supports her claims about the book.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: 4 min. Read Evidence D aloud; skip its boxes.

💬 Say this

"Put your finger on the start of Gia's script. Where does it say the book was free?" — Wait for "nowhere." Then find the tag in the caption.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students count the caption tag as a disclosure. **Listen for:** "She tagged them, so it's disclosed." **Then:** Ask what the tag tells a viewer. It names the publisher; it never says the book was free.

📄 Support

- Give each document on its own half-page, with the email's key sentence enlarged.
- Read Caio's notes aloud. Explain that 0:00—0:03 means the first three seconds.
- **Cognates:** connection (conexión), material (material), recommendation (recomendación), relationship (relación), product (producto), opinion (opinión), audience (audiencia), video (video).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask why Caio tests the video on mute, and which viewers a spoken-only disclosure would miss.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Key idea: material connections

On your own Read the key idea and the FTC guide. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 minutes.

An **endorsement** is a message that shares someone's opinion or experience of a product to promote it. Gia's video review is an endorsement, and her opinion in it is honest. A **material connection** is a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect. The free copy from the publisher is a material connection. Knowing about it gives viewers context, but it does not prove that Gia's opinion is false.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is a federal agency. Its Endorsement Guides explain how a federal law against deceptive practices applies to endorsements. A **disclosure** is a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know. For a video, the FTC says the disclosure belongs in the video itself, ideally both spoken and on screen. A tag in the caption only names the brand, and it sits below the video.

A disclosure answers one question: how did Gia get the book? Viewers can still ask what supports her claims about the book itself. A clear disclosure does not make every claim in a review accurate. Do not accuse a real creator of hiding a sponsorship based on a guess.

Professional standards

Real source | Law or regulation | Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

FTC Endorsement Guides (16 CFR Part 255): § 255.5 Disclosure of material connections

"They can include monetary payment or the provision of free or discounted products ... to an endorser, regardless of whether the advertiser requires an endorsement in return."

In plain words: The FTC says a free product can be a connection that reviewers must clearly disclose, even if the brand asked for nothing in return.

Question: The publisher's email says there is "no obligation to post." Does that change whether Gia has a connection to disclose?

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

 Short on time: 4 min. Read the first FTC row only. Skip In the news.

Say this

"The FTC counts free products even when the brand requires no review. What does that mean for Gia?" — Wait for: the email's "no obligation" does not change the connection.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the PRSA code and the FTC guides as the same kind of rule. **Listen for:** "Gia broke the PRSA code." **Then:** Say: "The PRSA code binds PRSA members. The FTC guides explain a federal law that reaches endorsers like Gia."

Support

- Read the quotation aloud. Point out the label: Law or regulation, not a code of ethics.

Stretch

- Use the second FTC row: where in the first three seconds would a viewer on mute learn the book was free?

Heat check

■□□ Low.

Professional standards, continued**Your answer**

The words “no obligation to post” ____, because ____.

→ The words “no obligation to post” do not change it, because the FTC counts free products even when no review is required.

In the news

Real source | NBC News | November 15, 2023

Influencers warned by FTC over ‘inadequate’ disclosures of artificial sweetener promotions

Real creators were warned for not clearly saying they were paid, the exact question this case asks.



Real source | ABC News | November 6, 2019

Popular YouTuber chimes in on federal product disclosure guide for influencers

A creator reacts to the FTC’s disclosure rules, showing how the guidance lands for people who actually post.

Notes

This page continues page 148. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 148.

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow each choice to its results. Then write whose view is missing. About 7 minutes.

Follow both choices forward. Which consequences can Gia control, which depend on viewers, and what test tells her the disclosure worked?

Post the first cut with only a brand tag in the caption

Sound-off viewers never learn the book was free

Who is affected

➡ Viewers deciding whether to buy or borrow the book

Disclose aloud and on screen in the first seconds

Viewers weigh the recommendation knowing the relationship

Who is affected

➡ Viewers deciding whether to buy or borrow the book

Some viewers may discount the review as an ad

Who is affected

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 _____.

➡ The publisher's publicity team. I would ask whether it has any other relationship with Gia besides the free copy.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 7 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

“Follow each choice forward. Which results can Gia control, and which depend on viewers?” — Model the first chain together.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students read “some viewers may discount the review” as a reason not to disclose. **Listen for:** “Then she shouldn’t say it.” **Then:** Ask what happens when viewers find out later. Follow the chain that starts with the tag only.

📄 Support

- Let students write the letter of each result on the arrows before they write sentences.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the change that makes the relationship clearest. Then fix the two marked phrases. About 7 minutes.

Gia loves the novel the publisher sent her for free. Which change to her video makes the relationship clearest to viewers?

☐ A Tag the publisher in the caption.

☒ B Say and show at the start of the video that the publisher sent her the book for free.

☐ C Leave the video as it is, since the email said there was no obligation to post.

Why I chose it

➤ B. It puts the relationship in the video, spoken and on screen. A only names the brand below the video. C ignores that the book was free.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Okay you guys, I have to tell you about this book because I literally could not put it down!! ① #ad #booktok @publisher. The characters are so real and the ending destroyed me. I stayed up until 2 a.m. finishing it and then just sat there staring at the wall. Everyone needs to read this, trust me, ② it's the best book of the year and you won't regret it. Link is in my bio, go get it before everyone else does!

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

Rewrite phrase 1

➤ Move it into the video, spoken and on screen, in the first three seconds.

Rewrite phrase 2

➤ Use her own reading instead: "I finished it in two nights."

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 7 min.

✂ Short on time: 5 min. Take the vote. Skip Improve a draft.

💬 Say this

"Gia loves the book, and it was free. Which change makes that clearest?" — Take a vote before any discussion.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students choose C because the email said there was no obligation. **Listen for:** "They didn't make her post, so it's fine." **Then:** Reread the FTC quotation. A free product counts even when no post is required.

📖 Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

➤ Answer key

A revised version: On screen and said aloud: "Quick heads-up: the publisher sent me this book for free to review." Then: "Okay, you guys, I could not put this down. The two sisters felt real to me, and the ending caught me completely off guard. If you like slow-burn family stories, this one's for you. If you need a fast plot, maybe not. I finished it in two nights." Caption: "Publisher sent me a free copy for review. #ad #booktok." The disclosure is in the first three seconds, readable without sound, and the claim is about my own reading.

Grades 9–10

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 8 minutes.

Write a revised script and caption and a short note on why a tag alone isn't enough.

Use: Case sources plus the FTC Disclosures 101 page.

You'll make: Script (60–90 seconds) plus 100-word note

Time: 50 minutes

- 1 Reread Evidence A and B. Underline what the publisher gave and where the first cut names it.
- 2 Fill in the planner: the relationship, where it shows now and the four checklist items.
- 3 Write the first three seconds of the script, spoken and on screen.
- 4 Write the rest of the script in Gia's voice. Keep her honest opinion and cut claims she cannot support.
- 5 Rewrite the caption so it names the relationship.
- 6 Write a note of about 100 words on why a tag alone is not enough.
- 7 Check your work with the questions on the Check your work page.



Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The relationship to disclose

➤ The publisher sent Gia a free copy for review.

Where the first cut shows it

➤ Only in a tag in the caption, below the video.

Checklist: words, placement, timing, repetition

➤ Words: sent me this free. Placement: in the video. Timing: 0:00–0:03. Repetition: spoken, on screen and in the caption.

Case 8 | Your task | Grades 9–10 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: 6 min. Students fill in only the checklist box.

💬 Say this

“Gia’s opinion stays. What has to change in the first three seconds?” — Write “words, placement, timing, repetition” on the board.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students think an honest opinion makes disclosure optional. **Listen for:** “She means it, so it doesn’t matter.” **Then:** Ask which question each one answers: what she thinks, or how she got the book.

📄 Support

- Before/after model

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

📋 Standards

Common Core: RI.9-10.1; W.9-10.2; W.9-10.5; SL.9-10.1.c; SL.9-10.1.d.

C3 Framework: D2.Civ.6.9-12; D3.2.9-12.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

➤ Answer key

A strong response:

- Disclosure is clear and early
- Uses both spoken and on-screen forms
- Note distinguishes opinion from relationship
- Accurately reflects FTC guidance

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 22 minutes.

Script: the first three seconds

Spoken: ____ On screen: ____

🔊 Spoken: “Quick heads-up, the publisher sent me this free.” On screen:
Free copy from the publisher.

Script: the rest of the review

🔊 You guys, I could not put this down. The two sisters felt real to me, and the ending caught me completely off guard. I stayed up until 2 a.m. and finished it in two nights. If you like slow-burn family stories, this one’s for you. If you need a fast plot, maybe not.

Caption

🔊 Publisher sent me a free copy for review. #ad #booktok @publisher

Note: why a tag alone is not enough, about 100 words

A tag alone is not enough because ____.

🔊 A tag alone is not enough because it only names the publisher. It does not say the book was free, and it sits in the caption below the video. Caio’s notes say most people won’t open the caption. The FTC says a video disclosure belongs in the video itself, ideally spoken and on

🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 22 min.

✂ Short on time: 18 min. Students write the first three seconds and the caption in class and finish the note at home.

💬 Say this

“Read only your on-screen words to a partner. Can they tell the book was free?” — This is Caio’s mute test on paper.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: The disclosure is spoken only. **Listen for:** “She says it out loud at the start.” **Then:** Point to Caio’s notes: phone on mute. Add the same words on screen.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

🔑 Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Names the relationship in plain words in the first three seconds.
2. Keeps a claim Gia can support in place of “best book of the year.”
3. Explains what a tag leaves out.
4. Separates the honest opinion from the relationship.

Your draft, continued

Note: why a tag alone is not enough, about 100 words, continued

On screen. So my script says it and shows it in the first three seconds. My opinion of the book is honest, and I kept it. Viewers still deserve to know the book was free, so they can decide how much weight to give my review.

Notes

This page continues page 153. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 153.

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 the script name the free copy in the first three seconds? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Is the disclosure both spoken and on screen? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does your note separate Gia's opinion from her relationship with the publisher? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does your note describe the FTC guidance accurately? ☒ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No disclosure or claim support.	☐ Tag only.	☐ Names the relationship clearly.	☐ Names the relationship and supports the product claim.
Reasoning	☐ Treats opinion as a substitute for disclosure.	☐ Discloses but can't explain why.	☐ Explains why placement and clarity matter.	☐ Distinguishes opinion, relationship and product claim.
Audience & purpose	☐ Ignores viewers.	☐ Assumes viewers read captions.	☐ Works for sound-off viewers.	☐ Works across channels with consistent wording.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Adds a hashtag.	☐ Adds spoken and on-screen disclosure.	☐ Explains each placement choice for different viewers.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

 Short on time: skip this page. Collect drafts and score them with the rubric yourself.

Say this

“Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why.” — Ask for one moved disclosure or one cut claim.

Watch for

Misconception: Students add a hashtag and call it done.

Listen for: “I added #ad.” **Then:** Point to the Revision row: a hashtag alone is the second level. Ask where a viewer on mute would see it.

Heat check

 Low.

Answer key

How to assess: The script and note are scored with the case rubric, with a check that the note separates opinion from relationship and reflects FTC guidance accurately.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Names the relationship clearly.
- **Reasoning:** Explains why placement and clarity matter.
- **Audience & purpose:** Works for sound-off viewers.
- **Revision:** Adds spoken and on-screen disclosure.

[illegible]

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then finish My take. About 12 minutes.

- 1 Would knowing the book was free change how much you trust Gia's review? Why or why not?

➤ It changes how I weigh it, not whether I believe her. The free copy is context, and her two nights of reading still count.

- 2 Some viewers may treat a review with a disclosure as just an ad. How could Gia keep their trust?

➤ Disclose in the first seconds, then keep claims to her own experience. Cutting "best book of the year" makes the rest easier to believe.

- 3 Who should make sure disclosures are clear: creators, brands or platforms?

➤ All three have a part. Gia controls her words, the publisher can ask for a disclosure, and a platform can offer a label. Gia speaks to viewers first.

My take

My claim: ____.

➤ Gia should disclose the free copy in the first three seconds, spoken and on screen.

The best evidence is ____, because ____.

➤ The first cut, because nothing in the video itself says the book was free.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

"Answer with a detail from the evidence, not with a real creator you follow." — Post the question numbers and take one answer per question.

➤ Stretch

- Ask what a disclosure checklist for a school media club would include, and who would check it.
- Going further: What does a viewer need to know about how Gia got the book? Plan one way to check that viewers understood the disclosure. A view count cannot tell you that.
- Going further: Design two versions of a sponsored post, with the disclosure in a different place in each. Keep the relationship equally clear in both versions.
- Going further: Find the line in the evidence that shows the book was free. Before you call any real post sponsored, look for that kind of evidence. Do not accuse a real creator based on a guess.
- Going further: The next time you see a recommendation, look for a disclosure in the video itself. Talk with a trusted adult before you accept any brand deal. If you post reviews, practice a clear spoken line, such as "They sent me this for free."
- Analyze three real posts from brands' own accounts (not individual creators) for disclosure
- Compare FTC guidance with another country's advertising standards body

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ____.

➤ Her opinion is honest, so the free copy does not matter.

I would change my mind if ____.

🔊 A viewer on mute could already tell the book was free from the first cut.

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 157.

Heat check

Question 2: Medium. Students may name real creators they believe hide sponsorships.

Cool-down: Say: “We are talking about Gia, not real creators.” Return to the viewer comment, which is about a creator.

Talk about this case at home

Case 8: Is it a recommendation or an ad?

In this case, a publisher sends Gia a free novel, and her video review does not say the book was free. Your student read the email and the video script, then rewrote the opening so viewers learn about the free copy.

Questions to talk about

- 1 How can you tell when a video review is also an ad?
- 2 Where in a video would you look for a note that a product was free?
- 3 Why might a review still be honest if the reviewer got the product for free?

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



See the case online.

Case 8 | Talk about this case at home | Grades 9–10 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 a personal story to complete it.