

Case 19: What should Gia say in her two-minute comment?

Overview

Students read a short story in which Gia wants to speak against a proposal to close the park’s lighted courts at 8 p.m. They read the parks committee agenda, the comment instructions and a nearby resident’s comment. They find the item, the deciding body, the deadline and the time limit. They then cut Gia’s three-page draft into a timed comment that makes one specific request.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- find a number and a time in a short document
- tell something they saw from something they feel
- read a short text aloud to a partner

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- find the agenda item, the deciding body and the time limit
- build a comment from four parts: the item, what I saw, why it matters and what I ask
- make one request the parks committee can act on
- deliver the comment in 60 seconds or less

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student

Materials, continued

- Evidence A and B on half-pages, one set per pair
- A timer for each pair

The task in this edition

Task: Write and practice a 60-second comment for the parks committee about the court hours.

Students make: 60-second comment (about 130 words)

Pacing

Opener (page 320): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Key terms (pages 321 and 322): 6 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Look at the evidence (pages 325 and 326): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Read Evidence A and B aloud. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Key idea (pages 327 and 328): 6 min. Short on time: 2 min. Read the first paragraph of the key idea aloud. Skip the code of ethics.

Sort the evidence (page 329): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 330): 6 min. Short on time: 4 min. Vote on the three openings and skip the marked draft.

Pacing, continued

Your task (pages 331 to 333): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Your draft (page 334): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Check your work (pages 335 and 336): 5 min. Short on time: skip. Check each comment against the four success points yourself.

Questions to discuss (pages 337 and 338): 8 min. Short on time: 4 min. Use question 4 as an exit ticket.

Talk about this case at home (page 339): at home.

Periods: full chapter 72 minutes; one period 45 minutes.

Standards

RI.6.1 Use evidence from the text to support what it says directly and what you can infer from it.

W.6.1 Write an argument for a claim, backed by clear reasons and relevant evidence.

W.6.5 With help from peers and adults, strengthen writing by planning, revising, editing or rewriting.

SL.6.1.c Ask and answer specific questions with details that add to the discussion.

SL.6.1.d Review the main ideas of a discussion and show you understand other views by reflecting and paraphrasing.

Case 19 plan, continued

Standards, continued

RI.7.1 Use several pieces of evidence from the text to support what it says directly and what you can infer.

W.7.1 Write an argument for a claim, backed by clear reasons and relevant evidence.

W.7.5 With help from peers and adults, strengthen writing by planning and revising, focusing on purpose and audience.

SL.7.1.c Ask questions that draw out more detail, and respond with relevant ideas that bring the discussion back on topic.

SL.7.1.d Take in new information from others and change your view when the evidence calls for it.

RI.8.1 Use the evidence that most strongly supports your analysis of what a text says and implies.

W.8.1 Write an argument for a claim, backed by clear reasons and relevant evidence.

W.8.5 With help from peers and adults, strengthen writing by planning and revising, focusing on purpose and audience.

SL.8.1.c Ask questions that connect several speakers' ideas, and respond with relevant evidence and observations.

SL.8.1.d Take in new information from others and qualify or defend your view based on the evidence.

Standards, continued

D2.Civ.2.6–8 Explain the roles citizens play, such as voters, jurors, taxpayers, petitioners and protesters. In this case: Students explain the role of residents as commenters in local government.

Codes of ethics

- **ASPA Code of Ethics:** 3. Promote democratic participation.
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** “We endorse freedom of expression, diversity of perspective, and acknowledgement of dissent...” (one of nine unnumbered principles)
- **SPJ Code of Ethics:** Minimize Harm

Heat map

- **Opener (page 320):** Low
- **Key terms (pages 321 and 322):** Low
- **Look at the evidence (pages 325 and 326):** Low
- **Key idea (pages 327 and 328):** Low
- **Sort the evidence (page 329):** Medium
- **Practice (page 330):** Medium
- **Your task (pages 331 to 333):** Low
- **Your draft (page 334):** Low
- **Check your work (pages 335 and 336):** Low

Try it at your school

Find your next local agenda.

- With a trusted adult, find the website for your city council, school board or parks board
- Open the next meeting agenda and find one item that affects you
- Read the public-comment instructions: sign-up, time limit, written option
- Draft a practice comment and decide with your adult whether to submit it

Who to ask: Clerk of the council or school board, a civics teacher, a student representative to the board if your district has one

Safety: Public comments and names may be published. Leave out addresses, phone numbers and anyone else's private story. Attend meetings with a trusted adult.

Sources

- Peacock, “Parks and Recreation,” No date listed
- Seattle City Council, “Public Comment,” No date listed

Case 19: What should Gia say in her two-minute comment?

Gia has two minutes to speak to the parks committee about the court lights, but her draft is three pages long.

On your own Read What happened and underline the sentence that says what item 4 proposes. About 5 minutes.



Gia and Mateo sit on a front stoop, each holding pages of notes.

Your role: You're the one holding the timer and listening for the request. **New skill:** Fit a request to the body's remit and time limit.

What happened

It is Tuesday, 5:40 p.m. The parks committee meets at 6. Item 4 on its agenda is a proposal to turn off the park's court lights at 8 p.m. The reason given is complaints about evening noise from nearby residents.

Gia, 21, wants to speak against item 4. It is her first time speaking at a public meeting. Each speaker gets two minutes. On Monday night, Gia wrote a three-page draft. When she reads page one out loud, it takes two minutes and forty seconds.

Mateo, 22, is timing her from a bench. He follows every word, but he cannot tell what she wants the committee to do. The draft also mentions a friend's private situation, and page two is about the bus. Everything Gia says will become part of the public record, along with her name.

Your question: What should Gia keep in her two-minute comment, and what should she cut?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Say this

"You get two minutes at a public meeting. What would you say first?" — Collect two or three answers. Do not correct anyone yet.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the park is closing. **Listen for:** "They're shutting down the park." **Then:** Ask what item 4 says exactly. It turns off the court lights at 8 p.m.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.

Heat check

Low.

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example, then write your first guess in the box. About 6 minutes.

Agenda item An agenda item is one topic listed on a meeting's official schedule of business.

En español: punto del orden del día

In this case: Item 4, "Evening court hours," proposes turning off the court lights at 8:00 p.m. Its action is a committee recommendation to the full council.

Remit A remit is the set of matters that a committee or other body is responsible for and can act on.

En español: competencia

In this case: The parks committee can recommend court hours. It cannot change bus routes, so page two of Gia's draft belongs with a different body.

Public record A public record is information a government keeps that anyone can ask to see, such as meeting comments.

En español: registro público

In this case: Comments and speakers' names become part of the public record. That is why Gia leaves her friend's private situation out of her comment.

Who is involved



Gia

Speaking at a public meeting for the first time

"I timed page one out loud. Two minutes forty. There are three pages."



Mateo

Timing Gia's practice run from a bench

"I followed all of it. I still couldn't tell you what she wants them to do."

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

💬 Say this

"Which part of item 4 tells you what the committee can do?" — Point to the action line: a recommendation to the full council.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students think the committee makes the final decision. **Listen for:** "The committee decides tonight." **Then:** Reread the action line. The committee recommends, and the full council decides.

📖 Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term with an example from the case.
- **Cognates:** agenda (agenda), committee (comité), public (público), comment (comentario), recommendation (recomendación), residents (residentes), private (privado), 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, what do you think Gia should say in her two minutes?

I think Gia should say ___ because ___.

➤ I think Gia should say why the park matters because she goes there all the time.

Notes

[illegible]

This page continues page 321. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 321.

Reading passage

Two minutes at the microphone

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

- **Agenda item:** An agenda item is one topic listed on a meeting's official schedule of business.
- **Remit:** A remit is the set of matters that a committee or other body is responsible for and can act on.
- **Public record:** A public record is information a government keeps that anyone can ask to see, such as meeting comments.
- **Proposal:** A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet.
- **Decision-maker:** A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.

The story: Three pages, two minutes

It is Tuesday at 5:40 p.m. The parks committee meets at 6. Item 4 on its agenda is a proposal to turn off the park's court lights at 8 p.m. The reason given is complaints about evening noise from nearby residents.

Gia, 21, wants to speak against item 4. It is her first time speaking at a public meeting. Each speaker gets two minutes. On Monday night, she wrote a three-page draft. When she reads page one out loud, it takes two minutes and forty seconds.

Mateo is timing Gia from a bench. He follows every word, but he cannot tell what she wants the committee to do. So he asks her one question: "If they only remember one sentence, what is it?"

Your role is to hold the timer and listen for the request.

Stop and think. Why can't Mateo tell what Gia wants, even though he followed every word?

What the committee can do

An **agenda item** is one topic listed on a meeting's official schedule of business. Item 4 is only about the court lights and closing time. Gia's draft says, "Please don't close the park." But nobody is closing the park. It is the lights at 8 p.m.

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (454 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: Three pages, two minutes":** Why can't Mateo tell what Gia wants, even though he followed every word?
2. **After "What the committee can do":** Why does the bus question not belong in this comment?
3. **After "Real students at real meetings":** Why does Gia leave her friend's story out?

What the committee can do, continued

A **remit** is the set of matters that a committee or other body is responsible for and can act on. Page two of Gia's draft is all about the bus. The bus is a real problem, but the parks committee cannot change bus routes. In Case 10, you learned to take a problem to the office responsible. The bus question belongs somewhere else.

In Case 4, you learned that a **proposal** is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet. Item 4 is a proposal. You also learned that a **decision-maker** is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. The agenda says the committee makes a recommendation, and the full council decides.

A short comment can do four jobs. It names the agenda item, shares something the speaker saw, says why it matters and ends with a clear request. Gia's version is short. Item 4. What she counted: twenty or thirty people on the courts between 8 and 9. Many of them work late. Her request: keep the lights on until 9 on weekdays this summer.

One more thing comes out. The draft mentions a friend's private situation. A **public record** is information a government keeps that anyone can ask to see, such as meeting comments. Gia's words and her name will be public. Her friend's story is her friend's to share.

❓ **Stop and think.** Why does the bus question not belong in this comment?

Real students at real meetings

In Philadelphia, students testified at school board meetings about school closures, using the district's own data (Chalkbeat Philadelphia, April 3, 2026). In Newark, a student coalition brought its own research and specific requests to the school board (Chalkbeat Newark, November 26, 2025).

❓ **Stop and think.** Why does Gia leave her friend's story out?

Sources

Real source | Chalkbeat Philadelphia | April 3, 2026

'Not what democracy is all about': Philly students slam school leaders' approach to school closures

Real source | Chalkbeat Newark | November 26, 2025

How a Newark student coalition is using its own research to press for change in schools

This page continues page 323. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 323.

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | Meeting agenda

Item 4 on the parks committee agenda

Item 4. Evening court hours. Proposal to turn off the court lights and close the lighted courts at 8:00 p.m. Background: complaints about evening noise from nearby residents. Action: committee recommendation to the full council.

Look closely: Circle the item number, the proposed time and the action.

What it shows

➤ Item 4 would turn off the court lights at 8 p.m.

One question I still have

➤ How many people complained about the noise?

Evidence B | Comment rules

How to comment at the meeting

Sign up to speak by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Each speaker has 2 minutes. Written comments may be submitted before the meeting. Comments and speakers' names become part of the public record.

Look closely: Underline the deadline, the time limit and what becomes public.

What it shows

➤ Each speaker gets 2 minutes. People can also send a written comment.

One question I still have

➤ Who can read the comments after the meeting?

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 8 min. Read Evidence A and B aloud. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

💬 Say this

“Put your finger on the action line in item 4. Who makes the final decision?” — The full council. The committee only recommends.

“Now find the time limit in the comment rules.” — Two minutes. Write it on the board.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students skip the public-record line. **Listen for:** “It’s just a meeting, nobody reads that.” **Then:** Reread the last sentence of Evidence B. Names and comments stay on the record.

📖 Support

- Give Evidence A and B on half-pages with the key lines enlarged.
- Read both documents aloud before students write.
- **Cognates:** agenda (agenda), committee (comité), public (público), comment (comentario), recommendation (recomendación), residents (residentes), private (privado), observation (observación).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask which document shows who decides and which shows how to speak, and what neither one says about the complaints.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

☛ We don't know how many people complained, or what court users who can't come at 6 p.m. think.

Notes

[illegible]

This page continues page 325. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 325.

Key idea: remit

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 6 minutes.

A **remit** is the set of matters that a committee or other body is responsible for and can act on. The parks committee can make a recommendation about court hours. It cannot change bus routes. That is why Gia's comment should ask for something the parks committee can do.

An **agenda item** is one topic listed on a meeting's official schedule of business. Each committee, council or board sets its own rules for who can speak, when and for how long. Seattle City Council is one real example. Its public comment page describes speaking in person or by phone and signing up before the meeting. Each speaker gets up to two minutes, and written comments can be sent by email.

A short comment can do four jobs. It names the agenda item, shares something the speaker observed, says why it matters and ends with a clear request. Before adding personal details, check whether comments become public. A **public record** is information a government keeps that anyone can ask to see, such as meeting comments. At Gia's meeting, comments and speakers' names become part of the public record.

Professional standards

Real source | American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)

ASPA Code of Ethics: 3. Promote democratic participation

"Inform the public and encourage active engagement in governance. Be open, transparent and responsive, and respect and assist all persons in their dealings with public organizations."

In plain words: ASPA's code asks people in public service to make it easy for every affected person to take part in decisions.

Question: The instructions allow written comments in advance. How does that help court users who cannot come at 6 p.m.?

Your answer

Written comments help because ____.

➞ Written comments help because people who work late can still send their ideas before the meeting.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: 2 min. Read the first paragraph of the key idea aloud. Skip the code of ethics.

💬 Say this

"A remit is what a body can act on. Can the parks committee change bus routes?" — No. It can recommend court hours.

"The ASPA code asks public servants to help people join in. How do written comments help?" — Wait for court users who work late.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the ASPA code as a law.

Listen for: "The committee is breaking the law if it ignores her." **Then:** Say: "ASPA's code is a standard for public servants who belong to ASPA. It is not a law."

📖 Support

- Read the code aloud. Point out the label: it is a quotation from a real code.

🔗 Stretch

- Use the NCA row: how could Gia acknowledge the resident's noise concern in one sentence?

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Real source | Chalkbeat Philadelphia | April 3, 2026

Students testified at board meetings and used district data, real public comment with a clear destination.

Real source | Chalkbeat Newark | November 26, 2025

Teens brought evidence and specific requests to their school board, the formula this case teaches.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, resembling notebook paper. 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 327. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 327.

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow a comment from the speaker to the final decision and fill in each box. About 6 minutes.

Follow a comment from the speaker to the final decision. Which body hears it, which body decides, and whose concerns reach the room?

Turn off the court lights at 8 p.m.?

Who decides

Full council: takes the final action

Under which rule

Who lives with it

Your way in

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 _____.

🔗 Court users who work late are missing. I would ask them what time they usually play.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

“Follow Gia’s comment from the meeting to the final decision. Who hears it, and who decides?” — Model the first box together: the parks committee.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students leave out the full council. **Listen for:** “If the committee says no, it’s over.” **Then:** Point to the action line in Evidence A. The full council decides.

📄 Support

- Let students write the name of each body before writing sentences.

🔥 Heat check

■ ■ □ **Medium.** The missing-perspective question can turn to students’ own work hours or their neighbors.

Cool-down: Keep answers about the court users and residents in the case. No one shares a personal schedule.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the best opening sentence, explain why and fix the two marked phrases. About 6 minutes.

Gia has two minutes on item 4. Which opening sentence gives the committee the most to work with?

- ☐ A “The park is really important to everyone, and closing it is a terrible idea.”
- ☒ B “Good evening. I’m Gia, and I’m commenting on item 4, the proposal to turn off the court lights at 8 p.m.”
- ☐ C “You guys never listen to young people, so I hope tonight is different.”

Why I chose it

➤ B. It names item 4 and the lights at 8 p.m., so the committee knows right away what Gia is talking about.

Improve a draft

A student’s first draft

Hi, my name is Gia and I have lived in this neighborhood my whole life. The park is really important to everyone and closing it is a terrible idea. I go there all the time with my friends and it’s one of the only free things to do around here. My friend works late and this is the only time she can play and **1** she’s been going through a lot at home. You guys never listen to young people. **2** Please don’t close the park.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

➤ Many of us work late, so after 8 is the only time we can play.

Rewrite phrase 2

➤ Please keep the court lights on until 9 p.m. on weekdays.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: 4 min. Vote on the three openings and skip the marked draft.

💬 Say this

“Gia has two minutes. Which opening gives the committee the most to work with?” — Vote before any discussion.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students choose C because it feels honest. **Listen for:** “But it’s true, they never listen.” **Then:** Ask what the committee could do with that sentence.

🔥 Heat check

■ ■ □ **Medium.** Students may voice frustration about adults ignoring young people.

Cool-down: Acknowledge the feeling. Then ask which sentence gives the committee a request.

➤ Answer key

A revised version: Good evening. I’m Gia Brooks-Romano, and I live two blocks from the park. I’m commenting on item 4, the proposal to turn off the court lights at 8 p.m. I play there after café shifts, and on weekday evenings I’ve counted twenty to thirty people using the courts between 8 and 9. Many of us work until evening. I understand the concern about noise from nearby residents. I’m asking the committee to keep the lights on until 9 p.m. on weekdays through the summer and to review noise complaints before making a permanent change. Thank you.

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Write and practice a 60-second comment for the parks committee about the court hours.

Use: The agenda item summary and comment instructions.

You'll make: 60-second comment (about 130 words)

Time: 45 minutes

Notes

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

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: 8 min.

 Say this

“Your comment has four boxes: the item, what you saw, why it matters and what you ask.” — Draw the four boxes on the board.

 Watch for

Misconception: The request is too big or too vague. **Listen for:** “Save our park.” **Then:** Ask what the committee could recommend. Name the hours and the days.

 Support

- Four-box organizer: item, what I saw, why it matters, what I ask
- Frames: “I’m here about item __. I noticed __.”
- Timer practice
- Option to submit in writing
- Frames: “I’m here about item ___. I noticed ___.”
- Offer a written comment instead of speaking.

Stretch

- Add one fact from the agenda to support your point.

Heat check

Low.

Your task, continued

- 1 Read item 4 in Evidence A. Write the item number and what it proposes.
- 2 Read the comment rules in Evidence B. Write the time limit.
- 3 Write what Gia saw at the courts and why it matters.
- 4 Write one request the parks committee can act on.
- 5 Put the four parts together in a comment of about 130 words in the Your draft box.
- 6 Read your comment aloud with a timer. Stop at 60 seconds.

Show it your way

Write it: Submit the comment in writing, about 130 words, using the four-box organizer.

Say it: Deliver your 60-second comment to a partner who plays a committee member and must repeat your request back.

Show it: Make a four-box cue card (item, what I saw, why it matters, what I ask) with a small drawing in each box, and speak from it.



Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The item

I'm here about item ____.

Item 4, turning off the court lights at 8 p.m.

What I saw

I noticed ____.

Twenty to thirty people on the courts between 8 and 9.

Why it matters

Many people work late, so after 8 is when they can play.

What I ask

Keep the lights on until 9 p.m. on weekdays.

This page continues page 331.

Standards

Common Core, grade 6: RI.6.1; W.6.1; W.6.5; SL.6.1.c; SL.6.1.d.

Common Core, grade 7: RI.7.1; W.7.1; W.7.5; SL.7.1.c; SL.7.1.d.

Common Core, grade 8: RI.8.1; W.8.1; W.8.5; SL.8.1.c; SL.8.1.d.

C3 Framework: D2.Civ.2.6-8.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Names the agenda item
- Shares one observation
- Makes one clear request
- Fits the time

Your task, continued

My time limit

60 seconds

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 331. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 331.

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 12 minutes.

Your comment, about 130 words

Good evening. I'm here about item ____.

🔑 Good evening. My name is Gia, and I'm here about item 4, the plan to turn off the court lights at 8 p.m. I play on the courts after my café shifts. On weekday evenings, I counted twenty to thirty people on the courts between 8 and 9. Many of us work late, so after 8 is the only time we can play. I know some neighbors are worried about noise. Please keep the court lights on until 9 p.m. on weekdays this summer. Thank you.

Notes

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

✂ Short on time: 12 min.

💬 Say this

“Read your comment to a partner. Can your partner repeat your request?” — Partners play committee members.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Comments run past the time limit. **Listen for:** “I’m not done yet.” **Then:** Cut any sentence that does not belong in one of the four boxes.

🔧 Heat check

■□□ Low.

🔑 Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Names the item and the exact proposal first.
2. Gives one observation with numbers and times.
3. Makes one request the committee can act on.

Check your work

On your own Answer the Check your work questions, mark your level in each rubric row and write one change you made. About 5 minutes.

- Does your first sentence name item 4? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does your comment share one observation from Gia? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does it make one clear request? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does it fit in 60 seconds when you read it aloud? ☒ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No facts.	☐ General claim about importance.	☐ One specific observation tied to the item.	☐ Observation plus acknowledgment of another perspective.
Reasoning	☐ Attacks the body.	☐ States a feeling only.	☐ Explains why the change matters.	☐ Weighs the concern and offers a middle path.
Audience & purpose	☐ Wrong body or no request.	☐ Request is vague.	☐ Names the item and a specific request.	☐ Request fits the body's remit and includes a follow-up.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Shortens only.	☐ Removes private details and adds a request.	☐ Explains each cut in terms of time, privacy and purpose.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

 Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. Check each comment against the four success points yourself.

Say this

“Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why.” — Ask for one removed private detail or one sharper request.

Watch for

Misconception: Students only shorten the draft.

Listen for: “I just cut some words.” **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Ask why each cut helps the committee or protects someone.

Heat check

 Low.

Answer key

How to assess: The educator checks the comment against the four success criteria and whether a listener can repeat the request back.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** One specific observation tied to the item.
- **Reasoning:** Explains why the change matters.
- **Audience & purpose:** Names the item and a specific request.
- **Revision:** Removes private details and adds a request.

[illegible]

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames. About 8 minutes.

- 1 The parks committee cannot fix the bus problem. Who should get that question instead?

➤ The office or board in charge of the buses. Gia could look up its meeting and its comment rules.

- 2 What does Gia get from speaking, even if the committee recommends turning off the lights?

➤ Her comment goes on the record, so the committee knows people use the courts after 8.

- 3 Court users who work late may miss a 6 p.m. meeting. How could their views reach the committee?

➤ They could send a written comment before the meeting. The rules allow that.

My take

I think Gia should ___ because ___.

➤ I think Gia should ask for lights until 9 on weekdays because the committee can act on that.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

➤ The evidence that changed my first guess is the agenda. Item 4 is about the lights, not closing the park.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: 4 min. Use question 4 as an exit ticket.

💬 Say this

“Answer with a detail from a document, not a guess about the committee.” — Ask for one answer per question.

🔗 Stretch

- Compare Evidence B with Seattle City Council’s public comment page. Which rules match, and which would you check locally?
- Going further: Write Gia’s request as one sentence a listener could repeat. Then reread your comment. Does it speak for anyone who has not asked you to?
- Going further: Compare the comment rules in Evidence B with Seattle City Council’s public comment page. Which rules match? Which would you need to check for your own city or school board?
- Going further: Record your comment as audio, then turn it into a written comment. Keep the same point in both. Ask a listener which version made the request clearer.
- Going further: With a trusted adult, find the website for your city council, school board or parks board. Open the next meeting agenda and find one item that affects you. Read the comment rules: the sign-up, the time limit and the written option. Leave addresses, phone numbers and other people’s private stories out of anything you submit.
- Compare comment rules for two different local bodies
- Track a real agenda item from discussion to vote

One question I still have is how many people complained about the noise.

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.

Talk about this case at home

Case 19: What should Gia say in her two-minute comment?

In this case, Gia gets two minutes at a parks committee meeting to speak about a plan to turn off the court lights. Your student helped cut her three-page draft into a short comment with one clear request.

Questions to talk about

- 1 Who makes decisions about parks and other public spaces in a town or city?
- 2 What makes a short request easy for a listener to remember?
- 3 Why might someone leave a friend's story out of a public comment?

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



See the case online.

Case 19 | Talk about this case at home

| Grades 6—8 educator edition

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

“Read this page at home with someone you trust.” —
Nobody needs to share a personal story to complete it.