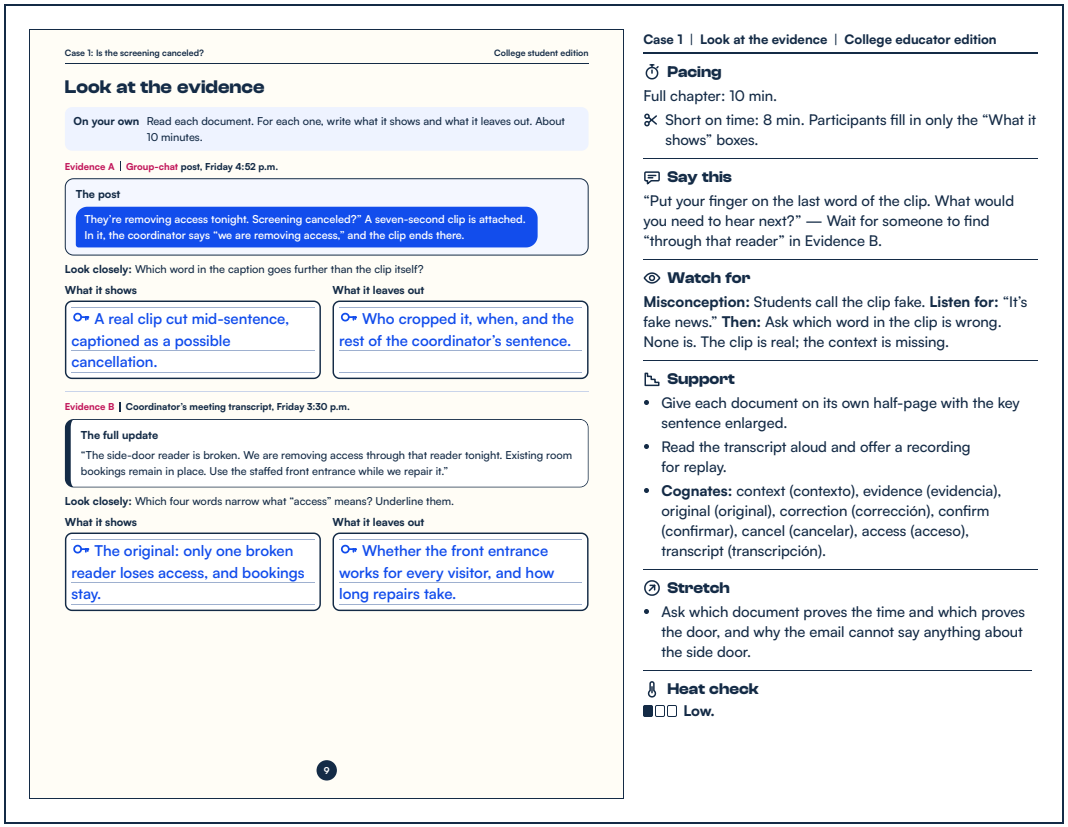
Educator edition

College and community

College courses, libraries, youth programs and community groups working with people ages 18 to 24.

20 cases



Case 1: Is the screening canceled? College student edition

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 | Group-chat post, Friday 4:52 p.m.

The post

They're removing access tonight. Screening canceled?" A seven-second clip is attached. In it, the coordinator says "we are removing access," and the clip ends there.

Look closely: Which word in the caption goes further than the clip itself?

What it shows	What it leaves out
A real clip cut mid-sentence, captioned as a possible cancellation.	Who cropped it, when, and the rest of the coordinator's sentence.

Evidence B | Coordinator's meeting transcript, Friday 3:30 p.m.

The full update

"The side-door reader is broken. We are removing access through that reader tonight. Existing room bookings remain in place. Use the staffed front entrance while we repair it."

Look closely: Which four words narrow what "access" means? Underline them.

What it shows	What it leaves out
The original: only one broken reader loses access, and bookings stay.	Whether the front entrance works for every visitor, and how long repairs take.

9

Case 1 | Look at the evidence | College educator edition

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 8 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Say this

"Put your finger on the last word of the clip. What would you need to hear next?" — Wait for someone to find "through that reader" in Evidence B.

Watch for

Misconception: Students call the clip fake. **Listen for:** "It's fake news." **Then:** Ask which word in the clip is wrong. None is. The clip is real; the context is missing.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page with the key sentence enlarged.
- Read the transcript aloud and offer a recording for replay.
- **Cognates:** context (contexto), evidence (evidencia), original (original), correction (corrección), confirm (confirmar), cancel (cancelar), access (acceso), transcript (transcripción).

Stretch

- Ask which document proves the time and which proves the door, and why the email cannot say anything about the side door.

Heat check

■□□ Low.

1. The student page, reduced, with the same page number as in the student edition.
2. Sample answers are blue, italic and start with a key symbol.
3. The educator column names the case, the page and this edition.
4. Blocks for this page, always in the same order.

How to use this educator edition

Each sheet shows one student page on the left and notes for you on the right. Student pages keep their page numbers in this book. Each case starts with a Case plan sheet.

The educator column

Pacing Minutes for the full chapter, and what to cut when you have one period.

Say this Prompts to read aloud, with a note on how to use each one.

Stop and think On reading passage pages: the passage questions and where each one falls.

Watch for A likely misconception, what it sounds like and what to do next.

Support Scaffolds, sentence frames and English and Spanish cognates.

Stretch A harder question or extension for students who are ready.

Heat check How likely the page is to start a hard conversation, and how to cool it down.

Standards The standards the task practices, on the task page.

Answer key Answers that are not printed on the student page.

Answers

A sample answer Each answer is a complete response a strong student could write. Your students' wording will differ.

Heat check

■□□ **Low:** most students can discuss this without personal stakes.

■■□ **Medium:** the talk can turn personal. Use the cool-down.

■■■ **High:** plan the cool-down before class.

Plan the course

Case	Task	Students make	Full chapter, min	One period, min	Code of ethics
1 Is the screening canceled?	Write an update-and-correction procedure for a student club's group chat and social accounts, using the Common Room rumor as the worked example. Include the correction the club would post.	Procedure, 250—350 words, plus a model correction of 60—90 words	107	75	SPJ Code of Ethics
2 Does the worksheet show what Dec knows?	Write a one-page guide for volunteer tutors in a library or youth program who work with high school students like Dec. The guide shows how to describe what a tutor observes without diagnosing and how to point a student and family to the school's own process.	Tutor guide, 350—450 words, with one worked example based on Dec	107	75	CEC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards
3 What should a group do after a public mistake?	Write a corrections policy for a student club's social accounts, then use it to write the correction for the crew's recap caption.	Corrections policy, 250—350 words, plus a posted correction of 70—100 words	106	75	PRSA Code of Ethics
4 Who gets a say when a shared room changes?	Write a proposal to the nonprofit board for hearing from evening users before it chooses among Options A, B and C. Add a written comment that recommends one option.	Proposal, 300—400 words, plus a written comment of 150—200 words	109	75	ASPA Code of Ethics
5 Why is my deposit smaller than what I earned?	Write Gia's question to payroll about the missing hours. Then write a one-page guide for new student workers that walks through her pay statement line by line. The guide could be used in a campus career office's first-job workshop.	Payroll question, 50—80 words, plus a guide of 300—400 words	90	75	PayrollOrg Code of Ethics

Plan the course, continued

Case	Task	Students make	Full chapter, min	One period, min	Code of ethics
6 What can your family see in your college records?	Write a plain-language explainer for first-year students and their families, suitable for an orientation program or a student government page. It separates billing access from access to academic records and explains how a student changes an authorization.	Explainer for students and families, 350—450 words, with three short questions and answers	94	75	AACRAO Ethics and Practice
7 Did one complaint get the novel banned?	Write an explainer for a public library newsletter or a campus newspaper on how a school library review works. Use the district's reconsideration notice as the example. Separate the district's adopted policy, the ALA's guidance and what courts have and have not settled.	Explainer, 450—600 words, with a labeled source list	101	90	ALA Code of Ethics
8 Is it a recommendation or an ad?	Write a social media disclosure policy for a student organization whose members post reviews, and a one-page training handout. Then use the policy to rewrite the first three seconds and the caption of Gia's review.	Policy, 300—400 words, a one-page handout and a revised opening and caption	106	75	FTC Endorsement Guides (16 CFR Part 255)
9 What is on your ballot, and where do you check?	Write a nonpartisan voting-information guide for a student organization's social accounts or a campus library display. Add a short note explaining how the guide avoids the problems in the creator's voter guide.	Guide, 300—400 words, plus a note of about 100 words	106	75	SPJ Code of Ethics

Plan the course, continued

Case	Task	Students make	Full chapter, min	One period, min	Code of ethics
10 Whose job is it to fix the blocked route?	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.	Memo, 300—400 words, plus a revised flyer of 60—100 words	103	75	ASPA Code of Ethics
11 Why are Jordy and Gia paid different rates?	Write Jordy's message to the supervisor and a one-page plan for the conversation. The plan lists the record Jordy brings, what Gia agreed to share, the questions to ask and Jordy's options after each kind of answer.	Message, 80—120 words, plus a one-page conversation plan	94	75	SHRM Code of Ethics
12 When can a school limit what students say?	Write a plain-language explainer on posters and walkouts at public schools for a library teen night or a youth program. Separate the speech question, the attendance rule and possible discipline, and use Anika's case as the example.	Explainer, 400—500 words, with a labeled source list	113	90	ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct
13 Can the crew cut waste before it reaches the bin?	Write a memo to a student government events committee proposing one purchasing change for campus or club events. Use the Common Room supply list as the model, and include a measurement plan that states its boundary.	Memo, 300—400 words, with a materials table	94	75	FTC Green Guides (16 CFR Part 260)

Plan the course, continued

Case	Task	Students make	Full chapter, min	One period, min	Code of ethics
14 Does giving credit let the crew use the song?	Write a rights-clearance guide for a community film night or a student film club, using Caio's rough cut as the worked example. The guide shows how to fill in a rights log, what a credit does and does not do, and where to get help.	Guide, 400—500 words, with a completed rights log for the rough cut	110	75	AIGA Standards of Professional Practice
15 Is Rafa's unpaid internship really a job?	Write a memo to the campus career center about unpaid internship listings on its job board, using the studio's listing as the example. Add a one-page checklist students can use before they accept an unpaid offer.	Memo, 300—400 words, plus a one-page checklist	110	75	NACE Principles for Ethical Professional Practice
16 Who wrote the new building rule?	Design a notice template that a building office could use for any rule change. Rewrite the rear-door notice with it, and write a short memo to the building office that explains each element.	Notice template, a rewritten notice of 60—120 words and a memo of about 150 words	110	75	ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct
17 How should the crew give out ten free seats?	Write a memo to a student government committee recommending how to give out ten free workshop seats among thirty applicants. Then draft the announcement that publishes the method before sign-ups open.	Memo, 350—450 words, plus an announcement of 80—120 words	107	75	The Belmont Report

Plan the course, continued

Case	Task	Students make	Full chapter, min	One period, min	Code of ethics
18 Why is the theater curtain still falling apart?	Write a fact-check of the viral post for a local news site or a campus newspaper. Correct the comparison, show the math and say what the proposed budget can and cannot tell readers about the curtain.	Fact-check, 350—450 words, with a worked calculation	106	75	ASPA Code of Ethics
19 What should Gia say in her two-minute comment?	Prepare the crew's input on item 4 as a small community group. Write a two-minute spoken comment for the parks committee and a follow-up email to the full council, which receives the committee's recommendation.	Spoken comment, 2 minutes (about 260 words), plus a follow-up email of 120—180 words	97	75	ASPA Code of Ethics
20 Can the crew post this image as true?	Write the verification note the crew posts instead of the image. Then write a memo recommending two changes to the campus facilities alerts page that would help students check rumors.	Verification note, 50—80 words, plus a memo of 250—350 words	97	75	RTDNA Code of Ethics

Standards in this edition

Common Core codes come from our standards map for this grade band. Each code links to its official page.

Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric AAC&U VALUE rubric. AAC&U's rubric for taking part in community life, including civic communication and working within community structures toward a civic aim. **Cases 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17 and 19**

Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric AAC&U VALUE rubric. AAC&U's rubric for exploring issues, evidence and assumptions thoroughly before forming a conclusion. **Cases 11 and 20**

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U VALUE rubric. AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. **Cases 2, 3, 8, 11, 14, 15, 16 and 17**

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U VALUE rubric. AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. **Cases 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 18 and 20**

Oral Communication VALUE Rubric AAC&U VALUE rubric. AAC&U's rubric for a prepared talk with a clear central message, organization, supporting material and delivery. **Case 19**

Problem Solving VALUE Rubric AAC&U VALUE rubric. AAC&U's rubric for defining a problem, proposing and weighing solutions and checking the results. **Cases 10 and 13**

Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U VALUE rubric. AAC&U's rubric for calculating, interpreting and explaining numbers in everyday situations. **Cases 4, 5, 13 and 18**

Written Communication VALUE Rubric AAC&U VALUE rubric. AAC&U's rubric for writing that fits its context and purpose, develops its content and uses sources and evidence. **Cases 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19**

Authority Is Constructed and Contextual ACRL Framework. A source's authority depends on its creator's expertise and on the question it is being used to answer. **Cases 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15 and 16**

Information Creation as a Process ACRL Framework. Information is made through a process, and how it was made affects what it can be trusted for. **Cases 1, 3, 8, 18 and 20**

Information Has Value ACRL Framework. Information has value, including as a means to influence people, so credit, access and privacy matter. **Cases 6, 7, 8, 11, 14, 15 and 17**

Research as Inquiry ACRL Framework. Research is a cycle of asking questions whose answers raise new questions. **Cases 4 and 5**

Scholarship as Conversation ACRL Framework. Experts and communities build knowledge over time through ongoing discussion and disagreement. **Cases 12 and 19**

Searching as Strategic Exploration ACRL Framework. Searching for information is an exploration that takes planning, several sources and changes of direction. **Cases 9 and 20**

Professional standards in this edition

A code of ethics is a standard a profession sets for its own members. Codes for journalists and public relations are voluntary. The rules of professional conduct for lawyers are adopted in each state and can lead to discipline. The FTC guides are law-related guidance, not ethics codes.

SPJ Code of Ethics, Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ). Professional code.

Revised September 6, 2014, at SPJ's National Convention in Nashville, Tennessee.

Who it binds: No one is legally bound. SPJ calls the code "not a set of rules" and says it is not legally enforceable under the First Amendment. SPJ encourages its use "by all people in all media."

Seek Truth and Report It: Cases 1, 9, 18 and 20

Minimize Harm: Case 19

spj.org/spj-code-of-ethics

RTDNA Code of Ethics, Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA). Professional code.

Revised code adopted June 11, 2015.

Who it binds: Journalists in broadcast and digital news, as guidance. RTDNA says the code "does not dictate what journalists should do in every ethical predicament." It is not a law.

Truth and accuracy above all: Cases 1 and 20

Independence and transparency: Cases 3 and 14

Opening statement (before the guiding principles): Case 9

rtdna.org/ethics

Professional standards in this edition, continued

PRSSA Ethical Principles for PR Students & Professionals (professional values and member pledge), Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), the student organization of PRSA. Professional code.

No date shown on the page.

Who it binds: PRSSA student members. PRSSA asks members to follow its Code of Ethics and Conduct and encourages chapters to have members sign the pledge when they join. PRSSA lists the same six professional values as PRSA and says it "models its ethics guidelines after those of its parent organization, PRSA." It does not say it adopts the PRSA Code word for word. The pledge says members who violate it may be barred from PRSA membership.

PRSSA Code of Ethics and Conduct (member pledge): Case 1

prsa.org/prssa/about-prssa/ethical-principles

CEC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards, Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Professional code.

No adoption date shown on the page.

Who it binds: Special education professionals, who CEC says "are guided by" these principles and standards. It is not a law; IDEA and Section 504 are the laws.

Special Education Standards for Professional Practice: Teaching and Assessment: Case 2

Special Education Professional Ethical Principles: Case 2

exceptionalchildren.org/standards/ethical-principles-and-practice-standards

Professional standards in this edition, continued

Code of Ethics of the Education Profession, National Education Association (NEA). Professional code.

Adopted by the 1975 NEA Representative Assembly. NEA's web page, titled "Code of Ethics for Educators," was published September 14, 2020.

Who it binds: Educators, including education support professionals. NEA says the code states "the aspiration of all educators" and that only NEA and its affiliates set remedies for violations. It is not a state licensing rule or a law.

Principle I: Commitment to the Student, item 8: Case 2

Principle I: Commitment to the Student, item 2: Case 7

nea.org/resource-library/code-ethics-educators

PRSA Code of Ethics, Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Professional code.

First developed in 1950. The current code was adopted by PRSA members in October 2000, according to PRSA's Board of Ethics and Professional Standards handbook. The page shows no later revision date.

Who it binds: PRSA members. PRSA says the code "applies to PRSA members." It is voluntary: PRSA says it has no legislative or government power to enforce it, though its board can bar or expel members sanctioned by a government agency or convicted in court for conduct that breaks the code.

Free Flow of Information: Cases 3 and 8

Disclosure of Information: Cases 12 and 20

Competition: Case 14

prsa.org/professional-development/prsa-resources/ethics

Professional standards in this edition, continued

Credo for Ethical Communication, National Communication Association (NCA). Professional code.

Approved by the NCA Legislative Council in 1999; reaffirmed in 2011; reaffirmed with edits in 2017 and 2024.

Who it binds: NCA members, who "endorse and are committed to practicing" its nine principles. It is a statement of values with no enforcement process.

"We accept responsibility for the short- and long-term consequences of our own communication..." (one of nine unnumbered principles): Case 3

"We advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings..." (one of nine unnumbered principles): Cases 6 and 9

"We strive to understand and respect other communicators' intent..." (one of nine unnumbered principles): Cases 7 and 16

"We advocate truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason..." (one of nine unnumbered principles): Case 18

"We endorse freedom of expression, diversity of perspective, and acknowledgement of dissent..." (one of nine unnumbered principles): Case 19

natcom.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Credo-for-Ethical-Communication-Revised-Clean-2024.pdf

ASPA Code of Ethics, American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). Professional code.

Revised 2013. ASPA has promoted ethical standards for public servants since 1984.

Who it binds: ASPA members, who "may be sanctioned" for failing to uphold it. ASPA also aims to raise awareness among "all those who work in public service in all sectors."

5. Fully Inform and Advise.: Cases 4 and 18

3. Promote democratic participation.: Cases 4, 10 and 19

4. Strengthen social equity.: Case 17

aspanet.org/ASPA/Code-of-Ethics/ASPA/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics.aspx

ALA Code of Ethics, American Library Association (ALA). Professional code.

Adopted in 1939; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; January 22, 2008; and June 29, 2021.

Who it binds: Librarians, library trustees and library staff, as a framework. ALA says the principles "cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations."

Principle 1 (of 9): Case 4

Principle 2 (of 9): Case 7

ala.org/tools/ethics

Professional standards in this edition, continued

PayrollOrg Code of Ethics, PayrollOrg. Professional code.

No date shown on the document.

Who it binds: Payroll professionals who belong to PayrollOrg. It is not a law; tax and wage laws are separate.

Item 2: Case 5

Item 5: Case 5

info.payroll.org/pdfs/members/PAYO-code-of-ethics.pdf

IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators, International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). Professional code.

No date shown on the page.

Who it binds: IABC members, who must agree to the code when they apply and renew. IABC can end the membership of anyone found to have violated it.

"I communicate accurate information": Case 5

"I protect confidential information": Case 11

"I do not guarantee results": Case 13

iabc.com/about/what-we-do/standards/code-of-ethics

AACRAO Ethics and Practice, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Professional code.

Adopted by the AACRAO Board on December 3, 2009; amended March 31, 2010; ratified by members April 23, 2010; reviewed without changes in 2016 and 2019.

Who it binds: AACRAO members, such as college registrars and admissions officers. It is not a law; FERPA is the federal law on education records.

Standards of professional practice: Case 6

Principles of professional ethics: Case 6

aacrao.org/resource/ethics-and-practice

FTC Endorsement Guides (16 CFR Part 255), Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Law or regulation.

Current text as revised July 26, 2023 (88 FR 48102), read on the eCFR.

Who it binds: Advertisers, endorsers (including influencers and reviewers) and intermediaries such as PR firms, under Section 5 of the FTC Act. The Guides are the FTC's "administrative interpretations" of that law. They are law-related guidance, not an ethics code.

§ 255.5 Disclosure of material connections: Case 8

§ 255.0 Purpose and definitions, paragraph (f): Case 8

ecfr.gov/current/title-16/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-255

Professional standards in this edition, continued

NPPA Code of Ethics for Visual Journalists, National Press Photographers Association (NPPA). Professional code.

No revision date shown on the page.

Who it binds: Visual journalists (news photographers and video journalists) and the people who manage visual news. The code says they "are accountable for upholding" its ten standards. It is not a law.

Code of Ethics, standard 3: Case 10

nppa.org/resources/code-ethics

ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct, American Bar Association (ABA), Center for Professional Responsibility. Professional code.

Adopted by the ABA House of Delegates in 1983 and amended since.

Who it binds: Lawyers. The ABA writes the Model Rules as a model. Each state adopts its own rules of professional conduct, most based on this model, and those rules bind the lawyers it licenses. Lawyers can be disciplined for breaking them. The rules do not bind people who are not lawyers.

Rule 3.1 Meritorious Claims and Contentions: Cases 10 and 16

Rule 2.1 Advisor: Case 12

Rule 4.1 Truthfulness in Statements to Others: Case 15

Rule 4.3 Dealing with Unrepresented Person: Case 15

americanbar.org/groups/professional_responsibility/publications/model_rules_of_professional_conduct

Professional standards in this edition, continued

SHRM Code of Ethics, Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). Professional code.

As amended April 24, 2023.

Who it binds: SHRM members (human resources professionals). SHRM's bylaws set disciplinary procedures for violations.

Fairness and Justice: Case 11

Use of Information: Case 11

shrm.org/legal/bylaws-and-code-of-ethics/code-of-ethics

AIGA Standards of Professional Practice, AIGA, the professional association for design. Professional code.

Text read in AIGA's Design Business + Ethics (2009 edition). AIGA's current web page for the standards could not be opened.

Who it binds: AIGA members. AIGA says the standards "represent the distinction of an AIGA member in the practice of design."

The designer's responsibility to the public: Case 12

The designer's responsibility to society and the environment: Case 13

The designer's responsibility to other designers: Case 14

aiga.org/resources/aiga-standards-of-professional-practice

FTC Green Guides (16 CFR Part 260), Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Law or regulation.

October 11, 2012 (77 FR 62124), current text read on the eCFR.

Who it binds: Marketers who make environmental claims, such as calling a product "recyclable." The Guides say they "do not operate to bind the FTC or the public," but the FTC can act under Section 5 of the FTC Act against claims that are deceptive. They are law-related guidance, not an ethics code.

§ 260.12 Recyclable claims: Case 13

ecfr.gov/current/title-16/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-260

NACE Principles for Ethical Professional Practice, National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Professional code.

Approved by the NACE Board of Directors in 2017; updated 2025.

Who it binds: NACE members: college career-services staff and employers' recruiting staff, who "are expected to use the Principles."

4. Comply with laws: Case 15

naceweb.org/career-development/organizational-structure/principles-for-ethical-professional-practice

Professional standards in this edition, continued

The Belmont Report, National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research; published by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Research ethics.

Published in the Federal Register on April 18, 1979 (44 FR 23192).

Who it binds: Researchers who study people. It is a statement of ethical principles for research with human subjects. It is not a membership code, and by itself it is not a law.

B. Basic Ethical Principles: 3. Justice: Case 17

C. Applications: 1. Informed Consent: Case 17

govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1979-04-18/pdf/FR-1979-04-18.pdf

Access, language and discussion

Supports in this edition

- **Vocabulary:** Keep the case concepts available as a reference, and define each legal or policy term the first time it appears.
- **Read aloud:** Read the key source aloud once and offer recordings of longer real sources.
- **Bilingual planning:** Allow planning notes in any language, provide the Spanish glossary and pair participants who share a language for source analysis. Never ask a participant to disclose a disability, immigration status, family finances or private records to take part.
- **Oral rehearsal:** Use a two-minute partner rehearsal of the main request before drafting.
- **Other ways to respond:** Where a task produces a memo or a guide, allow a recorded explainer or an annotated slide in its place.

Cognates

The terms and evidence sheets list English and Spanish cognates in the Support block, such as context (contexto). Point them out before reading. A fluent Spanish reader checks every list before release.

Heat check

Every sheet rates how likely the page is to start a hard conversation.

■□□ **Low:** most students can discuss it without personal stakes.

■■□ **Medium:** use the cool-down if talk turns personal.

■■■ **High:** plan the cool-down before class.

No one has to share

No student needs to share private experiences, create a social media account or post publicly. Students can answer every question with the evidence on the page.

How this book works

Each case is a short chapter. The pages follow the same order in every case, so you learn the layout once.

What happened Read the story and the question you will answer.

Reading passage Read a longer passage about the case. Stop and think at each question.

Key idea and In the news Read the idea behind the case, a code of ethics and two real news stories.

Practice Choose the best response and fix two phrases in a student's draft.

Check your work Answer yes-or-no questions and mark your level in the rubric.

Talk about this case at home Take home a page of questions for your family.

Key terms Learn the words the case needs, each with its Spanish word.

Look at the evidence Read each document. Write what it shows and what it leaves out.

Sort the evidence Decide which evidence supports each claim and whose view is missing.

Your task Follow the numbered steps, plan in the boxes and write your draft.

Questions to discuss Write short answers, then finish My take.

Labels on the page

Evidence A | Group-chat post
A document from the case. Read it closely and compare it with the other documents.

Real source | Publisher | Date
A real news story, code or study. Scan its code to read the original.

Directions on each page

On your own A short direction under a heading tells you what to do if you work without a teacher, and about how long it takes.

When a page continues

Some sections run onto a second page. Its heading says "continued," and it keeps the next page number.

Filling in this book

- Fill it in on paper or in a PDF app. Save a copy before you type.
- What you type stays on your device. Nothing is sent to us.
- Do not write private information about yourself or other people.

Say this

"Every case in this book follows the same order, so you learn the layout once." — Point to the list of sections as you say it.

"An "Evidence" label marks a document from the case. A "Real source" label names its publisher and date." — Ask two students to find one of each in Case 1.

Watch for

Misconception: Every document in a chapter comes from the news. **Listen for:** "Where was this group chat published?" **Then:** Point to the labels. Evidence documents belong to the case; a real source always names its publisher and date.

Support

- Read the page aloud with the class.
- Show the "On your own" strip on one case page before students work alone.
- Repeat the rule: do not write private information about yourself or other people.

Contents

1	Is the screening canceled?	3
2	Does the worksheet show what Dec knows?	24
3	What should a group do after a public mistake?	45
4	Who gets a say when a shared room changes?	66
5	Why is my deposit smaller than what I earned?	87
6	What can your family see in your college records?	107
7	Did one complaint get the novel banned?	127
8	Is it a recommendation or an ad?	149
9	What is on your ballot, and where do you check?	170
10	Whose job is it to fix the blocked route?	192
11	Why are Jordy and Gia paid different rates?	213
12	When can a school limit what students say?	233
13	Can the crew cut waste before it reaches the bin?	253
14	Does giving credit let the crew use the song?	275
15	Is Rafa's unpaid internship really a job?	297
16	Who wrote the new building rule?	317
17	How should the crew give out ten free seats?	338
18	Why is the theater curtain still falling apart?	358
19	What should Gia say in her two-minute comment?	379
20	Can the crew post this image as true?	400

Say this

"Find the case we are starting and write its first page number in your notes." — Page numbers match the educator edition, so you can call out pages.

Watch for

Misconception: The class must do every case in order. **Listen for:** "Do we have to start at Case 1?" **Then:** Tell students which cases the class will use and in what order.

Support

- Mark the cases your class will use before you copy the page.

Case 1: Is the screening canceled?

Content note

The optional film clip from The Hunger Games (2012) shows coercion and danger to young people. Preview it before class, or skip it, because students need only the evidence in the story.

Overview

Students read a short story about a neighborhood screening. A cropped seven-second clip in the crew's group chat seems to say the event is canceled. Students compare the post with two documents, the coordinator's meeting transcript and a booking email, and decide what the evidence supports. They then write a short group-chat update that corrects the claim and says which entrance to use.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- summarize a short record accurately
- explain what a professional code of ethics is and whom it applies to
- write clear numbered instructions for a group

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- write a procedure that names who checks the original record before anyone posts

Objectives, continued

- include a holding-message step that gives a time for the next update
- write a model correction with the time, the entrance and the source checked
- cite one professional code accurately and say whom it applies to

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant
- Evidence A, B and C, and Jordy's holding message
- The SPJ, RTDNA and PRSSA code cards
- The procedure template

The task in this edition

Task: Write an update-and-correction procedure for a student club's group chat and social accounts, using the Common Room rumor as the worked example. Include the correction the club would post.

Students make: Procedure, 250—350 words, plus a model correction of 60—90 words

Pacing

Opener (page 3): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the opening question.

Key terms (pages 4 and 5): 5 min. Short on time: skip. Define holding statement aloud.

Pacing, continued

Look at the evidence (page 9): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 10): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read Evidence C aloud. Skip its boxes.

Key idea (pages 11 and 12): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip the In the news section.

Sort the evidence (page 13): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 14): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 15 and 16): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Fill in the first two planner boxes together.

Your draft (pages 17 and 18): 30 min. Short on time: 30 min.

Check your work (pages 19 and 20): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Skip the rubric boxes.

Questions to discuss (pages 21 and 22): 10 min. Short on time: 6 min. Discuss question 4 only.

Talk about this case at home (page 23): at home.

Periods: full chapter 107 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 1 plan, continued

Standards

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students evaluate the forwarded clip against the transcript and the booking email before they use it (Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically).

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 procedure and a correction for club members and guests who are about to travel (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 coordinator's transcript carries more authority than a forwarded screenshot for this question.

Information Creation as a Process Information is made through a process, and how it was made affects what it can be trusted for. In this case: Students trace how cropping a seven-second clip changed what the meeting record appeared to say.

Codes of ethics

- **SPJ Code of Ethics:** Seek Truth and Report It
- **RTDNA Code of Ethics:** Truth and accuracy above all
- **PRSSA Ethical Principles for PR Students & Professionals (professional values and member pledge):** PRSSA Code of Ethics and Conduct (member pledge)

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 3):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 4 and 5):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 9):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 10):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 11 and 12):** Low

■■□ **Sort the evidence (page 13):** Medium

■■□ **Practice (page 14):** Medium

■□□ **Check your work (pages 19 and 20):** Low

Try it at your school

Find out how your school sends urgent updates.

- Ask a teacher or front-office staff which channel carries official changes (email, app, website)
- Save the official channel so you can check it before reposting

Try it at your school, continued

- Next time a screenshot circulates, post "still checking" instead of a verdict
- Suggest to your student council that urgent updates include the original link

Who to ask: Front-office staff, a teacher, the student council advisor or a school librarian

Safety: Don't share other people's names or messages from a private chat. Check any official source with a trusted adult if it asks for personal information.

Sources

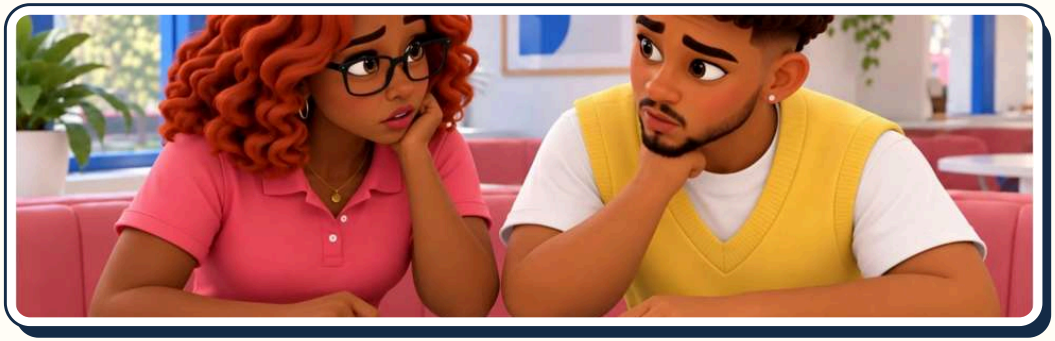
- Scholastic, "Sunrise on the Reaping announcement," June 6, 2024
- Robert M. Entman, "Framing," 1993
- Society of Professional Journalists, "SPJ Code of Ethics," September 6, 2014

Case 1: Is the screening canceled?

A cropped clip in the group chat seems to cancel the crew's screening, so you check the original documents and write an update.

On your own Read What happened. Underline the sentence that worries the crew. About 5 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who reads the full transcript before Gia posts. **New skill:** Find the original source.



Gia and Mateo read the message about tonight's screening.

What happened

It is Friday afternoon at the Common Room, a shared event space inside a bookshop in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. Mateo, 22, booked the room for tonight's 6 p.m. screening, the crew's first in the neighborhood. He has been moving tables and chairs all afternoon.

Gia, 21, is helping between her class and her shift at a café. Jordy is testing the projector and captions. Sami is on her way from the print shop.

At 4:52 p.m., someone forwards a seven-second clip to the group chat. The clip comes from a meeting about the room. Its caption asks whether the screening is canceled.

Gia wants to warn people before they leave home. Mateo hopes the post is wrong. Gia has about ten minutes before she has to leave for work.

Your question: Is the screening really canceled, and what should the crew tell people?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the opening question.

Say this

"What would you do if this landed in your chat right now?" — Take two or three answers. Do not correct anyone yet.

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide from the caption alone. **Listen for:** "It's canceled, obviously." **Then:** Ask which document would prove it. Write "We need to check" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Point to the time on the post, 4:52 p.m., and the screening time, 6 p.m.

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.

Claim A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.

En español: afirmación

In this case: The caption "Screening canceled?" is a claim. It ends with a question mark, and no document confirms it.

Context Context is the information around an event or a quote that you need to understand what it means.

En español: contexto

In this case: The full transcript adds the words "through that reader tonight." Those words show that only the broken side door is closing.

Framing Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward.

En español: encuadre

In this case: The crop and the caption choose what viewers notice: "removing access," not "through that reader."

Holding statement A holding statement is a short update that says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more.

En español: comunicado provisional

In this case: Jordy posts: "We're checking the original. Hold your plans for a moment."

Who is involved

Mateo

Booked the room for tonight

"I've been moving these tables all afternoon. Please tell me we didn't cancel this in a group chat."

Gia

Leaving soon for a café shift

"Sami's already on the train from the print shop. "We're figuring it out" doesn't tell her whether to keep coming."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. Define holding statement aloud.

Say this

"Write your first guess now. You will come back to it at the end." — Keep first guesses private unless a student wants to share.

Watch for

Misconception: Students hear "claim" as "lie." **Listen for:** "The claim is fake." **Then:** Reread the definition. A claim can turn out to be true or false; evidence decides.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- Frame: "A claim is ___. In this case, the claim is ___."
- **Cognates:** context (contexto), evidence (evidencia), original (original), correction (corrección), confirm (confirmar), cancel (cancelar), access (acceso), transcript (transcripción).

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 is going on?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that the room lost its booking, because the clip has the coordinator saying access is being removed.

Notes

This page continues page 4. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 4.

Reading passage

Urgent updates and the ethics of the crop

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

- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Context**: Context is the information around an event or a quote that you need to understand what it means.
- **Framing**: Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward.
- **Holding statement**: A holding statement is a short update that says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more.

The story: An accurate clip, a false conclusion

The crew's first neighborhood screening is set for 6 p.m. on a Friday at the Common Room, an event space inside a bookshop in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. Mateo, 22, booked the room and has spent the afternoon moving tables. Gia, 21, is helping between class and a café shift. Jordy is testing the projector and captions, and Sami is traveling from the print shop. At 4:52 p.m., a forwarded seven-second clip reaches the group chat. In it, the room coordinator says, "we are removing access," and the recording stops. The caption asks whether the screening is canceled.

The case is useful for adult communicators because each person's first impulse is reasonable. Gia wants to warn guests before they travel. Mateo wants the event to happen and admits he wants the clip to be fake. Jordy wants the rest of the sentence. Each impulse becomes a different message, and each message has different consequences for people already on the move.

In this case, you are the one who reads the full transcript before Gia posts. Treat that role as a professional one. You are the check between a claim and an organization's public answer.

Stop and think. Which of the three first impulses would a real organization most likely act on, and why?

What the documents support

The caption makes a **claim**: a statement that something is true, which can be checked with evidence. The coordinator's 3:30 p.m. transcript says the side-door reader is broken and that access is removed "through that reader tonight."

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (720 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: An accurate clip, a false conclusion":** Which of the three first impulses would a real organization most likely act on, and why?
2. **After "What the documents support":** What does the crew still not know after reading both documents, and how should the correction handle that gap?
3. **After "Framing, verification and professional duty":** Should a small host group be held to the same verification standard as a newsroom? What would change if it were not?

What the documents support, continued

It adds that existing bookings remain in place and that people should use the staffed front entrance. The booking email, sent Tuesday, confirms Friday from 6 to 9 p.m. with a step-free, staffed front entrance from 5:30.

Read together, the documents support a narrow conclusion. The event is on, one entrance has changed, and a person who relies on the side door needs that information before arrival. **Context**, the information around a quote that you need to understand what it means, turns an apparent cancellation into a routing change. The documents also have limits. Neither says how long the repair will take, and neither confirms that every visitor can use the front entrance.

The crew's sequence is a small model of crisis communication. A **holding statement** comes first. It is a short update that says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more. Jordy's version, "We're checking the original. Hold your plans for a moment," neither repeats the rumor's key word nor overclaims by calling the clip fake. The correction follows in the channel where the rumor spread, with the time, the entrance and the original update. It is captioned for people reading without sound, and the full transcript stays linked beside the crop.

Stop and think. What does the crew still not know after reading both documents, and how should the correction handle that gap?

Framing, verification and professional duty

Entman's often-cited definition treats **framing** as selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a text (Robert M. Entman, "Framing," 1993). In this case, framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward. The analytical value of the concept is that it separates two questions that are often merged: what a message emphasizes, and why the sender chose it. The crew can answer the first question with documents. The second would require evidence the crew does not have.

Professional codes turn this analysis into duties. The SPJ Code of Ethics asks journalists to "verify information before releasing it" and to "use original sources whenever possible" (Society of Professional Journalists, September 6, 2014). The RTDNA code grants that "going viral" may increase urgency, but it says such moments "only heighten the need for strict standards of accuracy" (RTDNA Code of Ethics, June 11, 2015). A host organization that relays an urgent update carries the same obligations as a newsroom, even when the audience is a group chat.

The research on audiences is both sobering and hopeful. A Stanford study of 3,446 students found that most judged posts by appearance rather than authorship (Stanford Graduate School of Education, November 18, 2019).

This page continues page 6. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 6.

Framing, verification and professional duty, continued

A peer-reviewed field study in high school government classes found that instruction in lateral reading measurably improved students' judgments (Wineburg et al., Journal of Educational Psychology, July 2022). For communicators, the implication is practical. Audiences can learn verification, but an organization should not rely on its audience to do the checking. In this series, finding the original source is the first skill, and later cases assume you will use it without being told.

Stop and think. Should a small host group be held to the same verification standard as a newsroom? What would change if it were not?

Sources

Real source | Robert M. Entman | 1993
Framing

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists | September 6, 2014
SPJ Code of Ethics

Real source | Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) | 2015
RTDNA Code of Ethics

Real source | Stanford Graduate School of Education | November 18, 2019
High school students are unprepared to judge the credibility of information on the internet, according to Stanford researchers

Real source | Journal of Educational Psychology (Wineburg et al.) | July 2022
Lateral reading on the open Internet: A district-wide field study in high school government classes

Notes

This page continues page 6. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 6.

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 | Group-chat post, Friday 4:52 p.m.

The post

They're removing access tonight. Screening canceled?" A seven-second clip is attached. In it, the coordinator says "we are removing access," and the clip ends there.

Look closely: Which word in the caption goes further than the clip itself?

What it shows

A real clip cut mid-sentence, captioned as a possible cancellation.

What it leaves out

Who cropped it, when, and the rest of the coordinator's sentence.

Evidence B | Coordinator's meeting transcript, Friday 3:30 p.m.

The full update

"The side-door reader is broken. We are removing access through that reader tonight. Existing room bookings remain in place. Use the staffed front entrance while we repair it."

Look closely: Which four words narrow what "access" means? Underline them.

What it shows

The original: only one broken reader loses access, and bookings stay.

What it leaves out

Whether the front entrance works for every visitor, and how long repairs take.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 8 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Say this

"Put your finger on the last word of the clip. What would you need to hear next?" — Wait for someone to find "through that reader" in Evidence B.

Watch for

Misconception: Students call the clip fake. **Listen for:** "It's fake news." **Then:** Ask which word in the clip is wrong. None is. The clip is real; the context is missing.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page with the key sentence enlarged.
- Read the transcript aloud and offer a recording for replay.
- **Cognates:** context (contexto), evidence (evidencia), original (original), correction (corrección), confirm (confirmar), cancel (cancelar), access (acceso), transcript (transcripción).

Stretch

- Ask which document proves the time and which proves the door, and why the email cannot say anything about the side door.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Booking email to Mateo, sent Tuesday

The booking email

Friday, 6—9 p.m. Screening confirmed. Front entrance: step-free. Staff member at the desk from 5:30 p.m. Contact the coordinator for arrival support.

Look closely: What does this confirm? What does it not say about the side door?

What it shows

A separate, earlier record of the time and the step-free, staffed entrance.

What it leaves out

The side-door problem, since it was sent Tuesday, before the Friday meeting.

What is still missing from the evidence?

Whether every visitor can use the staffed front entrance (the email says step-free, not that every arrival need is covered), who first cropped the clip and why, and how many people already changed their plans.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read Evidence C aloud. Skip its boxes.

Say this

"Put your finger on the last word of the clip. What would you need to hear next?" — Wait for someone to find "through that reader" in Evidence B.

Watch for

Misconception: Students call the clip fake. **Listen for:** "It's fake news." **Then:** Ask which word in the clip is wrong. None is. The clip is real; the context is missing.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page with the key sentence enlarged.
- Read the transcript aloud and offer a recording for replay.
- **Cognates:** context (contexto), evidence (evidencia), original (original), correction (corrección), confirm (confirmar), cancel (cancelar), access (acceso), transcript (transcripción).

Stretch

- Ask which document proves the time and which proves the door, and why the email cannot say anything about the side door.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: framing

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

The clip in the group chat is real, but that only tells you the video is authentic. A **claim** is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence. **Context** is the information around an event or a quote that you need to understand what it means. Here, the clip stops before the rest of the coordinator's sentence, so the clip alone cannot confirm the caption's claim.

Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward. Media researcher Robert Entman uses this idea to study what messages select and emphasize. The crop makes "removing access" stand out and hides "through that reader," the words that limit the change to one broken side door. You do not have to prove that anyone meant to mislead people. You only need to show what the edit leaves out.

A **holding statement** is a short update that says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more. It gives people a next step while the crew checks the documents. The correction that follows needs the time, the door and a contact for arrival help. People who are already traveling need those details before they arrive.

Professional standards

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ)

SPJ Code of Ethics: Seek Truth and Report It

"Verify information before releasing it. Use original sources whenever possible."

In plain words: Journalists who follow the SPJ code check a claim against the original source before they share it.

Question: What does the full meeting transcript say right after the point where the seven-second clip ends?

Your answer

The transcript goes on to say ___, which changes ___.

The transcript goes on to say "through that reader tonight. Existing room bookings remain in place." That changes the claim from a canceled event to one closed door.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"A frame is what a message chooses to show. What did this clip choose?" — Accept "the scary part" and ask for the exact words.

"The SPJ code says to use original sources whenever possible. Which document here is the original?" — Wait for the transcript.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the SPJ code as a law. **Listen for:** "They could get arrested for that." **Then:** Say: "A code of ethics is a standard a profession sets for its own members. The SPJ code is not a law."

Support

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

Stretch

- Read the RTDNA line about going viral. Ask what Jordy can tell Sami right now that they know is accurate.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

In the news

Real source | CrashCourse (YouTube) | January 22, 2019

Check Yourself with Lateral Reading: Crash Course Navigating Digital Information #3

Shows the move the crew makes: leave the screenshot, open new tabs and check who made it and what other sources say.

Real source | PolitiFact | August 1, 2022

Viral image shows fake story from The Atlantic about Biden

A real fact-check of a fabricated news screenshot: the image looked official, but the outlet never published it.

Notes

This page continues page 11. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 11.

Sort the evidence

On your own Compare each piece of evidence with each claim. Write supports, challenges or neither in each box. About 6 minutes.

Draw an arrow from each piece of evidence to the claim it supports or challenges. Which claim is left standing, and which gap still needs a check before you post?

Evidence	**Claim 1** The screening is canceled.	**Claim 2** The screening is on; use the staffed front entrance.
1 The clip: "we are removing access..." ends mid-sentence.	Supports	Neither
2 The transcript: access is removed "through that reader," and existing bookings remain in place.	Challenges	Neither
3 The booking email: Friday 6—9 p.m., screening confirmed, step-free front entrance.	Challenges	Supports

Still open

- Can every visitor use the temporary entrance?

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 coordinator's. I would ask whether the front entrance meets every visitor's arrival needs and how the room will announce changes next time.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Draw an arrow from each piece of evidence to the claim it supports or challenges." — Model the first row together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students mark the clip as challenging the cancellation claim. **Listen for:** "The clip is against canceled." **Then:** On its own, the clip supports claim 1. That is why people believed it. The transcript narrows it.

Support

- Let students write S or C in each box before writing sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can turn to disability access.

Cool-down: Keep it about the characters. No student speaks for a group. Return to what the booking email says about arrival support.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the message you would send and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

The post arrived a few minutes ago, and nobody has checked the original yet. What do you send to the group chat?

- ☐ **A** Cancel your plans before you travel.
- ☑ **B** We're checking the original. Hold your plans for a moment.
- ☐ **C** The post is fake. Ignore it.

Why I chose it

B. It admits uncertainty and asks people to wait. A acts on an unchecked claim, and C trades one unsupported claim for another.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Hey everyone, so there was a clip going around that said the screening was canceled but (1) that is NOT true lol. Someone didn't watch the whole thing and posted it anyway which is kind of annoying. I checked with Mateo and he said the booking is still good. They are just removing access through one door so everything is fine and (2) you can come like normal. The event is still happening Friday. Bring snacks if you want, Jordy is doing the projector. See you there!! Also if you have questions ask Mateo.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

The clip is real but cut one sentence early.

Rewrite phrase 2

Use the staffed, step-free front entrance tonight.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Nobody has checked the original yet. Which message do you send?" — Vote first.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose "The post is fake." **Listen for:** "Just ignore it." **Then:** Ask for a false word in the clip. There is none.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Students may guess why the clip was posted.

Cool-down: Say the documents do not show why. Go back to the options.

Answer key

A revised version: Update on Friday's screening: it is still on, 6—9 p.m. The clip going around cut off mid-sentence. The full update from the coordinator says the side-door card reader is broken, so that door is closed tonight, but existing bookings are still in place. Please use the staffed front entrance, which is step-free. Staff will be at the desk from 5:30. I checked the coordinator's transcript and Mateo's booking email. If you need help arriving, message the coordinator before you leave. Thanks for waiting while we checked. Jordy is still confirming arrival support with the coordinator.

Other notes on the draft:

- "Someone didn't watch the whole thing and posted it anyway" This guesses at the poster's motive. The sources don't tell us what they knew.

College

Your task

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

Write an update-and-correction procedure for a student club's group chat and social accounts, using the Common Room rumor as the worked example. Include the correction the club would post.

Use: Case documents: the forwarded screenshot, the coordinator's transcript, the booking email and Jordy's holding message. Real sources: the SPJ Code of Ethics summary, the RTDNA code and the PRSSA member pledge.

You'll make: Procedure, 250—350 words, plus a model correction of 60—90 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. Reread Evidence A, B and C. Note what each one can confirm.
2. List who in a club would check the original record, and when.
3. Write a holding-message step that gives a time for the next update.
4. Write a correction step that says what the correction includes and where it goes.
5. Draft the procedure, 250 to 350 words, on the Your draft page.
6. Write a model correction of 60 to 90 words for the Common Room rumor.
7. Cite one code of ethics in your procedure and say whom it applies to.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Who checks the original, and when

The officer who posts updates opens the original record before any post about a change.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 10 min. Fill in the first two planner boxes together.

Say this

"Your club gets a clip like this at 4:52 on a Friday. Who opens the original, and how fast?" — Push for a named role, not "someone."

Watch for

Misconception: The procedure says to be careful without saying who does what. **Listen for:** "Everyone should double-check." **Then:** Ask who, when and where. One named role checks the original.

Support

- Procedure template: who checks the original, when to post a holding message, how to correct and who gets the correction
- Jordy's holding message and Gia's final update to annotate as models
- Key terms from the case: primary source, holding statement, correction, lateral reading
- Frame: "Before anyone posts about ___, the ___ opens ___."

Stretch

- Explain how the procedure handles a clip that is real but cropped, and how the correction reaches people who saw the post in other chats.

Your task, continued

The holding-message step

Post what we are checking and when we will post again. Do not repeat the rumor's key word.

One code, and whom it applies to

The SPJ code says to use original sources whenever possible. It binds no one by law, and SPJ encourages its use by all people in all media.

How the correction reaches people in other chats

Post the correction in the same chat as the rumor. Ask members to share it wherever they shared the clip.

Notes

This page continues page 15.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Information Literacy VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Information Creation as a Process.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Names who checks the original record before anyone posts a verdict
- Includes a holding-message step that gives a time for the next update
- The model correction gives the time (6—9 p.m.), the staffed step-free front entrance and the source checked
- Cites one professional code accurately and says whom it applies to
- Keeps any guess about the poster's motive out of the correction

Your draft

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

Your procedure, 250 to 350 words

Urgent updates procedure for our club. 1. Check the original first. Before anyone posts about a change to an event, the officer on duty opens the original record. That might be a booking email or a meeting transcript. A screenshot or a clip does not count as the original. 2. Post a holding message if checking takes time. Say what we are checking and when we will post again. Do not repeat the rumor's key word, such as "canceled." 3. Post the correction in the same place as the rumor. Give the time, the place and the entrance, and name the record we checked. Add a contact for anyone who needs arrival help. 4. Keep guesses about motive out. We correct the claim, not the person who shared it. 5. Reach people who saw the rumor elsewhere. Ask members to share the correction wherever they shared the clip. Worked example: at 4:52 p.m., a seven-second clip suggested our screening was canceled. The full transcript showed that only a broken side-door reader was losing access and that existing bookings remained in place. The clip was real but cropped, so step 1 applies even when a video is authentic. The SPJ Code of Ethics tells journalists, "Use original sources whenever possible." The code binds no one by law, but its habit fits a club that posts for its members.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 30 min.

Say this

"Write the model correction for someone already on the train. What do they need in the first sentence?" — Ask partners to read each correction aloud.

Watch for

Misconception: The procedure cites the code as if it were a law. **Listen for:** "SPJ rules say we have to." **Then:** Ask whom the SPJ code applies to. It binds no one by law.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Names who checks the original before anyone posts.
2. The holding step gives a time for the next update.
3. The model correction names the entrance, as the success criteria require.
4. Says whom the cited code applies to.

Your draft, continued

Your model correction, 60 to 90 words

Update on tonight's screening: it is still on, 6—9 p.m. The clip in the chat stopped mid-sentence. The coordinator's full transcript says the side-door reader is broken, so that door is closed tonight. Existing bookings remain in place. Please use the staffed, step-free front entrance. Staff are at the desk from 5:30. Need help arriving? Contact the coordinator before you leave.

Notes

This page continues page 17. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 17.

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 procedure say who checks the original record before anyone posts?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it include a holding step with a time for the next update?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your model correction give the time, the entrance and the source?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Did you keep guesses about motive out of the correction?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Repeats the screenshot's claim or ignores the documents.	☐ Mentions a source but not the detail that changes the meaning.	☐ Uses the transcript or email to correct the claim accurately.	☐ Uses both documents and names what they still cannot confirm.
Reasoning	☐ Treats the clip as fake or as final.	☐ Corrects the claim but adds a guess about motive.	☐ Explains the difference between an entrance change and a cancellation.	☐ Explains how the crop produced the wrong conclusion and avoids inventing motive.
Audience & purpose	☐ Message would not help someone decide whether to leave.	☐ Gives the verdict but leaves out time or entrance.	☐ Gives time, entrance and a contact.	☐ Anticipates access needs and people who saw only the original post.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Skip the rubric boxes.

Say this

"Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why." — Circulate and ask for one added fact or one removed guess.

Watch for

Misconception: Students make surface edits only. **Listen for:** "I fixed the spelling." **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Ask for one added fact or one removed guess.

Support

- Let students mark rubric levels with a partner before they revise.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score the procedure with the case rubric. Add a check that the model correction matches the transcript and the booking email and that the cited code is described accurately.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Uses the transcript or email to correct the claim accurately.
- **Reasoning:** Explains the difference between an entrance change and a cancellation.
- **Audience & purpose:** Gives time, entrance and a contact.
- **Revision:** Adds a missing fact or removes an unsupported claim.

How your work is scored, continued

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change after feedback.	☐ Surface edits only.	☐ Adds a missing fact or removes an unsupported claim.	☐ Explains why each edit makes the update more usable.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I added a step for reaching people in other chats, because people who saw the clip elsewhere might never open our chat.

Notes

This page continues page 19. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 19.

Questions to discuss

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

1 The clip is real. How did it lead people to the wrong conclusion?

The crop kept the words about removing access, and the caption made cancellation the obvious reading. No word in the clip was false.

2 Should the crew say why they think the clip was posted? Why or why not?

No. The sources cannot show motive. A correction that guesses at motive invites a second argument and gives readers a reason to doubt the facts.

3 Jordy's holding message does not repeat the word "canceled." Why might that matter?

Repeating the word would put the rumor in front of readers again. A message that names only what is being checked keeps the claim from spreading.

4 What rule could the Common Room adopt for urgent updates? What would the rule cost?

Link the coordinator's original update in the first post about any change. The cost is a slower first message, which matters most to people already traveling.

My take

My claim: ___.

The crew should post a holding message, then a correction that links the transcript and names the entrance.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Discuss question 4 only.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from a document, not a feeling about the poster." — Post the question numbers and call on one student per question.

Stretch

- Map how the rumor would travel through three different chats and who would miss the correction.
- Going further: Ask who has already changed plans because of the post, and how the crew can reach them. Then write two truthful captions for the correction. What does each one make a reader notice first?
- Going further: Trace the clip back to the full meeting transcript. When you share the clip, keep the sentence before it and the words that come right after it.
- Going further: Make a 20-second correction video with readable captions and a link to the source.
- Going further: Ask a teacher or someone in the front office which channel carries official changes, such as email, an app or the school website. Save that channel so you can check it before you repost a screenshot.
- Write a one-paragraph policy for how the Common Room posts urgent updates

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The transcript, because it contains the words the crop removed.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

A fast warning is safer, because people are already on the way.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

Nobody knows how many people changed plans after the first post.

I would change my mind if ___.

The coordinator later reported that the booking itself was canceled.

Notes

This page continues page 21.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 2: Medium.** Students may guess at the poster's motive or bring up people they know who post rumors.

Cool-down: Ask what the documents say about why it was posted. They say nothing. Write "unknown" on the board and return to the evidence.

Talk about this case at home

Case 1: Is the screening canceled?

In this case, a short video clip in a group chat makes a group of friends think their movie night is canceled. Your student compared the clip with the full meeting notes and a booking email, then wrote a message that corrects the mix-up.

Questions to talk about

1. What would you check before you share a screenshot?
2. Where does your school post official updates, such as closings?
3. What makes a correction easy to trust?

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

See the case online.

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.

Case 2: Does the worksheet show what Dec knows?

Content note

This case discusses disability, evaluations and support plans. No student should share their own grades, diagnosis or support plan, so keep the discussion on Dec's situation.

Overview

Students read about Dec, a high school senior who explains a circuit well out loud but loses his place on a dense practice sheet. They sort the evidence into what is observed, what might explain it and what is not established, using a summary of the IDEA evaluation rule. They then redesign the practice sheet or draft a support request that Dec could approve.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- tell an observation from an explanation
- restate a legal rule accurately in plain words
- write instructions for a volunteer audience

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- separate what a tutor observes, what might explain it and what is not established
- state the IDEA evaluation rule accurately
- direct formal questions to the student, the family and the school
- include one redesign that keeps the learning goal

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant
- Evidence A and B, and Dec's and Anika's lines in Who is involved
- The IDEA and CAST UDL summaries in the key idea
- The three-column organizer: observed, possible explanation, not established

The task in this edition

Task: Write a one-page guide for volunteer tutors in a library or youth program who work with high school students like Dec. The guide shows how to describe what a tutor observes without diagnosing and how to point a student and family to the school's own process.

Students make: Tutor guide, 350—450 words, with one worked example based on Dec

Pacing

Opener (page 24): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the opening question.

Key terms (pages 25 and 26): 6 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read the key terms aloud. Keep Who is involved, because the guide uses Dec's words.

Look at the evidence (pages 30 and 31): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 32 and 33): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Skip the In the news section.

Sort the evidence (pages 34 and 35): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Do the teacher and Dec rows only.

Practice (page 36): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 37 and 38): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Fill in the three columns together.

Your draft (page 39): 30 min. Short on time: 28 min. Participants finish the worked example outside the session.

Check your work (pages 40 and 41): 8 min. Short on time: skip. Review the guides against the success criteria yourself.

Questions to discuss (pages 42 and 43): 10 min. Short on time: 6 min. Discuss question 3 only.

Talk about this case at home (page 44): at home.

Periods: full chapter 107 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 2 plan, continued

Standards

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 practical guidance for volunteer tutors, with a worked example (Context of and Purpose for Writing).

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. In this case: Students decide what a tutor may say about a student's learning and what belongs to the student, the family and the school (Ethical Issue Recognition).

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students use the IDEA regulation summary accurately and do not stretch it to decide anything about Dec (Use Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose).

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 an eligibility decision belongs to the school's evaluation process and not to a tutor or a friend.

Codes of ethics

- **CEC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards:** Special Education Standards for Professional Practice: Teaching and Assessment
- **CEC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards:** Special Education Professional Ethical Principles
- **Code of Ethics of the Education Profession:** Principle I: Commitment to the Student, item 8

Heat map

■■□ **Opener (page 24):** Medium

■□□ **Key terms (pages 25 and 26):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (pages 30 and 31):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 32 and 33):** Low

■■□ **Sort the evidence (pages 34 and 35):** Medium

■■□ **Practice (page 36):** Medium

■□□ **Check your work (pages 40 and 41):** Low

Try it at your school

Learn your school's route for asking about support.

- Find your school's student handbook or website page on learning support

Try it at your school, continued

- Write one question you'd want answered, without naming a classmate
- Ask a counselor who handles support requests and how parents or students start one
- If a friend is struggling, ask them what they want before doing anything

Who to ask: School counselor, special-education coordinator or a teacher you trust

Safety: Don't share anyone's grades, diagnosis or support plan. A parent or guardian usually has to be part of a formal evaluation request for students under 18.

Sources

- U.S. Department of Education, "IDEA regulations, 34 CFR § 300.304 (evaluation procedures)," No date listed
- CAST, "Universal Design for Learning Guidelines 3.0," 2024

Case 2: Does the worksheet show what Dec knows?

Dec can explain a circuit out loud but gets lost on a crowded worksheet, so the crew asks what the task measures.

On your own Read What happened. Underline what Dec can do out loud and where he gets stuck. About 5 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who reads the goal line before anyone decides what Dec knows. **New skill:** Check what a task is meant to measure.

Dec points to a small light circuit on the table while Anika watches.

What happened

Anika, 16, and Dec, 17, are at the study table twenty minutes before theater rehearsal. They are building a light circuit for a school set. Dec can explain out loud how the current travels through the circuit. On the written practice sheet, he loses his place in the instructions.

The sheet has six dense paragraphs and one small diagram. Anika's first idea is to run the same timed practice sheet again. Then she draws a larger sketch, and Dec traces the whole circuit correctly.

Mari, 19, is on her break from the bookshop. She does not assume she knows why Dec is stuck. Dec wants help with this task, but he does not want a diagnosis from the group chat.

Your question: Does the practice sheet show what Dec knows, and what should Dec ask his teacher?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the opening question.

Say this

"Dec can explain the circuit out loud. What could make a written sheet harder than talking?" — Set the norm first: nobody shares their own grades or support plans. Take two or three answers.

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide Dec is not trying. **Listen for:** "He just needs to focus." **Then:** Ask what the story says Dec can do. Write "explains the circuit out loud" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Sketch a simple circuit on the board: battery, switch, LED.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Students may link Dec's struggle to their own diagnosis or a classmate's.

Cool-down: Restate the norm: we talk about Dec and the worksheet only. Nobody shares grades, diagnoses or support plans.

Key terms

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

Learning goal A learning goal is the knowledge or skill that a task is meant to show.

En español: meta de aprendizaje

In this case: The practice brief names one goal: explain how a simple circuit works. It does not list speed or reading six dense paragraphs.

Evaluation An evaluation is a school's formal process for learning about a student's needs, using more than one measure.

En español: evaluación

In this case: Dec's practice sheet is not an evaluation. It is one observation the crew can describe to a teacher.

Eligibility Eligibility is meeting the requirements for a particular service or program.

En español: elegibilidad

In this case: A practice sheet cannot show whether Dec is eligible for special education. Under IDEA, no single measure can be the only basis for that decision.

Who is involved

Dec

Theater crew, working on the circuit sheet

"I can show you where the current goes. Then I get halfway through the written question and lose my place."

Anika

Studying the circuit with Dec

"I kept pointing at the page and saying "it's right there." I never looked at how the question was written."

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read the key terms aloud. Keep Who is involved, because the guide uses Dec's words.

Say this

"Write your first guess now. You will come back to it at the end." — Keep first guesses private unless a student wants to share.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think "evaluation" means any test. **Listen for:** "The worksheet was his evaluation." **Then:** Reread the definition. An evaluation is a formal school process, not a practice sheet.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term.
- Frame: "A learning goal is ___. In this case, the goal is ___."
- **Cognates:** evaluation (evaluación), eligibility (elegibilidad), circuit (circuito), diagram (diagrama), observation (observación), format (formato), instructions (instrucciones), diagnosis (diagnóstico).

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, why do you think Dec gets stuck on the worksheet?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that the worksheet measures reading as much as circuits, because Dec can explain the circuit out loud.

Notes

This page continues page 25. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 25.

Reading passage

Validity, support and who decides

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

- **Learning goal**: A learning goal is the knowledge or skill that a task is meant to show.
- **Evaluation**: An evaluation is a school's formal process for learning about a student's needs, using more than one measure.
- **Eligibility**: Eligibility is meeting the requirements for a particular service or program.
- **Context**: Context is the information around an event or a quote that you need to understand what it means.

The story: A correct explanation and a wrong answer

Dec, 17, can explain a simple circuit aloud with complete accuracy. He is building one for a school theater set with Anika, 16, at a study table twenty minutes before rehearsal. The written practice sheet for the same content defeats him. It has six dense paragraphs, one small diagram and four questions to answer in complete sentences. On paper, he skips a line in the instructions and answers a question that was not asked. When Anika redraws the circuit larger, he traces it correctly.

The case is built around a problem that teachers, testers and employers meet constantly. A performance can fail for reasons unrelated to the skill being measured. It also shows how quickly helpful people overreach. Anika's first proposal is to repeat the timed sheet. A group chat could easily move from "Dec struggled" to a confident theory about why. Dec draws the line himself. He asks his friends to say what happened, not what is wrong with him, and to ask him before anyone tells his teacher what he needs.

Mari, who is dyslexic and switches between print and audio, models a different stance. She asks Dec to walk her through the circuit and then compares that with the worksheet. Your role is to read the goal line before anyone decides what Dec knows.

Stop and think. Where have you seen a test or application measure format more than the skill it names?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (703 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A correct explanation and a wrong answer":** Where have you seen a test or application measure format more than the skill it names?
2. **After "Construct and format":** Dec sets the terms for what his friends say. What would change if Anika wrote to Ms. R on her own?
3. **After "Evaluation, eligibility and professional duty":** CEC calls for involving individuals in decisions about them. How does the crew follow that principle without being bound by it?

Construct and format

The practice brief states its **learning goal**: explain how a simple circuit works. A learning goal is the knowledge or skill that a task is meant to show. In assessment language, the goal is the construct, and everything else about the sheet is format. The brief does not ask for speed and sets no time limit. The density of the text and the size of the diagram may still be affecting the score. When format drives performance, the result says less about the construct.

Case 1's habit of returning to the original source applies directly. The goal line, not the group's impression, defines what should be measured. Case 1's term **context** also applies. The written answer is authentic evidence, but alone it is a partial frame, like a cropped clip. The study-table notes supply the rest: correct aloud, incorrect on paper, cause unknown.

The crew's response respects those limits. Dec tries a clearer practice diagram and explains his reasoning again, so the new format still requires the target skill. Anika changes the study plan. Dec decides whether to raise the question of support.

Stop and think. Dec sets the terms for what his friends say. What would change if Anika wrote to Ms. R on her own?

Evaluation, eligibility and professional duty

The crew cannot answer the question of support, and the law says why. An **evaluation** is a school's formal process for learning about a student's needs, using more than one measure. **Eligibility** is meeting the requirements for a particular service or program. Under the IDEA regulations, a public school must use a variety of assessment tools and strategies, and no single measure may be the sole basis for an eligibility decision (U.S. Department of Education, IDEA regulations, 34 CFR 300.304). The rule guards against the very shortcut the case warns about: one performance, read as a verdict.

Professional codes reinforce the point. The Council for Exceptional Children asks special educators to use assessment procedures that "accurately measure what is intended to be measured." It also calls for "actively involving families and individuals with exceptionalities in educational decision making" (CEC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards, no date listed). The NEA code limits what educators may disclose about students (National Education Association, Code of Ethics, 1975). Federal testing guidance frames accommodations as a way to measure skill, not disability (ADA.gov, U.S. Department of Justice, February 28, 2020).

Design research offers a complementary strategy. CAST's Universal Design for Learning Guidelines recommend building more than one path into and out of a task from the start (CAST, 2024). A systematic review and meta-analysis examined the effectiveness of that approach (Almeqdad et al., Cogent Education, May 29, 2023). Journalists continue to test specific supports, asking whether extended time helps students with ADHD show what they know (Education Week, October 13, 2025).

This page continues page 27. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 27.

Evaluation, eligibility and professional duty, continued

The unresolved questions are real. The ethical baseline is not. Measure the goal, and let the student decide what is shared about him. That question, what is this document or task designed to show, will return when you read pay statements, ballots and budgets in later cases.

Stop and think. CEC calls for involving individuals in decisions about them. How does the crew follow that principle without being bound by it?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Department of Education | No date listed
IDEA regulations, 34 CFR § 300.304 (evaluation procedures)

Real source | Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) | No date listed
CEC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards

Real source | National Education Association (NEA) | 1975
Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

Real source | ADA.gov (U.S. Department of Justice) | February 28, 2020
ADA Requirements: Testing Accommodations

Real source | CAST | 2024
Universal Design for Learning Guidelines 3.0

Real source | Cogent Education (Almeqdad et al.) | May 29, 2023
The effectiveness of universal design for learning: A systematic review of the literature and meta-analysis

Real source | Education Week | October 13, 2025
Does Extended Time on Tests Actually Help Students With ADHD?

Notes

This page continues page 27. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 27.

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 | Practice brief, handed out Monday

The assignment

Goal: Explain how a simple circuit works. Read the six paragraphs below before you answer. Use the diagram to trace the path of the current from the battery through the switch and the LED and back. Answer questions 1—4 in complete sentences.

Look closely: Which skill does the goal line name, and which does it leave out?

What it shows	What it leaves out
The goal names one skill, but the page adds six dense paragraphs.	How it is scored, and what the paragraphs are meant to test.

Evidence B | Study-table notes, Wednesday 3:40 p.m.

Dec's explanation

Out loud, with the larger sketch: traced the whole path, battery to switch to LED and back. Correct. Written sheet: skipped a line in the instructions and answered a different question from the one asked. Dec: the layout is hard to follow.

Look closely: What did Dec get right out loud that the sheet did not record?

What it shows	What it leaves out
Two observations and Dec's own account: right aloud, off track on paper.	Any cause, and whether Dec wants the school involved.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 8 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Say this

"Put your finger on the goal line in Evidence A. Now find what Dec did out loud in Evidence B." — Ask students to compare the two before anyone explains why.

Watch for

Misconception: Students read the notes as proof of a disability. **Listen for:** "So he has a learning disability." **Then:** Ask what the notes record: two observations and Dec's own words. They do not record a cause.

Support

- Give Evidence A with the goal line enlarged and the paragraphs numbered.
- Read Evidence B aloud.
- **Cognates:** evaluation (evaluación), eligibility (elegibilidad), circuit (circuito), diagram (diagrama), observation (observación), format (formato), instructions (instrucciones), diagnosis (diagnóstico).

Stretch

- Ask which parts of Evidence A a teacher could change without changing the goal line.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Whether Dec wants formal support at all, how the sheet is scored, whether other students lose their place in the same layout, and what the teacher meant the six paragraphs to test.

Notes

This page continues page 30. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 30.

Key idea: learning goals

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 12 minutes.

Dec's written answer and his spoken explanation give the crew different information. A **learning goal** is the knowledge or skill that a task is meant to show. The practice brief names one goal: explain how a simple circuit works. It does not list speed, and it does not list reading six dense paragraphs. So the next question is what the sheet was meant to measure and what got in the way.

CAST's Universal Design for Learning Guidelines encourage giving learners more than one way to take in information and show what they know. For Dec, a larger diagram is a practice option to test. It is not a diagnosis, and it does not change an official test. Ask Dec what helped, and check that he can still explain the circuit.

An **evaluation** is a school's formal process for learning about a student's needs, using more than one measure. Under IDEA, a federal law, a public school must use varied tools in an evaluation. No single measure can be the only basis for deciding **eligibility**. Eligibility is meeting the requirements for a particular service or program. A study session is not an evaluation, so Dec decides whether to ask his school how that process starts.

Professional standards

Real source | Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

CEC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards: Special Education Standards for Professional Practice: Teaching and Assessment

"Use culturally and linguistically appropriate assessment procedures that accurately measure what is intended to be measured"

In plain words: Special educators who follow CEC's standards use assessments that measure the skill the task is meant to measure.

Question: The goal is explaining a circuit. Which parts of the sheet test something else, like reading six dense paragraphs?

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 10 min. Skip the In the news section.

Say this

"A learning goal names what a task should show. What does this sheet show besides the goal?" — Wait for "reading the paragraphs."

"The CEC standard asks for assessments that measure what they are meant to measure. Does this sheet?" — Take a thumbs vote, then ask for evidence.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the CEC code or IDEA as rules for every quiz. **Listen for:** "It's illegal to give that worksheet." **Then:** Say: "IDEA's rule covers formal evaluations. The CEC code guides special educators. Neither makes this sheet illegal."

Support

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

Stretch

- Read the second CEC card. Ask how the crew can make sure Dec, not Anika, decides what his message says.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Besides its goal, the sheet measures ___, so ___.

Besides its goal, the sheet measures sustained reading and tracking of written instructions. So a wrong answer may reflect the layout, not circuit knowledge.

In the news

Real source | Education Week | October 13, 2025

Does Extended Time on Tests Actually Help Students With ADHD?

Asks the case's question in real life: does a test accommodation help students show what they actually know?

Real source | K-12 Dive | December 3, 2025

IDEA at 50: How the landmark law changed education

Explains where IDEA, evaluations and IEPs came from and why schools must plan around each student's needs.

Notes

This page continues page 32. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 32.

Sort the evidence

On your own Read each decision in the diagram. Write who decides it in each blank box. About 8 minutes.

Sort who can decide each question. Which decision belongs to the teacher, which to a formal school process, and which only to Dec?

Try a clearer practice format for the circuit goal	Start a formal IDEA evaluation or a Section 504 conversation
Who decides The teacher, who sets the practice format and the learning goal	**Who decides** The school's evaluation process, with a parent or guardian for a student under 18
Under which rule	**Under which rule** IDEA evaluation rule: varied tools, no single measure as the sole basis
Who lives with it Dec, who decides what to share and whether to ask	**Who lives with it**
Your way in	**Your way in** A counselor or special-education coordinator explains how a request starts

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Do the teacher and Dec rows only.

Say this

"Each decision in the diagram has a different decider. Which decision belongs only to Dec?" — Model the teacher row together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students give the friends a decider role. **Listen for:** "Anika and Mari should ask for the IEP." **Then:** Point to the diagram. The school's process decides evaluations, and Dec decides what he shares.

Support

- Let students write T (teacher), S (school process) or D (Dec) before writing sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can lead students to talk about their own support plans.

Cool-down: Keep it about Dec and Ms. R. Restate the norm, then return to what the diagram says each person decides.

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 ___.

Dec's family's. A parent or guardian usually has to be part of a formal request for a student under 18, so I would ask Dec first.

Notes

This page continues page 34. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 34.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what the crew should try and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

What should the crew try at the study table?

- [ ] **A** Run the same timed sheet again so Dec gets more practice.
- [x] **B** Let Dec explain with a larger diagram, then compare his reasoning with the sheet.
- [ ] **C** Tell Dec he probably needs an IEP.

Why I chose it

B. It holds the goal constant and adds a second observation. A repeats the same conditions, and C reaches past what friends can know.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Hi Ms. R, Dec failed the circuit sheet again and we think the test is unfair to him. He obviously knows the material because he explained it to us perfectly. At the study table he went through the whole thing out loud with no mistakes. (1) We think he might have a learning disability and should get an IEP so he can get extra time. My cousin has one and it helped her a lot. (2) Can you give him an easier version? We really think this would help him pass. Thanks, Anika and Mari.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Out loud, he traced the circuit. On paper, he lost his place.

Rewrite phrase 2

Could the same questions work with a larger diagram?

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Dec has twenty minutes before rehearsal. What should the crew try right now?" — Take a vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose C because it sounds caring. **Listen for:** "He needs help, so tell him about an IEP." **Then:** Ask who can decide eligibility. Only the school's evaluation process can.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Option C can prompt stories about classmates' IEPs.

Cool-down: Say that no student's plan is discussed here. Ask what the evidence shows about Dec, then go back to the options.

Answer key

A revised version: Hi Ms. R, I'm working on the circuit practice sheet. The goal says we should explain how a simple circuit works. When I talked it through with a larger diagram, I could trace the whole route. On the written sheet, I lost my place in the paragraphs and answered a different question. Could we talk about how the sheet checks the goal and what support options might help me show my reasoning? I can bring both attempts. Anika and Mari helped me write this, and I asked them to. Thanks, Dec

College

Your task

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

Write a one-page guide for volunteer tutors in a library or youth program who work with high school students like Dec. The guide shows how to describe what a tutor observes without diagnosing and how to point a student and family to the school's own process.

Use: Case documents: Dec's practice brief, his study-table notes and Dec's and Anika's statements. Real sources: the IDEA evaluation rule summary (34 CFR § 300.304) and the CAST UDL Guidelines summary. Also use the case's safety note.

You'll make: Tutor guide, 350—450 words, with one worked example based on Dec

Time: 75 minutes

1. Sort the details in Evidence B into observed, possible explanation and not established.
2. Write the IDEA rule in one plain sentence.
3. List who a tutor should send formal questions to.
4. Sketch one redesign of the practice sheet that keeps the circuit goal.
5. Draft the guide, 350 to 450 words, on the Your draft page.
6. Use Dec's case as the one worked example, without diagnosing him.
7. Check the guide with the questions on the Check your work page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Observed	Possible explanation
Traced the circuit aloud. Skipped a line on paper.	The layout, which Dec says is hard to follow.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 10 min. Fill in the three columns together.

Say this

"You are writing for a volunteer who meets Dec for the first time. What should they write down, and what should they never write down?" — Build two lists on the board.

Watch for

Misconception: The guide tells tutors to spot disabilities. **Listen for:** "Tutors can tell who needs an IEP." **Then:** Ask what decides eligibility under IDEA: a school evaluation with varied tools.

Support

- Three-column organizer from the workshop: observed, possible explanation, not established
- Dec's own words as a model of a student describing a barrier
- Plain-language paraphrase of the IDEA evaluation rule
- Frame: "I noticed ___. I don't know yet ___."

Stretch

- Add a section on redesigning a practice sheet with the UDL Guidelines. Explain why a tutor may change practice materials but may not decide eligibility.

Your task, continued

Not established

Why Dec loses his place, and whether he has a disability.

The IDEA rule in one plain sentence

In a formal evaluation, no single measure can be the only basis for deciding eligibility.

Who gets formal questions

The student first, then the family and the school's counselor or coordinator.

Notes

This page continues page 37.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Written Communication VALUE Rubric; Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric; Information Literacy VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Separates an observation from a possible explanation and from what is not established
- States the IDEA rule accurately: no single measure can be the only basis for deciding eligibility
- Sends formal questions to the student, the family and the school
- Includes one redesign that keeps the learning goal of explaining how a simple circuit works
- Shares no real student's grades, diagnosis or support plan

Your draft

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

Your guide: what to write down

Describe what you see, not what you think it means. Write down what the student did, in the student's words when you can. Keep three columns: what you observed, what might explain it and what is not established. A possible explanation stays a question until the student, the family and the school look at it. Never write a diagnosis in your notes. Never share a student's grades or support plan outside the program. If a student wants to ask about support, help them find the school counselor or coordinator. A parent or guardian usually has to be part of a formal evaluation request for a student under 18.

Your worked example: Dec

Dec's practice sheet names one goal: explain how a simple circuit works. Out loud, with a larger sketch, he traced the whole circuit correctly. On paper, he skipped a line and answered a different question. He said the layout is hard to follow. A tutor can write those observations down. A tutor can also try a practice sheet with a bigger diagram and numbered steps, because that keeps the goal the same. A tutor cannot decide whether Dec has a disability or qualifies for services. Under IDEA, a school's evaluation must use varied tools, and no single measure can decide eligibility.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 28 min. Participants finish the worked example outside the session.

Say this

"Read your worked example as Dec. Would you be comfortable seeing it?" — Partners mark one line to rewrite.

Watch for

Misconception: The worked example says more than the evidence shows. **Listen for:** "Dec probably has a learning disability." **Then:** Cross it out. The notes record what happened, not a diagnosis.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Sets the rule that separates observation from explanation.
2. Points the student and family to the school's own process.
3. The redesign keeps the circuit learning goal.
4. States the IDEA rule accurately.

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 guide separate what was observed from what is not established?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it state the IDEA rule accurately?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it send formal questions to the student, the family and the school?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Did you leave out every real student's grades, diagnosis and support plan?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Mentions only the score.	☐ Describes Dec's explanation vaguely.	☐ Cites the goal and two specific observations.	☐ Uses observations and notes what they cannot show.
Reasoning	☐ Concludes Dec has a disability or the test is illegal.	☐ Suggests easier content without linking to the goal.	☐ Connects a possible format barrier to the learning goal.	☐ Distinguishes classroom support from IDEA evaluation accurately.
Audience & purpose	☐ Message speaks for Dec without his input.	☐ Mentions Dec but ignores his voice.	☐ Written in Dec's voice with his permission.	☐ Respects Dec's control and gives the teacher a clear next step.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. Review the guides against the success criteria yourself.

Say this

"Would Dec agree to your work as written? Mark your level honestly. Then make one change." — Circulate and ask for one removed guess or one added observation.

Watch for

Misconception: Students make surface edits only. **Listen for:** "I fixed the spelling." **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Ask students to replace one diagnosis with an observation.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score the guide with the case rubric. Add checks that the IDEA summary is accurate, that no line diagnoses Dec and that the redesign keeps the circuit goal.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Cites the goal and two specific observations.
- **Reasoning:** Connects a possible format barrier to the learning goal.
- **Audience & purpose:** Written in Dec's voice with his permission.
- **Revision:** Replaces the diagnosis with an observation.

How your work is scored, continued

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Removes one problem line.	☐ Replaces the diagnosis with an observation.	☐ Explains how each change protects Dec's privacy and agency.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

🔑 I cut "tutors can tell when a student needs an IEP," because only a school evaluation can decide eligibility.

Notes

This page continues page 40. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 40.

Questions to discuss

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

1 **Is the practice sheet checking circuit understanding, reading speed or both?**

Both, in practice. The goal names circuit understanding, but the layout also demands sustained reading, so one score cannot separate the two.

2 **How would you know a new format shows Dec's learning more clearly instead of giving away the answer?**

Hold the questions constant and change only the layout. If Dec still has to explain the circuit in his own words, the format has not given away the answer.

3 **What does the IDEA evaluation rule cover, and why does a study session fall outside it?**

It covers formal IDEA evaluations: varied tools, and no single measure decides eligibility. A study session makes no decision, so the rule does not reach it.

My take

My claim: ___.

The sheet mixes its goal with a reading load, so Dec's written answer cannot show what he knows about circuits.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The study-table notes, because the same student gave two different results in two formats.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Discuss question 3 only.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the brief or the notes, not a story about someone you know." — Post the question numbers and call on one student per question.

Stretch

- Design a universal design version of a real quiz from another class. Keep its learning goal the same.
- Going further: Write down your first guess about why Dec got stuck. Then compare the two observations in the evidence, and write what changed your mind.
- Going further: Design two practice sheets that keep the same learning goal: explaining how a simple circuit works. Ask a classmate which one makes the goal easier to show.
- Going further: Find the IDEA evaluation rule in its federal source, 34 CFR § 300.304. Quote the part about using more than one measure, and name where it comes from.
- Going further: Find your school's handbook or web page on learning support. Write one question you want answered, without naming a classmate. Then ask a counselor how students or parents start a request.
- Research how your state describes the timeline for an initial evaluation after a parent consents
- Design a UDL version of a real quiz from another class

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

A reading load is part of any written task, so the sheet is fair as written.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

Two observations at one study table cannot show why Dec loses his place.

I would change my mind if ___.

Dec went off track the same way with numbered steps and a larger diagram.

Notes

This page continues page 42.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 3: Medium.** Students may bring up their own IEP or 504 plan, or a classmate's.

Cool-down: Restate the norm: nobody shares their own or anyone else's support plans. Then return to what the rule says.

Talk about this case at home

Case 2: Does the worksheet show what Dec knows?

In this case, a student can explain a light circuit out loud but gets lost on a crowded worksheet. Your student compared the worksheet's goal with notes from a study session and thought about what the worksheet really measures.

See the case online.

Questions to talk about

1. Can one test show everything a person knows? Why or why not?
2. What makes the directions on a worksheet or a form easy to follow?
3. Who at a school can students ask about help with schoolwork?

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

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.

Case 3: What should a group do after a public mistake?

Content note

The recap caption blames younger attendees for a late start. Keep the discussion on the event in the story, and do not ask students to describe times they were blamed or stereotyped.

Overview

Students read a short story in which the crew's recap caption blames "the younger crowd" for a late start. They build a timeline from Jordy's setup log, which shows that a projector failure caused the delay, and compare it with Gia's first apology draft. They then write a correction that names the error and a repair step with an owner and a way to check it.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- summarize what a professional code asks of its members
- write a policy with clear roles and steps
- write a correction for a public audience

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- write a corrections policy that says who writes corrections, where they appear and how quickly
- include a repair step with an owner and a check

Objectives, continued

- write a correction that names the error and states what the log shows
- cite the PRSA or RTDNA code accurately

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant
- Evidence A, B, C and D
- The PRSA and RTDNA code cards, and the NPR Public Editor column "That was wrong" (October 21, 2022)
- The policy template

The task in this edition

Task: Write a corrections policy for a student club's social accounts, then use it to write the correction for the crew's recap caption.

Students make: Corrections policy, 250—350 words, plus a posted correction of 70—100 words

Pacing

Opener (page 45): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the opening question.

Key terms (pages 46 and 47): 5 min. Short on time: skip. Define correction and accountability aloud.

Look at the evidence (page 51): 8 min. Short on time: 7 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Pacing, continued

Look at the evidence (page 52): 6 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read Anika's message and Gia's draft aloud. Skip the boxes.

Key idea (pages 53 and 54): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip the In the news section.

Sort the evidence (page 55): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 56): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 57 and 58): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Fill in the first two planner boxes together.

Your draft (pages 59 and 60): 30 min. Short on time: 30 min.

Check your work (pages 61 and 62): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Skip the rubric boxes.

Questions to discuss (pages 63 and 64): 10 min. Short on time: 6 min. Discuss question 2 only.

Talk about this case at home (page 65): at home.

Periods: full chapter 106 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 3 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 write a correction that reaches the younger neighbors the caption blamed (Civic Communication).

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 corrections policy and a correction that fit a club's social accounts (Genre and Disciplinary Conventions).

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. In this case: Students weigh the club's reputation against the harm to the people the caption blamed (Ethical Issue Recognition).

Information Creation as a Process Information is made through a process, and how it was made affects what it can be trusted for. In this case: Students compare how a caption, a setup log and a correction were each produced and what each can show.

Codes of ethics

- **PRSA Code of Ethics:** Free Flow of Information
- **RTDNA Code of Ethics:** Independence and transparency
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** "We accept responsibility for the short- and long-term consequences of our own communication…" (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

■■□ **Opener (page 45):** Medium
■□□ **Key terms (pages 46 and 47):** Low
■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 51):** Low
■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 52):** Low
■□□ **Key idea (pages 53 and 54):** Low
■■□ **Sort the evidence (page 55):** Medium
■□□ **Practice (page 56):** Low
■□□ **Check your work (pages 61 and 62):** Low

Try it at your school

Help a club you're in write a corrections rule.

- Ask the editor or advisor of a school newsletter, club account or yearbook how they fix mistakes
- Suggest a three-step checklist: name the error, show the evidence, say what changes
- Offer to test it on an old post together

Try it at your school, continued

- Keep any real examples anonymous

Who to ask: School newspaper or yearbook advisor, club advisor, student council secretary

Safety: Don't repost someone else's mistake to criticize them. Talk to the club privately first.

Sources

- Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), "PRSA Code of Ethics," October 2000
- Society of Professional Journalists, "SPJ Code of Ethics," September 6, 2014
- Critical Media Project, "Zootopia: the press conference," No date listed

Case 3: What should a group do after a public mistake?

The crew's recap caption blamed younger neighbors for a late start, but the event log shows the projector failed.

On your own Read What happened. Underline the caption and the time the projector failed. About 5 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who checks the log's times before the correction goes up. **New skill:** Correct a public mistake.

Gia and Jordy sit at a table with a laptop and a printed page.

What happened

It is Sunday at the edit desk. Caio, 24, edited a short recap of Friday's screening. The crew posted it on Saturday morning. Gia's caption, "Great night, once the younger crowd finally got organized," sounded believable, because a few people did arrive late.

Then Jordy checks the setup log. The projector failed at 5:40 p.m. The replacement was not running until 6:20, twenty minutes after everyone was seated. The log also says Anika and Dec helped carry chairs before the doors opened.

Anika sends the group a voice note asking why she and Dec are the problem in the post. Gia wants to take responsibility. Her first draft of a correction is mostly about how bad she feels, and the recap caption is still up.

Your question: What should the correction say, and what will the crew do differently next time?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the opening question.

Say this

"Imagine a post says your group caused a problem, and you were helping. What should the post say instead?" — Take two answers. Keep the focus on the crew's post.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the caption as a harmless joke. **Listen for:** "It's just a caption." **Then:** Ask who the caption names and what it says they did. Point to Anika's message.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Write the three times on the board: 5:40, 6:00 and 6:20.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** The caption blames an age group, and students may bring up times they were blamed.

Cool-down: Keep the talk on the crew's post. Nobody needs to share a personal story.

Key terms

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

Claim A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.

En español: afirmación

In this case: The caption claims the late start happened because "the younger crowd" was not organized. Jordy's setup log checks that claim.

Correction A correction is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information.

En español: corrección

In this case: Gia edits the original caption, not just her story, so people who saw it learn what was wrong.

Accountability Accountability is owning a mistake and doing what you said you would do to fix it.

En español: rendición de cuentas

In this case: The crew names who fixes the caption, who contacts Anika and Dec, and who checks the next recap against the log.

Who is involved

Gia

Wrote the recap caption

"I wrote 'once the younger crowd finally got organized.' A few people did come in late, so it felt true. I never checked why we started late."

Jordy

Kept the setup log on Friday

"My log says Anika and Dec were carrying chairs before doors opened. The caption turned them into the reason we started late."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. Define correction and accountability aloud.

Say this

"Write your first guess now. You will come back to it at the end." — Keep first guesses private unless a student wants to share.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think saying sorry is the same as a correction. **Listen for:** "She apologized, so it's fixed." **Then:** Reread the definition. A correction replaces wrong information with supported information.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term.
- Frame: "The claim was ___. The correction says ___."
- **Cognates:** correction (corrección), evidence (evidencia), error (error), projector (proyector), stereotype (estereotipo), repair (reparación), responsibility (responsabilidad), public (público).

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 should Gia's correction say first?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is an admission that the caption was wrong, because the error was public.

Notes

This page continues page 46. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 46.

Reading passage

Corrections, repair and responsibility

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

- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Correction**: A correction is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information.
- **Accountability**: Accountability is owning a mistake and doing what you said you would do to fix it.

The story: A believable caption

After the crew's first neighborhood screening, the one saved from a cropped clip in Case 1, the crew posted a recap on Saturday at 11:08 a.m. Caio, 24, edited the video, and Gia, 21, wrote the caption: "Great night, once the younger crowd finally got organized." The caption was plausible for an ordinary reason. Some people did arrive late, and the event did start late.

Jordy's setup log from Friday tells a different story. A projector failure was reported at 5:40 p.m. Attendees were seated by 6:00. The replacement was connected at 6:20. The log also records that Anika, 16, and Dec, 17, helped carry chairs before the doors opened. The caption had turned two volunteers into the cause of a delay they had no part in.

Anika responds with a voice note: "We were helping you set up. Why are we the problem in this post?" Gia's unpublished first draft reads, "Sorry if this came across wrong. We love our younger neighbors and would never want anyone to feel excluded." Its conditional "if" shifts responsibility to the reader. It also omits the facts, which leaves the false explanation standing.

Stop and think. Gia's draft uses the word "if." How does a conditional apology shift responsibility?

Anatomy of a repair

The caption contains a causal **claim**, a statement that something is true that can be checked with evidence. Applying the Case 1 skill, finding the original source, the crew checks the claim against the log, and the log refutes it.

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (730 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A believable caption":** Gia's draft uses the word "if." How does a conditional apology shift responsibility?
2. **After "Anatomy of a repair":** Why should the people harmed by a mistake be kept out of the work of repairing it?
3. **After "Evidence from research and practice":** Choose one of the brand apologies. Using the six-element research, what would count as repair rather than regret?

Anatomy of a repair, continued

A **correction** is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information. Three design choices determine whether it works. The first is placement. Caio insists on editing the original post rather than publishing a new one, so the correction reaches the same audience. The second is content. The correction names the specific error and states the documented cause. The third is order. The facts come before the author's feelings, which may not belong in the correction at all.

Accountability is owning a mistake and doing what you said you would do to fix it. The crew converts that principle into assigned tasks: Gia corrects the post, Caio keeps a visible correction note with the edit and Jordy adds a pre-publication source check. The case also marks the boundary of accountability. The people harmed are not recruited into the repair. Anika is not asked to approve the correction publicly or to reassure Gia. She is offered a private channel and left to decide how she feels. Finally, Jordy defines success by audience understanding rather than reach. If people who saw the original post still attribute the delay to "the younger crowd," the correction has not worked.

Stop and think. Why should the people harmed by a mistake be kept out of the work of repairing it?

Evidence from research and practice

Research on apologies supports the crew's priorities. Lewicki and colleagues identified six elements of an effective apology and found that acknowledging responsibility and offering repair carried the most weight (Negotiation and Conflict Management Research, April 6, 2016). Research on misinformation reaches a compatible conclusion. Walter and Murphy's meta-analysis of 65 studies found that corrections are more effective when they give a clear explanation rather than a bare denial (Communication Monographs, May 15, 2018).

Professional codes translate these findings into obligations. PRSA members commit to "act promptly to correct erroneous communications for which the practitioner is responsible" (PRSA Code of Ethics, October 2000). The RTDNA code requires "giving corrections as much prominence as the error itself had" (RTDNA Code of Ethics, June 11, 2015). The National Communication Association's credo states, "We accept responsibility for the short- and long-term consequences of our own communication and expect the same from others" (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024).

Corporate cases show the gap between regret and repair. Dove expressed regret after an ad played into a racial stereotype (NPR, October 8, 2017). H&M hired a diversity leader after outrage over its "monkey hoodie" ad (NBC News, January 17, 2018). Whether such steps count as repair is a fair question to put to any organization, including your own.

The film connection shows the same error at a larger scale. In Zootopia (2016), Judy tells a press conference that a set of incidents has a biological explanation tied to one group.

This page continues page 48. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 48.

Evidence from research and practice, continued

Nick's reaction shows a personal cost that her official answer overlooks. In our reading, good intentions do not erase the effect of an unsupported claim about a group, and the animal groups in the film are not a scientific model of human race. Your job in this case is to check the log's times before the correction goes up.

Stop and think. Choose one of the brand apologies. Using the six-element research, what would count as repair rather than regret?

Sources

Real source | Negotiation and Conflict Management Research (Lewicki et al.) | April 6, 2016
An Exploration of the Structure of Effective Apologies

Real source | Communication Monographs (Walter & Murphy) | May 15, 2018
How to unring the bell: A meta-analytic approach to correction of misinformation

Real source | Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) | October 2000
PRSA Code of Ethics

Real source | Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) | 2015
RTDNA Code of Ethics

Real source | National Communication Association (NCA) | 2024
Credo for Ethical Communication

Real source | NPR | October 8, 2017
Dove Expresses 'Regret' For Racially Insensitive Ad

Real source | NBC News | January 17, 2018
H&M hires diversity leader after outrage over 'monkey hoodie' ad

Real source | Critical Media Project | No date listed
Zootopia: the press conference

This page continues page 48. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 48.

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 | Recap caption, posted Saturday 11:08 a.m.

The caption

Great night, once the younger crowd finally got organized.

Look closely: Which group does this caption ask readers to blame, and on what evidence?

What it shows	What it leaves out
A published claim that blames an age group without support.	The recorded cause of the delay, and who saw the post.

Evidence B | Setup log, Friday evening

Jordy's event log

5:40 p.m. Projector failure reported. 6:00 p.m. Attendees seated. 6:20 p.m. Replacement projector connected. Note: Anika and Dec helped carry chairs before doors opened.

Look closely: What happened at 5:40 that the caption never mentions?

What it shows	What it leaves out
A record made that night, which contradicts the caption's cause.	What attendees experienced, and how far the recap spread.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 7 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Say this

"Put your finger on 5:40 in the log. Now find anything in the caption about the projector." — Wait for "nothing."

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide Gia is a bad person. **Listen for:** "Gia is just rude." **Then:** Ask what the evidence shows Gia did. The caption made a claim she never checked.

Support

- Give the four documents on separate half-pages.
- Read Anika's message aloud in a neutral voice.
- **Cognates:** correction (corrección), evidence (evidencia), error (error), projector (proyector), stereotype (estereotipo), repair (reparación), responsibility (responsabilidad), public (público).

Stretch

- Ask which document was written at the time and which were written later, and why that matters.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | **Voice note to the crew**

Anika's message

"We were helping you set up. Why are we the problem in this post?"

Look closely: What fact does Anika add, and what is she asking the crew?

What it shows

A direct account from someone the caption misrepresented.

What it leaves out

What repair, if any, Anika wants from the crew.

Evidence D | **Draft correction, Saturday 2:15 p.m., not posted**

Gia's first correction

Sorry if this came across wrong. We love our younger neighbors and would never want anyone to feel excluded.

Look closely: What fact does this correct? Who does the word "if" put the problem on?

What it shows

A conditional apology that centers intent over impact.

What it leaves out

Every checkable fact: the claim, the cause and the fix.

What is still missing from the evidence?

What each attendee actually experienced, whether any latecomers affected the start at all, how far the recap was reshared, and whether Anika wants any public response.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read Anika's message and Gia's draft aloud. Skip the boxes.

Say this

"Put your finger on 5:40 in the log. Now find anything in the caption about the projector." — Wait for "nothing."

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide Gia is a bad person. **Listen for:** "Gia is just rude." **Then:** Ask what the evidence shows Gia did. The caption made a claim she never checked.

Support

- Give the four documents on separate half-pages.
- Read Anika's message aloud in a neutral voice.
- **Cognates:** correction (corrección), evidence (evidencia), error (error), projector (proyector), stereotype (estereotipo), repair (reparación), responsibility (responsabilidad), public (público).

Stretch

- Ask which document was written at the time and which were written later, and why that matters.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: corrections

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

Gia's caption did two jobs at once. It explained the late start, and it blamed a group of people for it. A **claim** is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence. Jordy's setup log checks the caption's claim and shows a projector failure instead.

A **correction** is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information. It should appear where people saw the mistake, so the crew should edit the recap caption itself. A 2016 study of apologies found that taking responsibility and offering to repair the harm mattered most. Gia's first draft talks about loving younger neighbors, and it does neither.

Accountability is owning a mistake and doing what you said you would do to fix it. That means naming who corrects the caption, who contacts the people it blamed and who checks the next recap. Anika does not have to comfort Gia or approve the correction in public. The crew can offer her a private way to respond.

Professional standards

Real source | **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)**

PRSA Code of Ethics: Free Flow of Information

"Act promptly to correct erroneous communications for which the practitioner is responsible."

In plain words: Public relations professionals who belong to PRSA agree to fix their own mistakes quickly.

Question: The recap caption went up Saturday at 11:08 a.m. What should the crew change first, and where?

Your answer

The first change is ___, made in ___, because ___.

The first change is the false cause in the caption, edited in place with a visible note. PRSA asks members to correct promptly, and the error was public.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"A correction replaces wrong information with supported information. Which document supplies the supported information?" — Wait for the setup log.

"The PRSA code says to act promptly to correct errors. What should the crew fix first?" — Point to the caption.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the PRSA code as a law. **Listen for:** "The crew could get sued for that." **Then:** Say: "A code of ethics is a standard a profession sets for its own members. The PRSA code is not a law."

Support

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

Stretch

- Read the RTDNA card. Ask whether a new post or an edit to the original would reach more of the same readers.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

In the news

Real source | NPR Public Editor | October 21, 2022

That was wrong

How a real newsroom corrects mistakes: name the error, fix it on the story and keep a public list.

Real source | NPR | October 8, 2017

Dove Expresses 'Regret' For Racially Insensitive Ad

A real brand apology after an ad played into a racial stereotype; compare the words with what changed afterward.

Notes

This page continues page 53. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 53.

Sort the evidence

On your own Compare the four accounts. Mark where they agree, where they differ and which one was written at the time. About 6 minutes.

Place the four accounts side by side. Where do they agree, where do they split, and which one was written down at the time?

Account 1

Caption: the night went well once the younger crowd got organized.

Account 2

Event log: projector failed at 5:40; replacement connected at 6:20; Anika and Dec carried chairs.

Account 3

Anika: "We were helping you set up."

Where they agree

The screening started late.

Where they differ

What caused the delay: a group's behavior or an equipment failure?

Check: Which account was recorded at the time rather than remembered afterward?

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 ___.

Viewers who saw screenshots of the caption elsewhere. I would ask how they could learn about the correction.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Put the four accounts side by side. Which one was written down at the time?" — Wait for the log. Model one row together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students trust the caption because Gia was there. **Listen for:** "Gia was there, so her caption counts." **Then:** Ask which account was recorded at the time. The log was written that night, and the caption came the next morning.

Support

- Let students write A (agree) or D (differ) in each box before writing sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can lead to talk about how younger people are treated.

Cool-down: Keep it about the people in the case. No student speaks for an age group. Return to the log.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what goes first in the correction and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

What should go first in the correction?

- [ ] **A** An explanation of how bad Gia feels about the caption.
- [x] **B** The wrong claim, and what the event log shows.
- [ ] **C** Delete the post and stay quiet.

Why I chose it

B. It corrects the record where the harm happened. A and C each leave the false cause standing for the people who saw it.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

We want to apologize for our last post. We didn't mean to offend anyone and we love having younger people at our events. It was a really stressful night and (1) things were hectic so we said something we shouldn't have. Honestly we were all tired and trying to get everything set up on time, and it's been a lot. We are sorry if anyone was hurt. (2) We promise it won't happen again and we hope everyone keeps coming! Thank you all for your support and understanding, it means a lot to us.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

The delay came from a projector failure logged at 5:40 p.m.

Rewrite phrase 2

Every recap now gets a log check before it posts.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Gia is ready to post. What goes first?" — Vote first.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose A because it sounds sincere. **Listen for:** "She should say how bad she feels." **Then:** Ask what A tells Anika about the delay.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: Correction: our recap said the screening started late because younger attendees were disorganized. That was wrong. Jordy's event log shows the projector failed at 5:40 p.m. and the replacement was connected at 6:20. Anika and Dec actually helped carry chairs before doors opened. We have edited the original caption and messaged the people it blamed. Starting with the next event, Gia and Jordy will check any claim about causes against the event log before we post. We're sorry we blamed people who were helping us. If you see something we got wrong, message Jordy.

Other notes on the draft:

- "We didn't mean to offend anyone" Talks about intent. It still doesn't say what was wrong.
- "We are sorry if anyone was hurt" "If" puts the problem on readers. Name who was blamed.
- "we hope everyone keeps coming" Good goal, but a repair makes that more likely than a hope.

College

Your task

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

Write a corrections policy for a student club's social accounts, then use it to write the correction for the crew's recap caption.

Use: Case documents: the recap caption, Jordy's setup log, Anika's message and Gia's unposted first draft. Real sources: the PRSA Code of Ethics summary, the RTDNA rule on prominent corrections and the NPR Public Editor's column "That was wrong" (October 21, 2022).

You'll make: Corrections policy, 250—350 words, plus a posted correction of 70—100 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. Reread Evidence A, B, C and D. List what the crew's process missed.
2. Decide who writes corrections, where they appear and how quickly.
3. Choose whether the club edits the original, posts a new one or does both.
4. Write a repair step with an owner and a check.
5. Draft the policy, 250 to 350 words, on the Your draft page.
6. Write the correction for the recap caption, 70 to 100 words.
7. Cite the PRSA or RTDNA code and say whom it applies to.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Who writes corrections

The person who wrote the post, checked by a second officer.

Where corrections appear, and how fast

In the original post, as soon as the error is confirmed.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 10 min. Fill in the first two planner boxes together.

Say this

"Your club's recap just blamed the wrong people. Who fixes it, where and by when?" — Push for named roles and a place, not "we'll be careful."

Watch for

Misconception: The policy is a list of values. **Listen for:** "We value honesty and inclusion." **Then:** Ask what a member does on the day of an error. Write it as a step.

Support

- Policy template: who writes corrections, where they appear, how fast and who owns the repair
- Highlighting key from the workshop: words about intent in one color, facts in another
- Correction frame: what we said, what the log shows, what we changed
- Frame: "When ___, the ___ does ___ by ___."

Stretch

- Decide whether the club edits the original caption, posts a new one or does both, and defend the choice with the RTDNA prominence rule.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric; Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Information Creation as a Process.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Your task, continued

Edit, new post or both, and why

Edit the original. RTDNA asks for corrections with as much prominence as the error itself had.

Notes

This page continues page 57.

Answer key

A strong response:

- The correction names the error and states what the log shows: a projector failure was reported at 5:40 p.m.
- The policy says who writes corrections, where they appear and how quickly
- The policy includes a repair step with an owner and a check
- Cites the PRSA or RTDNA code accurately
- Repeats no stereotype and names no real person

Your draft

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

Your corrections policy, 250 to 350 words

Corrections policy for our club's accounts. When we post something wrong, we fix it where people saw it, and we repair any harm. 1. Who writes it: the person who wrote the post drafts the correction. A second officer checks it against the record before it goes up. 2. Where it goes: we edit the original post and add a visible correction note. We do not delete a post that blamed someone, because screenshots can keep spreading. 3. How fast: we correct as soon as the error is confirmed. PRSA asks members to act promptly to correct errors they are responsible for. RTDNA asks that corrections get as much prominence as the error. 4. What it says: the error first, then the checked fact, then what we changed. An apology can follow, but it never replaces the fact. 5. Repair: we message the people the post blamed and offer a private way to reply. We never ask them to reassure us. The officer who wrote the post owns this step. 6. Check: a week later, the second officer asks a few readers what they now understand. If they still repeat the error, we post the correction again. These codes bind their members, not our club, but their standards fit what we publish.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 30 min.

Say this

"Read your correction as Anika would. Does it name what happened before it says sorry?" — Partners read corrections aloud.

Watch for

Misconception: The correction repeats the stereotype to explain it. **Listen for:** "We said younger people are disorganized, but..." **Then:** Name the error without repeating the label more than once.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. The policy names who writes and who checks.
2. Defends the choice to edit in place.
3. Keeps the repair off the people who were blamed.
4. The correction states what the log shows.

Your draft, continued

Your correction, 70 to 100 words

Correction:

Correction: our recap said the screening started late because the younger crowd was not organized. That was wrong. Jordy's setup log shows a projector failure was reported at 5:40 p.m., and the replacement was connected at 6:20. Anika and Dec helped carry chairs before the doors opened. We have edited this caption and messaged the people it blamed. We are sorry we blamed people who were helping us. If we got anything else wrong, message Jordy.

Notes

This page continues page 59. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 59.

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 policy say who writes corrections, where they appear and how quickly?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it include a repair step with an owner and a check?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your correction name the error and state what the log shows?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you cite a code accurately and repeat no stereotype?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No evidence about the delay.	☐ Mentions "technical issues" vaguely.	☐ Cites the projector failure from the log.	☐ Cites specific times and corrects who actually helped.
Reasoning	☐ Apologizes for feelings only.	☐ Admits error but not what it was.	☐ Names the inaccurate claim and replaces it.	☐ Explains why the claim harmed a group and how the repair prevents a repeat.
Audience & purpose	☐ Does not consider who saw the post.	☐ Speaks to readers in general.	☐ Reaches the people who were blamed.	☐ Reaches the original audience and the blamed group through appropriate channels.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Skip the rubric boxes.

Say this

"Would Anika recognize what happened in your correction? Mark your level, then make one change." — Ask for one added fact or one removed excuse.

Watch for

Misconception: Students soften the tone instead of fixing facts. **Listen for:** "I made it sound nicer." **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Ask for one fact, owner or check added.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the correction matches Jordy's setup log and that the policy assigns an owner and a check for the repair.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Cites the projector failure from the log.
- **Reasoning:** Names the inaccurate claim and replaces it.
- **Audience & purpose:** Reaches the people who were blamed.
- **Revision:** Adds facts and a repair.

How your work is scored, continued

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Softens tone only.	☐ Adds facts and a repair.	☐ Adds facts, an owner, a check and removes shifting of blame.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

🔑 I moved the apology after the facts, because the error has to be corrected before the apology means anything.

Notes

This page continues page 61. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 61.

Questions to discuss

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

1. **The caption felt true to Gia because a few people came in late. Why was that not enough evidence?**

A plausible story still has to be verified. Gia generalized from a few latecomers to a group, while the log recorded a different cause at the time.

2. **What evidence would show that the repair happened?**

Check understanding, not views. Ask people who saw the first post what caused the delay, and confirm the next recap went through the log check.

3. **After the correction goes up, what is still up to Anika and Dec to decide?**

Whether to accept the apology and whether to engage at all. The crew can offer a private channel but cannot ask for reassurance.

My take

My claim: ___.

The crew owes a correction in place, a named repair plan and no request for reassurance.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The log, because it contradicts the caption with a record made that night.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Discuss question 2 only.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the log or the messages, not a story about someone you know." — Post the question numbers and call on one student per question.

Stretch

- Compare a real newsroom's published correction policy with the crew's plan.
- Going further: Ask the people affected what the correction missed, without asking them to forgive anyone. Then decide where the corrected fact should go so the original audience sees it.
- Going further: Correct the record where people can see it. Keep enough of the original caption in a correction note to explain what changed.
- Going further: Write a caption correction and a short script for an accessible video. Use the same facts in both.
- Going further: Ask the editor or advisor of a school newsletter, club account or yearbook how they fix mistakes. Suggest three steps: name the error, show the evidence and say what changes.
- Draft how the crew would measure whether younger neighbors come back
- Compare a real published correction policy from a newsroom with the crew's plan

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

A quiet deletion avoids drawing more attention to the error.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

Nobody knows how far the recap was reshared.

I would change my mind if ___.

Anika and Dec said they preferred no public correction.

Notes

This page continues page 63.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 1: Medium.** Students may repeat age stereotypes or defend the caption.

Cool-down: Ask what the log recorded at 5:40. Keep the talk on evidence, not on what younger people are like.

Question 3 cool-down: Say that Anika and Dec owe the crew nothing. Ask what the crew can offer instead: a private way to respond.

Talk about this case at home

Case 3: What should a group do after a public mistake?

In this case, a group of friends posts a caption that wrongly blames younger neighbors for a late start. Your student compared the caption with an event log and wrote a correction and a plan to repair the harm.

Questions to talk about

1. What makes an apology feel complete?
2. Where should a correction appear so the people who saw a mistake will see it?
3. How can a group check a claim before it posts about an event?

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

See the case online.

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.

Case 4: Who gets a say when a shared room changes?

Overview

Students read a short story about the Common Room, where a nonprofit board is considering paid evening rentals. The rentals would help close a $200 weekly budget gap. Students read the board agenda, a budget note and listening notes from evening users, then map who might miss the meeting. They write a note or a spoken comment with a budget question and an access question.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- read a simple budget and state figures as projections
- plan a meeting or a survey around people's schedules
- write a formal comment to a board

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- design a way for the board to hear from people a meeting time leaves out
- use the $600, $400 and $120 figures accurately
- include the nearby resident's concern as well as evening users' needs
- make one request the board can act on

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant

Materials, continued

- Evidence A, B and C
- The options matrix and the people map
- The written-comment header: name, agenda item, position, request

The task in this edition

Task: Write a proposal to the nonprofit board for hearing from evening users before it chooses among Options A, B and C. Add a written comment that recommends one option.

Students make: Proposal, 300—400 words, plus a written comment of 150—200 words

Pacing

Opener (page 66): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the opening question.

Key terms (pages 67 and 68): 5 min. Short on time: skip. Define proposal and decision-maker aloud.

Look at the evidence (page 72): 10 min. Short on time: 9 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 73): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read the listening notes aloud. Participants fill in only the first box.

Key idea (pages 74 and 75): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip the In the news section.

Pacing, continued

Sort the evidence (page 76): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 77): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 78 and 79): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Fill in the first planner box together.

Your draft (pages 80 and 81): 30 min. Short on time: 30 min.

Check your work (pages 82 and 83): 8 min. Short on time: 4 min. Participants answer the four questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 84 and 85): 10 min. Short on time: 6 min. Discuss question 3 only.

Talk about this case at home (page 86): at home.

Periods: full chapter 109 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

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 plan how people whose shifts overlap the meeting can still be heard by the board (Civic Contexts/Structures).

Case 4 plan, continued

Standards, continued

Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for calculating, interpreting and explaining numbers in everyday situations. In this case: Students calculate the $200 weekly gap and explain why the $120 per rental is a projection (Calculation; Assumptions).

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 proposal and a comment for a board audience, each with a clear request (Context of and Purpose for Writing).

Research as Inquiry Research is a cycle of asking questions whose answers raise new questions. In this case: Students turn gaps in the listening notes into questions that the input process must answer.

Codes of ethics

- **ASPA Code of Ethics:** 5. Fully Inform and Advise.
- **ASPA Code of Ethics:** 3. Promote democratic participation.
- **ALA Code of Ethics:** Principle 1 (of 9)

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 66):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 67 and 68):** Low

Heat map, continued

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 72):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 73):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 74 and 75):** Low

■■□ **Sort the evidence (page 76):** Medium

■□□ **Practice (page 77):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 82 and 83):** Low

Try it at your school

Find the room where your community's decisions happen.

- With a trusted adult, look up an upcoming library board, school committee or rec-center meeting agenda
- Identify which body decides and whether the item is for discussion or a vote
- Write one question about who uses the space and when
- Check whether written comments are accepted if you can't attend

Who to ask: Library staff, a rec-center manager, the school board clerk or a student council advisor

Safety: Go to public meetings with a trusted adult. Check whether comments and names become part of the public record before submitting.

Sources

- New York City Council, "NYC Council, Library Leaders, and New Yorkers Celebrate Library Budget Restorations to Restore Full Service, as Branches Reopen and Reinstate Services on Sunday for First Time in Months," July 14, 2024
- NYC Mayor's Office, "Mayor Adams Celebrates $58.3 Million Investment in City's Three Library Systems," July 1, 2024
- NY1, "Public libraries over the next two weeks to begin closing on Sundays," November 17, 2023
- PIX11 News, "Last Sunday service held at Brooklyn Public Library," December 17, 2023
- Carol Bacchi, "What's the problem represented to be?," No date listed
- NYC.gov, Brooklyn Community Board 13, "About community boards," No date listed
- Design Council, "The Double Diamond," No date listed

Case 4: Who gets a say when a shared room changes?

The Common Room's board is weighing paid rentals on two free evenings, so the crew prepares a comment before the meeting.

On your own Read What happened. Underline who decides and what the board is considering. About 5 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who checks the budget figures before the crew speaks to the board. **New skill:** Weigh the trade-offs of each option.

Mari shows Sami a printed schedule.

What happened

It is the Friday after the crew's first screening, and the board meeting is coming up. A small neighborhood nonprofit runs the Common Room alongside the bookshop. The nonprofit's board is considering paid rentals on two evenings a week to help cover staffing. No vote has happened yet.

Mari, 19, works the bookshop counter and closes the shop. She knows that "just keep it free" does not pay the evening staff. Sami runs a print workshop in the room after her afternoon shift. It is one of the few step-free rooms nearby.

Caio, 24, runs the crew's Tuesday film night. Tuesday is one of the evenings Option B would rent out. Mateo already has a headline for a petition. The crew agrees the room matters, but they do not agree on the best schedule.

Your question: Which option should the crew support, and what should they ask the board?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the opening question.

Say this

"A room you use might lose two free evenings. What would you want to know before you speak up?" — Take three answers and write them as questions.

Watch for

Misconception: Students assume the change is already decided. **Listen for:** "They're taking our nights away." **Then:** Point to the story: no vote has happened. Write "proposal" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Draw the Common Room's week on the board and mark Tuesday and Thursday.

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.

Proposal A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet.

En español: propuesta

In this case: Option B is a proposal on the board's agenda. No vote has been taken, so it is not a decision yet.

Trade-off A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.

En español: compensación entre opciones

In this case: Paid rentals help close the $200 weekly gap but take away free evenings Sami and Dec use.

Decision-maker A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.

En español: quien toma la decisión

In this case: The nonprofit board decides, not a city community board and not the crew.

Who is involved

Mari

Closes the bookshop, then stays for zine night

"I'm the one they pay to lock up, and I'm also one of the people using this room after. I can't pretend either half away."

Sami

Runs a print workshop in the room

"We keep deciding what the evening people need. Has anyone asked them yet?"

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. Define proposal and decision-maker aloud.

Say this

"Write your first guess now. You will come back to it at the end." — Keep first guesses private unless a student wants to share.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think a proposal is a decision. **Listen for:** "The board decided to rent it out." **Then:** Reread the definition. A proposal has not been approved yet.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term.
- Frame: "A trade-off here is ___. The cost is ___."
- **Cognates:** option (opción), projection (proyección), community (comunidad), access (acceso), authority (autoridad), equity (equidad), pilot (piloto), decision (decisión).

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 the crew should ask the board for?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is a compromise, because the room needs money and the evening users need their nights.

Notes

This page continues page 67. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 67.

Reading passage

Budgets, access and the politics of a shared room

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

- **Proposal**: A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet.
- **Trade-off**: A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.
- **Decision-maker**: A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.
- **Framing**: Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward.

The story: A small board with a real deficit

The Common Room is a shared space run by a small neighborhood nonprofit alongside a Fort Greene bookshop. Its board is considering paid rentals on two evenings a week to help cover staffing, and it will discuss the idea at a Wednesday 6:30 p.m. meeting. No vote has been taken. The crew, who hold screenings, workshops and film nights there, agree that the room matters. They disagree about the best schedule.

Their positions follow their circumstances. Mateo arrives with a petition headline and, by his own account, no budget. Mari, 19, is paid to close the bookshop and also uses the room afterward, so she sees a cost that nobody has recorded. Rental nights would turn her zine evenings into shifts spent staffing a stranger's event. Sami, who works afternoons and runs a print workshop in one of the few step-free rooms nearby, objects to the process. The crew is deciding what evening users need without consulting them. She also rejects the easy substitute of moving her workshop online, which would require devices, quiet space and supplies that not everyone has. Caio, 24, runs the Tuesday film night that Option B would end.

Stop and think. Sami wants to know what her input can change. How does that question test whether a consultation is real?

The documents and the frame

The agenda offers three **proposals**. A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet. Option A keeps the free evenings and accepts a continuing funding gap.

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (719 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A small board with a real deficit":** Sami wants to know what her input can change. How does that question test whether a consultation is real?
2. **After "The documents and the frame":** Propose a different representation of the problem. Which option would it favor, and why?
3. **After "Participation, authority and professional duty":** What would a budget note that met the ASPA standard say about the $120 projection?

The documents and the frame, continued

Option B replaces Tuesday and Thursday evenings with paid rentals. Option C pilots one rental evening for six weeks while the board seeks other funding. The weekly budget note shows $600 in evening staffing and utilities against $400 in grants and donations. Each rental is projected to net $120, so two would close the $200 gap and one would leave $80. The note flags demand as uncertain and does not say whether the $120 figure rests on any past bookings.

A **trade-off** is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up. Carol Bacchi's policy-analysis approach asks what a proposed solution assumes the problem is (Carol Bacchi, November 1, 2017). Option B represents the problem as a revenue shortfall, which makes free evenings the natural place to find money. The Case 1 concept of **framing**, choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward, describes the same move. A different representation, such as unequal access to the few step-free rooms nearby, would make different options look reasonable. Bacchi's method is symmetrical. It applies equally to the petition, which represents the problem as a threat to free space and treats staffing costs as someone else's concern.

The listening notes supply the evidence a representation can hide. Sami works afternoons. Dec rehearses on Thursdays. Mari closes the shop. A nearby resident worries about late noise. The meeting time overlaps several shifts, so the people with the most at stake are the least able to attend.

Stop and think. Propose a different representation of the problem. Which option would it favor, and why?

Participation, authority and professional duty

A **decision-maker** is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. The board decides its own schedule. Public bodies distribute authority differently. New York's community boards advise rather than decide (NYC.gov, Brooklyn Community Board 13, no date listed). The city's library cuts illustrate the chain. Budget reductions ended Sunday service at every branch that still had it, with Brooklyn's last Sunday on December 17, 2023 (NY1, November 17, 2023). A $58.3 million restoration brought Sundays back from July 14, 2024 (NYC Mayor's Office, July 1, 2024), and Council members credited residents who called and wrote (New York City Council, July 14, 2024).

Some institutions share the decision itself. Researchers at Tufts' CIRCLE found that participatory budgeting in Illinois high schools helped students weigh competing needs (CIRCLE, August 9, 2024). A peer-reviewed study examined how young people take part when communities share decisions about public resources (Farahmandpour and Zrudlo, Education, Citizenship and Social Justice, December 4, 2023).

For administrators, the ASPA code asks them to provide "accurate, honest, comprehensive, and timely information and advice" to governing boards (ASPA Code of Ethics, 2013).

This page continues page 69. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 69.

Participation, authority and professional duty, continued

A budget note that projects revenue without stating its basis falls short of that standard. The crew answers in kind: one joint question that leaves room for disagreement, checked figures and an accessible way to send written feedback. Your role is to check the figures before the crew speaks, and to ask the board how certain the $120 projection is.

Stop and think. What would a budget note that met the ASPA standard say about the $120 projection?

Sources

Real source | Carol Bacchi | November 1, 2017
What's the problem represented to be?

Real source | NYC.gov, Brooklyn Community Board 13 | No date listed
About community boards

Real source | NY1 | November 17, 2023
Public libraries over the next two weeks to begin closing on Sundays

Real source | NYC Mayor's Office | July 1, 2024
Mayor Adams Celebrates $58.3 Million Investment in City's Three Library Systems

Real source | New York City Council | July 14, 2024
NYC Council, Library Leaders, and New Yorkers Celebrate Library Budget Restorations to Restore Full Service, as Branches Reopen and Reinstate Services on Sunday for First Time in Months

Real source | CIRCLE (Tufts University) | August 9, 2024
Participatory Budgeting in Schools Helps Build Student Voice and Civic Skills

Real source | Education, Citizenship and Social Justice (Farahmandpour & Zrudlo) | December 4, 2023
Investigating young people's involvement in participatory budgeting

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

This page continues page 69. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 69.

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 | Board agenda, Wednesday 6:30 p.m. meeting

The proposal

Evening rentals, for discussion. Option A: keep the current free evenings; the funding gap remains. Option B: replace Tuesday and Thursday evenings with paid rentals. Option C: pilot one rental evening for six weeks while seeking additional funding. No vote has been taken.

Look closely: Is this a vote or a discussion? Which words tell you?

What it shows

Three options at the discussion stage, with no decision recorded.

What it leaves out

Evidence of who uses each evening, and the pilot's review plan.

Evidence B | Weekly budget note for the board

The budget note

Evening staffing and utilities: $600. Current grants and donations: $400. Each paid rental is projected to add $120 after its extra costs. Two bookings would add $240; one would add $120. Demand is uncertain.

Look closely: Which number is a guess, and what could change it?

What it shows

Fixed costs and income, plus a conditional revenue projection.

What it leaves out

The data behind the $120 estimate, and any other funding.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 9 min. Participants fill in only the "What it shows" boxes.

Say this

"Put your finger on the word "projected" in the budget note. What does it tell you about the $120?" — Wait for "it's a guess."

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat $120 per rental as guaranteed. **Listen for:** "Two rentals means $240, done." **Then:** Point to "Demand is uncertain." Ask what happens with one booking, or none.

Support

- Provide a calculator and work $600 − $400 = $200 together.
- Read one option at a time aloud.
- **Cognates:** option (opción), projection (proyección), community (comunidad), access (acceso), authority (autoridad), equity (equidad), pilot (piloto), decision (decisión).

Stretch

- Ask students to work out the gap with zero, one and two rentals, and say which result is a guess.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | **Listening notes from evening users**

The missing voices

Sami works afternoons. Dec rehearses on Thursdays. Mari closes the shop. A nearby resident worries about late noise. The proposed meeting time overlaps with several shifts.

Look closely: Whose voice is missing from these four notes?

What it shows

A small, uneven sample of evening users and one neighbor.

What it leaves out

How the notes were collected, and who was never asked.

What is still missing from the evidence?

Who uses the room on other evenings, whether the $120 projection rests on any past bookings, what the board will do if the pilot underperforms, and the views of evening users who were not in the listening notes.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read the listening notes aloud. Participants fill in only the first box.

Say this

"Put your finger on the word "projected" in the budget note. What does it tell you about the $120?" — Wait for "it's a guess."

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat $120 per rental as guaranteed. **Listen for:** "Two rentals means $240, done." **Then:** Point to "Demand is uncertain." Ask what happens with one booking, or none.

Support

- Provide a calculator and work $600 − $400 = $200 together.
- Read one option at a time aloud.
- **Cognates:** option (opción), projection (proyección), community (comunidad), access (acceso), authority (autoridad), equity (equidad), pilot (piloto), decision (decisión).

Stretch

- Ask students to work out the gap with zero, one and two rentals, and say which result is a guess.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: trade-offs

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

The board is weighing a **proposal** about the free evenings. A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet. Option B would help close the $200 weekly gap, but it would end the free Tuesday and Thursday evenings. A **trade-off** is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up. Every option on the agenda has one, including the one you prefer.

Carol Bacchi's policy-analysis approach asks what a proposed solution assumes the problem is. Option B treats the $200 gap as the problem and two free evenings as the price. That leaves two questions open: who loses those evenings, and what happens if bookings come in lower than projected? Ask the same questions about your own favorite option.

A **decision-maker** is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. Here, the nonprofit's board controls its own schedule. A community board or a city agency would follow other rules. A strong comment names the proposal, explains one effect with evidence and asks for a decision the board can make. The board can still choose an option the crew did not ask for.

Professional standards

Real source | American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)

ASPA Code of Ethics: 5. Fully Inform and Advise

"Provide accurate, honest, comprehensive, and timely information and advice to elected and appointed officials and governing board members"

In plain words: ASPA members agree to give decision-makers, such as board members, accurate and complete information.

Question: The budget note projects $120 more per rental. What should it also tell the board about how certain that is?

Your answer

The note should also state ___, so that ___.

The note should also state the basis for the $120 estimate. It should show what happens if bookings fall short, so the board weighs a projection, not a promise.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"A trade-off means gaining one benefit costs something else. What does each option cost, and who pays?" — Build a three-column chart: A, B, C.

"The ASPA code asks for accurate, complete information for decision-makers. What is missing from the budget note?" — Wait for the basis of the $120.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the ASPA code as a law. **Listen for:** "The board has to follow ASPA." **Then:** Say: "A code of ethics is a standard a profession sets for its own members. The ASPA code is not a law."

Support

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

Stretch

- Read the second ASPA card. Ask how the board could hear from evening users who cannot attend.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

In the news

Real source | Education Week | February 6, 2023

Letting Students Decide Where Money Should Go: How One District Did It

A real district let students propose and vote on how shared school spaces and money would change.

Real source | First Alert 4 (KMOV) | June 4, 2026

St. Louis shuts down streets to cars, hands them over to neighbors

A city pilot that changes a shared space for a trial run, so neighbors can test trade-offs before anything is permanent.

Notes

This page continues page 74. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 74.

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow each option to its consequences. Mark the consequences that depend on a projection. About 8 minutes.

Follow each option to its consequences. Which consequences depend on a projection, and who carries the cost if it misses?

Option B: paid rentals replace Tuesday and Thursday evenings

A projected $240 would cover the $200 gap if both evenings book

Who is affected

Check: What happens if bookings fall short of the projection?

Option C: one rental evening piloted for six weeks

A projected $80 gap remains while the board seeks funding and reviews the pilot

Who is affected

Check: What happens if bookings fall short of the projection?

Dec loses Thursday rehearsals and Mari's late evenings stop being usable

Who is affected

Evening users, including people who cannot attend the meeting

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 ___.

Possible renters. I would ask whether anyone has asked to book the room, since the $120 projection depends on demand.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Follow Option B to the end of its chain. Which consequence depends on a guess?" — Model the Option B row together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students list only money consequences. **Listen for:** "B makes $240." **Then:** Ask who is affected at the end of the chain. Point to Dec on Thursdays.

Support

- Let students write $ (money) or P (people) next to each consequence before writing sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can lead to talk about access needs or money at home.

Cool-down: Keep it about the people in the case. No student needs to describe their own schedule or budget.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what the crew should ask for first and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

What should the crew ask the board for first?

- ☐ **A** Post that the board is taking away the free nights.
- ☑ **B** Ask for the budget assumptions, who uses each evening and a way to comment without attending.
- ☐ **C** Support whichever option brings in the most money.

Why I chose it

B. It requests the budget basis and a way to hear people who cannot attend. The board can act on both.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

(1) The board should not take away our free nights. The Common Room is important to the community and a lot of people use it. I have been coming here for movie nights since it opened and it's one of the only places we can all hang out without paying. Renting it out just shows (2) the board cares more about money than people. Sami and Dec would lose their spot and that is not fair. Please keep it free for everyone. Thank you for listening.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

The board is weighing Option B, which would rent two free evenings.

Rewrite phrase 2

The budget note shows a $200 weekly gap the board has to address.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"The meeting is Wednesday. What should the crew ask for first?" — Vote first.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose A because it feels urgent. **Listen for:** "We have to warn everyone." **Then:** Ask whether the board has voted. It has not, so A misstates the facts.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: I use the Common Room on weeknights, and I'm commenting on the rental options. Option B would replace both Tuesday and Thursday free evenings. Sami meets clients after her print-shop shift, and Dec rehearses Thursdays, so losing both nights hits people with the least flexible schedules. I understand the $200 weekly gap is real. Option C's one-night pilot could cut it to about $80 if bookings hold. I'm asking the board to choose the pilot, collect written input from evening users who can't attend, and review the results with them after six weeks.

Other notes on the draft:

- "Sami and Dec would lose their spot" Good affected perspectives. Say which evenings and why they matter.
- "Please keep it free for everyone" Clear position, but the board needs a plan for the gap. What could it do?

College

Your task

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

Write a proposal to the nonprofit board for hearing from evening users before it chooses among Options A, B and C. Add a written comment that recommends one option.

Use: Case documents: the board agenda, the weekly budget note, the listening notes and Mari's and Sami's statements. Real sources: the Bacchi summary, ASPA's principle on promoting democratic participation and the first principle of the ALA code.

You'll make: Proposal, 300—400 words, plus a written comment of 150—200 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. Reread Evidence A, B and C. Note who the meeting time leaves out.
2. Plan two ways the board can hear from evening users before it decides.
3. Add a way to hear the nearby resident's concern about noise.
4. Say how the board will report back what it heard.
5. Draft the proposal, 300 to 400 words, on the Your draft page.
6. Write a comment of 150 to 200 words that recommends one option.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Who the meeting time leaves out

People whose shifts overlap with the Wednesday 6:30 p.m. meeting.

Input method 1

Written comments for two weeks.

Input method 2

A short session on a free evening.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 10 min. Fill in the first planner box together.

Say this

"The meeting is Wednesday at 6:30. Who in the listening notes can't be there, and how else could they be heard?" — List answers, then sort them by cost and effort.

Watch for

Misconception: The plan hears only people who agree with the crew. **Listen for:** "We'll invite the evening regulars." **Then:** Ask who else is affected. Point to the resident who worries about noise.

Support

- Options matrix: cost, access and uncertainty for A, B and C
- People map from the workshop
- Written-comment header: name, agenda item, position, request
- Frame: "Before it votes, the board can hear from ___ by ___."

Stretch

- Plan input from evening users and from the nearby resident who worries about late noise. Say how the board would report back what it heard.

Your task, continued

How the board reports back

A one-page summary of the input, posted at the counter before the vote.

Notes

This page continues page 78.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric; Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Research as Inquiry.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Names the nonprofit board as the decision-maker and says no vote has been taken
- Uses the $600, $400 and $120 figures accurately and calls the $120 a projection
- Schedules input at times that fit the shifts in the listening notes
- Includes the nearby resident's concern as well as the evening users' needs
- Makes one request the board can act on at its meeting

Your draft

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

Your proposal, 300 to 400 words

Proposal: hear from evening users before the board decides on evening rentals. The board's agenda lists three options, and no vote has been taken. The proposed meeting time overlaps with several shifts, so the people most affected may not be in the room. We propose two ways to hear them. First, accept written comments for two weeks, on paper at the bookshop counter and online. Second, hold one short listening session on a free evening, when evening users are already in the room. Invite the nearby resident who worries about late noise, so that concern is heard alongside the users' needs. The board should share the figures it is working from. Evening staffing and utilities cost $600 a week, and grants and donations cover $400. Each rental is projected to add $120, but demand is uncertain. Finally, the board should post a one-page summary of what it heard before it votes. This plan asks for one decision the board can make at its next meeting: approve the two-week comment period.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 30 min.

Say this

"Your comment makes one request. Could the board say yes to it at its next meeting?" — Partners mark the request in each other's comment.

Watch for

Misconception: The comment treats the pilot's $80 gap as settled. **Listen for:** "The pilot leaves exactly $80." **Then:** Add "projected" and "if bookings hold." Demand is uncertain.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Names who the meeting time leaves out.
2. Includes the resident's concern, as the success criteria require.
3. States the figure as a projection.
4. Makes one request the board can act on at its meeting.

Your draft, continued

Your written comment, 150 to 200 words

Agenda item: evening rentals. Position: I support Option C, the six-week pilot. Option B would replace both the Tuesday and Thursday free evenings, and Dec rehearses on Thursdays. The pilot would keep one free evening. If its rental books, it would leave a projected gap of about $80. I ask the board to say how it will seek the rest. Request: please approve a two-week written comment period before the vote.

Notes

This page continues page 80. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 80.

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 proposal name the board as the decision-maker and say no vote has been taken?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Do you use the figures accurately and call the $120 a projection?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does your plan reach people whose shifts overlap with the meeting?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Do you make one request the board can act on?	☑ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No figures or perspectives.	☐ Mentions money or people vaguely.	☐ Uses one figure and one affected perspective accurately.	☐ Uses figures conditionally and names an uncertainty.
Reasoning	☐ Assigns bad motives to the board.	☐ States a preference without addressing the gap.	☐ Recommends an option and addresses the gap.	☐ Weighs trade-offs across options and explains the choice.
Audience & purpose	☐ Speaks to the wrong decision -maker.	☐ Addresses the board but asks for nothing specific.	☐ Makes a request the board can act on.	☐ Requests a process that includes people who can't attend.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone edits only.	☐ Replaces a motive claim with evidence.	☐ Adds a figure, a perspective and a follow-up request.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Participants answer the four questions only.

Say this

"Could a board member act on your request tomorrow? Mark your level, then make one change." — Ask for one figure stated as a projection.

Watch for

Misconception: Students state the $120 as certain. **Listen for:** "The pilot will bring in $120." **Then:** Point to the Evidence row. Add "is projected to."

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that every figure matches the budget note and that the input plan reaches the people named in the listening notes.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Uses one figure and one affected perspective accurately.
- **Reasoning:** Recommends an option and addresses the gap.
- **Audience & purpose:** Makes a request the board can act on.
- **Revision:** Replaces a motive claim with evidence.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I added the nearby resident to the listening session, because my first plan heard only people who want the room open late.

Notes

This page continues page 82. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 82.

Questions to discuss

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

1. **Option B treats the $200 gap as the problem. What does that way of stating the problem leave out?**

Framing the issue as a funding gap makes two free evenings the price of solving it. The users who lose them, and the uncertain demand, drop out of view.

2. **Mari is paid to close the shop and also uses the room at night. How does that shape what she asks for?**

Her two roles make her weigh the costs, so she asks for tested options and written costs, not a simple yes or no.

3. **If the board chooses an option the crew did not support, how should the crew tell the group what happened?**

Report the decision accurately, including the board's stated reasons. Then explain what input is still possible, such as the pilot review.

4. **How is the Common Room's board different from the City Council that helped restore library Sundays?**

The board decides the schedule for one nonprofit's room. The Council is a public body that negotiates the city budget with the mayor, so the routes for input differ.

My take

My claim: ___.

The board should pilot one rental night and collect written input from evening users.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Discuss question 3 only.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the agenda, the budget note or the listening notes." — Post the question numbers and call on one student per question.

Stretch

- Model what happens if only four of six pilot rentals are booked.
- Going further: Choose one option on the agenda. Write what it assumes the problem is and what it leaves out.
- Going further: Map who is affected by the change, including people who cannot attend the meeting. Then write an invitation that says what is still open to input.
- Going further: Make an annotated options sheet that compares Options A, B and C. Test it with a neighbor, and revise any part that confuses them.
- Going further: With a trusted adult, look up an upcoming library board, school committee or recreation center meeting agenda. Find out whether the item is for discussion or a vote, and whether written comments are accepted.
- Research the difference between a nonprofit board and a public community board in your area

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The budget note, because it calls demand uncertain.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Covering the full gap now protects the room for everyone.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

Four listening notes cannot represent every evening user.

I would change my mind if ___.

Past bookings showed that two rentals a week are reliable.

Notes

This page continues page 84.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 3: Medium.** Students may describe the board as the enemy or guess at its motives.

Cool-down: Ask what the agenda and budget note show. Keep the talk on the decision, not on the people who made it.

Talk about this case at home

Case 4: Who gets a say when a shared room changes?

In this case, a community room's board is weighing whether to rent out two free evenings to cover its costs. Your student used a budget note and notes from evening users to write a comment the board could act on.

See the case online.

Questions to talk about

1. Who decides the hours at a public library or community center?
2. What should a group know before it asks a board for a change?
3. How can people give input if they cannot attend a meeting?

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

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.

Case 5: Why is my deposit smaller than what I earned?

Content note

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

Overview

Students read a short story in which Gia's bank deposit is smaller than she expected after 18 hours of café shifts. They read her pay statement and shift log, label gross pay, FICA, withholding and net pay, and find out why three hours are missing. They then write a private question to payroll about any line they cannot explain.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- read a pay statement line by line
- summarize an official source accurately
- write for a workshop audience of new workers

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- write a workplace question that cites dates and lines without private information
- walk a new worker from gross pay to net pay with the case figures
- separate FICA from income-tax withholding, citing the IRS pages
- state that the practice amounts predict no one's taxes

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant
- Evidence A and B, with a calendar that shows the pay period
- The IRS employment-tax page, the IRS tutorial on gross and net pay and the Department of Labor's Young Worker Toolkit
- A line-by-line table of the statement

The task in this edition

Task: Write Gia's question to payroll about the missing hours. Then write a one-page guide for new student workers that walks through her pay statement line by line. The guide could be used in a campus career office's first-job workshop.

Students make: Payroll question, 50—80 words, plus a guide of 300—400 words

Pacing

Opener (page 87): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Summarize What happened in one minute.

Key terms (pages 88 and 89): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Look at the evidence (pages 93 and 94): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Participants fill in the What it shows boxes only.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 95 and 96): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Read the key idea. Skip In the news.

Sort the evidence (page 97): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 98): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Do the choice only. Skip Improve a draft.

Your task (pages 99 and 100): 10 min. Short on time: 10 min.

Your draft (page 101): 30 min. Short on time: 30 min.

Check your work (pages 102 and 103): 6 min. Short on time: 6 min.

Questions to discuss (pages 104 and 105): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Talk about this case at home (page 106): at home.

Periods: full chapter 90 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Standards

Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for calculating, interpreting and explaining numbers in everyday situations. In this case: Students follow gross pay to net pay and use pay-period dates to account for the three missing hours (Calculation; Interpretation).

Case 5 plan, continued

Standards, continued

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 workplace question and a guide for new student workers (Context of and Purpose for Writing).

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students check each deduction against the IRS pages before they explain it (Use Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose).

Research as Inquiry Research is a cycle of asking questions whose answers raise new questions. In this case: Students turn a confusing deposit into specific questions that the statement, the shift log and the IRS pages can answer.

Codes of ethics

- **PayrollOrg Code of Ethics:** Item 2
- **PayrollOrg Code of Ethics:** Item 5
- **IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators:** "I communicate accurate information"

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 87):** Low

Heat map, continued

■□□ **Key terms (pages 88 and 89):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (pages 93 and 94):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 95 and 96):** Low

■□□ **Sort the evidence (page 97):** Low

■■□ **Practice (page 98):** Medium

■□□ **Check your work (pages 102 and 103):** Low

Try it at your school

Know how to read your first pay statement.

- Before a first job, ask how and when you'll be paid and where to see your pay statement
- Keep your own log of hours and shifts
- Look up your state's minimum wage on its labor department site
- Bring pay questions to a supervisor or payroll, in writing

Who to ask: School counselor or career office, a work-permit issuing officer if your state uses them, your supervisor or payroll office

Safety: Never post pay statements, Social Security numbers or bank details online. Workers under 18 have limits on hours and jobs; ask a trusted adult to help check them.

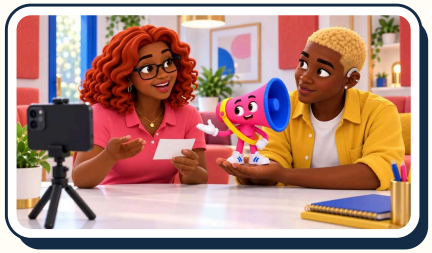
Sources

- Internal Revenue Service, "Understanding Taxes: gross pay and net pay," No date listed
- Internal Revenue Service, "Understanding employment taxes," No date listed
- Internal Revenue Service, "Tax Withholding Estimator," No date listed
- TBS, "Rachel Gets Her First Paycheck from Central Perk," No date listed

Case 5: Why is my deposit smaller than what I earned?

Gia's bank deposit is smaller than the pay she worked out, so she reads her pay statement line by line before asking payroll.

On your own Read What happened and underline the two hour totals that do not match. About 4 minutes.



Gia holds a small card and talks beside a phone on a tripod. Jordy holds Voz, one of the crew's companions, on an open hand.

Your role: You're the one who adds up Gia's hours before she writes to payroll. **New skill:** Read a pay statement line by line.

What happened

It is Thursday evening, and it is payday for Gia. She works café shifts around her college classes. She checks her bank account and sees a deposit that is smaller than the pay she worked out. Gia keeps a shift log in her notes app. The log says 18 hours, but her pay statement says 15.

Jordy works event shifts, and their deposit looks different too. Jordy's shifts fall on different dates and hours, so their pay cannot explain Gia's. Jordy asks Gia to name the line that worries her instead of posting her whole statement.

Gia's pay statement lists her hours, her hourly rate and four tax lines. She expected the lines for Social Security and Medicare. She does not understand the line for federal income tax. Before she writes to payroll, she wants to know what her own records show.

Your question: Why is Gia's deposit smaller than her own count, and what should she ask payroll?

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Summarize What happened in one minute.

Say this

"Gia counted 18 hours. Her statement says 15. What are three reasons that could happen?" — List guesses on the board and keep them for the sort page.

Watch for

Misconception: Students assume payroll cheated Gia. **Listen for:** "They're ripping her off." **Then:** Ask which document would prove an error. Write "Check the dates first" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Write 18 and 15 side by side on the board.

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.

Gross pay Gross pay is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.

En español: salario bruto

In this case: Gia's statement pays 15 hours at $17.00 an hour, so her gross pay is $255.00.

Net pay Net pay is the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay.

En español: salario neto

In this case: The $220.99 that reached Gia's bank account is her net pay, not the amount she earned.

FICA FICA is the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare.

En español: FICA (Seguro Social y Medicare)

In this case: On Gia's statement, FICA appears as two lines: Social Security tax, $15.81, and Medicare tax, $3.70.

Withholding Withholding is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker.

En español: retención

In this case: Federal income tax withheld, $8.40, is a separate line from FICA. The IRS says its amount depends partly on the W-4.

Who is involved

Gia
Works café shifts and keeps her own shift log

"My notes say 18 hours. The statement says 15. I counted twice, so where did three hours go?"

Jordy
Works event shifts on different dates

"Mine is event work. Different dates, different hours. My deposit can't tell Gia anything about hers."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

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

Say this

"Which number did Gia see in her bank account, gross pay or net pay?" — Wait for "net pay." Then ask what her gross pay was.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat FICA and federal income tax as the same tax. **Listen for:** "FICA is just the income tax." **Then:** FICA is two lines, Social Security and Medicare. Federal income tax is a third line.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- Draw gross pay at the top and net pay at the bottom, with deductions between them.
- **Cognates:** deduction (deducción), net (neto), total (total), calculate (calcular), period (período), federal (federal), confirm (confirmar), error (error).

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, why do you think Gia's deposit is smaller than she expected?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that taxes explain part of the gap, but her 18-hour count suggests something else is missing too.

Notes

This page continues page 88. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 88.

Reading passage

Pay statements, payroll taxes and privacy

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

- **Gross pay**: Gross pay is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.
- **Net pay**: Net pay is the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay.
- **FICA**: FICA is the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare.
- **Withholding**: Withholding is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker.
- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.

The story: A discrepancy with two causes

Gia, 21, works café shifts around her college classes and keeps her own record of every shift in a notes app. On payday, a Thursday, her bank deposit is smaller than her estimate. Her log shows five shifts totaling 18 hours. Her pay statement shows 15. The gap between what she expected and what arrived has two separate causes, and the case asks students to separate them before anyone writes to payroll.

Jordy, who works event shifts on different dates, steers the conversation. Comparing their deposits would prove nothing, because the inputs differ. Jordy also sets two privacy boundaries. Gia should not post her whole statement to the group. When Gia writes to payroll, she should leave out Jordy's pay and her own bank account number, which payroll already has. Keep the shift log, lose the bank details.

Your role is to add up Gia's hours before she writes to payroll. For many young workers, a pay statement is the first place they meet labor law and the social insurance system. It is also where an unreviewed assumption, such as "it all went to taxes," can hide a real error.

Stop and think. Jordy separates two questions: what the deposit shows and what the statement shows. Why does that separation matter?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (720 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A discrepancy with two causes":** Jordy separates two questions: what the deposit shows and what the statement shows. Why does that separation matter?
2. **After "Two causes, read line by line":** What would payroll have to say for the missing hours to count as an error rather than a timing issue?
3. **After "Institutions behind the statement":** Jordy's privacy rules mirror a payroll code. Where else should a worker limit what they share about pay?

Two causes, read line by line

Gia's hypothesis that payroll shorted her is a **claim**, a statement that something is true that can be checked with evidence. Testing it draws on skills from earlier cases. Case 1 taught you to go to the original source, and Case 4 taught you to read figures carefully and ask what each one assumes.

The first cause is timing. The statement covers the period ending Friday the 12th and pays 15 hours at $17.00, for $255.00 in **gross pay**, the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out. Gia's shifts through the 12th total exactly 15 hours. The 3-hour shift on Saturday the 13th falls in the next period. The evidence strongly suggests a cutoff issue rather than an error, but only payroll can confirm when those hours will be paid.

The second cause is deductions. Social Security tax ($15.81) and Medicare tax ($3.70) are the two components of **FICA**, the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare. Federal income tax withheld ($8.40) and state and local income tax withheld ($6.10) are separate. **Withholding** is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker. The remainder, $220.99, is **net pay**, the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay.

A careful reader also notes what the statement does not show. It does not explain how the $8.40 in federal income tax was figured. Gia asks whether the W-4 she completed on her first day is the reason. That is exactly the kind of targeted question payroll can answer.

> **Stop and think.** What would payroll have to say for the missing hours to count as an error rather than a timing issue?

Institutions behind the statement

The IRS explains that employers withhold federal income tax, Social Security and Medicare from employees' wages, and that the worker's Form W-4 partly determines income-tax withholding (Internal Revenue Service, updated May 1, 2026). Because withholding is credited toward a full year's liability, a single statement cannot reveal what a worker will owe. The IRS Tax Withholding Estimator exists for that check (Internal Revenue Service, updated June 27, 2026). This framework covers employees in the United States. Self-employed workers follow a different process.

The social insurance side is often invisible to new workers. The Peter G. Peterson Foundation explains what payroll taxes fund (May 26, 2026), and NPR's The Indicator explains why the Social Security portion comes out of nearly every paycheck (June 6, 2018). Wage floors shape gross pay before any of this. States can set a minimum above the federal level, and 19 states raised theirs in January 2026 (Money, January 1, 2026).

Professional ethics frames the employer's obligations.

This page continues page 90. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 90.

Institutions behind the statement, continued

The PayrollOrg code commits members to “perfect compliance, accuracy, and timeliness of all payroll activities” and to “the absolute confidentiality of the payroll within the procedures of the employer” (PayrollOrg Code of Ethics, no date listed). Jordy’s privacy instincts mirror that second commitment from the worker’s side. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Young Worker Toolkit collects federal rules on young workers’ pay and hours for cases where a paycheck does not add up (U.S. Department of Labor, no date listed). Reading the statement line by line is the new skill here, and later cases ask you to read budgets, forms and offers the same way.

Stop and think. Jordy’s privacy rules mirror a payroll code. Where else should a worker limit what they share about pay?

Sources

Real source | Internal Revenue Service | May 1, 2026
Understanding employment taxes

Real source | Internal Revenue Service | June 27, 2026
Tax Withholding Estimator

Real source | Peter G. Peterson Foundation | May 26, 2026
Payroll Taxes: What Are They and What Do They Fund?

Real source | NPR, The Indicator from Planet Money | June 6, 2018
Social Insecurity

Real source | Money | January 1, 2026
Minimum-Wage Workers in These 19 States Just Got a Raise

Real source | PayrollOrg | No date listed
PayrollOrg Code of Ethics

Real source | U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division | No date listed
Young Worker Toolkit

This page continues page 90. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 90.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the pay statement and the shift log, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Pay statement

Gia's pay statement

Pay period ending Friday the 12th, paid the following Thursday. Hours: 15.00 at $17.00. Gross pay: $255.00. Social Security tax: $15.81. Medicare tax: $3.70. Federal income tax withheld: $8.40. State and local income tax withheld: $6.10. Net pay: $220.99.

Look closely: Which line shows gross pay? Which two lines together make up FICA?

What it shows	What it leaves out
Hours × rate matches gross pay. Two FICA lines and two income-tax lines leave $220.99.	Any shift after the 12th, and the W-4 details that partly set the $8.40 line.

Evidence B | Notes app

Gia's shift log for the last two weeks

Mon the 8th: 4 hrs. Wed the 10th: 4 hrs. Thu the 11th: 3 hrs. Fri the 12th: 4 hrs. Sat the 13th: 3 hrs. My total: 18 hrs.

Look closely: Which shift falls outside the pay period? Add the hours inside it.

What it shows	What it leaves out
15 of the 18 logged hours fall inside the period. The 3-hour Saturday shift does not.	Which period payroll gives the Saturday shift, and whether it has those hours.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Participants fill in the What it shows boxes only.

Say this

"Put your finger on the date the pay period ends. Now find each shift in the log that comes after it." — Wait for Saturday the 13th.

Watch for

Misconception: Students expect all 18 hours on this statement. **Listen for:** "She worked 18 hours, so she gets paid for 18." **Then:** Ask which dates the pay period covers. Only 15 of the 18 hours fall inside it.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page with the dates enlarged.
- Offer calculators and model 15 × $17.00 = $255.00.
- **Cognates:** deduction (deducción), net (neto), total (total), calculate (calcular), period (período), federal (federal), confirm (confirmar), error (error).

Stretch

- Ask which two lines make up FICA, and why the statement lists federal income tax on its own line.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

- Whether the Saturday shift will appear on the next statement, what Gia entered on her W-4, whether any other deductions such as benefits apply to her job, and the minimum wage where she works.

Notes

This page continues page 93. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 93.

Key idea: gross pay and net pay

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 8 minutes.

A bank deposit shows how much money arrived, but the pay statement shows how the employer figured it. **Gross pay** is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out. For an hourly worker, gross pay is the hours worked times the hourly rate, plus any other earnings. **Net pay** is the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay. Gia's deposit is her net pay.

Deductions are the lines between those two totals. **FICA** is the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare. On Gia's statement, FICA appears as two lines: Social Security tax and Medicare tax. **Withholding** is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker. Federal income-tax withholding is a separate line from FICA, and the IRS says its amount depends partly on the worker's Form W-4.

A statement can also list other deductions, such as benefit contributions, so read each line's name before you decide it is income tax. The federal income tax taken from each paycheck counts toward the tax a worker owes for the whole year. One paycheck cannot show what that yearly total will be. This explanation covers employees in the United States. Self-employed workers follow a different tax process.

Professional standards

Real source | PayrollOrg

PayrollOrg Code of Ethics: Item 2

"To strive for perfect compliance, accuracy, and timeliness of all payroll activities."

In plain words: Payroll professionals who belong to PayrollOrg aim to pay people correctly and on time.

Question: Gia worked Saturday the 13th, after the pay period ended. What should payroll confirm about when she gets paid?

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Read the key idea. Skip In the news.

Say this

"PayrollOrg members aim for accuracy and timeliness. Which part of Gia's question is about timeliness?" — Wait for the Saturday shift.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the PayrollOrg code as a law. **Listen for:** "Payroll could get sued for breaking the code." **Then:** Say: "The code binds PayrollOrg members. Tax and wage laws are separate."

Support

- Read the quotation aloud. Point out the label: a real source, quoted word for word.

Stretch

- Read PayrollOrg Item 5 on confidentiality. Ask why Jordy wants Gia to name one line instead of posting her statement.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Payroll should confirm ___. This matters because ___.

Payroll should confirm that the shift on the 13th falls in the next pay period, and when it will be paid. This matters because Item 2 asks for accuracy and timeliness.

In the news

Real source | Two Cents, PBS (YouTube) | April 10, 2019

How Do Your Tax Dollars Get Spent?

Starts with a first paycheck that's smaller than expected and explains FICA and income tax withholding.

Real source | NPR, The Indicator from Planet Money | June 6, 2018

Social Insecurity

A short episode on the Social Security part of FICA and why it comes out of nearly every paycheck.

Notes

This page continues page 95. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 95.

Sort the evidence

On your own Compare each piece of evidence with each claim and write supports, challenges or neither in each box. About 6 minutes.

Before calling it an error, sort the evidence. Which facts explain the smaller deposit, and which question is still worth asking payroll?

Evidence	**Claim 1** Payroll shorted Gia's pay.	**Claim 2** The missing 3 hours belong on the next statement.
1 Shift log shows 18 hours; the statement shows 15	Supports	Neither
2 The period ended Friday the 12th; the 3-hour shift was Saturday the 13th	Challenges	Supports
3 Gross pay of $255.00 matches 15 × $17.00	Challenges	Neither
4 FICA and withholding lines account for the gap between gross and net	Challenges	Neither

Still open

- Will the Saturday shift actually appear next time? Ask payroll.

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 ___.

Payroll's view is missing. I would ask where this pay period ends, when the Saturday shift will be paid and how the W-4 affects the federal line.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Which facts explain the smaller deposit, and which question is still open for payroll?" — Model the first row together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students mark the shift log as proof that payroll shorted Gia. **Listen for:** "The log proves she was cheated." **Then:** On its own, the log supports that claim. The pay-period date challenges it.

Support

- Let students write S or C in each box before they write sentences.

Heat check

Low.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Gia should do first and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 5 minutes.

Gia's deposit is smaller than the pay she worked out. What should she do first?

- ☐ **A** Compare her deposit with Jordy's.
- ☑ **B** Check her hours and the pay period, then read each line of her statement.
- ☐ **C** Treat the whole gap as taxes and let it go.

Why I chose it

B. Gia's own statement and log can separate timing from deductions. A compares a worker with different shifts, and C treats one real cause as the whole explanation.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Hi, my paycheck is wrong. ❶ I worked way more hours than what I got paid for and also a lot of money was taken out for taxes which doesn't seem right. I've been working really hard and picking up extra shifts so this is really frustrating. My friend Jordy works similar hours and got more than me. Can you fix it? ❷ My account number is 4471-xxxx if you need it. Please let me know as soon as possible because I have bills. Thanks, Gia

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

Rewrite phrase 1

My log shows 18 hours; the statement shows 15. Was my Saturday shift after the cutoff?

Rewrite phrase 2

I can bring my dated shift log to the payroll office if that would help.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Do the choice only. Skip Improve a draft.

Say this

"Gia just saw the deposit. What should she do first?" — Hold a quick vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose comparing deposits with Jordy. **Listen for:** "Just ask Jordy what they got." **Then:** Ask what Jordy's deposit could prove about Gia's hours. Jordy works different dates.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Students may start comparing their own pay or their family's income.

Cool-down: Say: "We use only Gia's and Jordy's numbers today." Return to the statement.

Answer key

A revised version: Hi, I'm checking my pay statement for the period that ended Friday the 12th. My shift log shows 18 hours, and the statement shows 15. I think my Saturday shift on the 13th may fall after the cutoff. Can you confirm whether those 3 hours will appear on my next statement? I also want to understand the federal income-tax withholding line. Is it based on the W-4 I filled out when I started? I can bring my shift log with dates and times to the office if that would help. Thank you, Gia

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 10 minutes.

Write Gia's question to payroll about the missing hours. Then write a one-page guide for new student workers that walks through her pay statement line by line. The guide could be used in a campus career office's first-job workshop.

Use: Case documents: Gia's pay statement, her shift log, her chat with Jordy and her statement. Real sources: the IRS page on employment taxes, the IRS tutorial on gross and net pay and the Department of Labor's Young Worker Toolkit.

You'll make: Payroll question, 50—80 words, plus a guide of 300—400 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. Reread Evidence A and B, and mark the pay period and the Saturday shift on the calendar.
2. Fill in the table, line by line, from gross pay to net pay.
3. Write Gia's payroll question, 50 to 80 words, in the Your draft box.
4. Draft the guide's walkthrough and its privacy note in the Your draft boxes.
5. Finish the guide on lined paper, 300 to 400 words.
6. Check both pieces with the questions on the Check your work page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

From gross pay to net pay

$255.00 gross − $15.81 Social Security − $3.70 Medicare − $8.40 federal − $6.10 state and local = $220.99 net

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 10 min.

Say this

"Picture a workshop of new student workers. What do they need to see first on this statement?" — Walk the table once on the board, top to bottom.

Watch for

Misconception: Guides predict readers' taxes. **Listen for:** "So you'll pay $8.40 in federal tax too." **Then:** Point to the note on Evidence A: the amounts are invented for practice.

Support

- Line-by-line table: gross pay, Social Security, Medicare, federal withholding, state and local withholding, net pay
- Calendar showing the pay period ending Friday the 12th and the Saturday shift on the 13th
- Model payroll question from the workshop
- Calendar strip: mark Friday the 12th and Saturday the 13th.

Stretch

- Explain that federal income-tax withholding is figured partly from the worker's Form W-4, as the IRS page says, without predicting anyone's taxes.

Your task, continued

The pay period and the Saturday shift

The period ended Friday the 12th. The 3-hour shift was Saturday the 13th.

What the IRS says about withholding

Federal income-tax withholding is figured partly from the worker's Form W-4. It is separate from Social Security and Medicare.

Notes

This page continues page 99.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric; Information Literacy VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Research as Inquiry.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- The question names the pay period, the Saturday shift on the 13th and what Gia wants confirmed
- The guide shows 15 hours × $17.00 = $255.00 and follows it to net pay of $220.99
- Separates Social Security and Medicare (FICA) from income-tax withholding, citing the IRS pages
- Says the withholding amounts belong to this statement and predict no one's taxes
- Tells readers never to post pay statements, Social Security numbers or bank details

Your draft

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

Gia's payroll question, 50 to 80 words

Hi, I'm checking my pay statement for ___.

Hi, I'm checking my pay statement for the period that ended Friday the 12th. My shift log shows 18 hours, and the statement shows 15. My Saturday shift on the 13th was 3 hours. Can you confirm that it falls in the next pay period and will be on my next statement? Thank you, Gia

Guide: walk through the statement

Start at the top. Gia's practice statement shows 15 hours at $17.00, so gross pay is $255.00. Two lines are FICA: Social Security tax, $15.81, and Medicare tax, $3.70. Federal income tax withheld, $8.40, is separate. The IRS says it is figured partly from your Form W-4. State and local income tax withheld is $6.10. What is left, $220.99, is net pay. These withholding amounts are invented for practice and do not predict anyone's taxes.

Guide: keep it private

Never post a pay statement, a Social Security number or bank details. Ask payroll in writing, and bring your own log of hours.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 30 min.

Say this

"Would a first-time worker know what to do if one line looked wrong?" — Partners find the sentence that tells readers where to ask.

Watch for

Misconception: Guides merge FICA and income tax. **Listen for:** "All of these are just income tax." **Then:** Count the lines on Evidence A: two FICA lines and two income-tax lines.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Says exactly what Gia wants confirmed.
2. Shows the calculation before the deductions.
3. Cites the IRS without predicting anyone's taxes.
4. Gives readers a clear privacy rule.

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 6 minutes.

Does the question name the pay period, the Saturday shift and what Gia wants confirmed?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does the guide follow $255.00 gross pay to $220.99 net pay?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does it separate FICA from income-tax withholding and cite the IRS?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does it say the amounts are invented and tell readers what never to post?	☑ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No specific numbers.	☐ Mentions hours but no period.	☐ Names hours, period and the line in question.	☐ Cites own records and the statement side by side.
Reasoning	☐ Assumes an error or theft.	☐ Assumes all difference is tax.	☐ Separates hours, deductions and period timing.	☐ Explains which differences are expected and which need checking.
Audience & purpose	☐ Shares private details or demands.	☐ Polite but vague.	☐ Clear question payroll can answer.	☐ Clear, private, and offers the right document.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Removes one issue.	☐ Adds period and line, removes private data.	☐ Explains why each change helps payroll respond.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 6 min.

Say this

“Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why.” — Circulate and ask for one added date or one removed private detail.

Watch for

Misconception: Students make surface edits only. **Listen for:** “I fixed the spelling.” **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Ask for one added line name or one removed private detail.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that every figure matches the statement and that each deduction is described the way the IRS pages describe it.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Names hours, period and the line in question.
- **Reasoning:** Separates hours, deductions and period timing.
- **Audience & purpose:** Clear question payroll can answer.
- **Revision:** Adds period and line, removes private data.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I added a sentence saying the amounts are invented, because a new worker might think they predict real taxes.

Notes

This page continues page 102. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 102.

Questions to discuss

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

1 What would Gia's statement need to show for the missing hours to be a payroll mistake?

It would have to leave out hours worked on or before Friday the 12th. It pays all 15 of those hours, so the open question is when the shift on the 13th will be paid.

2 Why might a new worker think that every missing dollar went to taxes?

A deposit shows only the final number, and taxes are the deduction people expect. That expectation can hide a timing issue, like the Saturday shift that fell after the cutoff.

3 Before a first job, what would you want to know about how and when you will be paid?

How the pay period lines up with payday, and where statements are posted. I would also want to know who answers payroll questions in writing.

My take

My claim: ___.

My claim: the smaller deposit comes from pay-period timing and expected deductions, not a payroll error.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The best evidence is the pay-period date, because the one missing shift falls after Friday the 12th.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Answer with a line from the statement or the log, not a guess about payroll." — Post the question numbers and hear one answer per question.

Stretch

- Ask what a new worker should keep in their own records before the first payday, and why.
- Going further: What does a new worker need to know before they feel ready to ask payroll a question? Explain the gap between gross pay and net pay without making taxes the answer to every missing dollar.
- Going further: Write down your first guess about why Gia's deposit was small. Then compare it with the line-by-line explanation. What changed?
- Going further: Record a spoken walkthrough of Gia's statement, and mark up a copy of the statement. Ask someone which version answers their question better.
- Going further: Before a first job, ask how and when you will be paid and where to see your pay statement. Keep your own log of hours and shifts. Look up your state's minimum wage on its labor department website, and bring pay questions to a supervisor or payroll in writing.
- Use the IRS Tax Withholding Estimator's public page to list what information it asks for (no personal data)
- Research your state's minimum wage and pay-statement requirements

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Someone who disagrees might say payroll should have told Gia about the cutoff before payday.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

The limit of the evidence is that no document shows when the Saturday shift will be paid.

I would change my mind if ___.

I would change my mind if the next statement still left out the 3 Saturday hours.

Notes

This page continues page 104.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 2: Medium.** Students may turn to opinions about taxes, or mention their own pay.

Cool-down: Say: “We’re explaining Gia’s statement, not debating taxes.” Point back to the four tax lines.

Question 3 cool-down: Say: “Answer as any new worker would. Nobody shares their own pay.” Return to Gia’s questions.

Talk about this case at home

Case 5: Why is my deposit smaller than what I earned?

In this case, Gia's bank deposit is smaller than the pay she expected. Your student read a practice pay statement line by line and explained where the money went.

Questions to talk about

1. What is the difference between gross pay and net pay?
2. Why might a bank deposit be less than the hours worked times the hourly rate?
3. Who at a workplace can answer questions about a pay statement?

See the case online.

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

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

"Bring this page home, or read it with someone you trust." — Nobody needs to share their own pay or family money matters.

Case 6: What can your family see in your college records?

Content note

This case is about private records. No student should share their own grades, forms, records or family finances, so keep the discussion on Rafa's situation.

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

Overview

Students read about Rafa, an 18-year-old in his first year of college whose family wants to help pay tuition and asks for his login. They read an access form, a college FERPA notice and summaries of federal guidance, then sort billing access from access to grades. They then write the question Rafa could send the records office and the smallest access that would help his family.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- summarize an official source accurately
- write for two audiences at once
- label a source as or real

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- state that FERPA rights belong to a student at a school beyond high school
- separate the billing authorization from the academic-records authorization

Objectives, continued

- describe the exceptions accurately without applying them to any real student
- explain how a student changes or withdraws an authorization

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant
- Evidence A and B, labeled as examples
- The Department of Education FAQs, the Eligible Student Guide to FERPA (March 8, 2023) and the American University guide
- A two-column organizer: billing access and records access

The task in this edition

Task: Write a plain-language explainer for first-year students and their families, suitable for an orientation program or a student government page. It separates billing access from access to academic records and explains how a student changes an authorization.

Students make: Explainer for students and families, 350—450 words, with three short questions and answers

Pacing

Opener (page 107): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Summarize What happened in one minute.

Pacing, continued

Key terms (pages 108 and 109): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Look at the evidence (pages 113 and 114): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Participants fill in the What it shows boxes only.

Key idea (pages 115 and 116): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip In the news. Use the Department of Education pages instead.

Sort the evidence (page 117): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 118): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 119 and 120): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (page 121): 30 min. Short on time: 30 min.

Check your work (pages 122 and 123): 6 min. Short on time: 5 min. Skip the rubric. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 124 and 125): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Talk about this case at home (page 126): at home.

Periods: full chapter 94 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 6 plan, continued

Standards

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students cite the Department of Education pages accurately and respect the limits on sharing confidential records (Access and Use Information Ethically and Legally).

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 one explainer for students and families at once (Context of and Purpose for Writing).

Information Has Value Information has value, including as a means to influence people, so credit, access and privacy matter. In this case: Students explain who controls access to education records and why an authorization can be limited or withdrawn.

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 weigh a college's form and a federal FAQ as sources for different questions.

Codes of ethics

- **AACRAO Ethics and Practice:** Standards of professional practice

Codes of ethics, continued

- **AACRAO Ethics and Practice:** Principles of professional ethics
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** "We advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings…" (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

■■□ **Opener (page 107):** Medium

■□□ **Key terms (pages 108 and 109):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (pages 113 and 114):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 115 and 116):** Low

■■□ **Sort the evidence (page 117):** Medium

■□□ **Practice (page 118):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 122 and 123):** Low

Try it at your school

Find your school's records notice.

- Search your school or district website for its FERPA or "student records" notice
- Find out what counts as directory information and how families can opt out
- Write one question about who can see a record, and ask the front office or counselor
- If you're heading to college, look up its parent-access and authorization forms early

Try it at your school, continued

Who to ask: School counselor, registrar or records office, front-office staff

Safety: Never post screenshots of grades, IDs or forms. Talk with a trusted adult about what to share and with whom.

Sources

- U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office, "What is FERPA?," No date listed
- U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office, "What is an education record?," No date listed
- U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office, "Must postsecondary institutions provide a parent with access to an eligible student's education records?," No date listed
- U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office, "Student privacy questions," No date listed
- American University, AU Central, "FERPA and parent-access guide," No date listed

Case 6: What can your family see in your college records?

Rafa's parents help pay his college bill, and a family-access form asks whether they should also get information about his grades.

On your own Read What happened and underline what Rafa's dad asks for in the family chat. About 4 minutes.

Rafa and Caio sit on a sofa and look at Rafa's phone. Caio explains something with an open hand.

Your role: You're the one who reads each box on the form before Rafa signs. **New skill:** Read a form section by section before you sign.

What happened

Rafa, 18, has just started college, and his parents help pay his tuition bill. He commutes from the next block and helps at his family's shop after class. At the end of August, the college mailed Rafa a family-access form, but he has not opened the envelope yet.

On Sunday night, his parents ask about the form in the family group chat. His dad wants Rafa's login so the family can handle everything. Rafa is glad to share the bill, but he wants to read the rest of the form first.

Caio, an older friend who rents a room on the block, reads the form with Rafa, not for him. The form has separate sections for billing and for grades. Rafa wants to check the billing box. He wants to talk with his family before he decides about grades.

Your question: What will this form let Rafa's parents see, and what should he ask before he signs?

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Summarize What happened in one minute.

Say this

"Rafa's dad asks for his login. What is his dad trying to help with?" — Hear two answers. Keep the talk about Rafa's family, not students' own.

Watch for

Misconception: Students assume paying tuition gives parents full access. **Listen for:** "They pay, so they get to see it." **Then:** Write "paying" and "seeing" as two columns. Ask which document connects them.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Remind students that nobody shares their own records or family rules.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Students may compare the case with their own family's rules about grades.

Cool-down: Say: "We're working with Rafa's family." Go straight to the form.

Key terms

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

FERPA FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a federal law about who can see student education records.

En español: FERPA (Ley de Derechos Educativos y Privacidad de la Familia)

In this case: Rafa is 18 and in college, so under the general rule the FERPA rights to his records are his, not his parents'.

Education record An education record is a record directly about a student that a school or college keeps.

En español: expediente educativo

In this case: Rafa's grades and schedule are education records. Section 2 of his form asks whether his parents may receive information about his grades.

Consent Consent is permission a person gives for something specific, such as sharing a record with a named person.

En español: consentimiento

In this case: Rafa's form asks for consent in two separate sections, one for billing and one for grades. He can say yes to one and no to the other.

Who is involved

Rafa

First-year commuter with a family-access form

"My parents help with the bill. The college mailed this form, and the family chat already wants to know if I signed it. I haven't even opened it."

Caio

Reads the form with Rafa, not for him

"I can sit with Rafa while he asks. Being the older friend doesn't make this my decision."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

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

Say this

"Which key term tells you whose rights these are?" — Wait for FERPA. Then ask when the rights transfer.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think FERPA protects only children. **Listen for:** "FERPA is for kids." **Then:** Reread the key idea: the rights transfer to the student at 18 or on starting college.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- Show a timeline: middle school, high school, 18 or college.
- **Cognates:** consent (consentimiento), privacy (privacidad), authorization (autorización), exception (excepción), information (información), academic (académico), federal (federal), education (educación).

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 Rafa's parents are allowed to see?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that paying tuition gives his parents some access, but not to his grades without his permission.

Notes

This page continues page 108. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 108.

Reading passage

Records, rights and the limits of family access

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

- **FERPA**: FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a federal law about who can see student education records.
- **Education record**: An education record is a record directly about a student that a school or college keeps.
- **Consent**: Consent is permission a person gives for something specific, such as sharing a record with a named person.
- **Decision-maker**: A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.

The story: The login shortcut

Rafa, 18, is a first-year commuter who helps at his family's shop after class. His parents contribute to his tuition. At the end of August, his college mailed him a parent and family access authorization. Before he opens it, his parents raise it in the family group chat. His mother offers help with the bill. His father proposes the shortcut many families would reach for: send the login, and they will handle everything.

The case turns on the difference between those two offers. Helping pay a bill requires access to billing. A login grants access to everything the account holds, including grades and schedules, and it bypasses any record of what was shared and why. Rafa answers that he can share the bill and wants to read the rest first.

Caio, 24, sits with him as he reads. He models the stance of a good advisor. He will help Rafa ask questions, but the decision is Rafa's. He also resists vague reassurance. If the law has an exception, they should find out which one and whether it applies, because "privacy law" is not an answer Rafa's father can act on.

Your role is to read each box on the form before Rafa signs.

Stop and think. Why is a shared login a weaker form of trust than a signed, specific authorization?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (734 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: The login shortcut":** Why is a shared login a weaker form of trust than a signed, specific authorization?
2. **After "Granular consent in practice":** The exceptions are permitted, not required. How should that change what Rafa asks the records office?
3. **After "FERPA's structure and the question of trust":** The NCA credo values both sharing and privacy. How could Rafa honor both in one conversation with his parents?

Granular consent in practice

The form is built for separate decisions. Section 1 authorizes a named person to view account statements and make payments. Section 2 authorizes that person to receive information about grades, enrollment and academic standing. Section 3 makes the authorization durable until Rafa changes or withdraws it in writing. Each of the first two sections has its own yes-or-no box.

The college's annual FERPA notice sets the background rule. Students may inspect their records, request corrections and consent to disclosures, except where the law permits disclosure without consent. Together, the documents show what Rafa controls and what he still needs to learn: which exceptions this college applies and where a written change goes.

This case extends two earlier skills. Case 5 asked you to read a statement line by line. Here you read a form section by section and decide each part independently. Case 4 introduced the **decision-maker**, the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. Rafa holds that role, and the form's structure lets him exercise it with precision. **Consent** is permission a person gives for something specific, such as sharing a record with a named person. For college records, it is written and identifies the record, the recipient and the purpose. A shared password is the opposite of that kind of consent.

> **Stop and think.** The exceptions are permitted, not required. How should that change what Rafa asks the records office?

FERPA's structure and the question of trust

FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a federal law about who can see student education records. An **education record** is a record directly about a student that a school or college keeps, on paper or stored digitally. Under the general rule, the rights transfer from parents to the student at 18 or upon entering college at any age, and the student becomes an "eligible student" (U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office, no date listed). The Department's guide for eligible students explains consent, access and the exceptions in plain language (U.S. Department of Education, March 8, 2023).

The exceptions matter for families like Rafa's. A college may disclose records to parents when the student is a dependent for federal tax purposes, or in a health or safety emergency. The Department describes these disclosures as permitted, not required, so practice varies by institution. American University's parent-access guide illustrates one institution's process, not a national rule (American University, June 30, 2025).

Records governance now reaches beyond the registrar. A breach at PowerSchool exposed millions of student records (Education Week, January 9, 2025). Classroom AI tools raise new questions about who can see student information (Chalkbeat, December 13, 2024).

This page continues page 110. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 110.

FERPA's structure and the question of trust, continued

The Markup has reported on where FERPA's protections run out when software companies handle student data (The Markup, January 15, 2022).

Professional codes describe both duties the registrar holds. AACRAO asks members to "protect the legitimate privacy interests of all individuals" and to "dispense complete, accurate, understandable, and truthful information and advice at all times" (AACRAO Ethics and Practice, 2010). The National Communication Association's credo speaks to Rafa's side: "We advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings when facing significant decisions, while also respecting privacy and confidentiality" (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024). The case asks students to hold both values at once. Family support and privacy can be negotiated one box at a time.

Stop and think. The NCA credo values both sharing and privacy. How could Rafa honor both in one conversation with his parents?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office | No date listed
What is FERPA?

Real source | U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office | March 8, 2023
An Eligible Student Guide to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Real source | U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office | No date listed
Must postsecondary institutions provide a parent with access to an eligible student's education records?

Real source | American University, AU Central | June 30, 2025
FERPA and parent-access guide

Real source | Education Week | January 9, 2025
What Schools Should Know About the PowerSchool Data Breach

Real source | Chalkbeat | December 13, 2024
AI presents explosive risks to student data privacy. These educators want to defuse them.

Real source | The Markup | January 15, 2022
The Big Business of Tracking and Profiling Students

Real source | American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) | 2010
AACRAO Ethics and Practice

Real source | National Communication Association (NCA) | 2024
Credo for Ethical Communication

This page continues page 110. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 110.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the form and the notice, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | College form

Parent and family access authorization, mailed to Rafa on August 28

Section 1, Billing and payments: allow the person named below to view account statements and make payments. Yes or No. Section 2, Academic records: allow the person named below to receive information about grades, enrollment and academic standing. Yes or No. Section 3: this authorization stays in effect until the student changes or withdraws it in writing.

Look closely: Which section covers billing, and which covers grades? Circle each yes-or-no box.

What it shows

Billing and grades need separate consents, and Section 3 allows a written change.

What it leaves out

The exceptions that allow sharing without consent, and where a change goes.

Evidence B | College notice

Annual FERPA notice on the registrar's page

Students have the right to inspect their education records, to request corrections and to consent to disclosures, except where the law allows disclosure without consent. Questions go to the Office of the Registrar.

Look closely: Which phrase tells you the law has exceptions? Underline it.

What it shows

The rights sit with the student. "Except where the law allows" signals exceptions.

What it leaves out

Which exceptions this college uses, and whether any could apply to Rafa.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Participants fill in the What it shows boxes only.

Say this

"Put one finger on the billing section and one on the grades section. Could Rafa say yes to one and no to the other?" — Wait for "yes, they are separate."

Watch for

Misconception: Students read the notice as a promise of total privacy. **Listen for:** "So nobody can ever see his grades." **Then:** Point to "except where the law allows disclosure without consent."

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page with the section headings enlarged.
- Read the notice aloud and pause at "except."
- **Cognates:** consent (consentimiento), privacy (privacidad), authorization (autorización), exception (excepción), information (información), academic (académico), federal (federal), education (educación).

Stretch

- Ask what Section 3 lets Rafa do later, and why that matters for the choice he makes today.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

- Which exceptions the college uses and whether any fit Rafa, including tax dependency; what help his family wants; and where a written change goes.

Notes

This page continues page 113. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 113.

Key idea: education records

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

FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a federal law about who can see student education records. It gives parents, and later students, rights over those records. An **education record** is a record directly about a student that a school or college keeps. Grades, transcripts and schedules can be education records, on paper or stored digitally. Under the general rule, the rights transfer to the student at age 18 or when the student starts college, at any age. The law calls that student an "eligible student."

Helping pay tuition does not, by itself, give those rights back to a parent. **Consent** is permission a person gives for something specific, such as sharing a record with a named person. For college records, consent is written and says which record, to whom and for what purpose. Rafa's form asks about billing and about grades in separate sections. He can say yes to one section and no to the other. He can also change his choice later in writing.

FERPA also has exceptions, which are situations in which a college may share records without the student's consent. A college may share records with parents if the student is a dependent for federal tax purposes. It may also share them in a health or safety emergency. The U.S. Department of Education says this sharing is allowed, not required, so Rafa should ask his records office what his college does.

Professional standards

Real source | **American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)**

AACRAO Ethics and Practice: Standards of professional practice

"Protect the legitimate privacy interests of all individuals and maintain appropriate confidentiality of institutional and student education records"

In plain words: College registrars who belong to AACRAO agree to protect students' privacy and keep education records confidential.

Question: Rafa's form separates billing from grades. What would the registrar need before sharing his grades with his parents?

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 8 min. Skip In the news. Use the Department of Education pages instead.

Say this

"The AACRAO code asks registrars to protect privacy. What would a registrar need before sharing Rafa's grades?" — Wait for "his consent in Section 2."

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the AACRAO code as the law. **Listen for:** "The registrar would go to jail." **Then:** Say: "The code binds AACRAO members. FERPA is the federal law on education records."

Support

- Read the quotation aloud. Point out the label: a real source, quoted word for word.

Stretch

- Use the second AACRAO row. Ask what a clear, complete answer to each of Rafa's three questions would include.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

The registrar would need ___, unless ___.

The registrar would need Rafa's consent in Section 2, unless an exception applies, such as a tax-dependent student or a health or safety emergency.

In the news

Real source | U.S. Department of Education (YouTube) | November 7, 2013

Student Privacy 101: FERPA for Parents and Students

The Education Department's own short explainer of FERPA rights and when they move from parents to students.

Real source | U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office | No date listed

Must postsecondary institutions provide a parent with access to an eligible student's education records?

Answers the case question directly, including the exception for students claimed as tax dependents.

Notes

This page continues page 115. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 115.

Sort the evidence

On your own Fill in the diagram to show who decides each question, which rule applies and who can ask. About 6 minutes.

Who actually decides each question: Rafa, the rule or the college? Mark where paying the bill and seeing grades split into two separate decisions.

Who may see Rafa's grades?	Who may see and pay the tuition bill?
Who decides Rafa, the eligible student, through written consent	**Who decides** Rafa, the eligible student, through written consent
Under which rule FERPA: rights transfer to the student at 18 or on entering college	**Under which rule**
Who lives with it Rafa's family, who help pay tuition	**Who lives with it** Rafa's family, who help pay tuition
Your way in The registrar or records office explains which form and which exceptions apply	**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 ___.

The records office's view is missing. I would ask which exceptions this college uses, where a written change to the form goes and when it starts to count.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"For each question on the diagram, who decides: Rafa, the rule or the college?" — Model the grades question together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students name the parents as the deciders. **Listen for:** "His parents decide because they pay." **Then:** Point to the diagram: his family can ask, and Rafa decides through written consent.

Support

- Let students label each box Rafa, rule or college before they write sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can turn to students' own families.

Cool-down: Keep answers about the characters. No student describes their own family arrangements.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose who holds Rafa's rights and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 5 minutes.

Rafa is 18 and in college, and his parents help pay his tuition. Under the general FERPA rule, who holds the rights to his education records?

- [x] **A** Rafa does.
- [ ] **B** His parents do, because they help pay the bill.
- [ ] **C** His parents do, until Rafa signs a form that says otherwise.

Why I chose it

A. The rights are Rafa's because he is 18 and in college. B treats payment as permission, and C makes the form the source of his rights instead of a way to share them.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Rafa, (1) your parents are paying so they can probably see everything, that's how it works at most schools. My parents could always see my grades on the portal in high school. FERPA is a privacy law but it's mostly for kids. (2) Once you're 18 it doesn't really matter anymore. If you want to keep your grades private you should just not give them your password. Honestly just ask your parents what they want to see. They're helping you a lot so it's probably fair for them to know how you're doing.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Paying tuition doesn't unlock grades. Grades need a separate consent on the form.

Rewrite phrase 2

At 18 or on starting college, the rights become yours, with some exceptions.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Rafa is 18 and in college. Who holds the rights to his records?" — Vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students pick the paying-parents option. **Listen for:** "They're paying, so it's theirs." **Then:** Ask what the form would be for if his parents already held the rights.

Support

- Read the options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: Rafa, under the general FERPA rule, the rights to your education records are yours now, because you're 18 and in college. Paying tuition doesn't automatically give your family access to your grades. At schools like the one in the guide, parent access for paying the bill is separate from permission to see academic records. You can decide what to share. Talk with your family about what help you actually want, then ask the records office which form covers that, what it allows and how to change it later. There are exceptions, so ask them which ones your college uses.

College

Your task

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

Write a plain-language explainer for first-year students and their families, suitable for an orientation program or a student government page. It separates billing access from access to academic records and explains how a student changes an authorization.

Use: Case documents: the authorization form, the FERPA notice, Rafa's family chat and Caio's statement. Real sources: two Department of Education FAQs, the Eligible Student Guide to FERPA (March 8, 2023) and the American University parent-access guide.

You'll make: Explainer for students and families, 350—450 words, with three short questions and answers

Time: 75 minutes

1. Reread Evidence A and B, and label each one as an example.
2. Fill in the organizer: what billing access covers and what records access covers.
3. Note two exceptions from the Department of Education pages without deciding that either one applies to Rafa.
4. Draft the opening and the exceptions paragraph in the Your draft boxes.
5. Write three short questions and answers for families in the last box.
6. Finish the explainer on lined paper, 350 to 450 words.
7. Check your explainer with the questions on the Check your work page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Billing access covers

Viewing account statements and making payments

Records access covers

Information about grades, enrollment and academic standing

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 12 min.

Say this

"Your readers are a student and a parent reading the same page. What does each need first?" — List both audiences' questions on the board.

Watch for

Misconception: Explainers apply an exception to Rafa. **Listen for:** "His parents can see his grades because he's a dependent." **Then:** Ask which document says Rafa is a tax dependent. None does.

Support

- Two-column organizer: billing access and records access
- Paraphrase of each Department of Education FAQ with its link
- Sentence frame for exceptions: "In some situations, a college may share records with parents without the student's consent, such as ..."
- Label line: "Example" above any detail from Rafa's form.

Stretch

- Explain the exceptions accurately, such as a tax-dependent student or a health or safety emergency. Do not suggest that either applies to Rafa.

Your task, continued

Two exceptions, stated generally

A college may share records with parents of a tax-dependent student, or in a health or safety emergency.

Notes

This page continues page 119.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Information Literacy VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Information Has Value; Authority Is Constructed and Contextual.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- States that FERPA rights belong to the student at a school beyond high school
- Separates the billing authorization from the academic-records authorization
- Describes the exceptions accurately and applies none of them to a real student
- Explains that the authorization stays in effect until the student changes or withdraws it in writing, as the form says
- Cites the Department of Education pages as real sources

Your draft

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

Opening: who holds the rights

Who can see your college records? Under FERPA, a federal law, the rights to your education records belong to you once you attend a school beyond high school. Paying tuition does not change that. In the form we studied, Section 1 covers account statements and payments. Section 2 covers grades, enrollment and academic standing. A student can say yes to one and no to the other.

The exceptions

In some situations, a college may share records without the student's consent, such as ___.

In some situations, a college may share records without the student's consent, such as with parents of a tax dependent. It may also share them in a health or safety emergency. That sharing is allowed, not required, so ask your records office what your college does.

Three questions and answers

Can my parents pay the bill without seeing my grades? At some colleges, yes. American University's guide says parent billing access does not include viewing grades. Can I change my mind later? In the form, the authorization stays in effect until the student changes or withdraws it in writing. Where do I ask? Your college's registrar or records office.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 30 min.

Say this

"Read your three questions as a parent at orientation. Would the answers be clear?" — Partners play the parent and ask one follow-up.

Watch for

Misconception: Explainers ask readers to share real records. **Listen for:** "Send us a screenshot of your portal." **Then:** Point to the success criteria: no one shares real records.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. States the legal baseline for this audience.
2. Labels the example as fictional.
3. Describes the exceptions without applying them to anyone.
4. Explains how to change an authorization, as the form says.

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 6 minutes.

Does your explainer say FERPA rights belong to the student at a school beyond high school?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does it keep billing and records permissions separate?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does it describe the exceptions accurately without saying that one applies to Rafa?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does it label the form and notice as and the federal pages as real?	☑ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No source cited.	☐ Refers to "privacy law" generally.	☐ Cites the transfer rule and the separate-access guide.	☐ Cites both and notes that exceptions exist.
Reasoning	☐ States the rule backwards.	☐ Gets the transfer right but merges billing and grades.	☐ Separates paying from permission correctly.	☐ Explains why least access is a reasonable choice.
Audience & purpose	☐ Tells Rafa what to do.	☐ Gives advice without a next step.	☐ Leaves the decision with Rafa and names the records office.	☐ Respects Rafa's family relationship while protecting his choice.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: 5 min. Skip the rubric. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Say this

"Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why." — Ask for one corrected rule or one added question for the records office.

Watch for

Misconception: Students leave an absolute claim in place. **Listen for:** "Parents can never see grades." **Then:** Point to the Evidence row. Ask them to add that exceptions exist.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the legal baseline and exceptions match the Department of Education pages and that the explainer asks no one to share real records.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Cites the transfer rule and the separate-access guide.
- **Reasoning:** Separates paying from permission correctly.
- **Audience & purpose:** Leaves the decision with Rafa and names the records office.
- **Revision:** Fixes the rule and adds a next step.

How your work is scored, continued

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Fixes one fact.	☐ Fixes the rule and adds a next step.	☐ Explains why each correction matters for Rafa's decision.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I cut a sentence that said Rafa's parents can see his grades because he is a dependent, because no document says he is one.

Notes

This page continues page 122. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 122.

Questions to discuss

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

1 **What is the smallest amount of access that would give Rafa the help he wants from his family?**

Billing access alone. It covers the help his family asked for, and Section 3 lets him change his choice later in writing.

2 **Why might Rafa want to talk with his family before he checks the box for grades?**

His parents asked about the bill, not about grades. Talking first lets him explain the two permissions before they see a box marked no.

3 **Someone says, "Parents can never see college records." How would you revise that claim after reading this case?**

Parents generally need an eligible student's consent. A college may still share records with parents of a tax dependent or in a health or safety emergency, but it is not required to.

My take

My claim: ___.

My claim: Rafa should approve billing now and leave grades for a talk with his family.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The best evidence is the form, because billing and grades are separate yes-or-no choices.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the form or the notice, not from your own family." — Post the question numbers and hear one answer per question.

Stretch

- Ask what Rafa could share with his family in a conversation, without signing any form.
- Going further: Compare FERPA's general rule with American University's parent-access process. Which parts come from the federal law, and which come from one university's forms?
- Going further: What might a student and a family member who pays the bill each misunderstand about access? Write wording that makes the separate permissions clear without promising total secrecy.
- Going further: Draw two permission guides for a sample student: a flowchart and a short conversation. Test both with a reader who does not know this case.
- Going further: Search your school or district website for its FERPA or "student records" notice. Then write one question about who can see a record, and ask the front office or a counselor. If you are heading to college, look up its parent-access and authorization forms early.
- Find your own school's FERPA notice and summarize what it says about directory information and opting out
- Compare FERPA with your state's student-privacy law, if it has one

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Someone who disagrees might say a family paying tuition has a fair claim to see grades.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

The limit of the evidence is that we don't know which exceptions Rafa's college uses.

I would change my mind if ___.

I would change my mind if Rafa's family needed help that billing access cannot give.

Notes

This page continues page 124.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 2: Medium.** Students may describe their own family's rules about grades or money.

Cool-down: Say: "We're talking about Rafa's family, not ours." Return to what the chat shows his family asked for.

Talk about this case at home

Case 6: What can your family see in your college records?

In this case, Rafa's parents help pay his college bill, and a form asks if they should also see his grades. Your student read the form and a federal privacy rule, then explained how paying the bill differs from seeing grades.

See the case online.

Questions to talk about

1. Under the general rule, when do students start to control who sees their school records?
2. Why might a college form keep paying a bill separate from seeing grades?
3. Who at a college could answer a question about records?

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

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

"Bring this page home, or read it with someone you trust." — Nobody needs to share their own records or family arrangements.

Case 7: Did one complaint get the novel banned?

Overview

Students read a short story in which a group chat claims that one parent's complaint got a novel "banned" from Anika's school library. They compare the claim with the district's reconsideration notice, the committee input form and the ALA's example procedure. They map where the novel is in the review. They then write input to the review committee that is tied to the selection criteria.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- tell a law from a policy and from professional guidance
- label a source as a news report, a secondary source or data
- write in a neutral tone for the public

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- state the novel's stage accurately
- separate the district's policy, the ALA's guidance and court decisions
- describe Pico as a decision with no majority opinion
- label each source by type and name no one who filed a challenge

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant

Materials, continued

- Evidence A and B
- Real sources: the ALA toolkit summary, two Chalkbeat reports (Colorado, 2025; Tennessee, 2024), a law-firm alert (September 2025) and the ALA list (April 2026)
- A chart: law, adopted policy, professional guidance

The task in this edition

Task: Write an explainer for a public library newsletter or a campus newspaper on how a school library review works. Use the district's reconsideration notice as the example. Separate the district's adopted policy, the ALA's guidance and what courts have and have not settled.

Students make: Explainer, 450—600 words, with a labeled source list

Pacing

Opener (page 127): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Summarize What happened in one minute.

Key terms (pages 128 and 129): 5 min. Short on time: 5 min.

Look at the evidence (pages 134 and 135): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 136 and 137): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Read the key idea and one In the news source only.

Sort the evidence (page 138): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Do the deciders column only.

Practice (page 139): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 140 and 141): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (pages 142 and 143): 35 min. Short on time: 35 min.

Check your work (pages 144 and 145): 6 min. Short on time: 6 min.

Questions to discuss (pages 146 and 147): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Talk about this case at home (page 148): at home.

Periods: full chapter 101 minutes; one period 90 minutes.

Standards

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students weigh a district notice, a professional toolkit, news reports and a law-firm alert for what each can support (Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically).

Case 7 plan, continued

Standards, continued

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 tell the public how and when students, parents, staff and community members may give input (Civic Contexts/Structures).

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 ALA's guidance is not law and why a district's adopted policy governs its own review.

Information Has Value Information has value, including as a means to influence people, so credit, access and privacy matter. In this case: Students connect the review process to readers' access to a book that stays available during the review.

Codes of ethics

- **ALA Code of Ethics:** Principle 2 (of 9)
- **Code of Ethics of the Education Profession:** Principle I: Commitment to the Student, item 2

Codes of ethics, continued

- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** "We strive to understand and respect other communicators' intent..." (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

■■□ **Opener (page 127):** Medium

■□□ **Key terms (pages 128 and 129):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (pages 134 and 135):** Low

■■□ **Key idea (pages 136 and 137):** Medium

■■□ **Sort the evidence (page 138):** Medium

■□□ **Practice (page 139):** Low

■■□ **Your draft (pages 142 and 143):** Medium

■□□ **Check your work (pages 144 and 145):** Low

Try it at your school

Find your library's reconsideration policy.

- Ask your school librarian how book challenges are handled
- Find the written policy on the district website
- Learn whether students can give input during a review
- If a review is happening, read the whole book before commenting

Try it at your school, continued

Who to ask: School librarian or media specialist, public library staff, school board clerk

Safety: Don't post names of people who filed a challenge or who spoke at a meeting. Disagree with ideas, not individuals.

Sources

- Penguin, "Matilda by Roald Dahl: authorized extract," No date listed
- American Library Association, "Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: formal reconsideration," No date listed
- American Library Association, "Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: selection criteria," No date listed

Case 7: Did one complaint get the novel banned?

A group chat says one parent's complaint got a novel banned, so Mari and Gia check what the school library's notice says.

On your own Read What happened and underline the word in the group chat that may go too far. About 4 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who reads the library notice before anyone replies "banned." **New skill:** Find what stage a process has reached.

Gia, Mari and Sami talk around a table on a rooftop terrace at sunset.

What happened

On Thursday night, a message about a novel in the library at Anika's high school appears in a group chat. The message says one parent complained, so the novel is now banned and gone from the library. Gia replies that this is censorship.

On Friday, the school library posts a notice about the novel. Mari reads it and compares it with the group chat. Gia deletes her first reply, because she had not read the notice or the novel.

Mari works the counter at the neighborhood bookshop. She switches between print and audio, and she is halfway through the novel on audio. Gia is planning a discussion at the bookshop. First, both of them want to know what stage the library's process has reached.

Your question: Is the novel really banned, and what can people who care about it do next?

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Summarize What happened in one minute.

Say this

"The chat says "banned." What would you need to see before you repeat that word?" — List answers on the board: stage, policy, who decides.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat a complaint as a removal. **Listen for:** "One complaint and it's gone." **Then:** Ask which document would show the book is gone. Write "Check the stage" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.

Heat check

Medium. Book challenges can bring up students' political or religious views.

Cool-down: Say: "Today we check what happened, not who is right about the book."

Key terms

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

Challenge A challenge is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material.

En español: impugnación

In this case: A parent's request about a novel at Anika's school started a review. The novel stays available while the committee reads it.

Reconsideration policy A reconsideration policy is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book.

En español: política de reconsideración

In this case: The library's notice follows district policy: a committee review, the selection criteria, written input by the 15th and an appeal.

Selection criteria Selection criteria are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.

En español: criterios de selección

In this case: The committee judges the whole novel against the district's selection criteria. The input form asks which criteria your comment addresses.

Who is involved

Mari

Works the bookshop counter

"The chat says the book is gone from the library. The notice says it stays available during the review. Those can't both be true."

Gia

Planning a book discussion at the bookshop

"I called it censorship before I'd read the notice. Now I'm planning a discussion at the bookshop, so I'd better get this right."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 5 min.

Say this

"Which key term names what the parent did, and which names what the committee will use?" — Wait for "challenge" and "selection criteria."

Watch for

Misconception: Students hear "challenge" as "ban." **Listen for:** "A challenge means they took it." **Then:** Reread the key idea: a challenge starts a review. On its own, it does not remove a book.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- Show the process as a flowchart: request, review, decision, appeal.
- **Cognates:** reconsideration (reconsideración), criteria (criterios), committee (comité), decision (decisión), appeal (apelación), process (proceso), novel (novela), district (distrito), censorship (censura).

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 happened to the novel?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that the library pulled the book while it looks into the complaint, because the chat says it is gone.

Notes

This page continues page 128. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 128.

Reading passage

Challenges, process and the language of book bans

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

- **Challenge**: A challenge is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material.
- **Reconsideration policy**: A reconsideration policy is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book.
- **Selection criteria**: Selection criteria are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.
- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Correction**: A correction is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information.

The story: The speed of a word

A group chat claims that one parent's complaint got a novel "banned" from the library at Anika's high school. Gia replies, "censorship, full stop." The next day the school library posts a notice that contradicts the chat. The book remains available while a committee reviews it. Mari, who works the counter at the neighborhood bookshop and is halfway through the novel on audio, catches the contradiction. Gia deletes her reply and admits she had read neither the notice nor the book.

The case is a study in how a single word can outrun a process. "Banned" is vivid, shareable and morally clear. It also asserts a finished outcome. In practice, library disputes pass through stages, and people who want to influence the outcome need to know which stage they are in. Gia's turn is instructive. She plans a bookshop discussion aimed at getting people to the input form before the 15th, and she rules out attacks on the parent who filed the request, noting that the parent used the process too.

Your role is to read the library notice before anyone replies "banned."

Stop and think. Why might advocates on either side prefer the word "banned" or the word "review"?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (731 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: The speed of a word":** Why might advocates on either side prefer the word "banned" or the word "review"?
2. **After "Mapping the process":** How does the input form's design shape who can take part effectively?
3. **After "Guidance, law and contested terms":** With federal courts split, what can local participation accomplish that litigation cannot?

Mapping the process

The notice describes the procedure. A request for reconsideration has been received for one title. Under district policy, the title remains available during review. A committee will read the full work and evaluate it against the district's selection criteria. Written input may be submitted by the 15th, and the decision may be appealed.

A **challenge** is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material. A **reconsideration policy** is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book. **Selection criteria** are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include. These three terms separate what the chat merged: the complaint, the procedure that evaluates it and the standards the procedure applies. The chat's **claim** describes an outcome that the notice shows has not occurred.

The skill here, identifying the stage of a process, rests on two earlier ones. Case 1 sends you to the original source, and Case 3 defines a **correction** as a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information. A good correction in this case also respects the notice's silences. It does not name the book, the committee or the criteria, because the notice does not.

The input form reveals what the committee values. It asks for the respondent's role, whether they read the entire work and which selection criteria their comment addresses, within 300 words. Mari's plan fits that design. She will finish the book and then join her personal reasons for caring to the criteria the committee must apply.

Stop and think. How does the input form's design shape who can take part effectively?

Guidance, law and contested terms

The American Library Association's toolkit models a formal reconsideration process in which a committee reads the whole work, and it offers guidance on selection criteria (American Library Association, updated January 2018). This guidance is professional, not legal, and districts adapt it. State legislatures are now writing the rules more directly. Colorado lawmakers advanced a bill requiring clear reconsideration policies (Chalkbeat Colorado, February 10, 2025). Reporting from Tennessee found that a stricter law altered the review steps and that some books quietly disappeared (Chalkbeat Tennessee, September 17, 2024). In Florida, the governor backed limits on repeated challenges (PBS NewsNight, February 23, 2024).

The constitutional status of removals is unsettled. A law-firm client alert explains that the Fifth Circuit applied the government speech doctrine to public library book removals, creating a split with the Eighth Circuit (Cahill Gordon and Reindel, September 22, 2025). National data complicates the picture further. ALA's annual list tracks how many challenges were filed, by whom and how many led to removals (American Library Association, April 20, 2026).

This page continues page 130. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 130.

Guidance, law and contested terms, continued

The book connection offers a contrast. In Roald Dahl's Matilda (1988), Matilda's father tears pages out of her library copy of The Red Pony because he disapproves of her reading, and no one reviews his choice. A real school library is supposed to follow a written process instead. The novel does not set rules for real libraries, but it shows what a process is for.

Professional ethics names the values in tension. The ALA code commits librarians to "resist all efforts to censor library resources" (ALA Code of Ethics, 2021). The NEA code says educators "shall not unreasonably deny the student's access to varying points of view" (NEA Code of Ethics, 1975). Using the right word for the stage is where fair advocacy starts.

Stop and think. With federal courts split, what can local participation accomplish that litigation cannot?

Sources

Real source | American Library Association | January 2018
Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: formal reconsideration

Real source | American Library Association | January 2018
Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: selection criteria

Real source | Chalkbeat Colorado | February 10, 2025
Colorado bill to curb school library book challenges clears first legislative hurdle

Real source | Chalkbeat Tennessee | September 17, 2024
Under stricter Tennessee law, some school library books quietly disappear

Real source | PBS (NewsNight) | February 23, 2024
Tackling Frivolous Challenges to Books in Public Schools

Real source | Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP (law-firm client alert) | September 22, 2025
Fifth Circuit Holds That Government Speech Doctrine Applies to Public Library Book Removals, Creating Circuit Split With Eighth Circuit

Real source | American Library Association | April 20, 2026
American Library Association releases 2025 Most Challenged Books List as National Library Week Begins

Real source | Penguin | June 24, 2026
Matilda by Roald Dahl: authorized extract

Real source | American Library Association (ALA) | 2021
ALA Code of Ethics

This page continues page 130. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 130.

Sources, continued

Real source | National Education Association (NEA) | 1975

Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

Notes

This page continues page 130. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 130.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the notice and the input form, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Library notice

Reconsideration notice, posted Friday by the school library

A request for reconsideration has been received for one title in the library collection. Under district policy, the title remains available during the review. A review committee will read the full work and evaluate it against the district's selection criteria. Written input may be submitted by the 15th. The committee's decision may be appealed.

Look closely: Which sentence tells you where the book is right now? Underline it.

What it shows

A request, not a decision: the title stays available while a committee reviews it.

What it leaves out

The criteria, the committee's members and what the request says.

Evidence B | Input form

Review committee input form, due the 15th

Name and role (student, parent, staff or community member). Have you read the entire work? Yes or No. Which selection criteria does your input address? Comments, 300 words maximum.

Look closely: Who can send input? What does the form ask before your comments?

What it shows

Anyone in the community can comment, but the form asks if you read the whole work.

What it leaves out

How the committee weighs comments, and the full list of criteria.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Find the sentence that says where the book is now. Read it aloud." — Wait for "the title remains available during the review."

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat a review as a ban in slow motion. **Listen for:** "They're reviewing it, so it's basically banned." **Then:** Ask what the notice says comes after the review: a decision, then a possible appeal.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page with the key sentence enlarged.
- Offer the notice as a read-aloud.
- **Cognates:** reconsideration (reconsideración), criteria (criterios), committee (comité), decision (decisión), appeal (apelación), process (proceso), novel (novela), district (distrito), censorship (censura).

Stretch

- Ask why the form asks whether you read the entire work, and what that suggests about the criteria.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Which novel is under review and what the request says, who sits on the review committee, what the district's selection criteria say in full, and what state law, if any, adds to the district policy.

Notes

This page continues page 134. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 134.

Key idea: book challenges

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

A **challenge** is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material. A challenge starts a review. On its own, it does not remove a book. A complaint, a temporary change and a final decision can happen at different times. Check which stage a process has reached before you repeat a claim.

A **reconsideration policy** is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book. The American Library Association (ALA) recommends that libraries adopt one, and its example has a committee read the whole work. **Selection criteria** are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include. ALA's guidance is a professional recommendation, not a law. Each district's adopted policy and the applicable law govern its own process.

Whether removing a book breaks the law is a harder question. Federal courts disagree about how the First Amendment applies when a library removes a book. The answer can depend on where you live. Right now, the notice at Anika's school describes a review, and the novel is still available.

Professional standards

Real source | **American Library Association (ALA)**

ALA Code of Ethics: Principle 2 (of 9)

"We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources."

In plain words: Library workers who follow the ALA code support people's freedom to read and oppose censorship of library materials.

Question: The district notice says the title stays available during review. Does that match the group chat's claim that it's "gone"?

Your answer

The notice says ___, so ___.

The notice says "the title remains available during the review," so the chat describes a removal that has not happened.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 8 min. Read the key idea and one In the news source only.

Say this

"ALA's code says to resist efforts to censor library resources. Does keeping the book available during review fit that?" — Wait for evidence from the notice.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the ALA code as a law. **Listen for:** "The school is breaking the ALA law." **Then:** Say: "ALA's code is a framework for library workers. District policy and the applicable law govern the process."

Support

- Read the quotation aloud. Point out the label: a real source, quoted word for word.

Stretch

- Use the NEA row. Ask how reading the whole work tests whether a reason to remove a book is reasonable.

Heat check

Medium. The word "censorship" can start a debate about real books or groups.

Cool-down: Keep the talk on this notice. Ask what the notice says, not which side is right.

In the news

Real source | Chalkbeat Colorado | February 10, 2025

Colorado bill to curb school library book challenges clears first legislative hurdle

A state debated requiring clear reconsideration policies, showing a challenge is a process, not an instant ban.

Real source | Chalkbeat Tennessee | September 17, 2024

Under stricter Tennessee law, some school library books quietly disappear

A state law changed the review steps, so you have to check which rules and stage actually applied.

Notes

This page continues page 136. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 136.

Sort the evidence

On your own Fill in the diagram to show who decides at each stage, which rules apply and where input goes. About 8 minutes.

Replace “banned” with the real chain of decisions. Who decides at each stage, which rules bind them, and where can a student’s input land?

Keep, restrict or remove the novel after review

Who decides

The school review committee, which reads the whole work and votes

District-level appeal and, finally, the school board

Under which rule

District reconsideration policy and selection criteria

State law and unsettled First Amendment case law (Pico had no majority opinion)

Who lives with it

Your way in

Written input on the committee form by the 15th

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 committee’s view is missing. I would ask how it will weigh written input against the criteria, and what the appeal step involves.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Do the deciders column only.

Say this

“Replace “banned” with the real chain of decisions. Who decides first?” — Model the first decider together: the review committee.

Watch for

Misconception: Students name the parent as the decider. **Listen for:** “The parent decided.” **Then:** Point to the diagram: the parent can ask, the committee decides and the board hears appeals.

Support

- Let students write D, R or A (decider, rule, affected) before they write sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can invite personal reasons a book matters.

Cool-down: No student has to share why a book matters to them. Answer about the characters.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what to check first and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 5 minutes.

A group chat says, "One parent complained, so that novel is banned." What should you check first?

- [x] **A** Find the library's policy and where the review stands.
- [ ] **B** Ask everyone in the chat whether they like the book.
- [ ] **C** Read the passage people are upset about, then decide.

Why I chose it

A. Only the policy and the notice can show the stage. B treats popularity as a decision, and C ignores the whole-work standard the committee uses.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

This is so messed up. One parent complains and (1) now the whole school can't read the book?? That's literally censorship and it's illegal because of the First Amendment. (2) Whoever complained is a terrible person and should mind their own business. Everyone should go to the board meeting and yell at them until they put it back. Books like this are the only ones some of us actually finish. I read part of it last year and it was actually really good. I'm so done with this school honestly.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

The novel is still available while a committee reviews the whole work.

Rewrite phrase 2

The parent used the district's process. Our input should answer the criteria.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"The chat says one parent got the novel banned. What do you check first?" — Hold a quick vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose to read the disputed passage and decide. **Listen for:** "Just read the bad part." **Then:** Point to the notice: the committee reads the full work.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: Update on the novel: it isn't banned. A parent filed a reconsideration request, which starts a review under the district's policy. The book stays on the shelf while a committee reviews the whole work against the selection criteria, and there's an appeal step after the decision. If you care about it, you can send written input to the committee by the 15th; the librarian has the form. Tie it to the criteria and your own reading, and please don't go after the parent who asked. People are allowed to use the process too.

Other notes on the draft:

- "it's illegal because of the First Amendment" The law here is unsettled and varies. Don't claim a verdict.

College

Your task

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

Write an explainer for a public library newsletter or a campus newspaper on how a school library review works. Use the district's reconsideration notice as the example. Separate the district's adopted policy, the ALA's guidance and what courts have and have not settled.

Use: Case documents: the group-chat claim, the reconsideration notice, the committee input form and Mari's statement. Real sources: the ALA toolkit summary, Chalkbeat reports from Colorado (2025) and Tennessee (2024), a law-firm client alert (September 2025) and the ALA's most-challenged books release (April 2026).

You'll make: Explainer, 450—600 words, with a labeled source list

Time: 90 minutes

1. Reread Evidence A and mark the stage the novel is at now.
2. Fill in the chart: law, adopted policy and professional guidance.
3. Label each source by type: example, news report, secondary source or national data.
4. Draft the stage, rules and source-list sections in the Your draft boxes.
5. Finish the explainer on lined paper, 450 to 600 words, with a labeled source list.
6. Check your explainer with the questions on the Check your work page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The novel's stage

Under review and still available. Input is due by the 15th, and the decision may be appealed.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 12 min.

Say this

"Your reader saw a headline that said "banned." What stage is the review at?" — Point to the notice's second sentence.

Watch for

Misconception: Explainers treat ALA guidance as law. **Listen for:** "The ALA rules say the book must stay." **Then:** Ask who adopted the rule. The district adopts policy, and ALA offers guidance.

Support

- Chart: law, adopted policy, professional guidance
- Stage map: request received, committee review, decision, appeal
- Model sentence for unsettled law: "Courts disagree about ..."
- Model sentence: "Courts disagree about how the First Amendment applies to library removals."

Stretch

- Explain why Island Trees v. Pico (1982) left the law unsettled. Use the 2025 law-firm alert to show that federal appeals courts still disagree about library removals, without predicting an outcome.

Your task, continued

Policy, guidance and courts

Policy: ___. Guidance: ___. Courts: ___.

Policy: the district's reconsideration policy. Guidance: ALA's toolkit, which is not law. Courts: Pico had no majority opinion, and courts still disagree.

Source labels

Notice and form: examples. Chalkbeat: news reports. Law-firm alert: secondary source. ALA list: national data.

Notes

This page continues page 140.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Information Literacy VALUE Rubric; Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Information Has Value.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- States the novel's stage accurately: under review and still available
- Separates the district's policy, the ALA's guidance and court decisions
- Describes Pico as a decision with no majority opinion
- Labels the law-firm alert as a secondary source and the ALA list as national data
- Keeps a neutral tone and names no one who filed a challenge or gave input

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 35 minutes.

How a review works

What happens when someone challenges a school library book? In our example, a parent's request started a review under district policy. The title remains available during the review. A committee will read the full work and judge it against the selection criteria. Students, parents, staff and community members can send written input by the 15th, and the decision may be appealed.

Policy, guidance and the courts

Three kinds of rules shape a review. The district's adopted policy governs this process. The American Library Association's toolkit is professional guidance for libraries to adapt, not law. Courts are the third layer, and there the law is unsettled. Island Trees v. Pico (1982) had no majority opinion. A 2025 law-firm alert reports a split between the Fifth and Eighth Circuits over public library book removals. This explainer does not predict how any court would rule.

Pacing

Full chapter: 35 min.

Short on time: 35 min.

Say this

"Could a reader on either side of this debate trust your explainer?" — Partners mark any word that picks a side.

Watch for

Misconception: Explainers predict a legal outcome. **Listen for:** "The court will order them to put it back." **Then:** Ask which source predicts that. None does, because courts still disagree.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Book challenges can bring out strong political and religious views.

Cool-down: Say: "We explain the process. We don't rule on the book."

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. States the stage accurately.
2. Separates guidance from law.
3. Describes Pico accurately.
4. Keeps a neutral tone.

Your draft, continued

Labeled source list, first two entries

Chalkbeat Tennessee, September 17, 2024 (news report). Cahill Gordon & Reindel, client alert, September 22, 2025 (secondary source).

Notes

This page continues page 142. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 142.

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 6 minutes.

Does your explainer state the novel's stage accurately?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does it separate the district's policy, the ALA's guidance and court decisions?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does it describe Pico as a decision with no majority opinion?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Are your sources labeled by type, with no one named who filed a challenge or gave input?	☑ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Repeats "banned."	☐ Mentions a complaint without stage.	☐ States the current stage from the policy.	☐ States stage, next steps and input route.
Reasoning	☐ Declares a legal verdict.	☐ Treats outrage as the argument.	☐ Separates complaint, review and decision.	☐ Connects input to criteria and notes legal uncertainty.
Audience & purpose	☐ Attacks people.	☐ Rallies without direction.	☐ Gives a useful participation route.	☐ Invites participation while respecting other readers and the parent.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone only.	☐ Corrects the stage and removes attacks.	☐ Explains how each change helps the chat act accurately.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 6 min.

Say this

"Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why." — Ask for one corrected stage or one removed attack.

Watch for

Misconception: Students keep a legal verdict in their reply. **Listen for:** "It's illegal, period." **Then:** Point to the Reasoning row: the law here is unsettled and varies.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks for an accurate stage, an accurate account of Pico and neutral, clearly labeled sources.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** States the current stage from the policy.
- **Reasoning:** Separates complaint, review and decision.
- **Audience & purpose:** Gives a useful participation route.
- **Revision:** Corrects the stage and removes attacks.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I labeled the law-firm alert as a secondary source, because it reports on a court decision instead of being one.

Notes

This page continues page 144. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 144.

Questions to discuss

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

1 **Whose reading experience is missing from the crew's discussion of the novel?**

Readers at Anika's school are missing, including the family that filed the request. Mari is halfway through, and Gia had not read the book.

2 **Gia says nobody should go after the parent who asked for the review. Why might that matter for her bookshop discussion?**

The parent used the same process Gia wants people to join. Attacking the parent adds a target but gives the committee nothing to weigh.

3 **How does calling the same action a "review," a "restriction" or a "ban" change what people think happened?**

"Review" names a process, "restriction" a partial limit and "ban" a final removal. The notice supports only "review," and the other words may stop people from sending input.

My take

My claim: ___.

My claim: the novel is under review, not banned, so a reply should name the stage and the deadline.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The best evidence is the notice, because it says the title remains available during the review.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the notice or the form, not a feeling about the parent." — Post the question numbers and hear one answer per question.

Stretch

- Ask how Gia's bookshop invitation could name the book, the stage and the deadline without naming the parent.
- Going further: Find the institution, its written policy and the decision process before you make a claim about rights. Which of the three does the district notice tell you about?
- Going further: What problem does a proposed restriction on a book claim to solve? Which readers' experiences or other options are missing from that proposal?
- Going further: Design a library notice that explains where a book review stands, and write a short guide for interviewing a librarian. Test whether a student can name the next document to ask for.
- Going further: Ask your school librarian how book challenges are handled. Find the written policy on the district website, and learn whether students can give input during a review. If a review is happening, read the whole book before you comment.
- Find your district's reconsideration policy and summarize its stages
- Research how your state's laws about school library materials have changed recently

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Someone who disagrees might say a review alone can discourage people from borrowing the book.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

The limit of the evidence is that we don't know the criteria or what the request says.

I would change my mind if ___.

I would change my mind if the library pulled the book before the committee decided.

Notes

This page continues page 146.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 1: Medium.** Students may feel pressed to share why a book matters to them personally.

Cool-down: Say: "Answer about the characters, not yourself." Nobody has to share a personal reason.

Question 2 cool-down: Say: "We discuss the request, not the person." Return to what the notice says.

Talk about this case at home

Case 7: Did one complaint get the novel banned?

In this case, a group chat claims one parent's complaint got a novel banned from a school library. Your student compared that claim with the library's notice and learned how a book review works.

Questions to talk about

1. What is the difference between a book being reviewed and a book being removed?
2. Where could someone find out how a library decides which books to keep?
3. How can people disagree about a book without attacking each other?

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

See the case online.

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

"Bring this page home, or read it with someone you trust." — Nobody needs to share their views on any real book.

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 government guidance page accurately
- write for a specific organization and its members
- revise a short text against a checklist

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- write a disclosure policy for a student organization that matches the FTC pages
- create a one-page training handout for members

Objectives, continued

- rewrite the first three seconds and the caption of Gia's review so they pass the sound-off check
- explain that the Endorsement Guides interpret the FTC Act and that the policy is not legal advice

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B, C and D
- The FTC's Disclosures 101 page, its Endorsement Guides questions and answers, and the Endorsement Guides sections on the idea page
- Policy template: what counts as a connection, where the disclosure goes, who checks before posting

The task in this edition

Task: Write a social media disclosure policy for a student organization whose members post reviews, and a one-page training handout. Then use the policy to rewrite the first three seconds and the caption of Gia's review.

Students make: Policy, 300—400 words, a one-page handout and a revised opening and caption

Pacing

Opener (page 149): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Students read What happened on their own.

Key terms (pages 150 and 151): 4 min. Short on time: skip.

Look at the evidence (page 155): 8 min. Short on time: 7 min. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 156): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read Evidence D aloud; skip its boxes.

Key idea (pages 157 and 158): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip In the news.

Sort the evidence (page 159): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 160): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 161 and 162): 15 min. Short on time: 14 min. Fill in the connections box together.

Your draft (pages 163 and 164): 30 min. Short on time: 30 min.

Check your work (pages 165 and 166): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 167 and 168): 10 min. Short on time: 5 min. Discuss question 3 only.

Case 8 plan, continued

Pacing, continued

Talk about this case at home (page 169): at home.

Periods: full chapter 106 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Standards

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. In this case: Students decide what viewers are owed when a reviewer got the product free (Application of Ethical Perspectives/Concepts).

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 policy and a training handout for members of a student organization (Genre and Disciplinary Conventions).

Information Has Value Information has value, including as a means to influence people, so credit, access and privacy matter. In this case: Students explain how a free product creates a relationship that viewers need to know about when they weigh a review.

Standards, continued

Information Creation as a Process Information is made through a process, and how it was made affects what it can be trusted for. In this case: Students trace how placement in a spoken line, on-screen text or a caption changes what a viewer notices.

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

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 149):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 150 and 151):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 155):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 156):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 157 and 158):** Low

■□□ **Sort the evidence (page 159):** Low

■□□ **Practice (page 160):** Low

■□□ **Your task (pages 161 and 162):** Low

■□□ **Your draft (pages 163 and 164):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 165 and 166):** 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

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 4 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.

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.

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

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

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

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 4 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: 4 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

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.

Your first guess

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

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that she should say it, because viewers weigh a free copy differently, but I am not sure where.

Notes

This page continues page 150. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 150.

Reading passage

Disclosure, trust and the creator economy

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: A sincere review with a gap

Gia made a short BookTok review of a novel she genuinely loved. She stayed up until 2 a.m. to finish it. Caio edited the video and finished the cut at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday. The review omits one fact. The publisher's publicity team sent Gia a free copy two weeks earlier, with no obligation to post but a request for a tag if she did. The first cut's spoken opening is pure enthusiasm. The video has no on-screen text. The only reference to the publisher is a tag in the caption below it.

The case is designed around a common and understandable mistake. Gia is not trying to deceive anyone, and her opinion is not for sale. She believes the tag discloses the relationship. Caio, who edits freelance video projects, knows how people watch: quickly, on phones and often muted. His edit notes are blunt. Most viewers will not open the caption, and a tag names a brand without stating a relationship.

Your role is to be the viewer with the sound off who checks the first three seconds.

Stop and think. Why does a disclosure placed in a caption function as no disclosure for many viewers?

The anatomy of an adequate disclosure

The analysis rests on three terms. An **endorsement** is a message that shares someone's opinion or experience of a product to promote it. A **material connection** is a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect.

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (741 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A sincere review with a gap":** Why does a disclosure placed in a caption function as no disclosure for many viewers?
2. **After "The anatomy of an adequate disclosure":** Caio defines success as a stranger answering without hesitation. What are the strengths and limits of that test?
3. **After "Law, enforcement and research":** Should platforms be required to build disclosure tools into video apps? What would that change?

The anatomy of an adequate disclosure, continued

A **disclosure** is a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know. The case keeps two judgments apart. Whether Gia's opinion is honest is one question. Whether viewers can weigh it with full knowledge is another.

The Case 1 concept of **framing**, choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward, explains why placement matters as much as wording. A disclosure that exists but is not brought forward functions, for most viewers, as no disclosure. Caio's solution moves the relationship to the first three seconds, "Quick heads-up, the publisher sent me this free," spoken and on screen, and then lets Gia's hook run. He also builds in a validation step. Someone who did not work on the video watches once, muted, and answers whether the book was free. Hesitation counts as failure.

Gia's own revision shows the limit of disclosure. She drops a superlative she cannot support, the best book of the year, in favor of a claim she can: two nights, could not put it down. Disclosure addresses how the endorser got the product. It does not verify the endorser's claims about the product.

A viewer comment on another creator's review, "wait was this sponsored?? kind of feels like an ad now," shows the reputational logic. Late discovery damages trust more than early disclosure does. The case also carries a caution. That comment is about someone else, and there is no evidence that review was sponsored. Do not accuse real creators on a guess.

Stop and think. Caio defines success as a stranger answering without hesitation. What are the strengths and limits of that test?

Law, enforcement and research

The FTC's Endorsement Guides, 16 CFR Part 255, apply federal law against deceptive practices to endorsements. Their current text states that material connections "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." It defines "clear and conspicuous" as "difficult to miss (i.e., easily noticeable) and easily understandable by ordinary consumers" (16 CFR Part 255, as revised 2023). The FTC announced that update, which addresses free products and tags, in June 2023 (Federal Trade Commission, June 28, 2023).

Enforcement has targeted placement directly. In November 2023, the agency warned two trade associations and a dozen influencers over posts promoting aspartame or sugar, and it stated that disclosures must appear in the video rather than in a caption (Federal Trade Commission, November 14, 2023). Coverage emphasized that sponsors share responsibility (Food Dive, November 27, 2023).

Research supports the premise that disclosure changes perception. A study of 3,149 Taiwanese high school students found that full sponsorship disclosure helped them recognize posts as advertising (Lin et al., PLOS One, May 27, 2026).

This page continues page 152. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 152.

Law, enforcement and research, continued

Earlier research examined age differences in how adolescents respond to disclosures in sponsored influencer videos (van Reijmersdal and van Dam, Journal of Youth and Adolescence, January 18, 2020).

Communicators have their own standard. The PRSA code asks practitioners to "preserve the free flow of unprejudiced information when giving or receiving gifts by ensuring that gifts are nominal, legal, and infrequent" (PRSA Code of Ethics, October 2000). Publishers who send review copies and creators who accept them both sit inside that principle.

Stop and think. Should platforms be required to build disclosure tools into video apps? What would that change?

Sources

Real source | Federal Trade Commission (FTC) | 2023
FTC Endorsement Guides (16 CFR Part 255)

Real source | Federal Trade Commission | June 28, 2023
Federal Trade Commission Announces Updated Advertising Guides to Combat Deceptive Reviews and Endorsements

Real source | Federal Trade Commission | November 14, 2023
FTC Warns Two Trade Associations and a Dozen Influencers About Social Media Posts Promoting Consumption of Aspartame or Sugar

Real source | Food Dive | November 27, 2023
FTC crackdown could change influencer marketing for food and beverages

Real source | PLOS One (Lin et al.) | May 27, 2026
Effects of social media sponsorship disclosure on adolescents' advertising literacy and purchase intention

Real source | Journal of Youth and Adolescence (van Reijmersdal & van Dam) | January 18, 2020
How Age and Disclosures of Sponsored Influencer Videos Affect Adolescents' Knowledge of Persuasion and Persuasion

Real source | Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) | 2000
PRSA Code of Ethics

Case 8 | Reading passage | College educator edition

This page continues page 152. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 152.

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 | 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

The gift and the ask: a free copy, and 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

An honest opinion, with the brand named only in the caption.

What it leaves out

The relationship: no spoken or on-screen word says it was free.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 7 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 stranger test on mute for the first three seconds, before upload.

What it leaves out

Any count of Gia's viewers who watch on mute or open captions.

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

Finding out late turns a review into "an ad" for this viewer.

What it leaves out

Whether that review was sponsored, and how many viewers feel this way.

What is still missing from the evidence?

Any other tie to the publisher, the platform's own label, how many viewers watch on mute, and support for her claims beyond her own reading.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 3 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 10 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: 10 min.

Short on time: 8 min. 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 email's wording ___, because ___.

The email's wording does not remove the connection, because the free copy counts whether or not a post is required. It only means Gia could skip posting.

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 157. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 157.

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow each choice to its results. Then write whose view is missing. About 6 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 ___.

Gia's viewers. Nobody knows how many watch on mute, so I would ask a few people to watch the new cut without sound.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 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 6 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. The FTC counts a free copy even when no post is required, so C fails. A leaves the relationship below the video. B reaches viewers first.

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!! ❶ #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, ❷ 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

Keep #ad, but add a spoken, on-screen line at 0:00 about the free copy.

Rewrite phrase 2

Narrow the claim to her experience: two nights, could not put it down.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

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.

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 15 minutes.

Write a social media disclosure policy for a student organization whose members post reviews, and a one-page training handout. Then use the policy to rewrite the first three seconds and the caption of Gia's review.

Use: Case documents: the publisher's email, Gia's first-cut script and caption, Caio's edit notes and the viewer comment. Real sources: the FTC's Disclosures 101 page, its Endorsement Guides questions and answers, and the Endorsement Guides sections on material connections and "clear and conspicuous" disclosures.

You'll make: Policy, 300—400 words, a one-page handout and a revised opening and caption

Time: 75 minutes

1. List every kind of connection your policy covers, starting with free and discounted products.
2. Decide where the disclosure goes: in the video itself, spoken and on screen.
3. Add Caio's sound-off check as a step before anyone posts.
4. Write how members answer a comment like "was this sponsored??"
5. Draft the policy core and the revised opening on the Your draft page.
6. Write the full policy of 300 to 400 words and a one-page handout.
7. State that the policy guides members and is not legal advice.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Connections the policy covers

Payment, free products and discounted products, even when the brand asks for no post in return.

Pacing

Full chapter: 15 min.

Short on time: 14 min. Fill in the connections box together.

Say this

"Your policy has to work for a member posting alone at midnight. What is the shortest rule they can follow?" — Push for rules with a who, a where and a when.

Watch for

Misconception: The policy covers only paid deals. **Listen for:** "If they didn't pay you, it's fine." **Then:** Read the FTC quotation: free or discounted products count, even when nothing is required.

Support

- Policy template: what counts as a connection, where the disclosure goes, who checks before posting
- Caio's sound-off check as a step before posting
- Model spoken line from the case: "They sent me this for free"

Stretch

- Explain that the Endorsement Guides interpret the FTC Act's ban on deceptive practices. Say why the policy guides members and does not give legal advice.

Heat check

■□□ Low.

Your task, continued

Where the disclosure goes

In the video itself, spoken and on screen, and again in the caption.

How members answer "was this sponsored??"

Yes, the publisher sent me the book free. I said so at the start of the video and in the caption.

Notes

This page continues page 161.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Information Has Value; Information Creation as a Process.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Covers free and discounted products, as the FTC's Disclosures 101 page does
- Requires the disclosure in the video itself, spoken and on screen, not only in a caption or tag
- Includes a sound-off check before posting
- Says how the organization answers a comment like "was this sponsored??"
- The revised opening tells a viewer in the first three seconds that the book was free

Your draft

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

Policy core: what counts, where it goes, who checks

Disclosure policy for member reviews. This policy applies to every member who posts a review or recommendation on the organization's accounts. It guides members; it is not legal advice. What counts: any relationship with a brand that could affect a review, including payment and free or discounted products. A free product counts even when the brand says there is no obligation to post. Where it goes: in the video itself, spoken and on screen in the first three seconds, and again in the caption. A tag or hashtag alone does not count. Who checks: before posting, a member who did not help make the video watches once, on mute, and says whether the product was free. If they hesitate, the post waits.

The law behind the policy

The FTC's Endorsement Guides interpret the FTC Act's ban on deceptive practices. They count free products as material connections.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 30 min.

Say this

"Test your revised opening on a partner, on mute. Was the book free?" — This is the check the policy requires.

Watch for

Misconception: The handout copies the policy word for word. **Listen for:** A handout that is all paragraphs. **Then:** Ask for three steps a new member can follow before posting.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Matches the FTC guidance on free products.
2. Requires the disclosure beyond a caption or tag.
3. Builds Caio's sound-off check into the policy.
4. States the policy's limits, as the challenge asks.

Your draft, continued

Revised first three seconds and caption

Spoken and on screen at 0:00: “Quick heads-up, the publisher sent me this free.” Caption: Publisher sent me a free copy for review. #ad #booktok @publisher

Notes

This page continues page 163. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 163.

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 policy cover free and discounted products?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it require the disclosure in the video itself, spoken and on screen?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it include a sound-off check before posting?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your revised opening tell a viewer in three seconds that the book was free?	☑ 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: 5 min. Students answer the check questions only.

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: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the policy matches the FTC pages and that the rewritten opening passes the sound-off check.

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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I added how members answer a comment asking about sponsorship, because the policy had no step for questions after posting.

Notes

This page continues page 165. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 165.

Questions to discuss

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

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

Somewhat. A free copy does not prove her opinion is false, but it is a reason to compare her review with others before deciding.

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

Keep the disclosure short and early, then give specifics from her own reading. Viewers who see the relationship first have less reason to feel tricked later.

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

Creators and brands both, since the Endorsement Guides reach endorsers and advertisers. A platform label can help, but it cannot replace Gia's own words.

My take

My claim: ___.

Gia should name the free copy in her first three seconds and keep her honest opinion after it.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

Caio's notes, because a tag names a brand, not a relationship.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

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 ___.

Viewers can find the tag if they care enough to look.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

We do not know how Gia's own viewers watch or read captions.

I would change my mind if ___.

A stranger on mute could already tell the book was free.

Notes

This page continues page 167.

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.

See the case online.

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.

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.

Case 9: What is on your ballot, and where do you check?

Content note

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

Overview

Students read a story in which Dec, who turns 18 in October, looks past the headline race on his sample ballot. He finds a school board race, a city council race and a transit bond. They compare the ballot with a creator's voter guide that mixes facts with picks, and they read Vote.gov's guidance for people 18 and under. They then write a personal checklist of official sources for registration, deadlines and their own sample ballot.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- tell an official source from an unofficial one
- write for a specific audience and channel
- state a rule only as far as its source supports it

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- write nonpartisan voting information that sends readers to official sources
- separate facts from recommendations
- explain how a student away from home can find out where to register, without stating any state's rule

Objectives, continued

- protect readers' private information

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B, C and D
- Vote.gov's page for people 18 and under, and the Twenty-Sixth Amendment
- CIRCLE's report of April 14, 2025, and Ballotpedia's report of September 26, 2025

The task in this edition

Task: Write a nonpartisan voting-information guide for a student organization's social accounts or a campus library display. Add a short note explaining how the guide avoids the problems in the creator's voter guide.

Students make: Guide, 300—400 words, plus a note of about 100 words

Pacing

Opener (page 170): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Students read What happened on their own.

Key terms (pages 171 and 172): 4 min. Short on time: skip.

Look at the evidence (page 177): 8 min. Short on time: 7 min. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Pacing, continued

Look at the evidence (page 178): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read Evidence D aloud; skip its boxes.

Key idea (pages 179 and 180): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip In the news.

Sort the evidence (pages 181 and 182): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 183): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 184 and 185): 15 min. Short on time: 14 min. Fill in the official-sources box together.

Your draft (page 186): 30 min. Short on time: 30 min.

Check your work (pages 187 and 188): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 189 and 190): 10 min. Short on time: 5 min. Discuss question 4 only.

Talk about this case at home (page 191): at home.

Periods: full chapter 106 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 9 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 give peers nonpartisan steps to find their own ballot and deadlines (Civic Communication).

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students rely on official sources and label the creator's guide as a mix of facts and recommendations (Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically).

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 a state or local election office, not a creator's post, is the authority on deadlines.

Searching as Strategic Exploration Searching for information is an exploration that takes planning, several sources and changes of direction. In this case: Students plan how a reader finds their own state's registration rules and sample ballot.

Codes of ethics

- **SPJ Code of Ethics:** Seek Truth and Report It

Codes of ethics, continued

- **RTDNA Code of Ethics:** Opening statement (before the guiding principles)
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** "We advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings..." (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 170):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 171 and 172):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 177):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 178):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 179 and 180):** Low

■■□ **Sort the evidence (pages 181 and 182):** Medium

■□□ **Practice (page 183):** Low

■■□ **Your task (pages 184 and 185):** Medium

■■□ **Your draft (page 186):** Medium

■□□ **Check your work (pages 187 and 188):** Low

Try it at your school

Find your official election information.

- With a trusted adult, visit vote.gov and choose your state or territory
- Check eligibility, preregistration and registration rules for your age

Try it at your school, continued

- Find a sample ballot for your address and circle one local office
- Learn what that office does before researching candidates

Who to ask: Your county or local election office, a civics teacher, a school librarian

Safety: Never share your address, birthdate or voter information in group chats. Use official government sites (.gov) for registration.

Sources

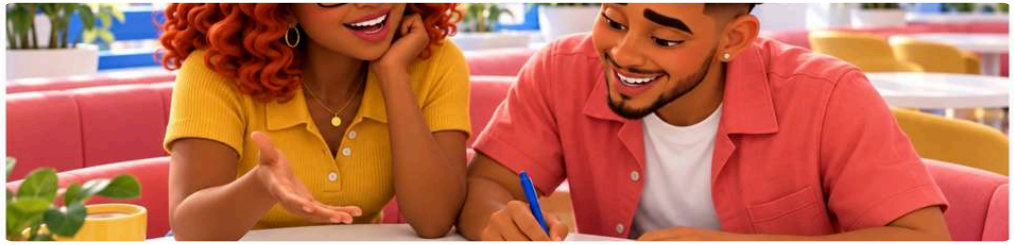
- Vote.gov, "Your state or territory's voting information," No date listed
- Vote.gov, "Preparing to vote: age 18 and under," No date listed
- USAGov, "Sample ballots and voter guides," No date listed
- National Constitution Center, "The 26th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution," No date listed

Case 9: What is on your ballot, and where do you check?

Dec turns 18 before the election on November 3, 2026, and his feed covers only one race on his ballot.

On your own Read What happened. Underline the contests Mateo finds below the big race. About 4 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who finds Dec's official sample ballot before anyone tells him how to vote.
New skill: Check an official source for your own area.



Mateo and Gia work in a notebook at a café table.

What happened

It is Sunday at the library desk. Dec turns 18 in October, before the general election on November 3, 2026. His feed is full of posts about one big race. Mateo and Gia are helping him find out what else is on his ballot.

They look at a sample ballot for the November election. The front shows the big race from Dec's feed. The second page has more: a school board race, a city council seat and Measure T, a transit bond. Mateo notices that nobody is posting about Measure T.

A creator's voter guide is also going around. It says registration closes "the 14th," but it never names a state. It also tells people how to vote on the school board race and Measure T. Gia is writing a reminder for the group chat.

Mateo has his own problem. He may still be registered at his mom's address in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Dec says he does not need anyone to pick for him. He needs to know what is on his ballot and whether he is registered in time.

Your question: What is on Dec's ballot, and where should he check his own information?

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

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

Say this

"Dec's feed is full of one race. What else do you think is on his ballot?" — List guesses on the board. Keep them for the sample ballot.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think a ballot holds only the big national races. **Listen for:** "It's just president or Congress." **Then:** Point to the second page of the sample ballot in the story: school board, city council, Measure T.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Explain that a measure is a question voters decide directly, like Measure T.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key terms

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

Sample ballot A sample ballot is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot.

En español: boleta de muestra

In this case: Dec's sample ballot lists a school board race, a city council seat and Measure T below the big race from his feed.

Voter guide A voter guide is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election.

En español: guía para votantes

In this case: A creator's voter guide mixes one deadline with two picks: "vote Candidate B" and "Measure T: yes, obviously."

Registration Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote.

En español: inscripción electoral

In this case: Dec turns 18 in October and needs to know whether he is registered in time. The guide's deadline names no state.

Jurisdiction A jurisdiction is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority.

En español: jurisdicción

In this case: Mateo may still be registered in New Bedford, Massachusetts. A different place can mean a different ballot and a different deadline.

Who is involved

Mateo
Helping Dec read the sample ballot

"Dec's feed is all the big race. Then you flip the sample ballot: school board, city council, a transit bond. Nobody's posting about Measure T."

Gia
Writing the group-chat reminder

"The creator's guide says 'registration closes the 14th.' Whose 14th? It doesn't even say which state."

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Which key term explains why Mateo's ballot might not match Dec's?" — Wait for jurisdiction.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat a voter guide and a sample ballot as the same document. **Listen for:** "The guide is the ballot." **Then:** Ask which one lists the contests for an address and which one tells you how to vote.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- Many election offices publish Spanish materials. Show where to find them.
- **Cognates:** election (elección), candidate (candidato), jurisdiction (jurisdicción), official (oficial), district (distrito), amendment (enmienda), constitution (constitución), vote (voto).

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 is on Dec's ballot?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is federal, state and local contests, but only his address can tell us which ones.

Notes

This page continues page 171. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 171.

Reading passage

Jurisdiction, information and the first ballot

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

- **Sample ballot**: A sample ballot is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot.
- **Voter guide**: A voter guide is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election.
- **Registration**: Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote.
- **Jurisdiction**: A jurisdiction is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority.
- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Material connection**: A material connection is a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect.

The story: Two first-time voters, two ballots

Dec turns 18 in October, before the general election on November 3, 2026. His feed has taught him that the election is about one race. At the library desk on Sunday, Mateo, 22, and Gia, 21, help him read a sample ballot that says otherwise. Beneath the federal race sit a state senate seat, a judicial retention, two school board seats, a city council seat and Measure T, a transit improvements bond. Mateo observes that no one is posting about Measure T.

A creator's voter guide circulates in the group chat. It combines one apparent fact, that registration closes "the 14th," with two unexplained recommendations: a school board candidate described as "the only one who cares about students" and "yes, obviously" on Measure T. Dec rejects the premise that he needs someone to choose for him. His questions are practical and prior to any choice. What is on his ballot, and is he registered in time?

Mateo's situation adds a complication many college students share. He moved from New Bedford, Massachusetts, for school and may still be registered at his mom's address. If so, his ballot, his deadline and even his election office differ from Dec's. He plans to check that night.

Your role is to find Dec's official sample ballot before anyone tells him how to vote.

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (720 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: Two first-time voters, two ballots":** Is a voter guide with unlabeled recommendations misleading, or simply incomplete, and why?
2. **After "Information versus recommendation":** How does jurisdiction shape both what appears on a ballot and what a voter should research?
3. **After "Rights, rules and professional norms":** What obligations, if any, should creators who publish voter guides have to disclose authorship and funding?

Stop and think. Is a voter guide with unlabeled recommendations misleading, or simply incomplete, and why?

Information versus recommendation

A **sample ballot** is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot. A **voter guide** is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election. Treating the two as interchangeable is the core error the case targets. The sample ballot defines the decision set. A guide proposes a way through it.

The analysis draws on the ladder of earlier skills. Case 1 established that a **claim** must be checked against an original source. The guide's deadline fails that test because it lacks a jurisdiction, so it cannot be confirmed for any reader. Case 8 established the importance of a **material connection**, a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect. The guide omits its author and funding. That omission does not show bias, but it removes the information a reader needs to weigh its recommendations.

A **jurisdiction** is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority. Jurisdiction operates twice here. It determines which contests a voter sees, since ballots are assembled by address. It also determines which office can act on an issue. A voter concerned about transit needs to know which body runs the buses before evaluating Measure T or a council candidate.

Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote. Gia's reminder models responsible civic communication under uncertainty. It gives no deadline, because none would be accurate for everyone. It points to Vote.gov for each person's own registration and ballot, and it asks people not to post their addresses in the chat.

Stop and think. How does jurisdiction shape both what appears on a ballot and what a voter should research?

Rights, rules and professional norms

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment sets a national floor, protecting the vote for citizens 18 and older (National Constitution Center, no date listed). Its history is tied to the wartime argument "old enough to fight, old enough to vote" (The National WWII Museum, October 27, 2020). Implementation belongs largely to the states. Most allow preregistration, and some permit 17-year-olds to vote in primaries if they will be 18 by the general election (Ballotpedia News, September 26, 2025). States have pursued other measures to raise youth registration as well (NPR, August 6, 2023).

Participation is substantial and uneven. CIRCLE estimates that about 47 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds voted in 2024, with wide variation across states (CIRCLE, April 14, 2025).

This page continues page 173. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 173.

Rights, rules and professional norms, continued

National Voter Registration Day coverage has emphasized registering people for elections “up and down the ballot” (PBS NewsHour, September 19, 2023).

Professional codes offer a template for a nonpartisan guide. The SPJ code instructs journalists to “label advocacy and commentary” (SPJ Code of Ethics, September 6, 2014). The RTDNA code holds that journalism “does not tell people what to believe or how to feel” (RTDNA Code of Ethics, June 11, 2015). The NCA credo endorses “sharing information, opinions, and feelings when facing significant decisions, while also respecting privacy and confidentiality” (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024). Gia’s request that no one post an address applies that last clause to a group chat.

Stop and think. What obligations, if any, should creators who publish voter guides have to disclose authorship and funding?

Sources

Real source | Vote.gov | No date listed
Your state or territory’s voting information

Real source | National Constitution Center | No date listed
The 26th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution

Real source | The National WWII Museum | October 27, 2020
“Old Enough to Fight, Old Enough to Vote”: The WWII Roots of the 26th Amendment

Real source | Ballotpedia News | September 26, 2025
Most states allow teenagers to pre-register to vote before turning 18, and some let them vote in primaries

Real source | NPR | August 6, 2023
Some states are trying to boost youth voter registration. Here's what they're doing

Real source | CIRCLE (Tufts University) | April 14, 2025
New Data: Nearly Half of Youth Voted in 2024

Real source | PBS NewsHour | September 19, 2023
New state and local efforts try get more people to vote

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) | 2014
SPJ Code of Ethics

Real source | Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) | 2015
RTDNA Code of Ethics

This page continues page 173. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 173.

Sources, continued

Real source | National Communication Association (NCA) | 2024

Credo for Ethical Communication

Notes

This page continues page 173. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 173.

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 | Sample ballot

Sample ballot for the November general election

Federal: U.S. Representative. State: State Senator; Superior Court judge (retention). Local: Board of Education, District 3 (vote for two); City Council, Ward 5. Measures: Measure T, transit improvements bond.

Look closely: Which contests sit below the big race, and which one touches Dec's school?

What it shows	What it leaves out
Contests at three levels of government, and a transit bond.	The address it applies to and what each office controls.

Evidence B | Voter guide post

A creator's voter guide

All you need for November!! Registration closes the 14th. School board: vote Candidate B, the only one who cares about students. Measure T: yes, obviously.

Look closely: Which line could you check, and which lines tell you how to vote?

What it shows	What it leaves out
A checkable claim beside advocacy that is not labeled as advocacy.	Which state "the 14th" is for, and who wrote and paid for it.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

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

Say this

"Put one finger on a line you could check and one on a line that tells you how to vote." — Use two highlighter colors if you have them.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the guide's picks as facts because the guide sounds sure. **Listen for:** "It says obviously, so it's true." **Then:** Ask what source could prove "Measure T: yes." None can; it is a pick.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the sample ballot aloud, one level of government at a time.
- **Cognates:** election (elección), candidate (candidato), jurisdiction (jurisdicción), official (oficial), district (distrito), amendment (enmienda), constitution (constitución), vote (voto).

Stretch

- Ask why Gia's reminder leaves out a deadline on purpose, and what each reader has to do instead.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Group-chat draft

Gia's reminder

Check your registration and your own sample ballot at vote.gov. Deadlines depend on your state. Please don't post your address here.

Look closely: What does Gia share, and what does she ask friends to keep private?

What it shows	What it leaves out
An official lookup route and a privacy request, with no picks.	Specific dates, since each state sets its own.

Evidence D | Statement

What Dec needs

"I turn 18 in October. I don't need someone picking for me. I need to know what's on my ballot and whether I'm registered in time for November."

Look closely: What two questions does Dec need answered, and which source answers each?

What it shows	What it leaves out
The reader's real need: his own ballot and his registration status.	His state and deadline, which only an official source can supply.

What is still missing from the evidence?

Dec's state and deadline, whether he is registered, his own sample ballot, what each local office controls, and who funds the creator's guide.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read Evidence D aloud; skip its boxes.

Say this

"Put one finger on a line you could check and one on a line that tells you how to vote." — Use two highlighter colors if you have them.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the guide's picks as facts because the guide sounds sure. **Listen for:** "It says obviously, so it's true." **Then:** Ask what source could prove "Measure T: yes." None can; it is a pick.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the sample ballot aloud, one level of government at a time.
- **Cognates:** election (elección), candidate (candidato), jurisdiction (jurisdicción), official (oficial), district (distrito), amendment (enmienda), constitution (constitución), vote (voto).

Stretch

- Ask why Gia's reminder leaves out a deadline on purpose, and what each reader has to do instead.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: sample ballots

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

A **sample ballot** is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot. A measure is a question that voters decide directly, such as Measure T. A **voter guide** is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election. The two have different purposes. Start with the ballot for your address, and then check a guide's facts apart from its picks.

Your address decides which contests appear on your ballot. A **jurisdiction** is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority. A friend two districts over may see different local races. A school board and a city council have different jobs, so each one makes different decisions. Before you research candidates, find out which office has power over the issue you care about.

Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote. Rules and deadlines vary by state, so do not copy a friend's deadline. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment protects the right to vote for citizens 18 and older. Most states let people preregister before they turn 18. Several states let 17-year-olds vote in a primary if they will be 18 by the general election.

Professional standards

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ)

SPJ Code of Ethics: Seek Truth and Report It

"Label advocacy and commentary."

In plain words: Journalists who follow the SPJ code mark opinions and recommendations so readers can tell them apart from facts.

Question: The creator's guide mixes a registration deadline with "vote Candidate B." Which lines are checkable facts, and which are picks?

Your answer

The checkable line is ___; the picks are ___.

The checkable line is the deadline, which names no state. The picks are Candidate B and Measure T, and the guide never labels them as advocacy.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"The SPJ code says to label advocacy. Which lines in the creator's guide are advocacy?" — Wait for the two picks.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the SPJ code as a law that creators must follow. **Listen for:** "The creator broke the rules." **Then:** Say: "SPJ's code binds no one by law. It shows how journalists label opinion."

Support

- Read the quotation aloud. Point out the label: a real source, quoted word for word.

Stretch

- Use the RTDNA row: what would a guide that helps Dec decide include about the school board race?

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

In the news

Real source | NPR | August 6, 2023

Some states are trying to boost youth voter registration. Here's what they're doing

Explains preregistration and other state steps that let teens sign up before they turn 18.

Real source | Ballotpedia News | September 26, 2025

Most states allow teenagers to pre-register to vote before turning 18, and some let them vote in primaries

Rules differ by state, so where you live decides when you can register and what you vote on.

Notes

This page continues page 179. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 179.

Sort the evidence

On your own Match each of Dec's questions to the rule or office that answers it. Then write whose view is missing. About 6 minutes.

Separate the two questions Dec has: what is on his ballot, and can he vote. Which rules and offices answer each, and which source should he check first?

Which contests and measures appear on Dec's ballot	Whether Dec can register and vote in November
Who decides His address and district lines, drawn through redistricting	**Who decides**
Under which rule	**Under which rule** Twenty-Sixth Amendment: the vote at 18 cannot be denied on account of age State rules on preregistration, deadlines and 17-year-old primary voting
Who lives with it	**Who lives with it**
Your way in Vote.gov, which links to his state or local election office	**Your way in** Vote.gov, which links to his state or local election office

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Dec has two questions. Which rule or office answers each one?" — Model the registration question together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the Twenty-Sixth Amendment sets every voting rule. **Listen for:** "The Constitution says when you register." **Then:** The amendment protects the vote at 18. States set registration rules and deadlines.

Support

- Let students draw the arrows before they write sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can turn to students' own eligibility.

Cool-down: Keep answers about Dec and his friends. No student shares their own or a family member's eligibility.

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 ___.

Dec's local election office. I would ask whether he is registered and what his deadline is, since his state is not named.

Notes

This page continues page 181. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 181.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what you would do with a friend's sample ballot. Then fix the two marked phrases. About 6 minutes.

You live at a new address. A friend sends their sample ballot and says, "Just use this one." What should you do?

- ☐ **A** Use it, because you and your friend live in the same state.
- ☑ **B** Check your registration and find the official sample ballot for your address.
- ☐ **C** Use a creator's voter guide instead, since it covers the whole election.

Why I chose it

B. A copies someone else's jurisdiction, and a guide cannot tell you which contests apply to your address. B starts with official information.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Guys the election is coming up and it's a big one!! (1) Registration closes on the 14th so do it now. Here's the voter guide I use, it tells you exactly who to vote for so you don't have to research. Also (2) drop your addresses and I'll check if you're registered for you. Only the big race really matters anyway, the rest is small stuff. My cousin in another state said the same deadline works for her too, so just use mine. Let's go vote!!

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Each state sets its own deadline. Check yours through vote.gov.

Rewrite phrase 2

Look up your own registration at vote.gov. Keep addresses out of the chat.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"A friend sends their sample ballot and says, "Just use this one." What do you do?" — Take a vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose A because the friend lives in the same state. **Listen for:** "Same state, same ballot." **Then:** Point to the key idea: a friend two districts over may see different local races.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: Election reminder: registration deadlines and voting options depend on your state, so check yours at vote.gov, which links to your state's election office. You can also look up your sample ballot for your own address there. It shows everything you'll vote on, including school board and local measures, not just the big race. If you use a voter guide, check the facts it gives and remember its picks are someone's opinion. Under 18? Many states let you preregister, and some let 17-year-olds vote in primaries. Check your state's rules. No need to share your address here.

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 15 minutes.

Write a nonpartisan voting-information guide for a student organization's social accounts or a campus library display. Add a short note explaining how the guide avoids the problems in the creator's voter guide.

Use: Case documents: the sample ballot, the creator's voter guide, Gia's reminder draft and Dec's and Mateo's statements. Real sources: Vote.gov's page for people 18 and under, the Twenty-Sixth Amendment, CIRCLE's report on youth voting (April 14, 2025) and Ballotpedia's report on preregistration (September 26, 2025).

You'll make: Guide, 300—400 words, plus a note of about 100 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. List the official sources your guide will use: Vote.gov and each reader's own election office.
2. Write down the facts you can state for every reader, from Vote.gov and the amendment.
3. Explain how a student away from home finds out where to register, using Mateo as the example.
4. Draft the guide on the Your draft page, with no picks.
5. Write a note of about 100 words on how your guide avoids the creator's guide's problems.
6. Finish the guide at 300 to 400 words for a social account or a library display.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Official sources the guide uses

Vote.gov and the reader's own state or local election office.

Pacing

Full chapter: 15 min.

Short on time: 14 min. Fill in the official-sources box together.

Say this

"Your readers live in many states. What can you say that is true for all of them?" — List only facts from Vote.gov and the amendment.

Watch for

Misconception: The guide states one state's rule as if it applied everywhere. **Listen for:** "Registration closes the 14th everywhere." **Then:** Ask whose state that is. Replace it with where each reader checks.

Support

- Checklist from the workshop: election office, registration, deadlines, sample ballot
- Highlighting key: checkable facts in one color, recommendations in another
- Official-source list: Vote.gov and the reader's own state or local election office

Stretch

- Explain how a student living away from home can find out where to register, without stating any state's rule. Use Mateo, who moved from New Bedford for college, as the example.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Students may add picks for candidates or measures they support.

Cool-down: Remind students the product is nonpartisan. Replace any pick with where to check the facts.

Your task, continued

Facts I can state for every reader

You must be 18 to vote. Most states allow preregistration, and several let some 17-year-olds vote in primaries. Rules vary by state.

Students living away from home

Ask the election office which address and process apply to you. Mateo, who moved from New Bedford, has to do the same.

Notes

This page continues page 184.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric; Information Literacy VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Searching as Strategic Exploration.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Sends readers to Vote.gov and their own state or local election office for rules and deadlines
- States only what the Vote.gov page and the Twenty-Sixth Amendment support, and says rules vary by state
- Explains how a student away from home can find out where to register
- Makes no recommendation on any candidate or measure
- Tells readers not to post their address, birthdate or voter information

Your draft

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

Your guide, first draft

Voting information for students. This guide is nonpartisan. It does not recommend any candidate, party or ballot measure. Start at vote.gov and choose your state or territory. It links to your state or local election office, which sets registration rules and deadlines. Rules vary by state, so do not copy a friend's deadline. Find the sample ballot for your own address. It lists every contest, including school board races and local measures. Under 18? You must be 18 to vote, but most states allow preregistration, and several let some 17-year-olds vote in primaries. Check your state's rule. Living away from home for school? Ask the election office which address and process apply to you. Keep your address, birthdate and voter information out of group chats and comments.

Note: how this guide avoids the creator's guide's problems

The creator's guide gave a deadline, "the 14th," with no state, and mixed it with picks it never labeled. This guide gives no dates at all. It sends each reader to the official source for their own state and states only what Vote.gov and the Twenty-Sixth Amendment support. It makes no recommendation, and it asks readers to keep private information out of the chat.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 30 min.

Say this

"Read your guide as Mateo, who may still be registered in another state. Does it tell him what to do?" — Check the away-from-home section in every draft.

Watch for

Misconception: The note restates the guide instead of comparing. **Listen for:** "My guide tells people to use vote.gov." **Then:** Ask for one problem in the creator's guide and how the new guide fixes it.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Students may add picks for candidates or measures they support.

Cool-down: Remind students the product is nonpartisan. Replace any pick with where to check the facts.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Sends readers to an official source first.
2. States only what the sources support.
3. Answers the away-from-home question without stating any state's rule.
4. Protects readers' private information.

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 every rule in your guide come from an official source?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your guide say that rules vary by state?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it make no recommendation on any candidate or measure?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it tell readers not to post their address, birthdate or voter information?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Copies one person's deadlines.	☐ Mentions official sources vaguely.	☐ Points to official sources for each person's state.	☐ Points to official sources and explains why rules differ.
Reasoning	☐ Treats a guide as the ballot.	☐ Mentions the ballot but not local contests.	☐ Separates ballot, guide and registration.	☐ Explains why local offices matter to the audience.
Audience & purpose	☐ Collects private info.	☐ Generic hype.	☐ Useful, private, nonpartisan.	☐ Includes people not yet eligible.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Adds a link.	☐ Replaces copied deadlines with official routes.	☐ Explains how each change helps friends in different situations.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions only.

Say this

"Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why." — Ask for one official source added or one pick removed.

Watch for

Misconception: Students keep a copied deadline. **Listen for:** "Registration closes the 14th." **Then:** Point to the Evidence row. Replace the date with the official place to check it.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that every rule is attributed to an official source and that the guide makes no recommendation.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Points to official sources for each person's state.
- **Reasoning:** Separates ballot, guide and registration.
- **Audience & purpose:** Useful, private, nonpartisan.
- **Revision:** Replaces copied deadlines with official routes.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I cut a registration date I had written from memory, because the guide sends each reader to their own state's official page.

Notes

This page continues page 187. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 187.

Questions to discuss

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

1 **Which contest on the sample ballot could affect Dec's school or his bus?**

The Board of Education race and Measure T, the transit bond. Both touch his daily routine, and neither shows up in his feed.

2 **Mateo may still be registered in New Bedford. Why might his ballot differ from Dec's?**

Registration ties him to an address. If it is still New Bedford, his contests and deadline come from there, so he should ask the election office which address applies.

3 **Anika is 16. How can she be part of this election before she can vote?**

She can check preregistration for her state, learn what the school board does and share official links with friends who can vote.

4 **When could a voter guide that recommends choices help a first-time voter?**

When its author and funding are clear and its picks are labeled. Read after the official ballot, it shows a voter one side of a contest.

My take

My claim: ___.

First-time voters should start with official sources for their own address before reading any guide.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Discuss question 4 only.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the evidence, not a candidate or party you like." — Post the question numbers and take one answer per question.

Stretch

- Ask what one local office on the ballot decides, and how a student could learn that before researching candidates.
- Going further: Which election office covers your address? Find it through Vote.gov. If you live away from home for school, write one question asking that office which address and rules apply to you.
- Going further: Plan an election reminder for your own group chat. Who might a group chat miss? Link to an official source so nobody has to trust a screenshot.
- Going further: Record a one-minute audio guide that tells listeners how to find their own sample ballot. Then write the same steps as a checklist. Check that both lead to the same official page.
- Going further: With a trusted adult, go to Vote.gov and choose your state or territory. Check the registration rules for your age, then find the sample ballot for your address. Never share your address or birthdate in a group chat.
- Find your county's sample ballot for the next election
- Research the history of the Twenty-Sixth Amendment

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The creator's guide, because its one fact names no state and its picks carry no label.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

A trusted friend's picks save time for busy voters.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

No document shows Dec's state, so no deadline in this case can be checked.

I would change my mind if ___.

The creator's guide named its author, gave a state for its deadline and labeled its picks.

Notes

This page continues page 189.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 3: Medium.** Some students cannot vote for reasons other than age, and may feel singled out.

Cool-down: Keep answers about Anika. No student shares their own or a family member's eligibility.

Question 4 cool-down: Say: "We are not discussing any real candidate or party." Return to the creator's guide in Evidence B.

Talk about this case at home

Case 9: What is on your ballot, and where do you check?

In this case, a teen about to turn 18 finds local races on his ballot that his feed never mentions. Your student compared a sample ballot with a voter guide, then wrote a guide that points to official sources without telling anyone how to vote.

See the case online.

Questions to talk about

1. What offices appear on a local ballot, besides the big races?
2. Where can someone find official information about registering to vote?
3. How can you tell a fact in a voter guide from a recommendation?

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

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 their own voting information or anyone else’s.

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.

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.

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

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 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	What it leaves out
A posted detour that a wheelchair user cannot follow, up since Monday.	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	What it leaves out
Five stages from home to the room. Stage 2 is blocked.	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.**

In the news

Real source | HISTORY | July 24, 2020

When the 'Capitol Crawl' Dramatized the Need for Americans with Disabilities Act

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.

Real source | THE CITY | October 3, 2025

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

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

Notes

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.
- [x] **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.

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

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.

Your draft, continued

Revised flyer, 60 to 100 words

Free Community Workshop Series. Tuesdays, 5—7 p.m., Parks Department Annex. All welcome! Need an accessible entrance or other access support? Call the front desk to request it before you come. Street work on your way? Ask the front desk for the current accessible route. Questions? Call the front desk.

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.

How your work is scored, continued

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.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

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

Notes

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

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.

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.

Case 11: Why are Jordy and Gia paid different rates?

Content note

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

Overview

Students read a story in which Jordy and Gia work the same Saturday event. Jordy is paid $16.50 an hour, and Gia is paid $18.00. They compare the pay statements and the crew schedule, which lists Gia as shift lead, with federal pages on pay discrimination and on discussing wages. They then draft Jordy's message to the supervisor asking how the rates were set.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- read a pay statement and a work schedule
- summarize an official agency web page accurately
- plan a conversation with a supervisor

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- prepare a record of hours, duties, title and rate from the case documents
- write a message that asks how rates are set without claiming discrimination
- use Gia's rate only as she agreed and keep her statement private

Objectives, continued

- plan next steps for a satisfying answer, a need for more facts and a possible legal issue

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B and C
- The EEOC Youth@Work page on pay discrimination and the NLRB page on discussing wages
- A record sheet and a next-step chart

The task in this edition

Task: Write Jordy's message to the supervisor and a one-page plan for the conversation. The plan lists the record Jordy brings, what Gia agreed to share, the questions to ask and Jordy's options after each kind of answer.

Students make: Message, 80—120 words, plus a one-page conversation plan

Pacing

Opener (page 213): 5 min. Short on time: 5 min.

Key terms (pages 214 and 215): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Look at the evidence (page 219): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Look at the evidence (page 220): 4 min. Short on time: 4 min.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 221 and 222): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip In the news.

Sort the evidence (page 223): 6 min. Short on time: skip. The record sheet covers the same comparison.

Practice (page 224): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 225 and 226): 10 min. Short on time: 10 min.

Your draft (page 227): 25 min. Short on time: 25 min.

Check your work (pages 228 and 229): 6 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 230 and 231): 10 min. Short on time: 10 min.

Talk about this case at home (page 232): at home.

Periods: full chapter 94 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Standards

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. In this case: Students decide how to use a coworker's pay information that she agreed to share and keep her statement private (Ethical Issue Recognition).

Case 11 plan, continued

Standards, continued

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 workplace message and a plan for the conversation (Context of and Purpose for Writing).

Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for exploring issues, evidence and assumptions thoroughly before forming a conclusion. In this case: Students state the pay question and the facts it depends on before they draw any conclusion (Explanation of Issues).

Information Has Value Information has value, including as a means to influence people, so credit, access and privacy matter. In this case: Students explain the right to discuss wages that the NLRB page describes and how it applies to comparing pay statements.

Codes of ethics

- **SHRM Code of Ethics:** Fairness and Justice
- **SHRM Code of Ethics:** Use of Information
- **IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators:** "I protect confidential information"

Heat map

■■□ **Opener (page 213):** Medium

Heat map, continued

■□□ **Key terms (pages 214 and 215):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 219):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 220):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 221 and 222):** Low

■□□ **Sort the evidence (page 223):** Low

■■□ **Practice (page 224):** Medium

■□□ **Your task (pages 225 and 226):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 228 and 229):** Low

Try it at your school

Know how pay decisions are made where you work.

- Ask for your pay rate and how it's set in writing when you start a job
- Keep your own record of hours and duties
- Talk with a trusted adult or counselor if something seems off
- Look up your state labor department's pay-equity page

Who to ask: Supervisor or HR, school counselor, state labor department, the EEOC's public information line

Safety: Don't share coworkers' pay information without their permission. Deadlines apply to formal complaints, so ask a qualified adviser early if you think there's a legal issue.

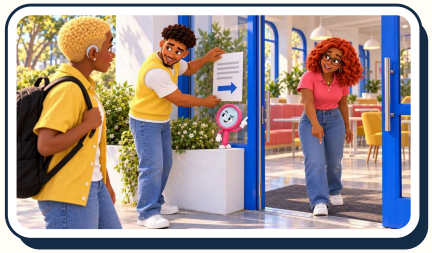
Sources

- NPR, "The U.S. national women's soccer team wins $24 million in equal pay settlement," February 22, 2022
- NPR, "Federal Judge Dismisses U.S. Women's Soccer Team's Equal Pay Claim," May 2, 2020
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), "Pay Discrimination," No date listed
- National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), "Your Right to Discuss Wages," No date listed

Case 11: Why are Jordy and Gia paid different rates?

Jordy and Gia worked the same Saturday event, but Gia's pay rate is $1.50 an hour higher, and Jordy wants to know why.

On your own Read What happened. Underline the two pay rates and the job title on the schedule. About 5 minutes.



Mateo attaches an arrival notice at the Common Room entrance. Gia points to the doorway, and Jordy checks what a visitor will see.

Your role: You're the one who lines up both shifts side by side before Jordy writes to Dana. **New skill:** Compare two cases on the same terms.

What happened

Jordy and Gia work event shifts for the same company. They both worked a Saturday event from 3 to 11 p.m. Both helped with setup and closing, and Jordy also ran the caption and audio check.

They were paid the following Friday. On Sunday afternoon, Jordy and Gia compare pay statements. Jordy's lists eight hours at $16.50 an hour. Gia's lists $18.00 an hour for the same event.

The crew schedule lists Gia as "shift lead," but it does not say what that job includes. That day, Gia opened up and handled one guest issue. She does not know if that explains the $1.50 difference. Gia is fine with Jordy knowing her rate. But she does not want her statement posted.

Jordy wants to ask Dana, the supervisor, how rates are set. Jordy will not post anything before Dana answers.

Your question: Why is Gia paid more than Jordy for the same event, and how should Jordy ask about it?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 5 min.

Say this

"Two friends, same event, same hours, different pay. What is your first reaction?" — Hear three answers. Write them on the board without judging them.

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide the gap proves discrimination. **Listen for:** "That's illegal." **Then:** Ask what else could explain $1.50. Add "shift lead" to the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud. Pause after each pay rate so students can underline it.

Heat check

Medium. Students may connect the gap to Jordy's identity or share a family member's pay.

Cool-down: Say: "We only know what the documents show." Nobody needs to share their own pay or a family member's.

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example. Then write your first guess about the pay difference. About 5 minutes.

Compensation Compensation is all the pay and benefits a worker receives, including hourly rates, bonuses and overtime.

En español: compensación

In this case: Jordy's statement shows eight hours at $16.50 an hour, and Gia's shows $18.00. The statements show the rates but not how they were set.

Equal Pay Act The Equal Pay Act is a federal law from 1963 that requires equal pay for men and women who do equal work.

En español: Ley de Igualdad Salarial

In this case: The Equal Pay Act covers pay differences based on sex, not every difference. Different job duties, such as a real shift-lead role, can be a lawful reason.

Title VII Title VII is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It bans job discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

En español: Título VII

In this case: Title VII covers pay decisions based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. No document shows how Jordy's rate was set.

Who is involved

Jordy
Worked setup through close

"Three to eleven, setup to close, and I ran the caption and audio check. $16.50 an hour. Gia's says $18.00."

Gia
Listed as shift lead

"I only found out I make more because Jordy showed me theirs. The schedule calls me shift lead. Nobody told me what that pays for."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Compensation is more than the hourly rate. What else could count?" — Listen for overtime, bonuses and benefits.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the Equal Pay Act covers every pay difference. **Listen for:** "Any pay gap breaks the Equal Pay Act." **Then:** Reread the definition. The law is about men and women doing substantially equal work.

Support

- Preteach "rate" and "gross pay" with Jordy's statement: 8 hours × $16.50 = $132.00.
- **Cognates:** compensation (compensación), discrimination (discriminación), supervisor (supervisor), evidence (evidencia), criteria (criterios), difference (diferencia), information (información), private (privado), legitimate (legítimo).

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, why do you think Gia is paid more than Jordy?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that Gia's shift-lead title comes with a higher rate, because the schedule lists her that way.

Notes

This page continues page 214. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 214.

Reading passage

Pay equity, comparators and the right to ask

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

- **Compensation**: Compensation is all the pay and benefits a worker receives, including hourly rates, bonuses and overtime.
- **Equal Pay Act**: The Equal Pay Act is a federal law from 1963 that requires equal pay for men and women who do equal work.
- **Title VII**: Title VII is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It bans job discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.
- **Gross pay**: Gross pay is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.

The story: Discovering a differential

Jordy and Gia work event shifts for the same company. On a Saturday, both worked from 3 to 11 p.m. and shared setup and closing. Jordy also ran the caption and audio check. The schedule named Gia "shift lead" without defining the role. On Sunday, comparing statements, they find a $1.50 hourly difference: $16.50 for Jordy and $18.00 for Gia.

The case models how most workers actually discover pay differences, which is informally, through a coworker. Gia learns she is paid more only because Jordy shows her. Neither of them knows the policy behind the rates. Gia can describe what she did as lead, opening up and handling one guest issue, but not whether the company values that at $1.50 an hour.

What follows is a careful sequence. The friends agree on the facts: same event, same hours, two rates. Gia consents to Jordy knowing her rate and withholds consent to posting her statement. Jordy chooses to ask Dana, the supervisor, how rates are set before posting anything, and keeps the decision about what to do next. Asked whether the gap is discrimination, Gia says she does not know. Maybe shift lead pays more. The first step is to ask what it covers.

Your role is to line up both shifts side by side before Jordy writes to Dana.

Stop and think. How does the choice of comparator change the answer in both the soccer case and Jordy's?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (745 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: Discovering a differential":** How does the choice of comparator change the answer in both the soccer case and Jordy's?
2. **After "Constructing a fair comparison":** Which legitimate explanations for the $1.50 are plausible, and what evidence would test each?
3. **After "Law, litigation and professional standards":** How should a worker balance the right to discuss pay with a coworker's wish to keep records private?

Constructing a fair comparison

The new skill is comparing two cases on the same terms before drawing a conclusion. It extends Case 5's line-by-line reading. Jordy's statement shows 8.0 hours at $16.50, or $132.00 in **gross pay**, the money earned before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.

In employment law, the person you compare yourself to is often called a comparator, and the choice of comparator shapes the result. Here the natural comparator is Gia, but the comparison only holds if the jobs are defined. **Compensation** is all the pay and benefits a worker receives, including hourly rates, bonuses and overtime. The evidence establishes identical hours and shared tasks. It also shows one technical task for Jordy and one title with modest added tasks for Gia. It leaves open what the title formally requires and how the employer sets rates. Legitimate explanations such as duties, title and experience are plausible. So is error. The documents cannot distinguish among them.

Case 10's skill, reporting to the office responsible, determines the next move. Dana sets rates, so Dana is asked. A strong message states the observation, lists the verified facts and asks one precise question about what shift lead includes and how rates are determined. It does not rely on Gia's statement, which respects her boundary and keeps the question about Jordy's pay.

Stop and think. Which legitimate explanations for the $1.50 are plausible, and what evidence would test each?

Law, litigation and professional standards

Federal law constrains pay-setting. The **Equal Pay Act** is a federal law from 1963 that requires equal pay for men and women who do equal work. **Title VII** is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It bans job discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. The EEOC enforces both and describes retaliation protections (EEOC, no date listed). Separately, the NLRB explains that most private-sector employees may discuss wages with coworkers, with or without a union (NLRB, no date listed). A right to discuss one's own pay is not a license to publish a colleague's records.

The women's national soccer team litigation illustrates the comparator problem at scale. In 2020, a federal judge dismissed the equal pay claim, emphasizing structural differences between the men's and women's contracts (NPR, May 2, 2020). The players appealed, arguing that rates of pay were the relevant comparison. The 2022 settlement, $24 million with a commitment to equal pay rates, resolved the dispute without a finding (NPR, February 22, 2022). The terms were later formalized in signed agreements (PBS NewsHour, September 6, 2022).

Broader trends frame the stakes. Pew reports that the gender pay gap has narrowed only slightly over two decades and is smaller for workers ages 25 to 34 (Pew Research Center, March 4, 2025). Salary transparency laws that require posted ranges may make comparisons easier to start (NPR, January 3, 2023).

This page continues page 216. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 216.

Law, litigation and professional standards, continued

Professional codes describe the employer's side of the conversation Jordy is starting. SHRM members commit to "take appropriate steps to ensure the accuracy and completeness of all communicated information about HR policies and practices" (SHRM Code of Ethics, April 24, 2023). IABC members pledge, "I protect confidential information while acting within the law" (IABC Code of Ethics, no date listed). Dana's answer should meet the first standard, and Jordy's message already meets the second.

Stop and think. How should a worker balance the right to discuss pay with a coworker's wish to keep records private?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) | No date listed
Pay Discrimination

Real source | National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) | No date listed
Your Right to Discuss Wages

Real source | NPR | May 2, 2020
Federal Judge Dismisses U.S. Women's Soccer Team's Equal Pay Claim

Real source | NPR | February 22, 2022
The U.S. national women's soccer team wins $24 million in equal pay settlement

Real source | PBS NewsHour (Associated Press) | September 6, 2022
U.S. men's and women's soccer teams formally sign equal pay agreements

Real source | Pew Research Center | March 4, 2025
Gender pay gap in U.S. has narrowed slightly over 2 decades

Real source | NPR | January 3, 2023
The impact that new salary transparency laws could have

Real source | Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) | 2023
SHRM Code of Ethics

Real source | International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) | No date listed
IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators

This page continues page 216. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 216.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Pay statement

Jordy's pay statement

Event crew, Saturday. Hours: 8.0 at $16.50. Gross pay for the event: $132.00.

Look closely: Multiply the hours by the rate. Does it match the gross pay?

What it shows	What it leaves out
Jordy's own record: 8.0 hours at $16.50, $132.00 gross. It is Jordy's to share.	How the rate was set, and whether the company has a written pay policy.

Evidence B | Work schedule

The crew schedule

Saturday event, 3:00—11:00 p.m. Crew: Gia (shift lead), Jordy and two other crew members. Setup, 3:00—5:00: all crew. Caption and audio check: Jordy. Closing, 10:00—11:00: all crew.

Look closely: Circle "shift lead." Does the schedule say what that job includes?

What it shows	What it leaves out
Gia is shift lead; all crew did setup and closing; Jordy ran the caption and audio check.	A job description for shift lead, and whether the title carries its own rate.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Put your finger on "shift lead." What would you need to know about that title?" — Wait for "what the job includes" and "whether it pays more."

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat Gia's pay statement as Jordy's to share. **Listen for:** "Jordy can show everyone Gia's statement." **Then:** Point to Evidence C. Gia agreed to let Jordy know her rate, not to post her statement.

Support

- Give students a four-column table: duties, hours, title, rate.
- Read the text messages aloud with two voices.
- **Cognates:** compensation (compensación), discrimination (discriminación), supervisor (supervisor), evidence (evidencia), criteria (criterios), difference (diferencia), information (información), private (privado), legitimate (legítimo).

Stretch

- Ask which duty on the schedule belongs only to Jordy, and whether it could matter as much as shift lead.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Text messages

Jordy and Gia compare notes

Sunday, 1:15 p.m.

Gia: I'm fine with you knowing my rate. I just don't want my statement posted anywhere.

Jordy: Got it. Did you do anything different as shift lead?

Gia: I opened up and handled one guest issue. Honestly, I don't know if that's why. Let's ask Dana.

Look closely: What does Gia agree to share, and what does she ask Jordy not to do?

What it shows

Gia shares her rate with Jordy but asks that her statement not be posted anywhere.

What it leaves out

Whether her lead work explains the rate, and whether Dana may be told her rate.

What is still missing from the evidence?

We don't know what shift lead officially involves or how rates are set. We also don't know whether other criteria explain Gia's rate, what the two other crew members earn or whether a written pay policy exists.

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 4 min.

Say this

"Put your finger on "shift lead." What would you need to know about that title?" — Wait for "what the job includes" and "whether it pays more."

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat Gia's pay statement as Jordy's to share. **Listen for:** "Jordy can show everyone Gia's statement." **Then:** Point to Evidence C. Gia agreed to let Jordy know her rate, not to post her statement.

Support

- Give students a four-column table: duties, hours, title, rate.
- Read the text messages aloud with two voices.
- **Cognates:** compensation (compensación), discrimination (discriminación), supervisor (supervisor), evidence (evidencia), criteria (criterios), difference (diferencia), information (información), private (privado), legitimate (legítimo).

Stretch

- Ask which duty on the schedule belongs only to Jordy, and whether it could matter as much as shift lead.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: equal pay

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

Before you can say why Jordy is paid less, you need to know what each job included. **Compensation** is all the pay and benefits a worker receives, including hourly rates, bonuses and overtime. A job title, extra duties or more experience can explain a pay difference. So can a mistake. The pay statements show the rates, but they do not show how the rates were set.

Federal laws limit the reasons an employer can use to set pay. The **Equal Pay Act** is a federal law from 1963 that requires equal pay for men and women who do equal work. **Title VII** is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It bans job discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Both laws apply to covered employers, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces them. A legitimate reason, such as different job duties, can lawfully explain a pay difference.

Talking about pay is protected too. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) says most private-sector workers have a right to discuss pay with coworkers. That right holds with or without a union. It does not make Gia's pay statement Jordy's to share. Jordy can ask Dana how rates are set without naming Gia's rate.

Professional standards

Real source | Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

SHRM Code of Ethics: Fairness and Justice

"Develop, administer, and advocate policies and procedures that foster fair, consistent and equitable treatment for all."

In plain words: HR professionals who belong to SHRM agree to use workplace policies that treat workers fairly and consistently.

Question: The schedule lists Gia as shift lead. What written policy would show whether that title explains the higher rate?

Your answer

A policy that answers this would state ___. Without it, ___.

A policy that answers this would state what shift lead involves and the rate for each role. Without it, Jordy cannot tell a legitimate factor from a mistake.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"The Equal Pay Act and Title VII limit the reasons for a pay gap. Which reason could be lawful here?" — Wait for "different job duties."

"The SHRM code asks for fair, consistent policies. What written policy would help Jordy?" — Accept "a job description" or "a pay chart."

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the SHRM code as a law. **Listen for:** "The company broke the SHRM code, so it's illegal." **Then:** Say: "SHRM's code binds its members, who are HR professionals. The laws here are the Equal Pay Act and Title VII."

Support

- Read the code quotation aloud. Point out its label: a quotation from a real source.

Stretch

- Use the second SHRM card: what should a complete answer from Dana include?

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

In the news

Real source | NPR | February 22, 2022

The U.S. national women's soccer team wins $24 million in equal pay settlement

A real 'same work, different pay' dispute that ended in a settlement and a promise of equal rates.

Real source | NPR | May 2, 2020

Federal Judge Dismisses U.S. Women's Soccer Team's Equal Pay Claim

Why the claim was first dismissed: the judge compared how the contracts were structured. What you compare shapes the answer.

Notes

This page continues page 221. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 221.

Sort the evidence

On your own Line up the accounts in the diagram. Then name one view that is missing. About 6 minutes.

Line up the accounts. Where do they agree, where do they differ, and which difference could be a legitimate factor? What would you need to find out before calling it unfair?

Account 1
Jordy's record: 8 hours, setup, caption and audio check, closing, $16.50

Account 2
Gia's account: same hours, setup and closing, opened up and handled one guest issue, $18.00

Account 3
The schedule: Gia listed as shift lead, with no description of the role

Where they agree

Both worked the same event, the same hours, and setup and closing.

Where they differ

Title and rate: shift lead at $18.00 versus crew at $16.50

Check: Ask the supervisor how rates are set and what the shift-lead role requires

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 person who sets event-crew rates is missing, and we don't know if that is Dana. I would ask how each rate is decided and whether it is written down.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. The record sheet covers the same comparison.

Say this

"Line up Jordy's record, Gia's account and the schedule. Where do they agree?" — Model the first link together: both worked setup and closing.

Watch for

Misconception: Students mark the title as proof that the pay is fair. **Listen for:** "She's shift lead, so it's fine." **Then:** Ask what the schedule says shift lead includes. It says nothing. The title leaves the question open.

Support

- Let students write A (agrees), D (differs) or ? (leaves open) before writing sentences.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Jordy should do first and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 5 minutes.

Jordy's statement shows $16.50 an hour. Gia's shows $18.00 for the same Saturday event, and the schedule lists her as "shift lead." What should Jordy do first?

- ☐ **A** Tell the rest of the crew that Gia is paid more for the same work.
- ☑ **B** Compare what each of them did, find out what "shift lead" means and ask Dana how rates are set.
- ☐ **C** Let it go, because an employer can set any pay rate it chooses.

Why I chose it

B. It tests the likeliest lawful explanation first and keeps Gia's statement private. A exposes a coworker's pay, and C ignores the limits federal law sets.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Hi, I found out Gia makes more than me and we did the exact same work so (1) this is discrimination. I know it's because of who I am. I want the same rate as her starting now or I'm going to post about it everywhere so people know how this company treats workers. (2) I have her pay stub as proof. I've worked here longer than some people and I always show up on time. Let me know by tomorrow. Jordy

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

Rewrite phrase 1

I don't know the reason for the difference yet. Could you explain the criteria?

Rewrite phrase 2

My statement shows $16.50 an hour. I am not sharing anyone else's pay records.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Jordy has just seen Gia's rate. What should Jordy do first?" — Hold a quick vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose C because employers can pay what they want. **Listen for:** "It's their company, they decide." **Then:** Ask what the key idea says. Employers set rates, but federal laws limit the reasons.

Support

- Read the options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Students may share their own pay or a boss's treatment.

Cool-down: Return to Jordy: "What does Jordy know for sure?" No one needs to describe their own job.

Answer key

A revised version: Hi Dana, I have a question about my pay rate for the Saturday event. I worked setup and closing, from 3 to 11 p.m., and ran the caption and audio check. My statement shows $16.50 an hour. I understand another worker on the same shift was paid a higher rate. Could you explain how rates are set for event crew, including what the shift-lead role involves and how someone qualifies? If there are criteria I haven't met, I'd like to know what they are. I'd appreciate a reply this week. Thanks, Jordy

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 10 minutes.

Write Jordy's message to the supervisor and a one-page plan for the conversation. The plan lists the record Jordy brings, what Gia agreed to share, the questions to ask and Jordy's options after each kind of answer.

Use: Case documents: Jordy's pay statement, the crew schedule with job titles, Jordy and Gia's conversation and Jordy's statement. Real sources: the EEOC's Youth@Work page on pay discrimination and the NLRB page on the right to discuss wages.

You'll make: Message, 80—120 words, plus a one-page conversation plan

Time: 75 minutes

1. Fill in the record sheet from Evidence A and B: date, hours, duties, title and rate.
2. Mark what Gia agreed to share in Evidence C, and with whom.
3. Write Jordy's message to Dana, 80 to 120 words, on the Your draft page.
4. Write the conversation plan: Jordy's next step after each kind of answer.
5. Note that formal complaints have deadlines. Say when Jordy should ask a qualified adviser.
6. Check your work with the questions on the Check your work page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Record sheet: date, hours, duties, title, rate

Saturday event, 3:00—11:00 p.m.; setup, caption and audio check, closing; crew; $16.50 an hour.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 10 min.

Say this

"Before Jordy writes to Dana, which records should Jordy have in hand?" — List hours, duties, title and rate on the board.

Watch for

Misconception: Students plan to lead with Gia's pay statement. **Listen for:** "Jordy should show Dana Gia's statement." **Then:** Point to Evidence C. Gia agreed to tell Jordy her rate. She did not agree to share her statement.

Support

- Record sheet: date, hours, duties, title, rate
- Message frame from the workshop: "We compared these duties and hours. Can you explain the rate?"
- Next-step chart: an explanation that answers the question, a need for more facts, a possible legal issue
- The plan is about Jordy's next steps. Nobody needs to describe their own job or pay.

Stretch

- Explain which facts would make the difference a legitimate factor, such as lead duties. Say when a worker would turn to the EEOC's information, and cite the EEOC page accurately.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Your task, continued

What Gia agreed to share

Gia's rate, with Jordy only. Gia does not want her statement posted.

Questions to ask Dana

What does shift lead include? How are event-crew rates set? How does someone qualify for a higher rate?

Notes

This page continues page 225.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric; Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Information Has Value.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- The record lists the 3:00—11:00 p.m. shift, the duties and the two rates from the case
- Uses Gia's rate only as she agreed and keeps her statement private
- Asks what "shift lead" includes and how rates are set, without claiming discrimination
- The plan separates a satisfying explanation, a need for more facts and a possible legal issue
- Notes that formal complaints have deadlines and suggests asking a qualified adviser early

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 25 minutes.

Jordy's message to Dana, 80 to 120 words

Hi Dana, I'd like to understand how pay rates are set for event crew. For the Saturday event, I worked from 3:00 to 11:00 p.m., did setup and closing, and ran the caption and audio check. My statement shows $16.50 an hour. I understand another worker on the same shift was paid a higher rate. Could you tell me what the shift-lead role includes, how rates are set and how someone qualifies for a higher one? Thanks for your help. Jordy

Conversation plan: Jordy's next step after each kind of answer

If Dana explains the criteria and they match the duties, Jordy asks how to qualify for shift lead. If Dana gives a vague answer, Jordy asks for the criteria in writing and keeps a record of hours and duties. If the answer suggests a protected trait played a role, Jordy reads the EEOC page. Jordy also asks a qualified adviser early, because formal complaints have deadlines.

Pacing

Full chapter: 25 min.

Short on time: 25 min.

Say this

"Read each branch of your plan aloud. Does Jordy know what to do next in every case?" — Partners test each other's plans.

Watch for

Misconception: The plan starts with a legal complaint.
Listen for: "Jordy should file with the EEOC right away."
Then: Ask what Jordy knows so far: a rate difference and a title. The first step is asking Dana.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Opens with a question, not an accusation.
2. Uses Gia's information without naming her or her rate.
3. Plans for a need for more facts, not only a yes or a no.
4. Covers the possible legal issue and its deadlines.

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 6 minutes.

Does your record match the documents exactly?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does your message use Gia's rate only as she agreed?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does it ask what shift lead includes and how rates are set, without claiming discrimination?	☑ Yes ☐ No
Does your plan separate a satisfying answer, a need for more facts and a possible legal issue?	☑ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Relies on assumption.	☐ Mentions the gap only.	☐ Cites duties, hours and rate.	☐ Cites records and acknowledges what isn't known.
Reasoning	☐ Declares discrimination.	☐ Assumes the reason.	☐ Asks for criteria before concluding.	☐ Identifies possible legitimate factors to test.
Audience & purpose	☐ Threatens or exposes coworkers.	☐ Polite but vague.	☐ Specific question to the right person.	☐ Specific question that protects coworkers' privacy.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the Check your work questions only.

Say this

"Read your message as Dana. Could you answer it in one reply?" — Partners swap and underline the question.

Watch for

Misconception: Students revise tone only. **Listen for:** "I made it nicer." **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Ask them to replace a conclusion with a question.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the message makes no accusation and that the plan describes the EEOC and NLRB pages accurately.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Cites duties, hours and rate.
- **Reasoning:** Asks for criteria before concluding.
- **Audience & purpose:** Specific question to the right person.
- **Revision:** Replaces conclusion with a question.

How your work is scored, continued

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone only.	☐ Replaces conclusion with a question.	☐ Explains how changes protect Jordy and get an answer.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I added a line about deadlines to my plan, because formal complaints have deadlines and Jordy should ask an adviser early.

Notes

This page continues page 228. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 228.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then complete each sentence frame below the questions. About 10 minutes.

1 **What information could explain the $1.50 difference, and what might challenge that explanation?**

Lead duties, experience or a payroll mistake could explain it. The explanation weakens if shift lead has no written duties, or if other crew earn more without the title.

2 **Whose choice is it to make Jordy's pay public, and why?**

Jordy's. The NLRB says most private-sector workers may discuss their own pay, with or without a union. That right does not cover posting Gia's statement, which she asked Jordy not to post.

3 **What answer from Dana would satisfy Jordy, and what answer would not?**

Criteria for each rate, applied to both roles, would satisfy Jordy. A vague appeal to experience, or no explanation at all, would leave the question open.

4 **In the soccer case, the judge looked at contract structures, and the players wanted him to compare rates of pay. Why does that choice matter?**

The comparison decides what counts as unequal. Contract structure and totals can make pay look fair while rates differ, and the 2022 settlement did not decide which comparison was right.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 10 min.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from a document, not a guess about the company." — Hear one answer per question, then ask who disagrees.

Stretch

- Draft the pay-policy page the company could share: each role, its duties, its rate and how to qualify.
- Going further: Read the EEOC page on pay discrimination. Which law could apply to Jordy's question? Which facts would you need before saying the law was broken?
- Going further: What might make it hard for a worker like Jordy to ask about pay? Write one sentence that names Jordy's concern without claiming more than Jordy knows.
- Going further: Draw a timeline of the evidence, from the posted schedule to Jordy's question for Dana. Mark each open question on it. Then compare it with your message: which one makes the open questions easier to follow?
- Going further: When you start a job, ask for your pay rate and how it is set, in writing. Keep your own record of hours and duties. If something seems off, talk with a trusted adult or a school counselor.
- Find your state labor department's page on pay equity
- Research the EEOC's filing deadlines and how they vary by state

My take

My claim: ___.

Jordy should ask Dana for the criteria in writing and keep a personal record of hours and duties.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The text messages, because they show what Gia did as shift lead and what she agreed to share.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Asking Dana first gives the company time, and deadlines apply to formal complaints.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

We have one pay statement and one schedule. No document shows how the company sets rates.

I would change my mind if ___.

Dana named criteria that match Gia's lead duties and showed how Jordy could qualify.

Notes

This page continues page 230.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 1: Medium.** Students may guess that Jordy's race or gender explains the gap, or bring up a family member's pay.

Cool-down: Ask which document shows the reason. None does. Sort the ideas into "could be lawful," "could be unlawful" and "need facts."

Talk about this case at home

Case 11: Why are Jordy and Gia paid different rates?

In this case, two friends who worked the same event find out one is paid $1.50 more an hour. Your student compared their records and wrote a respectful message asking a supervisor how pay rates are set.

Questions to talk about

1. What questions could someone ask about pay when starting a new job?
2. Why might a person want to keep their pay private?
3. What makes a question to a boss sound respectful?

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

See the case online.

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

“Bring this page home or read it with someone you trust.” — Nobody needs to share their own pay or a family member’s pay.

Case 12: When can a school limit what students say?

Content note

The news sources include 2026 student walkouts against federal immigration enforcement, which grew after federal agents fatally shot two people in Minneapolis. Preview them, and keep discussion on the legal questions in Anika's case.

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

Overview

Students read about Anika, a high school junior whose poster asks students to wear blue Thursday to keep the library open at lunch. They compare her poster, a posting policy and a group chat about a walkout with a summary of Tinker v. Des Moines (1969). They then compare the fact patterns and write two questions for a school contact about the posting policy.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- summarize a court decision for a general reader
- tell a court opinion, a news report and an advocacy guide apart
- write for a younger audience in plain language

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- state the Tinker ruling accurately and say that it concerns public schools
- separate the message from the act of leaving class
- report that schools responded to the 2026 walkouts in different ways, without taking a side
- label court, news and advocacy sources for readers

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B and C
- The Tinker summary, the Mahanoy opinion, WFYI's rights guide, Chalkbeat's report and the ACLU guide
- A three-column organizer: speech, attendance, discipline

The task in this edition

Task: Write a plain-language explainer on posters and walkouts at public schools for a library teen night or a youth program. Separate the speech question, the attendance rule and possible discipline, and use Anika's case as the example.

Students make: Explainer, 400—500 words, with a labeled source list

Pacing

Opener (page 233): 5 min. Short on time: 5 min.

Key terms (pages 234 and 235): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Look at the evidence (page 239): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Look at the evidence (page 240): 4 min. Short on time: 4 min.

Key idea (pages 241 and 242): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Skip the code of ethics.

Sort the evidence (page 243): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 244): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 245 and 246): 15 min. Short on time: 15 min.

Your draft (page 247): 35 min. Short on time: 35 min.

Check your work (pages 248 and 249): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 250 and 251): 10 min. Short on time: 5 min. Use question 3 only.

Talk about this case at home (page 252): at home.

Periods: full chapter 113 minutes; one period 90 minutes.

Case 12 plan, continued

Standards

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students weigh a court opinion, two news reports and an advocacy guide for what each can support (Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically).

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 explain rights and school rules to a younger community audience (Civic Communication).

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 a Supreme Court opinion and an ACLU guide carry different kinds of authority.

Scholarship as Conversation Experts and communities build knowledge over time through ongoing discussion and disagreement. In this case: Students trace how Mahanoy (2021) builds on and limits Tinker (1969).

Codes of ethics

- **ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct:** Rule 2.1 Advisor

Codes of ethics, continued

- **PRSA Code of Ethics:** Disclosure of Information
- **AIGA Standards of Professional Practice:** The designer's responsibility to the public

Heat map

■■□ **Opener (page 233):** Medium

■□□ **Key terms (pages 234 and 235):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 239):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 240):** Low

■■□ **Key idea (pages 241 and 242):** Medium

■□□ **Sort the evidence (page 243):** Low

■■□ **Practice (page 244):** Medium

■■□ **Your task (pages 245 and 246):** Medium

■□□ **Check your work (pages 248 and 249):** Low

Try it at your school

Read your school's expression policy before you print.

- Find your student handbook's section on posting, dress or expression
- Write down which spaces allow student posters and whether approval is needed
- Make student-made materials clearly student-made, with no school logo

Try it at your school, continued

- Bring questions to student council or an advisor before planning an action

Who to ask: Student council advisor, a civics or government teacher, an assistant principal

Safety: Don't pressure classmates to join a protest or skip class. Talk with a trusted adult before any action that could lead to discipline.

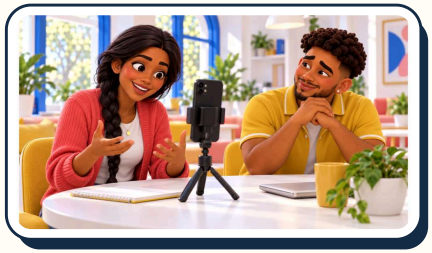
Sources

- U.S. Courts, "Facts and Case Summary: Tinker v. Des Moines," No date listed
- U.S. Courts, "Fictional Scenario: Tinker v. Des Moines," No date listed
- Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, "Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969)," 1969

Case 12: When can a school limit what students say?

Anika's poster asks her school to keep the library open at lunch, and now someone in her group chat suggests a walkout.

On your own Read What happened. Underline each plan: the poster, wearing blue and the walkout. About 5 minutes.



Anika records a voice memo while Mateo listens beside a phone on a small tripod.

Your role: You're the one who compares Tinker with each action before anyone says "can't touch us."
New skill: Apply a precedent by comparing fact patterns.

What happened

Anika is a junior at a public high school. She wants the school library to stay open at lunch. On Tuesday afternoon, she prints a poster that says "KEEP OUR LIBRARY OPEN AT LUNCH. Wear blue Thursday."

Mateo did the photo and layout. He put a photo of the school's sign and logo across the top. The poster does not name Anika or any student group. The student handbook says posters need approval from the main office and the name of the student or group responsible.

On Wednesday night, someone in the group chat suggests a walkout if the school takes the poster down. The message says a 1969 Supreme Court case, Tinker v. Des Moines, means the school "can't touch us." Anika never suggested a walkout.

Your question: How far does Tinker cover the poster, the wear-blue plan and the walkout, and what facts are missing?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 5 min.

Say this

"There are three plans in this story. Can you name all three?" — Listen for the poster, wearing blue and the walkout. List them on the board.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the walkout as Anika's plan. **Listen for:** "Anika wants everyone to walk out." **Then:** Reread the last paragraph. Someone in the chat suggested the walkout. Anika never did.

Support

- Read What happened aloud. Pause after each plan so students can underline it.

Heat check

Medium. Students may bring up walkouts or discipline at their own school.

Cool-down: Say: "Today we're looking at Anika's school." Keep examples to the case, and do not ask who took part in a walkout.

Key terms

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

Precedent A precedent is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases.

En español: precedente

In this case: Tinker v. Des Moines (1969) guides Anika's case only as far as the facts match: quiet expression at a public school.

Fact pattern A fact pattern is the specific set of facts in a situation that a rule is applied to.

En español: conjunto de hechos

In this case: Anika lists each plan's action, place, timing and rule: the poster on a school board, wearing blue on Thursday and leaving class.

Substantial disruption Substantial disruption is the standard from Tinker v. Des Moines: a public school may limit speech that would seriously disrupt school activities.

En español: alteración sustancial

In this case: Wearing blue on Thursday is quiet, like the armbands. Leaving class is conduct under the attendance rule, which Tinker does not settle.

Who is involved

Anika
Made the poster

"My poster says keep the library open at lunch, and wear blue Thursday. Now the chat says we walk out. I never said walk out."

Mateo
Did the photo and layout

"I put the school sign across the top because it looked good. Now it reads like the school is announcing it. It isn't."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

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

Say this

"A precedent is an earlier decision. What makes it fit a new case?" — Wait for "similar facts."

Watch for

Misconception: Students think a precedent decides every later case. **Listen for:** "Tinker already decided this." **Then:** Reread the definition: it guides cases with similar facts. Ask which facts match.

Support

- Point out a false cognate: library means biblioteca, not librería.
- **Cognates:** precedent (precedente), constitutional (constitucional), expression (expresión), protest (protesta), suspension (suspensión), decision (decisión), logo (logotipo), conduct (conducta).

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, can the school do anything about the poster or the walkout?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that the poster and the walkout raise different questions, because one is a message and the other means leaving class.

Notes

This page continues page 234. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 234.

Reading passage

Analogical reasoning and student expression

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

- **Precedent**: A precedent is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases.
- **Fact pattern**: A fact pattern is the specific set of facts in a situation that a rule is applied to.
- **Substantial disruption**: Substantial disruption is the standard from Tinker v. Des Moines: a public school may limit speech that would seriously disrupt school activities.
- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Framing**: Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward.

The story: A slogan outruns a poster

Anika, a public high school junior, prints a poster asking her school to keep the library open at lunch and inviting students to "Wear blue Thursday." Mateo, 22, designed it and placed a photo of the school's sign and logo across the top. The poster names no student or group. The next night, a group chat reframes the campaign. If the school removes the poster, students will walk out, and "Tinker says they can't touch us."

The case is useful precisely because the legal claim sounds informed. Tinker v. Des Moines is a real and important precedent, and many students have heard of it. What the chat gets wrong is scope. It treats a holding about a specific kind of expression as a guarantee covering any protest method. It also attaches a walkout to a campaign whose author never proposed one.

Both friends model professional self-correction. Anika separates her poster from the walkout and acknowledges that her poster lacks the name the handbook requires. Mateo recognizes that his design choice changed the poster's apparent speaker and plans a new version with office approval, Anika's name and no logo.

Your role is to compare Tinker with each action before anyone says "can't touch us."

Stop and think. How does analogical reasoning differ from applying a rule mechanically?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (701 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A slogan outruns a poster":** How does analogical reasoning differ from applying a rule mechanically?
2. **After "Precedent as analogy":** The walkout involves both expression and conduct. Why does that distinction matter legally?
3. **After "Doctrine, practice and professional norms":** Compare the ACLU guide with the court sources. Where does legal description end and advocacy begin?

Precedent as analogy

A **precedent** is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases. In Tinker (1969), public-school students wore black armbands to protest the Vietnam War, were suspended and won at the Supreme Court. **Substantial disruption** is the standard from Tinker v. Des Moines: a public school may limit speech that would seriously disrupt school activities. The Court added that an undifferentiated fear of disruption is not enough.

Legal reasoning from precedent is analogical, and it requires disciplined description. A **fact pattern** is the specific set of facts in a situation that a rule is applied to. The skill here extends Case 11's method of comparing situations on the same terms. Three fact patterns emerge. The wear-blue plan is passive, symbolic and compatible with attending class, and it is the closest analogue to the armbands. The walkout is conduct as well as expression. Leaving class triggers an attendance rule that applies whatever the message. The poster raises a question outside Tinker's core. Bearing the school's insignia and no student attribution, it risks being read as the school's own speech, over which schools have more control.

Case 1's concepts clarify the communication problem. The chat's slogan is a **claim**, a statement that can be checked with evidence, and the holding does not support it. The logo is **framing**, choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward. It foregrounds institutional authorship, and that changes the legal question as well as the audience's reading.

Stop and think. The walkout involves both expression and conduct. Why does that distinction matter legally?

Doctrine, practice and professional norms

The Tinker opinion's best-known line holds that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate" (Legal Information Institute, 1969). The federal judiciary teaches the case alongside a walkout scenario that separates message from conduct and notes the usual attendance consequences (U.S. Courts, no date listed).

The Court's 2021 decision in Mahanoy Area School District v. B. L. extended the inquiry to off-campus speech. It ruled 8 to 1 for a student disciplined over a Snapchat post while preserving school authority over some off-campus speech, such as threats (Supreme Court of the United States, June 23, 2021; PBS NewsHour, June 23, 2021).

Current events test the walkout distinction. In early 2026, students in several states walked out to protest federal immigration enforcement. Indiana schools responded variously, with unexcused absences at some and one-day suspensions at one high school (Chalkbeat Indiana, February 11, 2026). Local reporting separated speech rights, attendance rules and discipline (WFYI, February 1, 2026). Advocacy groups publish their own guides.

This page continues page 236. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 236.

Doctrine, practice and professional norms, continued

The ACLU's is a rights group's plain-language reading, and comparing it with court sources shows where law ends and advocacy begins (ACLU, February 27, 2018).

Two professional norms bear on the poster. The PRSA code asks communicators to "reveal the sponsors for causes and interests represented" (PRSA Code of Ethics, October 2000). The AIGA standards ask designers to avoid "false, misleading and deceptive promotion" (AIGA Standards of Professional Practice, no date listed). An unattributed poster under a school logo strains both.

Stop and think. Compare the ACLU guide with the court sources. Where does legal description end and advocacy begin?

Sources

Real source | Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School | 1969
Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969)

Real source | U.S. Courts | No date listed
Fictional Scenario: Tinker v. Des Moines

Real source | Supreme Court of the United States | June 23, 2021
Mahanoy Area School District v. B. L. (opinion)

Real source | PBS NewsHour (Associated Press) | June 23, 2021
Supreme Court rules in favor of cheerleader who published critical social media post in First Amendment case

Real source | Chalkbeat Indiana | February 11, 2026
How schools in Marion County responded to anti-ICE student protests

Real source | WFYI Indianapolis Public Media | February 1, 2026
A guide to your rights at Indiana protests, in the streets, and at school

Real source | ACLU | February 27, 2018
Students' Rights: Speech, Walkouts, and Other Protests

Real source | Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) | 2000
PRSA Code of Ethics

Real source | AIGA, the professional association for design | No date listed
AIGA Standards of Professional Practice

This page continues page 236. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 236.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Poster

Anika's poster, first version

Printed Tuesday, 3:15 p.m. The poster reads "KEEP OUR LIBRARY OPEN AT LUNCH. Wear blue Thursday." A photo of the school's sign and logo runs across the top. No student name or group appears anywhere on the poster.

Look closely: Cover the logo photo with your hand. Who seems to be speaking now?

What it shows

A student message with the school's sign and logo on top and no student name.

What it leaves out

Whether the office approved it, and whether the school has objected.

Evidence B | Handbook policy

Student handbook, page 14

Students may post materials on the student bulletin boards outside the cafeteria and the library. Materials must be approved by the main office and must show the name of the student or group responsible.

Look closely: Underline the two requirements for every poster.

What it shows

Posting needs one of two boards, office approval and a named student or group.

What it leaves out

The penalty for breaking the rule, and anything about leaving class.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"The handbook names two requirements for every poster. Which one is missing from Anika's poster?" — Wait for "the name of the student or group responsible."

Watch for

Misconception: Students say the handbook bans the poster's message. **Listen for:** "The school can't allow a poster about the library." **Then:** Point to Evidence B. The rule covers where posters go, approval and a name. It says nothing about topics.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the chat messages aloud and name who is speaking in each.
- **Cognates:** precedent (precedente), constitutional (constitucional), expression (expresión), protest (protesta), suspension (suspensión), decision (decisión), logo (logotipo), conduct (conducta).

Stretch

- Ask what the walkout message assumes about Tinker, and which document would test that assumption.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Group chat

The walkout message

Wednesday, 9:02 p.m.

First message: “If they take the poster down we walk out Thursday. Tinker says they can’t touch us.

Reply: “Wait, wear blue AND walk out??

Look closely: Which part is a message, and which part is leaving class?

What it shows

A claim that Tinker bars any response, and a reply confused about the plan.

What it leaves out

The attendance policy, and whether anyone at school has acted on the poster.

What is still missing from the evidence?

We don’t know what the attendance policy says about leaving class, or whether the office approved the first poster. We also don’t know whether the school has objected, or what process comes before discipline.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 4 min.

Say this

“The handbook names two requirements for every poster. Which one is missing from Anika’s poster?” — Wait for “the name of the student or group responsible.”

Watch for

Misconception: Students say the handbook bans the poster’s message. **Listen for:** “The school can’t allow a poster about the library.” **Then:** Point to Evidence B. The rule covers where posters go, approval and a name. It says nothing about topics.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the chat messages aloud and name who is speaking in each.
- **Cognates:** precedent (precedente), constitutional (constitucional), expression (expresión), protest (protesta), suspension (suspensión), decision (decisión), logo (logotipo), conduct (conducta).

Stretch

- Ask what the walkout message assumes about Tinker, and which document would test that assumption.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: precedent

On your own Read the key idea and the Professional standards card. Then answer the question in the box. About 12 minutes.

A **precedent** is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases. In Tinker v. Des Moines (1969), public-school students wore black armbands to protest the Vietnam War. The school suspended them, and the Supreme Court ruled for the students. The Court wrote that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate." It also said a mere fear of disruption was not enough to limit their expression.

A precedent guides a new case only as far as the facts match. **Substantial disruption** is the standard from Tinker v. Des Moines: a public school may limit speech that would seriously disrupt school activities. Wearing blue on Thursday is quiet, like the armbands. A walkout is different, because students leave class. The school's attendance rule covers that conduct, and Tinker does not settle it.

The poster raises another question. It shows the school's sign and logo but no student name, so it may look like the school is speaking. Schools have more control over speech that looks like it comes from the school. A **fact pattern** is the specific set of facts in a situation that a rule is applied to. Write a fact pattern for each action before you decide whether Tinker fits it.

Professional standards

Adapted from a real source | **American Bar Association (ABA), Center for Professional Responsibility**

ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct: Rule 2.1 Advisor

Summary: Summary, not a quotation: in representing a client, a lawyer must use independent professional judgment and give candid advice. A lawyer may refer to moral, economic, social and political factors as well as the law.

In plain words: Lawyers must give their clients honest, independent advice, even when the client would rather hear something else.

Question: The chat says "Tinker says they can't touch us." What would candid advice say about the walkout and attendance policy?

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 10 min. Skip the code of ethics.

Say this

"Tinker protected quiet armbands. Which of the three plans looks most like that?" — Wait for the wear-blue plan.

"Rule 2.1 asks lawyers for candid advice. What would candid advice tell the group chat?" — Accept "Tinker doesn't cover leaving class."

Watch for

Misconception: Students read "schoolhouse gate" as meaning schools can never limit speech. **Listen for:** "Students can say anything at school." **Then:** Read the next idea aloud: a school may limit speech that would substantially disrupt school.

Support

- Read the two In the news cards aloud. Both are about Mahanoy, a 2021 case about a student's off-campus post.

Stretch

- Use the PRSA card: who would a reader think is behind the first poster?

Heat check

Medium. The In the news cards cover a cheerleader punished for an off-campus Snapchat post. Students may bring up their own posts.

Cool-down: Keep to what the Court decided. Nobody needs to describe their own posts or discipline.

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Candid advice would say ___, even if ___.

Candid advice would say Tinker fits the quiet wear-blue plan but not leaving class, even if the chat wants to hear “can’t touch us.”

In the news

Real source | PBS NewsHour | April 28, 2021

Student free speech makes it to the Supreme Court in former high school cheerleader's case

Explains the Snapchat case the Court used to ask when a school can punish off-campus student speech.

Real source | PBS NewsHour (Associated Press) | June 23, 2021

Supreme Court rules in favor of cheerleader who published critical social media post in First Amendment case

The 8-1 ruling protected the student but said schools may still act on some off-campus speech, like threats.

Notes

This page continues page 241. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 241.

Sort the evidence

On your own Link each piece of evidence to the claim it supports or challenges. Then name one missing view. About 6 minutes.

Test the slogan against the facts. Which evidence supports each claim, which challenges it, and which fact would you still need?

Evidence	**Claim 1** Tinker means nobody can face consequences for walking out.	**Claim 2** The **wear-blue** plan closely matches Tinker's facts.	**Claim 3** The poster should carry a student byline instead of the school logo.
1 Tinker's facts: silent armbands, no substantial disruption, a public school	Narrows	Supports	Neither
2 A walkout means leaving class, which falls under the attendance rule	Challenges	Neither	Neither
3 The logo photo makes the poster look like school-sponsored speech	Neither	Neither	Supports

Still open

- What does the attendance policy say, and what process follows?

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 school's view on attendance is missing. I would ask what the attendance policy says about leaving class and what happens before any discipline.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Test the slogan. Which evidence narrows "Tinker means nobody can face consequences"?" — Model the first link together: Tinker's facts narrow the claim.

Watch for

Misconception: Students say the logo does not matter. **Listen for:** "It's just a picture." **Then:** Ask who a stranger would think made the poster. That question is about who is speaking.

Support

- Let students write S, C or N (supports, challenges, narrows) before writing sentences.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the best reply to the group chat and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 5 minutes.

Someone in Anika's group chat says, "Tinker means nobody can get in trouble for walking out of class." How should you respond?

- ☐ **A** Agree, because Tinker protected students who protested at school.
- ☐ **B** Disagree, because schools can make any rule they want about student speech.
- ☑ **C** Say that the message and leaving class are separate questions, then check the attendance rule.

Why I chose it

C. A and B each claim more than Tinker says. C separates the message from the act of leaving class and checks the rule that covers it.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

No, the school can't take it down because of Tinker v. Des Moines. In that case (1) the Supreme Court said students have free speech at school. The poster is just saying the library should stay open at lunch which is not hurting anybody. We even used a nice photo of the school sign so it looks professional. The principal would be breaking the law if he took it down. This is America and students have rights. Everyone should wear blue Thursday and (2) walk out if they try.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Tinker protects student speech unless it would substantially disrupt school.

Rewrite phrase 2

Wear blue Thursday. Leaving class falls under the attendance rule, not Tinker.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Someone says Tinker means nobody gets in trouble. What do you reply?" — Vote first, then discuss.

Watch for

Misconception: Students pick B: schools set the rules. **Listen for:** "Schools can do whatever they want." **Then:** Point to the schoolhouse-gate sentence.

Support

- Read the options aloud.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** Talk may turn to real protests at school.

Cool-down: Ask which fact in Anika's case decides it. Keep real students' names out.

Answer key

A revised version: Tinker v. Des Moines (1969) says public-school students keep free-speech rights at school, unless their expression would substantially disrupt school or invade others' rights. Anika's message, keep the library open at lunch, and the plan to wear blue Thursday are quiet and look a lot like the armbands in Tinker. But two facts matter. The poster uses a school-logo photo, so it may look like an official announcement, which schools can regulate more. And walking out of class is conduct under an attendance rule, a different question. I'd remove the logo and ask the office which posting policy applies.

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 15 minutes.

Write a plain-language explainer on posters and walkouts at public schools for a library teen night or a youth program. Separate the speech question, the attendance rule and possible discipline, and use Anika's case as the example.

Use: Case documents: Anika's poster, the posting policy and the walkout chat. Real sources: the Tinker summary and opinion (1969), the Mahanoy opinion (2021), WFYI's rights guide and Chalkbeat's report (February 2026) and the ACLU guide (2018).

You'll make: Explainer, 400—500 words, with a labeled source list

Time: 90 minutes

1. Sort the case facts into three columns: speech, attendance and discipline.
2. Label each source as a court opinion, a news report or an advocacy guide.
3. Write one plain sentence that states the Tinker ruling.
4. Draft your explainer on the Your draft page, using Anika's case as the example.
5. Finish your 400- to 500-word explainer on lined paper, with a labeled source list.
6. End with a line that says the explainer gives general information, not legal advice.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Speech

The poster's message and wearing blue on Thursday.

Attendance

Leaving class for a walkout, under the attendance policy.

Pacing

Full chapter: 15 min.

Short on time: 15 min.

Say this

"Your readers are younger than you. Which word in the Tinker ruling needs the plainest explanation?" — Hear answers. Listen for "disruption" and "precedent."

Watch for

Misconception: Explainers treat the ACLU guide as law. **Listen for:** "The ACLU says it, so it's the rule." **Then:** Point to the source labels. An advocacy guide explains a group's view. Court opinions set the precedent.

Support

- Three-column organizer: speech, attendance, discipline
- Source-type chart: court opinion, news report, advocacy guide
- Model line: "This explainer gives general information, not legal advice."
- The case does not cover speech rules on a college campus. Keep the explainer to public schools.

Stretch

- Label each statement as coming from a court, a news report or an advocacy group, and explain why a reader should weigh them differently.

Your task, continued

Discipline

In 2026, some schools counted walkouts as unexcused absences; one gave one-day suspensions.

Source labels

Court: Tinker, Mahanoy. News: Chalkbeat, WFYI. Advocacy: the ACLU guide.

Notes

This page continues page 245.

Heat check

■■□ **Medium.** The walkouts protested federal immigration enforcement and grew after two people were fatally shot. Readers may have personal ties.

Cool-down: Report how schools responded. Do not ask for views on immigration. Let anyone pass.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Information Literacy VALUE Rubric; Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Scholarship as Conversation.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- States the Tinker ruling accurately and says it concerns public schools
- Separates the message from the act of leaving class
- Reports that schools responded to the 2026 walkouts in different ways, without taking a side on the protests
- Labels court, news and advocacy sources
- Gives general information and sends readers to a trusted adult or a school contact for their own situation

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 35 minutes.

Your explainer, first part, about 150 words

Can a school stop a poster or a walkout? The answer depends on which part you mean. In 1969, the Supreme Court decided Tinker v. Des Moines. Students at a public school wore black armbands to protest the Vietnam War, and the Court ruled for them. A school could not limit their expression because of a mere fear of disruption. Tinker applies to public schools. Consider Anika, a student in a made-up example. Her poster asks the school to keep the library open at lunch and tells students to wear blue on Thursday. That is expression, much like the armbands. A walkout is different, because students leave class, and attendance rules cover that. When students walked out in early 2026, schools responded in different ways. Some counted it as an unexcused absence, and one high school near Indianapolis gave one-day suspensions.

Labeled source list

Court: Tinker v. Des Moines (1969). Court: Mahanoy Area School District v. B. L. (2021). News: Chalkbeat Indiana, February 11, 2026. Advocacy: ACLU, February 27, 2018.

Pacing

Full chapter: 35 min.

Short on time: 35 min.

Say this

“Read your explainer as a middle schooler at teen night. Where would you get lost?” — Partners mark one confusing sentence each.

Watch for

Misconception: Drafts give personal legal advice. **Listen for:** “You won’t get in trouble if you walk out.” **Then:** Replace it with general information and a pointer to a trusted adult or a school contact.

Support

- The overprinted sample holds the first part of the explainer. Full explainers run 400 to 500 words.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Signals the split between speech and attendance in plain words.
2. States the setting the ruling covers.
3. Separates the message from the act of leaving class.
4. Reports the 2026 responses without taking a side.

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.

Do you state the Tinker ruling accurately and say it concerns public schools?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you separate the message from the act of leaving class?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you report the 2026 school responses without taking a side on the protests?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Is every source labeled as court, news or advocacy?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No case facts.	☐ Names Tinker without its rule.	☐ States Tinker's facts and substantial -disruption test.	☐ Adds a second precedent or the walkout exercise accurately.
Reasoning	☐ Treats a slogan as the answer.	☐ Applies Tinker to everything.	☐ Compares facts and separates speech from conduct.	☐ Varies facts to show where the precedent stops fitting.
Audience & purpose	☐ Tells others to break rules.	☐ Argues for one side only.	☐ Recommends a clear next question for the school.	☐ Balances effective expression with respect for process.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Softens tone only.	☐ Adds the rule's limit and removes a legal conclusion.	☐ Explains how each edit makes the argument more precise.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the Check your work questions only.

Say this

"Find the sentence where you separate the message from leaving class." — If it is missing, that is the revision.

Watch for

Misconception: Students soften the tone and call it revision. **Listen for:** "I made it sound nicer." **Then:** Point to the Revision row: add the rule's limit or remove a legal conclusion.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks for an accurate Tinker ruling, labeled source types and a clear line between general information and advice.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** States Tinker's facts and substantial-disruption test.
- **Reasoning:** Compares facts and separates speech from conduct.
- **Audience & purpose:** Recommends a clear next question for the school.
- **Revision:** Adds the rule's limit and removes a legal conclusion.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I added "Tinker applies to public schools," because the case does not cover private schools or college campuses.

Notes

This page continues page 248. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 248.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then complete each sentence frame below the questions. About 10 minutes.

1 **Which changed fact would make Tinker a weaker comparison for the wear-blue plan?**

Evidence that wearing blue would substantially disrupt school, or a plan that adds leaving class. Either change moves the facts away from the quiet armbands.

2 **Why might it matter whether a poster looks like it comes from the school?**

Speech that looks school-sponsored gives the school more control, as in Hazelwood (1988). Readers may also assume the office approved the message.

3 **If the poster had Anika's name and no school logo, what would change?**

The poster would meet the name rule and read as Anika's own speech, closer to Tinker. It would still need office approval, and the walkout question would stay the same.

My take

My claim: ___.

Tinker fits the wear-blue plan, the poster needs a name and approval, and the walkout falls under the attendance rule.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The Tinker facts, because the armbands were quiet and nobody left class.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Use question 3 only.

Say this

"Change one fact at a time. Say which fact you changed before you answer." — Hear one answer per question.

Stretch

- Rewrite the walkout message so it says only what the chat knows for sure.
- Going further: Read the U.S. Courts summary of Tinker. List two facts from Tinker and two facts from Anika's situation. Which difference matters most, and why?
- Going further: Write two headlines about the same walkout, one using the words "a protest" and one using "leaving class" instead. What does each headline make readers think the dispute is about?
- Going further: Write a short dialogue in which Anika explains to a friend why Tinker fits the wear-blue plan better than the walkout. Ask a reader to explain the difference back to you.
- Going further: Find the section of your student handbook on posting, dress or expression. Write down which spaces allow student posters and whether you need approval. Bring questions to a student council advisor before you plan any action.
- Read about Bethel v. Fraser (1986) and Morse v. Frederick (2007) and add them to the comparison
- Find your district's student expression or posting policy and compare it with Tinker

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Any student protest is protected speech, so the school cannot respond to a walkout.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

We have not seen the attendance policy, and we don't know whether the school has objected.

I would change my mind if ___.

The school removed the poster because of its message instead of the posting rule.

Notes

This page continues page 250.

Heat check

■□□ **Question 1: Low.**

Talk about this case at home

Case 12: When can a school limit what students say?

In this case, a student's poster asks her school to keep the library open at lunch, and someone in a group chat suggests a walkout. Your student compared a 1969 Supreme Court case with each plan and wrote a short analysis.

See the case online.

Questions to talk about

1. What rules do schools often have about posters or flyers?
2. Why might a school treat wearing a color differently from leaving class?
3. How can a reader tell who made a poster?

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

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

"Bring this page home or read it with someone you trust." — Nobody needs to share their own views about protests or school discipline.

Case 13: Can the crew cut waste before it reaches the bin?

Overview

Students read a story in which Dec's box of replacement parts arrives half full of packaging. The crew's "recyclable" cups turn out to be on the city's not-accepted list. They place items from the supply list on EPA's waste hierarchy and check them against the city's accepted-materials list. They then fill in an event materials sheet and propose one change with a way to measure it.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- read a supply list and pull out counts
- state what a comparison counts and leaves out
- write a memo for a committee

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- propose one purchasing change for campus or club events
- use the supply-list counts accurately as a model
- state a measurement boundary before any claim of savings
- check disposal against a local list and keep an option for people who need disposable items

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B and C
- The EPA hierarchy page, the FTC Green Guides section on recyclable claims and NPR's July 11, 2018 report
- A materials sheet and a boundary checklist

The task in this edition

Task: Write a memo to a student government events committee proposing one purchasing change for campus or club events. Use the Common Room supply list as the model, and include a measurement plan that states its boundary.

Students make: Memo, 300—400 words, with a materials table

Pacing

Opener (page 253): 5 min. Short on time: 5 min.

Key terms (pages 254 and 255): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Look at the evidence (page 260): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Look at the evidence (page 261): 4 min. Short on time: 4 min.

Key idea (pages 262 and 263): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip In the news.

Pacing, continued

Sort the evidence (pages 264 and 265): 6 min. Short on time: skip. The materials sheet covers the same ground.

Practice (page 266): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 267 and 268): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (page 269): 25 min. Short on time: 25 min.

Check your work (pages 270 and 271): 6 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 272 and 273): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Talk about this case at home (page 274): at home.

Periods: full chapter 94 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Standards

Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for calculating, interpreting and explaining numbers in everyday situations. In this case: Students use counts from the supply list and set a measurement boundary before they claim any savings (Assumptions; Application/Analysis).

Case 13 plan, continued

Standards, continued

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 waste problem before the bin and propose one change with a way to check its results (Define Problem; Evaluate Outcomes).

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 bring a proposal to the committee that decides event purchasing (Civic Contexts/Structures).

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 weigh a "recyclable" label against the city's accepted-materials list.

Codes of ethics

- **FTC Green Guides (16 CFR Part 260):** § 260.12 Recyclable claims
- **AIGA Standards of Professional Practice:** The designer's responsibility to society and the environment
- **IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators:** "I do not guarantee results"

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 253):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 254 and 255):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 260):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 261):** Low

■■□ **Key idea (pages 262 and 263):** Medium

■□□ **Sort the evidence (pages 264 and 265):** Low

■■□ **Practice (page 266):** Medium

■□□ **Your task (pages 267 and 268):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 270 and 271):** Low

Try it at your school

Change one thing before the next event.

- Pick one repeated item at a school event: cups, flyers, plates
- Count how many were used last time
- Check your city's recycling list and propose one reduction or reuse option
- Count again after the event and share results with the organizers

Who to ask: Student council, custodial or facilities staff, a science teacher, your city's sanitation or recycling office

Safety: Don't sort through trash with your hands; unsafe items can be hidden. Make sure changes don't leave out people who need disposable items.

Sources

- NPR, "Starbucks To Eliminate Plastic Straws In Its Stores By 2020," July 9, 2018
- NPR, "Why People With Disabilities Want Bans On Plastic Straws To Be More Flexible," July 11, 2018
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), "Sustainable Materials Management: Non-Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Hierarchy," No date listed

Case 13: Can the crew cut waste before it reaches the bin?

The last Common Room screening used about 120 cups the city won't recycle, and a box of parts arrived half full of packaging.

On your own Read What happened. Underline the number of cups and what the city list says about them. About 5 minutes.

Anika, Dec and Sami react to a round of their tabletop game.

Your role: You're the one who counts the cups before and after the change. **New skill:** Count a starting point before you claim a change works.

What happened

It is Tuesday in the theater shop. Dec opens a box of replacement parts. Three separate orders of small LED connectors and switches, placed over one week, arrived together. About half of the box is plastic air pillows and foam.

The supply list from last Friday's screening at the Common Room shows a second problem. The crew used about 120 single-use cups. The cups are plastic-lined paper and labeled "recyclable." But the city's recycling list does not take plastic-lined paper cups.

Dec wants to fix how they order parts before anyone redoes the recycling sign. Anika tracks the parts and the budget. She agrees with Dec, but she wants numbers before anyone says a change saves money. Some people need a disposable cup or a straw, so any plan has to work for them too.

Your question: What could the crew change before the next screening, and how would they know it worked?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 5 min.

Say this

"The cups say "recyclable." Where do you think they went after the screening?" — Hear guesses. Do not reveal the city list yet.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the label decides where the cups go. **Listen for:** "They said recyclable, so they got recycled." **Then:** Ask who decides what a city recycles. Promise to check the city list in the evidence.

Support

- Read What happened aloud. Show a paper cup if you have one.

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.

Source reduction Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging.

En español: reducción en la fuente

In this case: Dec wants to combine the parts orders so less packaging arrives in the first place.

Reuse Reuse is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use.

En español: reutilización

In this case: Borrowing washable cups from the bookshop is reuse. Washing uses water and someone's time.

Local acceptance Local acceptance is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes.

En español: materiales aceptados en tu ciudad

In this case: The cups say "recyclable," but the crew's city does not accept plastic-lined paper cups.

Who is involved

Dec
Opened the parts order

"Three orders of tiny connectors in one week. One big box, and half of it's packaging."

Anika
Tracks the parts and the budget

"I'm in. But if anyone says it saves money, I want the numbers. Right now we have one box and a guess."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Source reduction happens before the waste exists. Which item in the story could the crew stop buying?" — Listen for the packaging and the cups.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat reuse and recycling as the same. **Listen for:** "Reusing is recycling." **Then:** Reuse means using the same item again, like a washable cup. Recycling depends on what the city list accepts.

Support

- Use picture cards: a washable cup, a paper cup and a recycling bin.
- **Cognates:** reduction (reducción), recycle (reciclar), plastic (plástico), material (material), accessible (accesible), alternative (alternativa), container (contenedor), quantity (cantidad).

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 is the best way for the crew to cut waste?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is to combine the parts orders, because one box of three small orders was about half packaging.

Notes

This page continues page 254. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 254.

Reading passage

Measuring waste reduction without overclaiming

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

- **Source reduction**: Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging.
- **Reuse**: Reuse is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use.
- **Local acceptance**: Local acceptance is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes.
- **Proposal**: A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet.
- **Trade-off**: A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.

The story: Two data points and a guess

A box of replacement parts arrives at the theater shop half full of air pillows and foam. Three small orders placed over one week have shipped together. Separately, the supply list from the crew's last screening shows about 120 single-use cups, plastic-lined and labeled "recyclable," plus 80 paper plates, 150 flyers and 40 paper straws given out on request.

Dec, 17, a theater tech weighing an electrical apprenticeship, traces the waste upstream to purchasing decisions. Combine orders, and ask the supplier about packaging. Anika, 16, who tracks parts and budget, accepts the diagnosis but refuses to let it become a claim. Nobody should say a change saves money on the basis of one box and a guess. She also insists that any plan preserve disposable cups and straws for people who need them.

The case turns an environmental question into a method question. What would it take to know that a change worked, and how large a claim would that evidence support?

Your role is to count the cups before and after the change.

Stop and think. What is the largest claim the crew could honestly make after one test screening?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (723 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: Two data points and a guess":** What is the largest claim the crew could honestly make after one test screening?
2. **After "Designing a small, honest test":** How should an organization weigh environmental goals against access needs when they conflict?
3. **After "Hierarchies, labels and the limits of bans":** Why might a city's acceptance list matter more than a federal label standard for the crew's decision?

Designing a small, honest test

Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging. **Reuse** is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use. Both address waste upstream of disposal, which is where Dec wants to intervene.

The cups expose the gap between a label and a system. The city's list accepts metal cans, glass, rigid plastic containers and flattened cardboard. It excludes plastic-lined paper cups, plastic film, foam and items labeled compostable. **Local acceptance** is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes. Case 9's skill, consulting the official source for your own jurisdiction, applies directly. A package's claim is not the city's rule. Anika's observation that compostable cups are also excluded prevents a substitution that would only look like progress.

The new skill is establishing a baseline before claiming an effect. The baseline is roughly 120 cups at one screening. The intervention is borrowed washable cups at the next. The measure includes cups used and unused, plus the resources reuse consumes, water and labor. Case 4 provides the terms for presenting it. The plan is a **proposal**, a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet, and it is a **trade-off**, a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up. The resulting claim should be scoped to one counted screening. That is modest by design, because a single comparison cannot establish a trend or a cost saving.

Stop and think. How should an organization weigh environmental goals against access needs when they conflict?

Hierarchies, labels and the limits of bans

The EPA's hierarchy places source reduction and reuse above recycling and composting, which rank above energy recovery and disposal. It explicitly notes that no single approach suits every material or situation (EPA, updated December 19, 2025). An NPR investigation reported that less than 10 percent of plastic has ever been recycled, which helps explain why reduction ranks first (NPR, September 11, 2020). FRONTLINE and NPR's documentary examined why recycling alone has not solved plastic waste (FRONTLINE PBS, March 31, 2020).

Environmental marketing is regulated. The FTC's Green Guides state that a product or package "should not be marketed as recyclable unless it can be collected, separated, or otherwise recovered from the waste stream through an established recycling program" (16 CFR Part 260, 2012). The crew's cups, marketed as recyclable in a city that does not accept them, illustrate the problem the rule addresses.

The 2018 straw debate shows why access must be designed in. Starbucks projected that its lid could mean a billion fewer straws a year (NPR, July 9, 2018).

This page continues page 256. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 256.

Hierarchies, labels and the limits of bans, continued

Disability advocates responded that some people need flexible plastic straws and that awareness of Seattle's exemption appeared low (NPR, July 11, 2018). Public institutions are adopting measurement. New York City's comptroller audited schools' food donation and composting efforts, showing how measurement changes what counts as success (Office of the New York City Comptroller, April 21, 2026). California schools use share tables so unopened food is shared instead of thrown away (California School Boards Association, October 13, 2023). Researchers have also studied which school and meal choices lead to more plate waste in K-12 cafeterias (Adjapong et al., PLOS ONE, December 27, 2024).

Professional ethics supports Anika's caution. The IABC code states, "I do not guarantee results that are beyond my power to deliver" (IABC Code of Ethics, no date listed).

Stop and think. Why might a city's acceptance list matter more than a federal label standard for the crew's decision?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) | December 19, 2025
Sustainable Materials Management: Non-Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Hierarchy

Real source | NPR | September 11, 2020
How Big Oil Misled The Public Into Believing Plastic Would Be Recycled

Real source | FRONTLINE PBS (YouTube) | March 31, 2020
Plastic Wars (full documentary) | FRONTLINE

Real source | Federal Trade Commission (FTC) | 2012
FTC Green Guides (16 CFR Part 260)

Real source | NPR | July 9, 2018
Starbucks To Eliminate Plastic Straws In Its Stores By 2020

Real source | NPR | July 11, 2018
Why People With Disabilities Want Bans On Plastic Straws To Be More Flexible

Real source | Office of the New York City Comptroller | April 21, 2026
Review of Schools' Food Donation and Composting Efforts (MH25-077S)

Real source | California School Boards Association | October 13, 2023
Share tables reduce food waste

Real source | PLOS ONE (Adjapong et al.) | December 27, 2024
School and meal characteristics associated with plate waste in K-12 cafeterias in the United States

This page continues page 256. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 256.

Sources, continued

Real source | International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) | No date listed

IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators

Notes

This page continues page 256. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 256.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Supply list

Screening supply list, last Friday

Single-use cups (plastic-lined paper, labeled “recyclable”): about 120. Paper plates: 80. Printed flyers: 150. Paper straws, on request: 40. Folding chairs: borrowed from the bookshop.

Look closely: Which item did the crew use the most? Could it be reused?

What it shows

A baseline: about 120 “recyclable” cups, 80 plates, 150 flyers and 40 straws.

What it leaves out

Where each item went after the event, and what each item cost.

Evidence B | Delivery

The parts order

Delivered Tuesday to the theater shop. Three separate orders of small LED connectors and switches, placed over one week, arrived together. They came in one full box, about half of it plastic air pillows and foam around tiny parts.

Look closely: How many orders came in this one box? Why does that matter?

What it shows

Three small orders placed over one week shipped in one box, about half packaging.

What it leaves out

Whether one combined order, or a request to the supplier, would cut packaging.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

“Put the supply list next to the city list. Which item appears on both?” — Wait for the plastic-lined paper cups.

Watch for

Misconception: Students say the cup label is a lie. **Listen for:** “The label is fake.” **Then:** Ask what the city list tells us: this city does not accept them. Other places are not in the evidence.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the city list aloud, pausing after “Not accepted.”
- **Cognates:** reduction (reducción), recycle (reciclar), plastic (plástico), material (material), accessible (accesible), alternative (alternativa), container (contenedor), quantity (cantidad).

Stretch

- Ask which document shows waste made before the event and which shows what happens after it.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Sanitation guide

City recycling list

Accepted in recycling: metal cans, glass bottles and jars, rigid plastic bottles and containers, flattened cardboard. Not accepted: plastic-lined paper cups, plastic bags and film, foam, items labeled compostable.

Look closely: Find the plastic-lined paper cups. Which list are they on?

What it shows

The city rejects plastic-lined paper cups, foam and items labeled compostable.

What it leaves out

Where rejected items end up after pickup.

What is still missing from the evidence?

We don't know how many cups washable reuse would replace, or what washing costs in water and volunteer time. We also don't know whether the bookshop can lend cups every time, or where the city's trash goes after pickup.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 4 min.

Say this

"Put the supply list next to the city list. Which item appears on both?" — Wait for the plastic-lined paper cups.

Watch for

Misconception: Students say the cup label is a lie. **Listen for:** "The label is fake." **Then:** Ask what the city list tells us: this city does not accept them. Other places are not in the evidence.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the city list aloud, pausing after "Not accepted."
- **Cognates:** reduction (reducción), recycle (reciclar), plastic (plástico), material (material), accessible (accesible), alternative (alternativa), container (contenedor), quantity (cantidad).

Stretch

- Ask which document shows waste made before the event and which shows what happens after it.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: source reduction

On your own Read the key idea and the Professional standards card. Then answer the question in the box. About 10 minutes.

Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ranks ways to handle waste. Source reduction and reuse come first. Recycling and composting come next, then energy recovery, then treatment and disposal. The EPA also notes that no single approach fits every item or situation.

Reuse is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use. Borrowing washable cups from the bookshop is one example. Reuse has costs too. Washing takes water and someone's time, so a fair comparison counts those costs along with the cups.

A "recyclable" label does not tell you where an item will go. **Local acceptance** is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes. The crew's cups say "recyclable," but their city's list does not take plastic-lined paper cups. The list does not take items labeled compostable either. So the crew has to check the list before choosing any new cup.

Professional standards

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

FTC Green Guides (16 CFR Part 260): § 260.12 Recyclable claims

"A product or package should not be marketed as recyclable unless it can be collected, separated, or otherwise recovered from the waste stream through an established recycling program"

In plain words: FTC guidance says a company should call a product recyclable only when recycling programs can collect and process it.

Question: The crew's city rejects plastic-lined paper cups. What else must you know before saying the "recyclable" label breaks the guide?

Your answer

Before saying the label breaks the guide, I would need to know ___.

Before saying the label breaks the guide, I would need to know whether established programs collect these cups. The guide asks about programs, not one city.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"The EPA ranks source reduction and reuse first. Where on that list is Dec trying to act?" — Wait for "source reduction."

"This card is FTC guidance, not an ethics code. Who does it apply to?" — Marketers who call a product recyclable.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the EPA ranking as a rule for every item. **Listen for:** "Reuse is always better." **Then:** Reread the key idea: no single approach fits every item. Washing has costs too.

Support

- Draw the ranking as a staircase, with source reduction and reuse on the top step.

Stretch

- Use the AIGA card: what could the next parts order change before anything reaches the shop?

Heat check

Medium. The straw story raises disability access, and students may describe their own needs or others'.

Cool-down: Keep the talk to the NPR report. No one needs to say what they or anyone they know needs.

In the news

Real source | NPR | July 9, 2018

Starbucks To Eliminate Plastic Straws In Its Stores By 2020

A throwback to a company cutting waste at the counter, before anything reached a bin.

Real source | NPR | September 11, 2020

How Big Oil Misled The Public Into Believing Plastic Would Be Recycled

Investigation finding less than 10% of plastic has ever been recycled, which is why reduction comes first.

Notes

This page continues page 262. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 262.

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow each choice to its consequences in the diagram. Then name one view that is missing. About 6 minutes.

Follow each choice to its consequences, including new costs. Which consequence would you measure first, and what would count as success?

Keep buying "recyclable" single-use cups	**Borrow washable cups and run a wash station**	**Combine parts orders into one shipment**
About 120 cups go to the trash because the city does not accept them **Who is affected** The city collection service and the neighborhoods near where waste ends up	Fewer cups in the trash, if people use the washable ones **Who is affected** **Check:** Count cups and bags after the next event and compare with last time	Less packaging arrives before anything reaches a bin **Who is affected** **Check:** Count cups and bags after the next event and compare with last time
	New costs: water, washing time and volunteers **Who is affected**	

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. The materials sheet covers the same ground.

Say this

"Follow the washable-cup choice. What new costs appear?" — Model the first chain together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students list only benefits for the washable cups. **Listen for:** "Washable cups are just better." **Then:** Point to the new-costs box: water, washing time and volunteers.

Support

- Let students draw arrows before writing labels.

Heat check

Low.

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 supplier's view is missing. I would ask whether a combined order would ship with less foam and fewer air pillows.

Notes

This page continues page 264. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 264.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the plan the crew should try and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 5 minutes.

The last screening used about 120 single-use cups, and the city's recycling list does not take that type. Which plan should the crew try for the next screening?

- [x] **A** Compare a washable-cup option, washing time, cost, access and the city list, then test one change.
- [ ] **B** Buy a different cup labeled "recyclable" and put up a clearer recycling sign.
- [ ] **C** Stop offering disposable cups and straws, and ask everyone to bring their own.

Why I chose it

A. It weighs washing time, cost, access and the city list before choosing. B repeats the label mistake, and C makes a rule that could shut out guests who need a cup.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

We should make the screening zero waste. Everyone should bring their own cup and we'll (1) ban all plastic. We can also put up posters that say "save the planet" so people remember to recycle. Recycling is the best thing you can do for the environment. This will be easy and (2) it will save money too. Last screening there were cups everywhere and the bins were overflowing by the end of the night. People will love it once they get used to it. Let's start next week!

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

Rewrite phrase 1

We will test washable cups and keep disposable cups and straws on request.

Rewrite phrase 2

We will count cups and washing costs before we claim it saves money.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"You are planning the next screening. Which plan would you try first?" — Vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose C because a ban cuts the most waste. **Listen for:** "Just ban them all." **Then:** Ask who at the screening might need a disposable cup or a straw. Point to the straw story.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

Medium. Talk about bans can turn to who "really" needs a straw.

Cool-down: Say: "Nobody has to prove a need." Keep the focus on how the plan offers items on request.

Answer key

A revised version: For the next screening, we propose one change: cups. Last time we used about 120 single-use cups, and our city's recycling list doesn't accept that type. We'll borrow 60 washable cups from the bookshop, keep 40 compostable cups for anyone who needs one, and ask Rafa and Jordy to run a quick wash station. Flexible straws and single-use cups stay available on request. We'll count cups used and leftover supplies after the event and compare with last time before deciding whether to keep the change. We're not claiming it saves money yet.

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 a student government events committee proposing one purchasing change for campus or club events. Use the Common Room supply list as the model, and include a measurement plan that states its boundary.

Use: Case documents: the screening supply list, the parts order, the city's accepted-materials list and Dec's and Anika's statements. Real sources: EPA's waste management hierarchy, the FTC Green Guides section on recyclable claims and NPR's report on disability and straw bans (July 11, 2018).

You'll make: Memo, 300—400 words, with a materials table

Time: 75 minutes

1. Fill in the materials sheet from Evidence A: item, number used, reduction option, disposal rule, trade-off.
2. Choose one purchasing change high on the EPA hierarchy.
3. Write your boundary: what your comparison counts and what it leaves out.
4. Draft your memo of 300 to 400 words. Start on the Your draft page.
5. Add a line that keeps disposable items available for people who need them.
6. Check your memo with the questions on the Check your work page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Materials table, using the screening as a model

Cups, about 120, reuse, not accepted. Plates, 80, reduce, not listed. Flyers, 150, reduce, not listed. Straws, 40, on request, not listed.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 12 min.

Say this

"The case gives you counts for one screening. What would you need to count on your own campus?" — Students who apply the memo to their campus check that campus's recycling list.

Watch for

Misconception: Students claim the "recyclable" label breaks the law. **Listen for:** "The cup company is breaking the FTC rules." **Then:** Ask what else they would need to know. The guide asks about established recycling programs, not one city.

Support

- Materials sheet: item, number used, reduction option, disposal rule, trade-off
- Boundary checklist: what the comparison counts and what it leaves out
- Plain paraphrase of the Green Guides row on recyclable claims
- Plain paraphrase of the Green Guides row: call a product recyclable only when recycling programs can collect and process it.

Stretch

- Explain why cups labeled "recyclable" can still be on the city's not-accepted list. Say what else you would need to know before claiming the label breaks the FTC guide.

Your task, continued

My purchasing change

Borrow washable cups instead of buying about 120 single-use cups.

Boundary: counted and left out

Counted: cups used and left over, water and time for washing. Left out: transport and where the trash goes.

Notes

This page continues page 267.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric; Problem Solving VALUE Rubric; Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Uses the supply list counts accurately: about 120 cups, 80 plates, 150 flyers and 40 straws on request
- Proposes a change high on the EPA hierarchy, such as reducing or reusing, and not only better sorting
- States the measurement boundary and what it leaves out, such as water and time for washing
- Checks disposal against the city's accepted-materials list
- Keeps an option for people who need disposable items, such as straws on request

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 25 minutes.

Your memo, first part, about 150 words

To: Events committee.

To: Events committee. Subject: One change for club events. We propose replacing single-use cups with borrowed washable cups at our next event. We used the Common Room screening as a model. It went through about 120 plastic-lined paper cups labeled “recyclable,” and the local list did not accept them. The EPA ranks source reduction and reuse above recycling, so cutting cups before they reach a bin is the stronger option. Our comparison counts cups used and left over, plus the water and time for washing. It leaves out transport and where the trash goes. Flexible straws and some disposable cups will stay available on request for anyone who needs them. We will report the counts after the event and make no claim about savings until then. Before our campus buys any new cup, we will check its own recycling list.

Pacing

Full chapter: 25 min.

Short on time: 25 min.

Say this

“Your committee will ask what this costs. Where does your memo answer that?” — Look for the boundary and the washing costs.

Watch for

Misconception: Memos promise savings. **Listen for:** “This will save the club money.” **Then:** Replace the promise with the count you will report after the event.

Support

- The overprinted sample holds the first part of the memo. Full memos run 300 to 400 words.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Checks disposal against the local list, not the label.
2. States the boundary before any claim.
3. Keeps the access option.
4. Applies the model to a campus without assuming its rules.

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 6 minutes.

Do your counts match the supply list?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your change sit high on the EPA hierarchy, not only better sorting?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you state your boundary before any claim of savings?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you keep an option for people who need disposable items?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No data.	☐ General claims about recycling.	☐ Uses quantities and local rules.	☐ Uses quantities, local rules and a before/after plan.
Reasoning	☐ Treats one fix as solving everything.	☐ Ignores trade-offs.	☐ Applies the hierarchy and names a trade-off.	☐ Weighs trade-offs including access and cost with a measurement boundary.
Audience & purpose	☐ Commands people.	☐ Relies on slogans.	☐ Specific change organizers can do.	☐ Specific, inclusive change with roles assigned.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Wording only.	☐ Narrows to a measurable change.	☐ Explains how narrowing makes success testable.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the Check your work questions only.

Say this

“Find the sentence that says what you will count. Is there a number in it?” — If not, that is the revision.

Watch for

Misconception: Proposals still promise savings. **Listen for:** “It will definitely save money.” **Then:** Ask what the crew has counted so far. Replace the promise with the count.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the counts match the supply list and that the boundary is stated before any claim of savings.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Uses quantities and local rules.
- **Reasoning:** Applies the hierarchy and names a trade-off.
- **Audience & purpose:** Specific change organizers can do.
- **Revision:** Narrows to a measurable change.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I moved the boundary sentence above the savings sentence, because the committee should know what we counted first.

Notes

This page continues page 270. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 270.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then complete each sentence frame below the questions. About 8 minutes.

1 **Could a change that reduces waste create an access problem for someone, and how would you find out?**

Yes. A ban on disposable cups or straws could shut out guests with disabilities, as the NPR straw reporting shows. The crew can offer items on request, say so clearly and ask guests privately what works.

2 **How does "add more bins" define the problem differently from "order less packaging"?**

The phrase "add more bins" treats waste as a sorting problem at the end, though the city would still reject the cups. The phrase "order less packaging" treats it as a buying problem, where source reduction, the EPA's first choice, applies.

3 **What would the crew need to count before saying a change saves money?**

They would count cups used and left over against about 120. They would also count the cost of borrowing and washing, including water and volunteer time, and state what the count leaves out.

My take

My claim: ___.

The crew should test washable cups at one screening, keep disposables on request and report only what it counted.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Use a number or a document in every answer." — Hear one answer per question, then ask for a different view.

Stretch

- Design the count sheet for the next screening: items, numbers before and after, and new costs.
- Going further: Compare two plans for the theater shop: order all the parts at once, or keep ordering when a part breaks. What problem does each plan solve? What new problem could each one create?
- Going further: List who would have to change a routine if the crew switched to washable cups. Write a two-sentence note to them. Say what the crew will count to show whether the change worked.
- Going further: Write two event plans for the next screening and a small test for each. After the tests, explain which plan you would improve and which you would drop.
- Going further: Pick one item that appears at many school events, such as cups, flyers or plates. Count how many were used last time, and check your city's recycling list. Do not sort through trash with your hands.
- Find your city's recycling rules and compare with a neighboring city
- Research where your area's trash goes after pickup

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The city list, because it shows the “recyclable” cups are not accepted where the crew lives.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Combining the parts orders would cut more packaging than any change to the cups.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

We have one supply list and one box, and no count of washing costs or where the trash goes.

I would change my mind if ___.

A count showed washing cost more than the cups it replaced, or guests could not use them.

Notes

This page continues page 272.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 1: Medium.** Students may describe their own disabilities or those of people they know.

Cool-down: Keep the talk to the case and the straw story. No one needs to say what they or anyone they know needs.

Talk about this case at home

Case 13: Can the crew cut waste before it reaches the bin?

In this case, a group of friends learns that the cups from their movie night can't be recycled in their city. Your student planned one change to cut waste before the next event and a way to count whether it worked.

Questions to talk about

1. How could someone find out what their city or town recycles?
2. What is one item people often throw away after a party or event?
3. Why might a rule to cut waste need an exception for some people?

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

See the case online.

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

"Bring this page home or read it with someone you trust." — Nobody needs to share personal needs or health information.

Case 14: Does giving credit let the crew use the song?

Content note

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

Overview

Students read a story in which Caio's film recap uses a sampled track and a six-second TikTok clip. Mateo wants to post it tonight with a credit in the caption. They separate attribution, permission and fair use, then apply the U.S. Copyright Office's four fair-use factors to the crew's planned use. They then complete a rights log and propose a licensed or original alternative.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- summarize an official source accurately
- keep a log of sources and permissions
- write a guide for a named group of readers

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- complete a rights log for one rough cut
- explain what a credit does and does not do
- describe the four fair-use factors the way the Copyright Office does
- point readers to licensed alternatives and to help, without promising a legal outcome

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- The Copyright Office's Fair Use Index overview and its Warhol v. Goldsmith summary
- Copyright Basics (Circular 1) from the Copyright Office
- NPR's report of February 1, 2024, on TikTok and UMG

The task in this edition

Task: Write a rights-clearance guide for a community film night or a student film club, using Caio's rough cut as the worked example. The guide shows how to fill in a rights log, what a credit does and does not do, and where to get help.

Students make: Guide, 400—500 words, with a completed rights log for the rough cut

Pacing

Opener (page 275): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud.

Key terms (pages 276 and 277): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud; skip the first-guess box.

Look at the evidence (page 282): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Look at the evidence (page 283): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Students fill in only the "What it shows" box.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 284 and 285): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip the In the news section.

Sort the evidence (page 286): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (pages 287 and 288): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 289 and 290): 15 min. Short on time: 15 min.

Your draft (page 291): 30 min. Short on time: 25 min. Students draft the rights log and credit sections in class and finish at home.

Check your work (pages 292 and 293): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions and skip the rubric.

Questions to discuss (pages 294 and 295): 10 min. Short on time: 3 min. Use question 2 as an exit ticket.

Talk about this case at home (page 296): at home.

Periods: full chapter 110 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 14 plan, continued

Standards

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students record where each outside element came from and what permission it has (Access and Use Information Ethically and Legally).

Information Has Value Information has value, including as a means to influence people, so credit, access and privacy matter. In this case: Students explain why credit, a license and fair use answer different questions about someone else's work.

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 practical guide for club members with a worked example (Genre and Disciplinary Conventions).

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. In this case: Students weigh the film's needs against the interests of the recording artist and the TikTok creator (Ethical Issue Recognition).

Codes of ethics

- **AIGA Standards of Professional Practice:** The designer's responsibility to other designers
- **RTDNA Code of Ethics:** Independence and transparency
- **PRSA Code of Ethics:** Competition

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 275):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 276 and 277):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 282):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 283):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 284 and 285):** Low

■□□ **Sort the evidence (page 286):** Low

■□□ **Practice (pages 287 and 288):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 292 and 293):** Low

Try it at your school

Start a rights log for your next project.

- List every outside clip, image, sound and quote before you edit
- Record the source and the license or permission for each
- Use your school's licensed media or openly licensed libraries when you can
- Ask your media teacher or librarian about uses you're unsure of

Try it at your school, continued

Who to ask: School librarian or media specialist, a media or film teacher, a college library's copyright help page

Safety: Don't share other people's creative work as your own. If you get a takedown notice, talk with a trusted adult before responding.

Sources

- NPR, "TikTok removes music from UMG artists, including Olivia Rodrigo and Taylor Swift," February 1, 2024
- U.S. Copyright Office, "Fair Use Index," No date listed

Case 14: Does giving credit let the crew use the song?

Mateo wants to post the crew's film tonight and credit the song's artist, but Caio wants to check the license first.

On your own Read What happened and underline the two pieces of the film that the crew did not make. About 5 minutes.

Caio, Mateo and Rafa laugh as they look at photos on a small digital camera.

Your role: You're the one who fills in the rights log before the film goes up. **New skill:** Check permission, not just credit.

What happened

It is Friday night, and Caio, 24, is editing the crew's festival film. The film is a short recap made from crew footage and interviews. At 9:40 p.m., he saves a rough cut. For 20 seconds, a released song plays under the setup montage. Caio pitched the song up slightly, and the song sets the mood for the whole scene.

The cut borrows one more piece. From 1:40 to 1:46, it shows a six-second clip downloaded from a TikTok post. That post used Stitch, TikTok's remix tool. The crew did not make the song or the clip.

At 10:02 p.m., Mateo texts the crew chat: "We'll credit them in the caption. Post tonight?" He wants the film online tonight. Caio asks what the credit gets them, and Mateo does not have an answer. Caio wants to check the license before they post.

Your question: Does a credit give the crew permission to use the song, and what should they do before they post?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud.

Say this

"Mateo wants to post tonight with a credit in the caption. Is that enough?" — Hold a quick thumbs-up or thumbs-down vote. Do not settle it yet.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat credit as permission. **Listen for:** "They gave credit, so it's fine." **Then:** Ask what question a credit answers. Write "Who made it?" and "Who said yes?" on the board.

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 5 minutes.

Attribution Attribution is naming the person who made a work, such as a song, a photo or a video.

En español: atribución

In this case: Mateo's plan, "We'll credit them in the caption," would name the artist. It answers who made the song, not whether the crew may use it.

License A license is permission from a rights holder to use a work under specific terms.

En español: licencia

In this case: The rights log says "permission unknown" for both borrowed pieces. A license from each owner would fill in that column.

Fair use Fair use is a part of U.S. copyright law that allows some uses without permission, judged case by case with four factors.

En español: uso justo

In this case: The crew would weigh the four factors for 20 seconds of a released song used as background mood. No number of seconds settles it.

Who is involved

Caio

Editing the crew's festival film

"Twenty seconds of that song carries the whole montage. That's exactly why I can't just borrow it and hope."

Mateo

Wanted the film online tonight

"I really texted 'we'll credit them, post tonight?' Then Caio asked what the credit gets us. I didn't have an answer."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud; skip the first-guess box.

Say this

"Write your first guess now. You will check it against the evidence later." — First guesses stay private unless a student wants to share.

Watch for

Misconception: Students hear "fair use" as any use that seems fair. **Listen for:** "It's fair because they aren't making money." **Then:** Point to "judged case by case on four factors." Everyday fairness does not decide it.

Support

- Draw three boxes: credit, permission, fair use. Students add one detail from the case to each box.
- **Cognates:** attribution (atribución), license (licencia), permission (permiso), credit (crédito), music (música), original (original), factor (factor), purpose (propósito), market (mercado).

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, do you think a credit in the caption lets the crew use the song?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that it depends on the license, because naming an artist does not show that the owner agreed.

Notes

This page continues page 276. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 276.

Reading passage

Rights clearance for small productions

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

- **Attribution**: Attribution is naming the person who made a work, such as a song, a photo or a video.
- **License**: A license is permission from a rights holder to use a work under specific terms.
- **Fair use**: Fair use is a part of U.S. copyright law that allows some uses without permission, judged case by case with four factors.
- **Disclosure**: A disclosure is a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know.

The story: Two borrowed elements

Caio, 24, is editing the crew's festival film, a short recap of footage and interviews. His Friday rough cut, saved at 9:40 p.m., includes two elements the crew did not create. The first is 20 seconds of a released song, pitched up slightly, running from 0:18 to 0:38 under the setup montage. It sets the tone for the scene. The second is a six-second clip, from 1:40 to 1:46, downloaded from a TikTok post that used Stitch, the platform's remix feature.

At 10:02 p.m., Mateo, 22, proposes a common solution. The crew will credit the artists in the caption and post that night. Caio responds with the question the case is built around. What does the credit get them? Mateo concedes he has no answer. By Saturday, he has revised his view on both elements. He recalls the 2024 TikTok music blackout, in which no one had failed to credit Taylor Swift, and he recognizes that an in-app remix permission may not extend to an off-platform screening. He moves both items to the rights log as unknowns.

Your role is to fill in the rights log before the film goes up.

Stop and think. Why do people so often treat attribution as if it were permission?

Three concepts, three questions

Rights clearance begins by separating concepts that everyday language merges. **Attribution** is naming the person who made a work, such as a song, a photo or a video.

Pacing

Reading: about 6 min (775 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: Two borrowed elements":** Why do people so often treat attribution as if it were permission?
2. **After "Three concepts, three questions":** How did the Warhol decision change the weight of the purpose factor for creators who remix?
3. **After "Markets, doctrine and codes":** When a deadline is soft, why is substitution often better than a fair-use argument?

Three concepts, three questions, continued

A **license** is permission from a rights holder to use a work under specific terms. **Fair use** is a part of U.S. copyright law that allows some uses without permission, judged case by case with four factors. Attribution answers who made something. A license answers whether the owner agreed to this use. Fair use asks whether the law permits the use anyway.

The case builds on earlier skills. From Case 1, the rights log traces each element to its source, maker and permission status, with a date. From Case 8, a **disclosure**, a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know, shows how honesty and authorization differ. Crediting an artist is a kind of disclosure, and it transfers no rights. From Case 12, the method of weighing facts against a legal standard applies to fair use, which works through factors rather than bright lines.

Applied to the song, the four factors are the purpose of the use, the nature of the original work, the amount used and the effect on the original's market. The purpose is atmosphere in a recap, the original is a creative recording, the amount is 20 seconds and the market effect is uncertain. A pitch shift does not change the purpose, and the Copyright Office is clear that no number of seconds is automatically safe. Even a short part can weigh against fair use if it is the most recognizable part of the work. The TikTok clip raises a separate question, the scope of the creator's consent. Stitch permission operates inside TikTok. Whether it reaches a downloaded clip in a film shown elsewhere is exactly what the rights log marks as unknown.

Caio's decision reflects professional practice. When clearance is uncertain and the deadline is soft, substitute. The crew can use a library track with clear license terms or a drum loop recorded by Dec that the crew owns, and publish Sunday.

Stop and think. How did the Warhol decision change the weight of the purpose factor for creators who remix?

Markets, doctrine and codes

Platform licensing is contractual and can change without notice to users. When UMG's agreement with TikTok expired in February 2024, videos using its artists' recordings went silent (NPR, February 1, 2024). Coverage explained the licensing structure behind the songs creators use (Christian Science Monitor, February 6, 2024), and later research examined the effects of the roughly three-month blackout (Harvard Business School Working Knowledge, March 5, 2025).

The Supreme Court's decision in Andy Warhol Foundation v. Goldsmith emphasized the first factor. A new work used for substantially the same purpose as the original was not fair use, despite its artistic changes (NPR, May 18, 2023; U.S. Copyright Office summary, 2023). The Copyright Office's Fair Use Index notes that educational purpose does not make a use automatically fair (U.S.

This page continues page 278. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 278.

Markets, doctrine and codes, continued

Copyright Office, updated July 2026). Its Circular 1 explains what copyright covers and who owns a song or a recording (U.S. Copyright Office, September 2021).

Professional codes align with the law. PRSA members commit to "preserve intellectual property rights in the marketplace" (PRSA Code of Ethics, October 2000). The AIGA standards bar designers from accepting instructions that involve "infringement of another person's property rights without permission" (AIGA Standards of Professional Practice, no date listed). The RTDNA code calls use "without attribution or permission" plagiarism (RTDNA Code of Ethics, June 11, 2015). Note the "or." Attribution and permission are separate obligations, which is the lesson Mateo learns.

Stop and think. When a deadline is soft, why is substitution often better than a fair-use argument?

Sources

Real source | NPR | February 1, 2024
TikTok removes music from UMG artists, including Olivia Rodrigo and Taylor Swift

Real source | The Christian Science Monitor | February 6, 2024
How Universal's licensing pullout is affecting music on TikTok

Real source | Harvard Business School Working Knowledge | March 5, 2025
What Happened When TikTok Songs Went Silent for Three Months

Real source | NPR | May 18, 2023
Supreme Court sides against Andy Warhol Foundation in copyright infringement case

Real source | U.S. Copyright Office | 2023
Andy Warhol Found. for the Visual Arts, Inc. v. Goldsmith (Fair Use Index summary)

Real source | U.S. Copyright Office | July 2026
Fair Use Index

Real source | U.S. Copyright Office | September 2021
Copyright Basics (Circular 1)

Real source | Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) | 2000
PRSA Code of Ethics

Real source | AIGA, the professional association for design | No date listed
AIGA Standards of Professional Practice

This page continues page 278. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 278.

Sources, continued

Real source | Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) | 2015

RTDNA Code of Ethics

Notes

This page continues page 278. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 278.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document, then fill in both boxes under it. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Edit timeline

Caio's rough cut, Friday, 9:40 p.m.

0:00—0:18 crew footage, no music. 0:18—0:38 sampled track, pitched up slightly, under the setup montage. 0:38—1:52 crew footage and interviews. 1:40—1:46 a 6-second clip downloaded from a stitched TikTok post.

Look closely: Which two parts of the cut did the crew not make?

What it shows

Two borrowed pieces: 20 seconds of a pitched-up song and a stitched TikTok clip.

What it leaves out

The owners, any license terms and which part of the song the 20 seconds use.

Evidence B | Group-chat message

Mateo's message, Friday, 10:02 p.m.

We'll credit them in the caption. Post tonight?

Look closely: Which question does the caption answer? Which question does it skip?

What it shows

Mateo treats a caption credit as enough to post the film tonight.

What it leaves out

Any sign that the song's owner gave permission for this use.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Put your finger on each row of the rights log. Which column says "unknown"?" — Wait for "permission or license" in both rows.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the pitch change makes the song the crew's own. **Listen for:** "They changed it, so it's theirs now." **Then:** Ask what the change added. The song is still recognizable, and nobody gave permission.

Support

- Reduce the work to one element, the song, for students who need it.
- Read the timeline aloud and list each borrowed piece on the board.
- **Cognates:** attribution (atribución), license (licencia), permission (permiso), credit (crédito), music (música), original (original), factor (factor), purpose (propósito), market (mercado).

Stretch

- Ask why Stitch permission inside TikTok may not cover the same clip in a festival film.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Rights log

Rights log, started Saturday morning

Columns: element, who made it, where it came from, permission or license and date. Row 1: setup-montage music, the recording artist, a streaming download, permission unknown. Row 2: 6-second clip, a TikTok creator, downloaded from TikTok, permission unknown.

Look closely: Which column says "unknown" in both rows?

What it shows

A record of each borrowed piece, its maker and where the crew got it.

What it leaves out

Any license, and what the TikTok creator agreed to when posting.

What is still missing from the evidence?

Whether the track has any license that covers this use, which part of the song the 20 seconds come from, where the film will be shown, and what the TikTok creator agreed to when the clip was posted.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Students fill in only the "What it shows" box.

Say this

"Put your finger on each row of the rights log. Which column says "unknown"?" — Wait for "permission or license" in both rows.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the pitch change makes the song the crew's own. **Listen for:** "They changed it, so it's theirs now." **Then:** Ask what the change added. The song is still recognizable, and nobody gave permission.

Support

- Reduce the work to one element, the song, for students who need it.
- Read the timeline aloud and list each borrowed piece on the board.
- **Cognates:** attribution (atribución), license (licencia), permission (permiso), credit (crédito), music (música), original (original), factor (factor), purpose (propósito), market (mercado).

Stretch

- Ask why Stitch permission inside TikTok may not cover the same clip in a festival film.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: fair use

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

Credit and permission answer different questions. **Attribution** is naming the person who made a work, such as a song, a photo or a video. It answers the question "Who made this?" A **license** is permission from a rights holder to use a work under specific terms. It answers another question: "Did the owner say yes to this use?" Mateo's caption would give attribution. It would not give the crew a license.

Without a license, the crew could ask whether the use is fair use. **Fair use** is a part of U.S. copyright law that allows some uses without permission, judged case by case with four factors. The U.S. Copyright Office names the four factors. They are the purpose of the use, the nature of the original work, the amount used and the effect on the original's market. No number of seconds is automatically safe. Even a short part can count against fair use if it is the most recognizable part of the song.

Platform tools come with their own limits. Stitch lets people remix another person's video inside TikTok. That permission does not automatically cover a downloaded clip in a film shown somewhere else. Using music the crew records, or a track with a clear license, can avoid the fair-use question. Caio's two backup plans follow this idea: a library track with clear terms, or a drum loop that Dec records.

Professional standards

Real source | **AIGA, the professional association for design**

AIGA Standards of Professional Practice: The designer's responsibility to other designers

"A professional designer shall not accept instructions from a client that involve infringement of another person's property rights without permission"

In plain words: Designers who belong to AIGA agree not to use other people's creative work without permission, even when a client asks.

Question: The rights log says "permission unknown" for the track and the TikTok clip. What does Caio need for each row?

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"Credit answers one question and a license answers another. Which question does each answer?" — Accept "who made it" and "did the owner say yes."

"The AIGA code says not to use someone's work without permission. What would Caio need?" — Wait for "a license for each row."

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the AIGA code as a law.
Listen for: "The crew could get arrested for breaking it."
Then: Say: "A code of ethics is a standard a profession sets for its members. AIGA's code binds its members, not the crew."

Support

- Read the code quotation aloud. Point out the label: it is a real source, quoted word for word.

Stretch

- Compare the RTDNA line, which calls using work without attribution or permission plagiarism. Why does it name both?

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Caio needs ___, because ___.

Caio needs a license or permission from each owner, with its terms and date, because a credit line fills neither column.

In the news

Real source | CrashCourse (YouTube) | May 7, 2015

Copyright, Exceptions, and Fair Use: Crash Course Intellectual Property #3

Explains why giving credit is not the same as permission, and how fair use is weighed.

Real source | NPR | May 18, 2023

Supreme Court sides against Andy Warhol Foundation in copyright infringement case

Even a famous artist's new version wasn't fair use when it served the same purpose as the original.

Notes

This page continues page 284. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 284.

Sort the evidence

On your own Match each piece of evidence to the claim it supports, challenges or narrows. About 8 minutes.

Test the crew's two assumptions against the sources. Which evidence knocks each one down, and what single check could still make the plan work?

Evidence	**Claim 1** Crediting the artist makes the use okay.	**Claim 2** Twenty seconds is short enough to be fair use.
1 Credit names the creator but grants no permission	Challenges	Neither
2 Copyright Office: no formula makes a set amount safe; the heart of a work matters	Neither	Challenges
3 The sample is background mood, not commentary on the song	Neither	Challenges
4 Stitch permission applies inside TikTok, not to a downloaded clip in another film	Narrows	Neither

Still open

- Does any license cover this use? Check before posting.

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 owners of the song and the clip. I would ask each one what their terms allow outside TikTok, such as a festival screening.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Which piece of evidence challenges the idea that credit is enough?" — Model the first row together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students mark Stitch permission as proof the clip is fine to use. **Listen for:** "TikTok lets you stitch, so it's allowed." **Then:** Stitch works inside TikTok. It narrows the claim; it does not settle the festival use.

Support

- Let students write S, C or N in each box before they write sentences.

Heat check

Low.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the plan you would pick and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

Caio's cut uses about 20 seconds of a released song as background mood for the crew's festival film. Mateo texts, "We'll credit them in the caption. Post tonight?" Which plan should the crew choose?

- [ ] **A** Credit the artist in the caption and post tonight.
- [x] **B** Pause the upload. Check the track's license, and swap in licensed or original music if the license does not cover this use.
- [ ] **C** Cut the song to ten seconds, since short clips are fair use.

Why I chose it

B. A answers only who made the song, and C rests on a myth about seconds. B checks the license and plans licensed or original music if it fails.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

We're good to post! (1) We only used like 20 seconds of the song and we're putting the artist's name in the caption so they get credit. Plus it's not like we're making money off it, it's just for our page. (2) Everyone uses songs like this on TikTok anyway so it's fine. We even changed the pitch a little so it's basically our own version now, and the whole cut is under two minutes. If they don't like it they can just ask us to take it down.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"It is 10:02 p.m. and Mateo wants to post. Which plan do you choose?" — Hold a vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose the ten-second plan. **Listen for:** "Ten seconds is always fair use." **Then:** Ask where the Copyright Office names a safe number of seconds. It names none.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Improve a draft, continued

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

Rewrite phrase 1

We used 20 seconds for mood, with no commentary. Length alone does not decide fair use.

Rewrite phrase 2

In-app licenses cover in-app sounds, not a downloaded track at a festival.

Notes

This page continues page 287.

Answer key

A revised version: Plan: we're pausing the upload tonight. We used about 20 seconds of the song as background mood, which isn't commentary on the song, and crediting the artist doesn't give us permission. We'll try two options. First, Caio will check whether the track has a license that covers this use. If not, we'll swap in a track from a library with a clear license, or Dec will record a short drum loop we own. We'll keep a rights log with the source, license and date for every clip and sound, then post by Sunday.

Other notes on the draft:

- "putting the artist's name in the caption" Good practice, but credit isn't permission.
- "it's not like we're making money off it" Noncommercial use is one consideration, not an automatic yes.
- "they can just ask us to take it down" That puts the risk on the artist. Check first.

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 15 minutes.

Write a rights-clearance guide for a community film night or a student film club, using Caio's rough cut as the worked example. The guide shows how to fill in a rights log, what a credit does and does not do, and where to get help.

Use: Case documents: Caio's rough-cut timeline, Mateo's message, Caio's statement and the rights log template. Real sources: the Copyright Office's Fair Use Index overview, its Warhol v. Goldsmith summary (2023), Copyright Basics (Circular 1) and NPR's report on TikTok and UMG (February 2024).

You'll make: Guide, 400—500 words, with a completed rights log for the rough cut

Time: 75 minutes

1. Fill in the rights log for Caio's rough cut, starting with the two rows in Evidence C.
2. Write one sentence on what a credit does and one on what it does not do.
3. Summarize the four fair-use factors from the Copyright Office page in your own words.
4. Draft the rights log and credit sections of your guide on the Your draft page.
5. List where readers can get help: a media teacher, a librarian or a copyright help page.
6. Finish a guide of 400 to 500 words on lined paper or in the online workspace.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Row 1: element, time and who made it

Montage music, 0:18—0:38.
The recording artist.

Row 1: source and permission

Streaming download.
Permission unknown.

Pacing

Full chapter: 15 min.

Short on time: 15 min.

Say this

"Your readers run a film night. What must they fill in before the screening?" — Build the rights log columns on the board.

Watch for

Misconception: Guides treat a credit line as clearance. **Listen for:** "Just credit everyone in the program." **Then:** Point to the permission column. A credit fills only the "who made it" column.

Support

- Rights log with the case's two rows started
- Sorting chart: attribution, permission, fair use
- Help list from the case: a media teacher, a librarian and a college library's copyright help page
- Help frame: "If you are unsure about a piece, ask ___."

Stretch

- Explain why permission to Stitch inside TikTok does not cover downloading the clip for a festival film. Say what the 2024 licensing dispute shows about platform permission changing.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Information Literacy VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric; Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Information Has Value.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Your task, continued

Row 2: element, time and who made it

Six-second clip, 1:40—1:46. A TikTok creator.

Row 2: source and permission

Downloaded from TikTok. Permission unknown.

A licensed or original alternative for the montage

A library track with clear terms, or a drum loop Dec records.

Notes

This page continues page 289.

Answer key

A strong response:

- The rights log lists the track at 0:18—0:38 and the clip at 1:40—1:46, with permission marked unknown until confirmed
- Says a credit names the creator but does not give permission
- Describes the four fair-use factors the way the Copyright Office does, with no safe number of seconds
- Offers a licensed or original alternative for the montage music
- Promises no legal outcome and points readers to help

Your draft

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

First draft: how to fill in a rights log

Before a screening or an upload, list every piece of the film your club did not make. Caio's rough cut has two. The montage music runs from 0:18 to 0:38, and a six-second TikTok clip runs from 1:40 to 1:46. For each piece, record who made it, where it came from, the permission or license and the date you checked. Mark permission "unknown" until someone confirms it. A piece marked "unknown" is not ready to show.

First draft: what a credit does and does not do

A credit names the creator. It answers the question "Who made this?" It does not answer "Did the owner say yes to this use?" Only a license or permission does that. Platform permission has limits too. Stitch lets people remix inside TikTok, but it may not cover a downloaded clip in a festival film. In February 2024, when UMG's license with TikTok expired, videos using its artists' songs went silent. Permission can change, so date every entry.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 25 min. Students draft the rights log and credit sections in class and finish at home.

Say this

"A guide gives steps a reader can follow. Could a club member use yours without you there?" — Partners test each guide on the rough cut.

Watch for

Misconception: Guides give a safe number of seconds. **Listen for:** "Keep clips under 10 seconds." **Then:** Ask where the Copyright Office names that number. It names none.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Keeps the log honest about what the club does not know.
2. Separates credit from permission in plain words.
3. Draws a practical rule from the 2024 licensing dispute.

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 8 minutes.

Does your rights log list both borrowed pieces, with permission marked unknown until confirmed?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your guide say what a credit does and does not do?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it describe the four factors as the Copyright Office does, with no safe number of seconds?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it offer an alternative and point readers to help, without promising a legal outcome?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Relies on myths.	☐ Cites credit as permission.	☐ Uses the four factors or license terms.	☐ Uses factors, license terms and platform differences.
Reasoning	☐ Assumes any use is fine.	☐ Applies one factor.	☐ Separates credit, permission and fair use.	☐ Weighs factors honestly and chooses a lower-risk path.
Audience & purpose	☐ Ignores the artist.	☐ Considers only the crew.	☐ Considers the artist and the audience.	☐ Balances creative goals with respect for the original creator.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Adds a credit.	☐ Replaces myths with a rights plan.	☐ Explains each step and a realistic alternative.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions and skip the rubric.

Say this

“Mark your level in each row. Then make one change and say why.” — Circulate and ask for one myth removed or one source added.

Watch for

Misconception: Students add a credit line and call it a revision. **Listen for:** “I added the artist’s name.” **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Adding a credit is level 2; a rights plan is level 3.

Heat check

■☐☐ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the rights log is complete and that the fair-use description matches the Copyright Office pages.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Uses the four factors or license terms.
- **Reasoning:** Separates credit, permission and fair use.
- **Audience & purpose:** Considers the artist and the audience.
- **Revision:** Replaces myths with a rights plan.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I changed “this guide keeps you legal” to a line that points readers to a librarian, because the guide cannot promise an outcome.

Notes

This page continues page 292. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 292.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete each sentence frame. About 10 minutes.

1 **Caio pitched the song up slightly. Does changing a song make it a new work? Why or why not?**

Not by itself. The pitch-shifted song stays recognizable and does the same job, setting a mood. The crew adds no commentary on the song.

2 **Mateo says the TikTok clip goes in the rights log as "unknown." What would the crew need to find out to fill in that row?**

The creator, the terms the clip was posted under and whether those terms reach a festival screening. If not, they need written permission or a new clip.

3 **Suppose a student used the same song in a video for class. What changes if that video becomes a public post?**

The audience and the market change. A public post can replace a license the artist might sell, and the platform's terms start to apply.

My take

My claim: ___.

The crew should hold the film until each borrowed piece has a license or is replaced.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The rights log, because it records two borrowed pieces and no permission for either.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Use question 2 as an exit ticket.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the evidence, not a rule you heard online." — Post the question numbers and collect one answer per question.

Stretch

- Compare Caio's two backup plans: a library track with clear terms or a drum loop Dec records. What does each need in the rights log?
- Going further: Apply the four fair-use factors to the six-second TikTok clip instead of the song. Which factor is hardest to judge, and why?
- Going further: Sketch two short storyboards of the setup montage: one with the sampled song and one with licensed or original music. Compare what each version makes viewers feel and what each one needs before it can be posted.
- Going further: Choose a sound or clip you have seen reused in several online videos. Trace it back to the earliest post you can find. Write a credit line for it, and note whether that post says anything about permission.
- Going further: Before you edit your next video or slideshow, list every outside clip, image, sound and quote. Record the source and the license or permission for each one. Ask your school librarian or media teacher about any use you are unsure of.
- Compare Creative Commons license types and what each allows
- Research how your school's media policy handles copyrighted material

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

A short, noncommercial use for mood could pass the four-factor test.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

No document shows the license terms or which part of the song the 20 seconds use.

I would change my mind if ___.

The track's license turned out to cover festival screenings.

Notes

This page continues page 294.

Heat check

■□□ **Question 1: Low.**

Talk about this case at home

Case 14: Does giving credit let the crew use the song?

In this case, a group of friends wants to post a short film that uses 20 seconds of a released song. Your student compared giving credit with getting permission, then planned what the crew should do before posting.

Questions to talk about

1. What is the difference between giving credit and getting permission?
2. Why might a short part of a song still need permission?
3. Where could a student find music they have permission to use?

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

See the case online.

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

“Share this page at home, or read it with an adult you trust.” — Nobody needs to share a personal story to complete it.

Case 15: Is Rafa's unpaid internship really a job?

Content note

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

Overview

Students read a story in which a studio offers Rafa an unpaid summer internship running its inbox. The studio says college credit makes it legal. They read the listing, the studio's reply and Gia's questions, and they apply the seven factors in the Department of Labor's Fact Sheet #71. They then write Rafa's email asking the studio about the learning plan and supervision.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- apply a multi-factor test to one example
- write a memo for an office with its own rules
- turn advice into a short checklist

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- apply the seven factors to the studio's listing and reply accurately
- flag displacement and explain what academic credit does not settle
- recommend questions a career center can ask employers, without legal rulings
- build a student checklist that includes opportunity cost

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Fact Sheet #71 from the U.S. Department of Labor
- NACE's principle on complying with laws and its internship reports from 2016 and 2023
- The factor chart and memo planner on the task page

The task in this edition

Task: Write a memo to the campus career center about unpaid internship listings on its job board, using the studio's listing as the example. Add a one-page checklist students can use before they accept an unpaid offer.

Students make: Memo, 300—400 words, plus a one-page checklist

Pacing

Opener (page 297): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud.

Key terms (pages 298 and 299): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud; skip the first-guess box.

Look at the evidence (page 303): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Look at the evidence (page 304): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Students fill in only the "What it shows" box.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 305 and 306): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip the In the news section.

Sort the evidence (page 307): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 308): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 309 and 310): 15 min. Short on time: 15 min.

Your draft (page 311): 30 min. Short on time: 25 min. Students draft the example and questions sections in class and finish at home.

Check your work (pages 312 and 313): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions and skip the rubric.

Questions to discuss (pages 314 and 315): 10 min. Short on time: 3 min. Use question 3 as an exit ticket.

Talk about this case at home (page 316): at home.

Periods: full chapter 110 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 15 plan, continued

Standards

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students apply a federal fact sheet to one listing and cite it accurately (Use Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose).

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 for a campus office and a checklist for students (Context of and Purpose for Writing).

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. In this case: Students weigh the studio's claim about credit against the effect on students who cannot work for free (Ethical Issue Recognition).

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 compare the studio's legal claim with the Department of Labor's own guidance.

Standards, continued

Information Has Value Information has value, including as a means to influence people, so credit, access and privacy matter. In this case: Students use NACE's reports on paid and unpaid internships to show what an unpaid role costs in time and paid hours.

Codes of ethics

- **NACE Principles for Ethical Professional Practice:** 4. Comply with laws
- **ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct:** Rule 4.1 Truthfulness in Statements to Others
- **ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct:** Rule 4.3 Dealing with Unrepresented Person

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 297):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 298 and 299):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 303):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 304):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 305 and 306):** Low

■□□ **Sort the evidence (page 307):** Low

■□□ **Practice (page 308):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 312 and 313):** Low

Try it at your school

Ask what the work is before you accept it.

Try it at your school, continued

- Before accepting any internship, ask for duties, hours, supervision and pay in writing
- Take the offer to your school counselor or college career center
- Check your state labor department's page on minimum wage and youth work
- Compare the offer with your other commitments before deciding

Who to ask: School counselor, college career center, work-permit officer where your state uses them, state labor department

Safety: If you're under 18, federal and state rules limit hours and certain jobs. Involve a trusted adult before accepting any work arrangement.

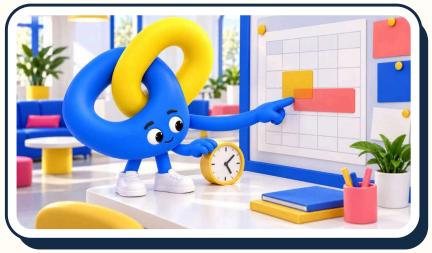
Sources

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, via Justia, "Glatt v. Fox Searchlight Pictures," 2016
- U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, "Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act," No date listed

Case 15: Is Rafa's unpaid internship really a job?

A studio offers Rafa an unpaid summer internship running its customer inbox and says college credit makes it legal.

On your own Read What happened and underline what Rafa would do all summer. About 5 minutes.



Nexo, one of the crew's companions, points to where a meeting and a work shift overlap on a calendar. Rafa's internship would take time from his shifts at the family shop.

Your role: You're the one who checks each factor of the test before Rafa says yes. **New skill:** Apply a legal test factor by factor.

What happened

Rafa, 18, is a first-year college student who commutes to class and helps at his family's shop. In April, a studio posted a listing on the campus job board for a "Summer Editing Intern." The internship is unpaid. The listing says the intern will run the customer inbox all summer. Rafa reads it twice, looking for the editing.

On Tuesday at 11:20 a.m., the studio answers Rafa's message. The email says college credit makes it "totally legal" not to pay him. It also asks him to start right after finals.

At lunch, Rafa talks it over with Gia, who fits café shifts around her classes. Gia asks whether the studio paid someone to run the inbox last year. Rafa says the studio's assistant ran it. Taking the internship would also cost Rafa paid shifts at the shop. He has not said yes yet.

Your question: Is the internship mainly training for Rafa or unpaid work for the studio, and what should he ask before he decides?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud.

Say this

"The job title says "Editing Intern." What would you expect to do all summer?" — Collect two or three answers, then read the listing.

Watch for

Misconception: Students trust the job title. **Listen for:** "It says editing, so he'll learn editing." **Then:** Ask them to find "editing" in the list of duties. It appears only in the title.

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 5 minutes.

Primary beneficiary test The primary beneficiary test is how the U.S. Department of Labor decides whether an intern at a for-profit company is an employee.

En español: prueba del beneficiario principal

In this case: The studio gets its customer inbox answered all summer. Rafa asks what he would learn and who would train him.

Fair Labor Standards Act The Fair Labor Standards Act is a federal law that sets minimum wage and overtime rules for most workers.

En español: Ley de Normas Justas de Trabajo

In this case: If Rafa counts as an employee under this law, the studio must pay him at least the minimum wage.

Academic credit Academic credit is credit toward a degree that a school gives for approved work, such as an internship.

En español: créditos académicos

In this case: The studio says credit makes the unpaid role "totally legal." Credit is one factor out of seven.

Who is involved

Rafa
Offered an unpaid summer internship

"The listing says 'Summer Editing Intern.' Then it says I'd run the customer inbox all summer. I read it twice looking for the editing."

Gia
Talking the offer over with Rafa

"I almost said 'take it, it'll look good.' Easy for me to say. I'm not the one giving up a summer."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud; skip the first-guess box.

Say this

"Write your first guess now. You will check it against the evidence later." — First guesses stay private unless a student wants to share.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the test asks whether Rafa likes the job. **Listen for:** "He benefits if he enjoys it." **Then:** Reread the term. The test asks who mainly benefits: the intern's learning or the employer's work.

Support

- Give factor cards with an icon and one line each: training, credit, school calendar, length, paid work.
- **Cognates:** academic (académico), credit (crédito), employee (empleado), supervision (supervisión), beneficiary (beneficiario), factor (factor), minimum (mínimo), experience (experiencia).

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, is Rafa's offer more like training or more like a job?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is a job, because running an inbox all summer sounds like regular work.

Notes

This page continues page 298. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 298.

Reading passage

Unpaid internships and the primary beneficiary test

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

- **Primary beneficiary test**: The primary beneficiary test is how the U.S. Department of Labor decides whether an intern at a for-profit company is an employee.
- **Fair Labor Standards Act**: The Fair Labor Standards Act is a federal law that sets minimum wage and overtime rules for most workers.
- **Academic credit**: Academic credit is credit toward a degree that a school gives for approved work, such as an internship.
- **Compensation**: Compensation is all the pay and benefits a worker receives, including hourly rates, bonuses and overtime.

The story: A legal conclusion in a recruiting email

A studio posts a "Summer Editing Intern (unpaid)" listing on a campus job board. The advertised benefits are exposure to the industry and available college credit. The listed duties are running the customer inbox all summer and helping with client files. Rafa, 18, a first-year commuter who works at his family's shop, reads it twice and cannot find the editing.

The studio's reply to his inquiry contains a legal conclusion: because interns receive college credit, it is "totally legal" not to pay. The case invites students to treat that sentence the way a lawyer or a careful journalist would. It is a claim, offered by an interested party, about a test the studio does not name.

Rafa's research on the train reveals that credit is one factor among seven. A conversation with Gia adds a decisive fact. The inbox was run last year by a paid assistant. Gia also models two useful disciplines. She counts the costs of the offer, lost shifts, commuting and a summer without income. And she declines to overstate. She cannot say the internship is illegal. She can say which questions remain unanswered.

Your role is to check each factor of the test before Rafa says yes.

Stop and think. Why is "this internship is illegal" as unsupported as "this internship is totally legal"?

Pacing

Reading: about 6 min (755 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A legal conclusion in a recruiting email":** Why is "this internship is illegal" as unsupported as "this internship is totally legal"?
2. **After "Applying a flexible standard":** How does a flexible, multi-factor test shift power between employers and interns compared with a bright-line rule?
3. **After "Litigation, inequity and professional ethics":** NACE data link paid internships to more job offers. What does that suggest about who benefits from unpaid ones?

Applying a flexible standard

The **primary beneficiary test** is how the U.S. Department of Labor decides whether an intern at a for-profit company is an employee. It asks whether the intern or the employer is the primary beneficiary of the relationship. An intern who is an employee must be paid under the **Fair Labor Standards Act**, a federal law that sets minimum wage and overtime rules for most workers. The Department's seven factors include educational training and ties to coursework or **academic credit**. They also include accommodation of the academic calendar, a limited duration tied to learning and whether the work complements or displaces paid employees. Academic credit is credit toward a degree that a school gives for approved work, such as an internship.

The new skill is applying a multi-factor test one factor at a time. It extends Case 12's analogical reasoning from precedent and Case 11's discipline of comparing like with like. Applied here, the analysis separates evidence from gaps. On displacement, the assistant's paid role last year is strong evidence. On academic credit, availability is asserted but unconfirmed. On training and supervision, the record is silent. On duration and calendar, the start date is known, but hours are not. Because the test is holistic and no factor controls, the defensible conclusion is limited. The studio's claim that credit makes nonpayment "totally legal" is unsupported. Whether Rafa would be an employee cannot be decided without more facts. The framework applies to for-profit employers, and state rules may differ.

Case 11's concept of **compensation**, all the pay and benefits a worker receives, frames the economics. The offer's compensation is zero, and Rafa would give up paid shifts. His written request for facts, covering training, a typical week, weekly hours and whether he would be doing the assistant's former job, is both prudent and the only way to apply the test.

Stop and think. How does a flexible, multi-factor test shift power between employers and interns compared with a bright-line rule?

Litigation, inequity and professional ethics

The Second Circuit's decision in Glatt v. Fox Searchlight Pictures anchors the modern test. Interns on the 2010 film Black Swan performed tasks the opinion lists, including answering phones, taking lunch orders, making coffee, photocopying and filing (U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, 2016). The court's 2015 ruling adopted the primary beneficiary question (LAist, July 2, 2015), and the Department of Labor now uses that test (U.S. Department of Labor, Fact Sheet #71, updated January 2018). Legal scholars have analyzed the test in detail (Harvard Law Review, February 9, 2016).

The policy stakes include access. Nearly half of U.S. interns were unpaid in 2022 (PBS NewsHour, August 26, 2023). NACE reports persistent inequity in who receives paid internships (National Association of Colleges and Employers, August 8, 2023). Earlier NACE data found that paid interns received more job offers than unpaid classmates (National Association of Colleges and Employers, March 23, 2016).

This page continues page 300. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 300.

Litigation, inequity and professional ethics, continued

On Capitol Hill, most summer interns have gone unpaid, which limits who can pursue those careers (NPR, July 25, 2017).

Professional standards apply to the studio's email. NACE asks employers to comply with laws "associated with local, state, and federal entities" (NACE Principles for Ethical Professional Practice, 2025). The ABA's model rules bar lawyers from knowingly making a false statement of material fact or law to a third person (ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct, 1983, as amended). A recruiting email is not legal advice, and Rafa is right to treat it as a claim.

Stop and think. NACE data link paid internships to more job offers. What does that suggest about who benefits from unpaid ones?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, via Justia | 2016
Glatt v. Fox Searchlight Pictures

Real source | LAist (AirTalk) | July 2, 2015
Appeals court reverses 'Black Swan' interns' victory over Fox

Real source | U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division | January 2018
Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act

Real source | Harvard Law Review | February 9, 2016
Glatt v. Fox Searchlight Pictures, Inc.

Real source | PBS NewsHour (YouTube) | August 26, 2023
Why unpaid internships still exist despite hardships for young workers

Real source | National Association of Colleges and Employers | August 8, 2023
The Class of 2023: Inequity Continues to Underpin Internship Participation and Pay Status

Real source | National Association of Colleges and Employers | March 23, 2016
Paid Interns/Co-ops See Greater Offer Rates and Salary Offers Than Their Unpaid Classmates

Real source | NPR | July 25, 2017
On Capitol Hill, Most Summer Interns Still Go Unpaid

Real source | National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) | 2025
NACE Principles for Ethical Professional Practice

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

This page continues page 300. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 300.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document, then fill in both boxes under it. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | **Job listing**

Studio listing on the campus job board, April

"Summer Editing Intern (unpaid). Join our fast-paced studio! You'll run the customer inbox all summer, help with client files and get great exposure to the industry. College credit available."

Look closely: Which words describe learning? Which words describe work?

What it shows

An "editing" title over a duty list led by the inbox, plus credit and "exposure."

What it leaves out

Training, supervision, hours and what editing, if any, the intern would do.

Evidence B | **Email**

Studio reply to Rafa, Tuesday, 11:20 a.m.

"Thanks for your interest, Rafa! Since interns get college credit, it's totally legal for us not to pay. We'd love for you to start right after finals."

Look closely: Is credit one factor or the whole test? What does the email skip?

What it shows

The studio treats one factor, credit, as if it settles the whole test.

What it leaves out

The other factors, and whether Rafa's school would grant credit at all.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Underline every task in the listing. Now circle the ones where Rafa learns." — Pause and ask what that tells them.

Watch for

Misconception: Students call the studio's email a lie. **Listen for:** "They're lying to him." **Then:** The email makes a claim. Ask which document could test it. Nobody knows what the studio believes.

Support

- Read the listing aloud and offer it on its own half-page.
- Reduce the factors to three: training, credit and paid work.
- **Cognates:** academic (académico), credit (crédito), employee (empleado), supervision (supervisión), beneficiary (beneficiario), factor (factor), minimum (mínimo), experience (experiencia).

Stretch

- Ask which factors the studio's email addresses and which it skips.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Chat

Gia and Rafa, Tuesday lunch

Gia: Didn't they pay someone to do the inbox last year?

Rafa: Yeah, their assistant.

Gia: And it's your summer, not theirs. What about your shifts at the shop?

Look closely: Who ran the customer inbox last year? Was that person paid?

What it shows

The intern would do work a paid assistant did last year: the displacement factor.

What it leaves out

The size of Rafa's cost: how many paid shop shifts he would lose.

What is still missing from the evidence?

What training and supervision the studio actually provides, how many hours a week the role takes, whether Rafa's school will grant credit, and how many paid shifts at the family shop Rafa would give up.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Students fill in only the "What it shows" box.

Say this

"Underline every task in the listing. Now circle the ones where Rafa learns." — Pause and ask what that tells them.

Watch for

Misconception: Students call the studio's email a lie. **Listen for:** "They're lying to him." **Then:** The email makes a claim. Ask which document could test it. Nobody knows what the studio believes.

Support

- Read the listing aloud and offer it on its own half-page.
- Reduce the factors to three: training, credit and paid work.
- **Cognates:** academic (académico), credit (crédito), employee (empleado), supervision (supervisión), beneficiary (beneficiario), factor (factor), minimum (mínimo), experience (experiencia).

Stretch

- Ask which factors the studio's email addresses and which it skips.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: the primary beneficiary test

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

A job title does not show how the work is arranged. The **primary beneficiary test** is how the U.S. Department of Labor decides whether an intern at a for-profit company is an employee. It asks whether the intern or the employer mainly benefits from an unpaid internship. An intern who counts as an employee must be paid under the **Fair Labor Standards Act**. The Fair Labor Standards Act is a federal law that sets minimum wage and overtime rules for most workers.

The Department of Labor's Fact Sheet #71 lists seven factors. They include training, links to coursework or **academic credit**, the school calendar and how long the learning lasts. Academic credit is credit toward a degree that a school gives for approved work, such as an internship. Another factor is whether the intern's work adds to paid employees' work or replaces it. The test is flexible, and no single factor decides it.

So the studio's email does not settle the question. Calling a job an internship does not decide it. Neither does college credit, or an intern agreeing to work for no pay. The test also has limits. It applies to for-profit employers, and state rules may differ. To apply the test, you need facts about the duties, training, supervision and hours.

Professional standards

Real source | National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

NACE Principles for Ethical Professional Practice: 4. Comply with laws

"Comply with laws ... associated with local, state, and federal entities"

In plain words: Career offices and employer recruiters who belong to NACE agree to follow federal, state and local laws.

Question: The campus job board lists the internship. What should the career office ask the studio about the seven DOL factors?

Your answer

Before posting, the career office should ask ___, because ___.

Before posting, the career office should ask how the role meets each factor, because the listing names credit but no training or supervision.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"The studio says one factor settles the test. What does the key idea say about a single factor?" — Wait for "no single factor decides it."

"The NACE principle asks career offices to follow the law. What should the office ask the studio?" — List answers on the board.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the NACE principles bind the studio. **Listen for:** "The studio broke the NACE code." **Then:** Say: "NACE's principles guide its members, career offices and employer recruiters. A code of ethics is not a law."

Support

- Read the code quotation aloud. Point out the label: it is a real source, quoted word for word, with a gap marked "...".

Stretch

- Try the ABA Rule 4.1 question: what does Fact Sheet #71 say about whether one factor, credit, decides the test?

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

In the news

Real source | PBS NewsHour (YouTube) | August 26, 2023

Why unpaid internships still exist despite hardships for young workers

Reports that nearly half of U.S. interns were unpaid in 2022 and who can afford to take those jobs.

Real source | NPR | May 18, 2013

Internships: Low-Paid, Unpaid Or Just Plain Illegal?

Explains when an unpaid internship can break wage law, using the 'Black Swan' intern lawsuit.

Notes

This page continues page 305. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 305.

Sort the evidence

On your own Match each piece of evidence to the claim it supports or challenges, and mark what is still unknown. About 8 minutes.

Test the studio's claim against the factor list. Which evidence points toward training, which toward a job, and what is still unknown?

Evidence	**Claim 1** College credit makes the unpaid internship legal.	**Claim 2** The role looks more like a job than training.
1 DOL: credit is one of seven factors, and no single factor decides	Challenges	Neither
2 The listing: Rafa runs the customer inbox all summer	Neither	Supports
3 A paid assistant ran the inbox last year	Neither	Supports
4 The role is openly unpaid and offers credit (factors 1 and 3)	Neither	Challenges

Still open

- Is there a learning plan, and who supervises?

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 ___.

Rafa's school. I would ask whether it would grant credit for this role, since the studio's whole argument rests on credit.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Some evidence points toward a job and some toward training. Find one of each." — Model the first row with the listing.

Watch for

Misconception: Students ignore the evidence that points toward an internship. **Listen for:** "Every single fact says it's a job." **Then:** Point to the unpaid label and the credit offer. A fair analysis counts evidence on both sides.

Support

- Let students write S, C or ? in each box before they write sentences.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Rafa should do next and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

The studio's unpaid internship has Rafa running its customer inbox all summer, the job a paid assistant did last year. The studio says college credit makes it legal. What should Rafa do next?

- ☐ **A** Accept the studio's answer, since college credit settles the question.
- ☑ **B** Ask for the learning plan, supervision, schedule and how the role relates to paid employees' work.
- ☐ **C** Tell the studio that unpaid internships are against the law.

Why I chose it

B. A lets one factor decide a flexible test, and C claims a rule the test does not contain. B asks for the facts each factor needs.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Hi, thanks so much for the offer! I'm really excited about this opportunity and I know it will look great on my résumé. I just wanted to ask ❶ if this is legal since it's unpaid? My friend said unpaid internships aren't allowed. Also how many hours is it? ❷ I can start whenever you need me. I really want to get into editing and this seems like a good way in. Let me know! Thank you again for thinking of me, Rafa

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Is there a written learning plan, and how much of a normal week is the customer inbox?

Rewrite phrase 2

I'll confirm a start date once I know the hours, the weeks and the supervision.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Rafa has the studio's email open. What should he do next?" — Hold a vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose to tell the studio the internship is illegal. **Listen for:** "Unpaid internships are against the law." **Then:** Ask where the evidence says that. The test depends on facts, so ask what facts Rafa needs first.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: Hi, thank you for the offer. Before I decide, could you help me understand the arrangement? What would a normal week look like, and how much of it is the customer inbox? Who would supervise and give feedback, and is there a written learning plan? How many hours per week, and for how many weeks? Does the role cover work a paid staff member did before? You mentioned college credit; I'm checking with my school about that. I also work at my family's shop, so I need to know the schedule before committing. Thanks, Rafa

Other notes on the draft:

- "I know it will look great on my résumé" Repeats the listing's pitch. What do you want to learn?

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 15 minutes.

Write a memo to the campus career center about unpaid internship listings on its job board, using the studio's listing as the example. Add a one-page checklist students can use before they accept an unpaid offer.

Use: Case documents: the studio listing and reply, Gia and Rafa's conversation and Rafa's statement. Real sources: the Department of Labor's Fact Sheet #71, NACE's principle on complying with laws and NACE's internship reports (2016 and 2023).

You'll make: Memo, 300—400 words, plus a one-page checklist

Time: 75 minutes

1. Fill in the factor chart: a question for the employer and what the listing says.
2. Mark the displacement evidence: a paid assistant ran the inbox last year.
3. Write the questions the career center can ask employers before posting a listing.
4. Draft the example and questions sections of your memo on the Your draft page.
5. Finish a memo of 300 to 400 words on lined paper or in the online workspace.
6. Add a one-page checklist students can use before they accept an unpaid offer.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Training: question for the employer	Credit: what the listing says
Who trains and supervises the intern? The listing does not say.	"College credit available." The reply treats credit as the whole test.

Pacing

Full chapter: 15 min.

Short on time: 15 min.

Say this

"The career center posted this listing. What could it have asked the studio first?" — List questions on the board and match each to a factor.

Watch for

Misconception: Memos ask the career center to judge legality. **Listen for:** "The career center should ban illegal internships." **Then:** Point to the challenge: ask employers questions without deciding legal questions.

Support

- Chart: each of the seven factors, a question for the employer and what the studio's listing says
- Memo template: purpose, example, recommendation, limits
- Opportunity-cost worksheet: the hours of paid work an internship would replace
- Checklist stem: "Before you say yes, ask ___."

Stretch

- Note that Fact Sheet #71 describes a test for for-profit employers in which no single factor decides. Explain what the career center can ask employers without deciding legal questions itself.

Your task, continued

Displacement: what the case shows

A paid assistant ran the inbox last year; the intern would run it now.

Opportunity cost: checklist line

How many paid hours or shifts would this internship replace?

Notes

This page continues page 309.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Information Literacy VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric; Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Information Has Value.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Applies the seven factors to the studio's listing and reply accurately
- Flags displacement: a paid assistant ran the inbox last year
- Explains that academic credit is one factor, not proof that an internship may be unpaid
- Recommends questions the career center can ask employers, not legal rulings
- The checklist includes opportunity cost, such as lost shifts at a paid job

Your draft

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

First draft: the studio's listing as an example

The studio's "Summer Editing Intern" listing shows why unpaid postings need review. The role is unpaid and offers college credit, which points toward an internship. Its main duty, though, is running the customer inbox all summer. A paid assistant ran that inbox last year, which points toward displacement. When a student asked, the studio replied that credit makes it "totally legal" not to pay. Fact Sheet #71 lists credit as one factor, and no single factor decides.

First draft: questions the career center can ask

The career center can ask employers these questions before it posts an unpaid listing. Who will train and supervise the intern? How many hours a week, and for how many weeks? Does the role cover work a paid employee did before? How is the role tied to coursework? These questions do not decide whether a role must be paid. They give students the facts the test uses, which fits NACE's principle on complying with laws.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 25 min. Students draft the example and questions sections in class and finish at home.

Say this

"Your reader works at the career center. What can they ask employers without making a legal ruling?" — Ask for questions an office could send this week.

Watch for

Misconception: Checklists skip the cost to the student.
Listen for: "The checklist is only about the employer."
Then: Ask what Rafa would give up. Add a line on lost paid hours.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Flags displacement with evidence from the case.
2. Explains what academic credit does not settle.
3. Keeps the career center out of legal rulings.

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 8 minutes.

Does your memo apply the factors to the listing and reply accurately?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it flag the displacement evidence?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it recommend questions, not legal rulings?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your checklist include opportunity cost?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Relies on rumor.	☐ Mentions pay only.	☐ Asks about several factors.	☐ Asks about factors and notes what the credit claim doesn't settle.
Reasoning	☐ Declares legal or illegal.	☐ Asks for a verdict.	☐ Gathers facts before deciding.	☐ Connects each question to a reason it matters.
Audience & purpose	☐ Gives away leverage or accuses.	☐ Polite but vague.	☐ Specific, respectful questions.	☐ Specific questions plus Rafa's own constraints.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone only.	☐ Replaces rumor with factor-based questions.	☐ Explains how each question helps Rafa decide.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions and skip the rubric.

Say this

"Mark your level in each row. Then change one question so it asks for a fact." — Circulate and ask which factor each question connects to.

Watch for

Misconception: Students soften the tone but keep the legal question. **Listen for:** "I made it more polite." **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Tone alone is level 2; replace the legal question with factor questions.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that each factor is applied accurately and that the memo makes no legal ruling.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Asks about several factors.
- **Reasoning:** Gathers facts before deciding.
- **Audience & purpose:** Specific, respectful questions.
- **Revision:** Replaces rumor with factor-based questions.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I changed "the studio is breaking the law" to a question about training, because the career center should ask, not rule.

Notes

This page continues page 312. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 312.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete each sentence frame. About 10 minutes.

1 **What would count as evidence that the promised training is happening?**

A learning plan tied to coursework, a supervisor's name and a weekly schedule that shows learning time beside inbox work.

2 **Unpaid summers are easier for people who do not need a paycheck. Who might an unpaid internship leave out?**

People who need income, work for family or pay to commute. PBS NewsHour reported that nearly half of U.S. interns were unpaid in 2022.

3 **If Rafa's school grants credit, does that settle whether the studio should pay him? Why or why not?**

No. The test is flexible, and credit is one factor among seven. The displacement evidence still weighs toward a job, and the training is unknown.

My take

My claim: ___.

Rafa should hold off on a start date until the studio answers questions tied to the factors.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The listing, because its main duty is the inbox a paid assistant ran last year.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Use question 3 as an exit ticket.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the evidence, not a story about a job you or your family had." — Post the question numbers and collect one answer per question.

Stretch

- Compare what the offer costs Rafa with what it would cost a student who does not need summer pay.
- Going further: Read Fact Sheet #71 from the Department of Labor. For each of the seven factors, mark whether Rafa's offer points toward training, toward a job or is still unknown.
- Going further: Suppose the studio answers, "We'll give college credit." What problem does that solve for the studio? What problem does it leave for Rafa?
- Going further: Make a two-column worksheet that compares what the listing promises with a normal week of duties. Ask a classmate to fill it in, and see which gaps they find.
- Going further: Before you accept any internship, ask for the duties, hours, supervision and pay in writing. Take the offer to your school counselor or college career center. If you are under 18, involve a trusted adult before you agree to any work.
- Look up whether your state has its own internship or minimum-wage rules
- Compare the for-profit test with guidance for volunteering at nonprofits

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

An unpaid role could still open doors that a paid job would not.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

No document shows the training, the hours or whether the school grants credit.

I would change my mind if ___.

The studio shared a learning plan tied to his coursework and a named supervisor.

Notes

This page continues page 314.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 2: Medium.** Students may bring up their own family's money or compare classmates' situations.

Cool-down: Keep answers about groups and about Rafa. Say: "Nobody needs to share their own family's situation."

Talk about this case at home

Case 15: Is Rafa's unpaid internship really a job?

In this case, a college student is offered an unpaid summer internship, and the studio says college credit makes that legal. Your student compared the offer with a federal test and wrote questions to ask before saying yes.

Questions to talk about

1. What questions would you ask before accepting an unpaid internship?
2. How can someone tell whether a role is mostly learning or mostly work?
3. Who can help a student check a job or internship offer?

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

See the case online.

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

"Share this page at home, or read it with an adult you trust." — Nobody needs to share a personal story to complete it.

Case 16: Who wrote the new building rule?

Content note

This case involves disability access and a request for an exception to a building rule. No student should share their own disability, health information or housing situation, so keep the discussion on Sami's building.

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

Overview

Students read a short story in which an unsigned notice says a building's rear door will be locked at 8 p.m. That step-free door is the only one Sami can use. Students compare the notice with last year's house rules and the entrance plan, and they map how the rule affects different residents. They read HUD's Fair Housing Act overview as a source of questions, then rewrite the notice or write Sami's question to the building manager.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- identify the parts of a clear public notice
- write for an office that will act on the writing
- state a legal point as a question

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- design a notice template that requires an issuer, a date and a contact
- rewrite the rear-door notice so it says what changed and whom to contact about access
- explain each element of the template in a short memo
- keep legal points as questions and leave out residents' private details

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B and C
- HUD's Fair Housing Act overview and HUD's video on reasonable accommodations (January 31, 2014)
- The notice checklist on the task page

The task in this edition

Task: Design a notice template that a building office could use for any rule change. Rewrite the rear-door notice with it, and write a short memo to the building office that explains each element.

Students make: Notice template, a rewritten notice of 60—120 words and a memo of about 150 words

Pacing

Opener (page 317): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud.

Key terms (pages 318 and 319): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud; skip the first-guess box.

Look at the evidence (page 323): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Look at the evidence (page 324): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Students fill in only the "What it shows" box.

Key idea (pages 325 and 326): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip the In the news section.

Sort the evidence (page 327): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (pages 328 and 329): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 330 and 331): 15 min. Short on time: 15 min.

Your draft (page 332): 30 min. Short on time: 25 min. Students draft the notice in class and finish the memo at home.

Check your work (pages 333 and 334): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions and skip the rubric.

Questions to discuss (pages 335 and 336): 10 min. Short on time: 3 min. Use question 2 as an exit ticket.

Talk about this case at home (page 337): at home.

Periods: full chapter 110 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 16 plan, continued

Standards

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 design a notice and a memo for residents and a building office (Genre and Disciplinary Conventions).

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 plan how residents with different needs learn about a rule and whom they can ask (Civic Communication).

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. In this case: Students weigh the effect of a door rule on different residents before recommending wording (Ethical Issue Recognition).

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 bold type and capital letters do not show who issued a rule.

Codes of ethics

- **ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct:** Rule 3.1 Meritorious Claims and Contentions
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** "We strive to understand and respect other communicators' intent..." (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

■■□ **Opener (page 317):** Medium

■□□ **Key terms (pages 318 and 319):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 323):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 324):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 325 and 326):** Low

■■□ **Sort the evidence (page 327):** Medium

■□□ **Practice (pages 328 and 329):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 333 and 334):** Low

Try it at your school

Ask who wrote the rule before you argue about it.

- When a new rule is posted where you live or at school, write down the date and take a photo
- Look for who issued it and what document it changes
- Ask a trusted adult to help you ask the building manager or office

Try it at your school, continued

- Find your city's or county's tenant or housing help page with an adult

Who to ask: A parent or guardian, the building manager, a local tenant or housing help line, a school social worker

Safety: Don't post neighbors' names, unit numbers or private situations online. Let adults handle lease disputes.

Sources

- Gothamist, "Brooklyn Landlord Does An About Face On Facial Recognition Plan," November 21, 2019
- Legal Services NYC, "Brooklyn tenants file legal opposition to landlord's application to install facial recognition entry system in building," May 1, 2019
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), "Fair Housing Act overview," No date listed

Case 16: Who wrote the new building rule?

An unsigned notice says the building's only step-free door locks at 8 p.m., and Sami's workshop runs later.

On your own Read What happened and underline the two changes the notice announces. About 5 minutes.

Mari hands a yellow sheet to Sami across a white table while Caio listens. This scene comes from Case 4.

Your role: You're the one who photographs the notice and writes down when and where it was found.
New skill: Find who has the authority to make a rule.

What happened

It is Monday morning in Sami's apartment building. A new notice is posted beside the common-room door. It says the rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. every night. It also says the common room is "for resident social use only," with "NO BUSINESS USE" in capital letters. The notice has no name, no date and no contact.

That rear door matters to Sami, who lives in apartment 3B and uses a manual wheelchair. It is the building's only step-free entrance. The front entrance has four steps and no ramp. Sami also runs a workshop in the common room, and it goes past 8 p.m.

Caio reads last year's house rules beside the notice. Those rules let residents reserve the common room for classes and resident-run workshops. The new notice does not say whether it replaces them. Before anyone starts arguing, Sami photographs the notice and writes down when and where she found it.

Your question: Who has the authority behind this notice, and what should Sami ask the building manager?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud.

Say this

"Suppose this notice appeared by your door tomorrow. What is your first question?" — Write questions on the board. Circle any that ask who wrote it.

Watch for

Misconception: Students assume bold type means the rule is official. **Listen for:** "It's in capital letters, so it's real." **Then:** Ask what would prove who wrote it. Write "issuer, date, contact" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.

Heat check

Medium. Students may share their own disability or housing situation.

Cool-down: Say: "Nobody needs to share their own health or home. We're talking about Sami's building."

Key terms

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

Authority Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision.

En español: autoridad

In this case: The notice uses bold type and capital letters but names no issuer. Sami has to find out who has the power to make this rule.

Reasonable accommodation A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place.

En español: acomodo razonable

In this case: Sami could ask the building for a key fob for the rear door, so she can get in after 8 p.m.

Documentation Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when.

En español: documentación

In this case: Sami photographs the notice and writes down when and where she found it, before anyone argues about what it said.

Who is involved

Sami
Lives in 3B and runs a workshop in the common room

"Rear door locked at 8. That's the only door I can get through. My workshop runs later. So, questions. Plural."

Caio
Reading last year's house rules beside the notice

"All caps, bold, no name, no date. Somebody made it look official. I still don't know who."

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud; skip the first-guess box.

Say this

"Write your first guess now. You will test it against three documents." — First guesses stay private unless a student wants to share.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think a building must grant every accommodation request. **Listen for:** "She asks, so they have to say yes." **Then:** Point to the key idea: whether a building grants an accommodation depends on the facts.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- **Cognates:** authority (autoridad), documentation (documentación), reasonable (razonable), resident (residente), access (acceso), discrimination (discriminación), disability (discapacidad), federal (federal).

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, should Sami follow the new notice?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that the notice may not be valid, because it has no name, date or contact.

Notes

This page continues page 318. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 318.

Reading passage

Authority, accommodation and the paper trail

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

- **Authority**: Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision.
- **Reasonable accommodation**: A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place.
- **Documentation**: Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when.
- **Decision-maker**: A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.
- **Barrier**: A barrier is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part.

The story: A rule without an author

An unsigned notice appears beside the common-room door of Sami's apartment building. It declares that, effective immediately, the rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. nightly and the common room is for resident social use only, with "NO BUSINESS USE." It has no author, date or contact.

For Sami, 23, a design student who uses a manual wheelchair and lives in 3B, the stakes are concrete. The building's entrance plan shows four steps and no ramp at the front, a service-only side door and a step-free rear door to the elevator hallway. The notice would close her only accessible entrance each evening. It would also cast doubt on the workshop she runs in the common room, which runs past 8.

Her first action is documentary rather than rhetorical. She photographs the notice and records when and where she found it. Caio, 24, reads last year's house rules, distributed at lease signing, beside the new text. He resists both easy responses. The notice should not be ignored, because if it is real the door is locked tonight. It should not be broadcast to the building either, until they know who wrote it.

Your role is to help Sami keep a clean record of the notice before anyone starts arguing.

Stop and think. Why is it important to separate the authority question from the access question?

Pacing

Reading: about 6 min (775 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A rule without an author":** Why is it important to separate the authority question from the access question?
2. **After "Separating authority from access":** How did state approval requirements give the Atlantic Plaza tenants leverage, and what would give Sami similar leverage?
3. **After "Law, guidance and tenant process":** What does the HUD guidance withdrawal teach about the difference between a rule and guidance about a rule?

Separating authority from access

Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision. The notice performs authority through typography and the phrase “effective immediately.” It does not establish it. The analytical task, and the new skill in this case, is locating the source of a rule: who issued it, under what power and in relation to which prior rule.

The skill draws on the ladder of earlier cases. From Case 1, the prior house rules serve as the original document. They permit reserving the room for “gatherings, classes and resident-run workshops” through the building office. From Case 4, the **decision-maker**, the person or group with the power to make a particular choice, is the unknown to be identified. From Case 7, the question of stage applies. The notice may be final, provisional or unauthorized. From Case 10, the question goes to the office positioned to answer it, the building manager.

Caio’s textual comparison surfaces the ambiguity that matters most. The old rules protect resident-run workshops. The new text bans undefined “business use” and does not say whether it supersedes the old rules. Until those gaps close, no one can say whether Sami’s workshop is affected.

Sami deliberately separates two questions that a less careful response would merge. The authority question asks who made the rule. The access question asks how she enters after 8. A **barrier**, the Case 10 term for something that blocks or limits a person from taking part, describes the locked door whatever its author’s intent. A **reasonable accommodation** is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place. A fob for the rear door is a concrete request that could preserve security and access together. **Documentation** is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when. It preserves Sami’s ability to rely on the facts later.

Stop and think. How did state approval requirements give the Atlantic Plaza tenants leverage, and what would give Sami similar leverage?

Law, guidance and tenant process

HUD explains that the Fair Housing Act bars housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability, with coverage of most housing and some exceptions (HUD, no date listed). HUD has also explained how people with disabilities can request exceptions to rules (HUD, January 31, 2014). Enforcement is real. The Justice Department announced a $750,000 settlement with a property management company in a disability discrimination case in 2026 (U.S. Department of Justice, April 30, 2026). Paired-testing research found that renters with disabilities were told about fewer options (Urban Institute, July 2, 2015). The source of a rule matters in law too. In 2025, HUD withdrew fair housing guidance documents without any change to the Act (National Association of Realtors, October 7, 2025).

This page continues page 320. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 320.

Law, guidance and tenant process, continued

Procedural leverage can be decisive. At Atlantic Plaza Towers in Brownsville, Brooklyn, tenants opposed a landlord's application to install facial-recognition entry, which required state agency approval (Legal Services NYC, May 1, 2019). The landlord withdrew the plan in November 2019 (Gothamist, November 21, 2019). That outcome depended on New York's rent-stabilization rules and may not transfer to Sami's building.

The ABA's model rules require a basis in law and fact before a lawyer brings a claim, and they call for learning the facts and the applicable law first (ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct, 1983, as amended). Sami and Caio follow the same order, and they hold their conclusions until the facts arrive.

Stop and think. What does the HUD guidance withdrawal teach about the difference between a rule and guidance about a rule?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) | No date listed
Fair Housing Act overview

Real source | HUD (YouTube) | January 31, 2014
The Federal Fair Housing Act and Reasonable Accommodations

Real source | U.S. Department of Justice | April 30, 2026
Justice Department Settles Disability Discrimination Case Against Property Management Company for $750,000

Real source | Urban Institute | July 2, 2015
Restricted Options: evidence on housing discrimination against people with disabilities

Real source | National Association of Realtors (Washington Report) | October 7, 2025
HUD Withdraws Fair Housing Guidance Documents

Real source | Legal Services NYC | May 1, 2019
Brooklyn tenants file legal opposition to landlord's application to install facial recognition entry system in building

Real source | Gothamist | November 21, 2019
Brooklyn Landlord Does An About Face On Facial Recognition Plan

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

This page continues page 320. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 320.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document, then fill in both boxes under it. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Posted notice

Unsigned notice by the common-room door, found Monday morning

NOTICE TO ALL RESIDENTS. Effective immediately, the rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. nightly. The common room is for resident social use only. NO BUSINESS USE.

Look closely: Which features give the notice an official look? What is missing?

What it shows	What it leaves out
Two changes stated as commands: a nightly 8:00 p.m. lock and a ban on business use.	An issuer, a date, a contact and any definition of "business use."

Evidence B | House rules (excerpt)

Last year's house rules, given out at lease signing

"Residents may reserve the common room for gatherings, classes and resident-run workshops. Reservations are made through the building office."

Look closely: What did last year's rules allow in the common room?

What it shows	What it leaves out
A written rule, given out at lease signing, that allowed resident-run workshops.	Whether it still governs the room, or whether the notice claims to replace it.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 8 min.

Say this

"Lay the notice beside last year's rules. What changed, and what does the notice leave out?" — Wait for the missing issuer, date and contact.

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide the notice is fake because it is unsigned. **Listen for:** "No name means it doesn't count." **Then:** Ask what happens at 8:15 if the door is locked anyway. Unsigned does not mean invalid.

Support

- Give the notice and last year's rules side by side with the changes highlighted.
- Read the entrance plan aloud and sketch it on the board.
- **Cognates:** authority (autoridad), documentation (documentación), reasonable (razonable), resident (residente), access (acceso), discrimination (discriminación), disability (discapacidad), federal (federal).

Stretch

- Ask which document would settle the business-use question, and who holds it.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Entrance plan

Building entrance plan from the lobby directory

Front entrance: four steps, no ramp. Rear door: step-free, opens to the elevator hallway. Side door: service use only.

Look closely: Which entrance is step-free? What happens to it after 8 p.m.?

What it shows

The 8:00 p.m. lock falls on the only step-free entrance; the front has four steps.

What it leaves out

How the building handles access requests, and whether another route exists.

What is still missing from the evidence?

Who issued the notice and why, whether it replaces or adds to the house rules, what Sami's lease says, whether there has been a security problem at the rear door, and how the building handles accommodation requests.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Students fill in only the "What it shows" box.

Say this

"Lay the notice beside last year's rules. What changed, and what does the notice leave out?" — Wait for the missing issuer, date and contact.

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide the notice is fake because it is unsigned. **Listen for:** "No name means it doesn't count." **Then:** Ask what happens at 8:15 if the door is locked anyway. Unsigned does not mean invalid.

Support

- Give the notice and last year's rules side by side with the changes highlighted.
- Read the entrance plan aloud and sketch it on the board.
- **Cognates:** authority (autoridad), documentation (documentación), reasonable (razonable), resident (residente), access (acceso), discrimination (discriminación), disability (discapacidad), federal (federal).

Stretch

- Ask which document would settle the business-use question, and who holds it.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: authority

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

A building rule should name who made it, give a date and list a contact. This notice has none of them. **Authority** is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision. Bold type and capital letters do not show who has that power. An unsigned notice is not automatically invalid, either. Sami has to find out who issued it and which document it claims to change.

A landlord's policy and the law are different sources of rules. The Fair Housing Act is a federal law. HUD, the federal housing department, says it bars housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability. It covers most housing, with some exceptions. Under the Act, a person with a disability can ask a building for a **reasonable accommodation**. A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place. For Sami, that could be a key fob for the rear door.

Sami cannot yet say the notice breaks the law. She does not know who wrote it, whether it replaces the house rules or how the building handles access requests. Whether a building grants an accommodation also depends on the facts. **Documentation** helps her keep those facts straight. Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when. Her photo of the notice, with the date and place she found it, is documentation.

Professional standards

Adapted from a real source | **American Bar Association (ABA), Center for Professional Responsibility**

ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct: Rule 3.1 Meritorious Claims and Contentions

Summary: Summary, not a quotation: a lawyer may not bring or defend a proceeding, or argue an issue in it, without a basis in law and fact that is not frivolous. The ABA comment says lawyers must first learn the facts and the applicable law.

In plain words: Before lawyers bring a claim, they must have facts and law that support it.

Question: Before claiming a Fair Housing Act violation, what should Sami learn about the notice's author and the building's access process?

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

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

Say this

"Bold type and capital letters: do they tell you who has authority?" — Accept "no," then ask what would.

"The ABA rule asks lawyers for facts before a claim. What facts does Sami need first?" — List them on the board.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think ABA Rule 3.1 binds Sami. **Listen for:** "Sami breaks the rule if she complains." **Then:** Say: "Rules like this bind lawyers. Each state adopts its own version, and lawyers can be disciplined. It shows how professionals check facts first."

Support

- Read the summary aloud. Point out the label: it is adapted from a real source, not a quotation.

Stretch

- Try the NCA credo's question: what could Sami ask the building office to learn who wrote the notice and why?

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Sami first needs ___, because ___.

Sami first needs the issuer, the rule it changes and the building's answer to an accommodation request, because a claim needs a basis in fact.

In the news

Real source | Gothamist | November 21, 2019

Brooklyn Landlord Does An About Face On Facial Recognition Plan

A throwback about a door rule: the landlord needed state permission to change how tenants got in, and tenants used that process to object.

Real source | HUD (YouTube) | January 31, 2014

The Federal Fair Housing Act and Reasonable Accommodations

HUD explains how a person with a disability can ask for an exception to a building rule.

Notes

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Fill in each box of the map: who decides, which rules apply, who is affected and where to ask. About 8 minutes.

Map who made this rule, which rules it has to fit, who it affects and where residents can take a question. Which box is still empty?

Lock the rear door at 8 p.m. and ban business use of the common room

Who decides

Unknown issuer: the owner, the manager or someone else?

Under which rule

Last year's house rules allowed resident-run workshops

Fair Housing Act: disability is a protected characteristic

Who lives with it

Sami and other residents who need the only step-free entrance

Your way in

A local tenant or housing help line, or HUD for a fair-housing concern

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 ___.

Other residents who use the common room or the rear door. I would ask how the notice changes their week, without naming anyone.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Fill in who decides, which rules apply, who is affected and where residents can ask. Which box stays empty?" — Wait for the issuer box.

Watch for

Misconception: Students write "the landlord" in the decider box. **Listen for:** "The landlord made it." **Then:** Ask which document says so. None does. Write "unknown" and how Sami could find out.

Support

- Let students write short labels in each box before they write sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The affected-people box can turn to classmates' own access needs.

Cool-down: Keep answers about Sami and residents in the story. No student speaks for a group.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Sami should do first and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

The notice says the rear door, the building's only step-free entrance, locks at 8 p.m. It also bans "business use" of the common room. It has no name, no date and no contact. What should Sami do first?

- ☐ **A** Ignore it until someone signs it, since an unsigned notice may not be official.
- ☑ **B** Photograph it, compare it with last year's house rules and ask the manager who issued it and how residents get in after 8.
- ☐ **C** Post online that the building is breaking disability law.

Why I chose it

B. A treats a missing signature as proof the rule is fake, and C draws a legal conclusion from partial facts. B documents first and asks the open questions.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Hi, I saw the notice about the common room and rear door. (1) This is illegal and discriminatory against disabled people like me. You can't just make rules like this without asking. Nobody signed it and nobody told us it was coming, so I don't even know if it's real. I'm going to keep using the room for my workshop because the old rules said I could. A lot of neighbors are upset too. (2) Please take the notice down. Sami, 3B

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"It is Monday morning, and the door locks at 8 tonight. What should Sami do first?" — Hold a vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose to post that the building breaks the law. **Listen for:** "Post it everywhere so they get in trouble." **Then:** Ask what Sami knows for sure. Point to the missing issuer and the request she has not made yet.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Improve a draft, continued

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Could you tell me who issued the notice and whether it replaces last year's house rules?

Rewrite phrase 2

I'm requesting an accommodation, such as a key fob, so I can enter after 8 p.m.

Notes

This page continues page 328.

Answer key

A revised version: Hi, I'm writing about the notice posted by the common room on Monday. It says the rear door will be locked after 8 p.m. and bans business use of the room. I use a wheelchair, and the rear door is the building's only step-free entrance, so I need a way to get in after 8. I'd like to request an accommodation, such as a key fob for that door. Could you also tell me who issued the notice and whether it replaces the house rules from last year, which allowed resident workshops? Thank you, Sami, 3B

Other notes on the draft:

- "disabled people like me" Sami's access need is real and relevant. Describe it concretely: the step-free door.
- "because the old rules said I could" Useful: quote the older rule so the manager can check it.

College

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 15 minutes.

Design a notice template that a building office could use for any rule change. Rewrite the rear-door notice with it, and write a short memo to the building office that explains each element.

Use: Case documents: the unsigned notice, last year's house rules, the entrance plan and Sami's and Caio's statements. Real sources: HUD's Fair Housing Act overview and HUD's video on reasonable accommodations (January 31, 2014).

You'll make: Notice template, a rewritten notice of 60—120 words and a memo of about 150 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. List the elements every building notice should have, using the checklist on the task page.
2. Build a template with a line for each element.
3. Rewrite the rear-door notice with your template in 60 to 120 words.
4. Add a line that tells residents who need the step-free rear door whom to contact.
5. Write a memo of about 150 words that explains each element to the building office.
6. Check that no real resident's name, unit or situation appears.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Template elements

Issued by, date, effective date, what changed, rule it replaces, contact, how to ask about access.

Pacing

Full chapter: 15 min.

Short on time: 15 min.

Say this

"A template has to work for any rule change. What does every notice need, whatever the rule?" — Build the checklist on the board before students design.

Watch for

Misconception: Templates copy the original's style. **Listen for:** "Put the important part in all caps." **Then:** Ask whether the capitals showed who issued the notice. They did not, so add an issuer line.

Support

- Checklist of notice elements: issuer, date, effective date, what changed, which rule it replaces, contact, how to ask about access
- Caio's line about design and authority as a discussion prompt
- Before-and-after layout sketch
- Before-and-after frame: "The old notice said ___. The new notice says ___."

Stretch

- Write the notice so it works for residents who rely on the step-free rear door. Say where a request for an exception goes, without promising how it will be decided.

Your task, continued

What changed from last year's house rules

Workshops could be reserved; now the room is for social use only.

The access line

Residents who need the step-free rear door after 8 p.m.: contact ___.

Notes

This page continues page 330.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Written Communication VALUE Rubric; Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric; Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- The template requires an issuer, a date and a contact on every notice
- The rewritten notice says what changed from last year's house rules
- The notice tells residents who need the step-free rear door whom to contact
- The memo states legal points as questions and declares no violation
- No real resident's name, unit or situation appears

Your draft

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

Your rewritten notice, 60 to 120 words

Notice to all residents. Issued by: ___ (name and title). Date posted: ___. Effective: ___. What changed: the rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. nightly, and the common room will be for resident social use only. This notice replaces, does not replace last year's house rules on workshops. Residents who need the step-free rear door after 8 p.m. can ask for another way in by contacting ___. Questions: the building office.

Your memo to the building office, about 150 words

To the building office: this template helps residents trust and follow a rule change. The issuer and date show who has authority and when the rule began. The effective date tells residents when to plan for it. "What changed" and "Rule it replaces" let residents compare the notice with the house rules they received at lease signing. The contact line gives residents a person to ask. The access line tells residents who need the step-free rear door where to send a request for an exception. It does not promise how a request will be decided. Does the building have a process for accommodation requests under the Fair Housing Act? If so, the notice should name it.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 25 min. Students draft the notice in class and finish the memo at home.

Say this

"Your memo explains each element to the office that posts notices. Why would they want each line?" — Ask for one reason per element.

Watch for

Misconception: Memos declare the original notice illegal. **Listen for:** "Tell them the old notice broke the law." **Then:** Point to the success list. Keep the legal point as a question.

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Leaves the issuer blank instead of guessing who wrote the original.
2. Says where a request goes without promising an outcome, as the challenge asks.
3. States the legal point as a question.

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 8 minutes.

Does your template require an issuer, a date and a contact?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your rewritten notice say what changed from last year's house rules?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it tell residents who need the step-free rear door whom to contact?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your memo keep legal points as questions, with no real resident's details?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No specifics from the notice.	☐ Mentions the notice generally.	☐ Quotes the notice and older rule.	☐ Quotes both and names what is still unknown.
Reasoning	☐ Declares a legal violation.	☐ Complains without a clear need.	☐ Connects the rule to a concrete effect.	☐ Separates the communication problem from the legal question.
Audience & purpose	☐ Hostile or vague.	☐ Polite but no request.	☐ Specific request the manager can act on.	☐ Specific request plus questions that clarify authority.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone edits only.	☐ Replaces the conclusion with a question and request.	☐ Explains how each change makes a yes more likely.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Students answer the check questions and skip the rubric.

Say this

"Mark your level in each row. Then change one sentence so the manager can say yes to it." — Circulate and ask for one request made more specific.

Watch for

Misconception: Students soften the tone and keep the legal conclusion. **Listen for:** "I said it nicely." **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Replace the conclusion with a question and a request.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that every element on the checklist appears in the rewritten notice and that legal points stay questions.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Quotes the notice and older rule.
- **Reasoning:** Connects the rule to a concrete effect.
- **Audience & purpose:** Specific request the manager can act on.
- **Revision:** Replaces the conclusion with a question and request.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I removed “the landlord” as the issuer and left a blank, because no document says who wrote the notice.

Notes

This page continues page 333. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 333.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete each sentence frame. About 10 minutes.

1 **Which missing fact would most change how you see the notice?**

The issuer. A notice from the owner carries different weight than one from a neighbor, and knowing the issuer tells Sami where to send her questions.

2 **The notice bans "business use" without saying what that means. What would you need to know to decide whether Sami's workshop counts?**

A written definition from whoever issued the notice, the facts of Sami's workshop and which document governs: the notice or last year's house rules.

3 **A building may want a door locked at night. How could it keep that door secure and still let Sami in?**

A fob reader keeps the rear door locked to outsiders and open to residents who need step-free entry. The policy should name whom to contact.

My take

My claim: ___.

Sami should request an accommodation and ask about authority without claiming a violation yet.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Use question 2 as an exit ticket.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from the evidence. You do not need to share details about your own home." — Post the question numbers and collect one answer per question.

Stretch

- List every kind of resident the 8 p.m. lock could affect, without names or unit numbers, and one question each would ask.
- Going further: Read HUD's Fair Housing Act overview. Which protected characteristic applies to Sami? List two facts you would need before saying the law was broken.
- Going further: The notice affects other residents too. Write a short note from Sami to other residents that explains the change and asks who else it affects. Leave out names, unit numbers and claims you cannot support.
- Going further: Rewrite the notice so every resident can tell who issued it, what changed, when it starts and who to ask. Put your version next to the original. Ask a reader which details they would still want to check.
- Going further: When a new rule is posted where you live or at school, write down the date and take a photo. Look for who issued it and what document it changes. Ask a trusted adult to help you bring your questions to the building manager or school office.
- Research what local tenant organizations exist in your area and what they offer
- Compare federal fair-housing protections with your state's list of protected characteristics

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The entrance plan, because it shows who bears the cost of the lock.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Security at night protects every resident, including Sami.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

No document shows who issued the notice or why.

I would change my mind if ___.

The building showed a signed rule and a working way in for Sami after 8.

Notes

This page continues page 335.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 3: Medium.** Students may share their own or a family member's disability, or talk about crime where they live.

Cool-down: Keep the talk on Sami's building. Say: "Nobody needs to share a personal or family situation to answer."

Talk about this case at home

Case 16: Who wrote the new building rule?

In this case, an unsigned notice in an apartment building says the only step-free door will lock at 8 p.m. Your student compared the notice with last year's building rules and practiced asking who made the new rule.

Questions to talk about

1. What should a clear building or school notice include?
2. Whom can people ask when a posted rule is unclear?
3. Why might someone keep a photo of a notice with the date?

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

See the case online.

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

"Share this page at home, or read it with an adult you trust." — Nobody needs to share a personal story to complete it.

Case 17: How should the crew give out ten free seats?

Overview

Students read a short story in which the crew has ten free workshop seats and thirty people who want one. They compare three options, first come, a lottery and a needs-based rubric, and apply two ethical lenses from the Markkula Center framework. They then write a note that explains one method to the people affected, names its strongest objection and revises it.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- write a memo with a recommendation and reasons
- apply an ethical principle to a practical choice
- write a short public announcement

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- recommend a method for sharing ten seats and compare all three options with the sign-up evidence
- publish the method and criteria before sign-ups open
- protect any personal information a needs-based step would collect
- explain how people who do not get a seat are told and treated

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant
- Evidence A, B and C, and the Belmont and ASPA rows on the idea page
- An options matrix, a model criteria statement and a privacy checklist

The task in this edition

Task: Write a memo to a student government committee recommending how to give out ten free workshop seats among thirty applicants. Then draft the announcement that publishes the method before sign-ups open.

Students make: Memo, 350—450 words, plus an announcement of 80—120 words

Pacing

Opener (page 338): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Key terms (pages 339 and 340): 4 min. Short on time: 2 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Look at the evidence (page 344): 8 min. Short on time: 7 min. Participants fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 345): 6 min. Short on time: 5 min. Read Evidence C aloud. Participants fill in only its What it shows box.

Key idea (pages 346 and 347): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Skip the In the news section.

Pacing, continued

Sort the evidence (page 348): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 349): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 350 and 351): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (page 352): 30 min. Short on time: 28 min. Participants draft the recommendation in the session and finish the memo afterward.

Check your work (pages 353 and 354): 8 min. Short on time: 4 min. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 355 and 356): 10 min. Short on time: 4 min. Use question 4 as a closing question.

Talk about this case at home (page 357): at home.

Periods: full chapter 107 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Standards

Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for recognizing ethical issues and applying and weighing different ethical perspectives. In this case: Students apply two ethical lenses to the options and evaluate the strongest objection to their choice (Evaluation of Different Ethical Perspectives/Concepts).

Case 17 plan, continued

Standards, continued

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 design a process that people who do not get a seat can still accept (Civic Contexts/Structures).

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 for a committee and an announcement for applicants (Context of and Purpose for Writing; Genre and Disciplinary Conventions).

Information Has Value Information has value, including as a means to influence people, so credit, access and privacy matter. In this case: Students decide what personal information a needs-based method would collect and how to protect it.

Codes of ethics

- **The Belmont Report:** B. Basic Ethical Principles: 3. Justice
- **The Belmont Report:** C. Applications: 1. Informed Consent
- **ASPA Code of Ethics:** 4. Strengthen social equity.

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 338):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 339 and 340):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 344):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 345):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 346 and 347):** Low

■■□ **Sort the evidence (page 348):** Medium

■□□ **Practice (page 349):** Low

■■□ **Your task (pages 350 and 351):** Medium

■□□ **Your draft (page 352):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 353 and 354):** Low

Try it at your school

Ask how your school decides who gets limited spots.

- Pick one limited resource at school: a class, a trip, a club seat
- Find out the selection method and whether it's published
- Ask who the method helps and who it might leave out
- Suggest publishing criteria in advance if they aren't

Who to ask: Club advisor, activities director, school counselor, student council

Try it at your school, continued

Safety: Never ask classmates to share financial or personal information for a needs-based process. Adults should handle that privately.

Sources

- Ticketmaster, "The Eras Tour onsale explained," November 19, 2022
- Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, Santa Clara University, "A Framework for Ethical Decision Making," No date listed

Case 17: How should the crew give out ten free seats?

Thirty people want ten free workshop seats, and the crew must choose a fair way to decide who gets them.

On your own Read What happened and underline the sentence that tells how many people want a seat. About 4 minutes.

Duda holds up a phone and points at a blank card on a bulletin board.

Your role: You're the one who writes down the rule before the crew picks the ten names. **New skill:** Set fair criteria before choosing.

What happened

The crew has ten free seats for a workshop, and thirty people want one. The crew opened a sign-up sheet on Monday at 9 a.m. Twenty-two names were on it before 10 a.m. By Wednesday, the sheet has thirty names.

The sheet says only "How seats will be chosen: to be announced." The crew has argued about the rule since dinner on Sunday. Gia is running the sign-up. She wants to give the seats to the first ten names, because that is simple and fast. Mateo suggests a lottery instead.

Anika, 16, is at rehearsal most days, and she checks her phone after rehearsal ends. Under first-come, she would see the message after the seats were gone. A third option on the crew's whiteboard would give seats to people who cannot afford the paid version of the workshop. That option would ask people for personal information.

Every method seats exactly ten people. The crew has to decide which ten, and then explain the rule to all thirty.

Your question: How should the crew choose who gets the ten seats, and how should they explain the choice to all thirty people?

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Say this

"Ten seats, thirty names. Before we read on, how would you pick?" — Collect three quick answers. Do not judge any of them yet.

Watch for

Misconception: Students assume one method can be fair to everyone. **Listen for:** "A lottery is fair, so nobody loses." **Then:** Ask how many people still get no seat. Every method leaves out twenty.

Support

- Read What happened aloud. Draw 30 dots on the board and circle 10.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key terms

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

Criteria Criteria are the standards or reasons a group uses to make a decision.

En español: criterios

In this case: The sheet says "How seats will be chosen: to be announced." Twenty-two names arrived before 10 a.m. Monday, before the crew stated any criteria.

Trade-off A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.

En español: compensación entre opciones

In this case: First-come is fast for Gia to run but favors whoever sees the message first. A lottery gives everyone the same chance but needs a sign-up window and a drawing.

Equity Equity is a way of sharing that adjusts for different needs so everyone gets a fair chance.

En español: equidad

In this case: Option C would give seats to people who cannot afford the paid version of the workshop. It would also ask applicants for personal information.

Who is involved

Gia
Running the sign-up

"First ten to reply get a seat. It's simple, I can post it tonight, and I have a shift at seven."

Anika
Checks her phone after rehearsal

"By the time I see the message, ten people will have answered. I don't even need a seat. I just want to know how you're picking."

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 2 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Say this

"Criteria are stated before anyone decides. Why does the timing matter?" — Point to "to be announced" on the sign-up sheet.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat equity and equality as the same word. **Listen for:** "Equity means everyone gets the same." **Then:** Contrast option B, the same chance for all, with option C, which adjusts for need.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term with an example from the case.
- **Cognates:** criteria (criterios), equity (equidad), option (opción), method (método), decision (decisión), consequence (consecuencia), information (información), justice (justicia).

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, how do you think the crew should choose who gets the ten seats?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is a lottery with published criteria, because the sign-up opened with no rule at all.

Notes

This page continues page 339. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 339.

Reading passage

Allocating scarce goods fairly

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

- **Criteria**: Criteria are the standards or reasons a group uses to make a decision.
- **Trade-off**: A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.
- **Equity**: Equity is a way of sharing that adjusts for different needs so everyone gets a fair chance.
- **Consent**: Consent is permission a person gives for something specific, such as sharing a record with a named person.

The story: Thirty applicants, ten places

The crew has ten free seats in a workshop and thirty people who want them. A sign-up sheet opened Monday at 9 a.m. with no stated selection method. Twenty-two names arrived within the first hour, and the list reached thirty by Wednesday. The crew's whiteboard lists three methods, each with its benefit and cost. First come, first served is fast but favors whoever sees it first. A lottery after a three-day window gives equal chances but requires a window and a drawing. A needs-based rubric prioritizes those who cannot afford the paid version but requires personal information and a judge.

The crew members' positions are candid. Gia, who runs the sign-up and has a shift at seven, prefers first-come because it is simple. She later admits she mostly wanted the task off her list. Mateo proposes a lottery. Anika, 16, who checks her phone only after rehearsal, would be excluded by first-come. She explicitly declines to make the decision about herself. She does not need a seat. She wants a stated method and an honest account of who loses.

The case asks students to treat a small allocation as a serious ethical problem, because the same structure governs school admissions, housing lotteries and medical triage.

Your role is to write down the rule before the crew picks the ten names.

Stop and think. Why might a procedurally fair rule be accepted even by people it excludes?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (726 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: Thirty applicants, ten places":** Why might a procedurally fair rule be accepted even by people it excludes?
2. **After "Procedure, criteria and consent":** How should the crew weigh equity against the privacy cost of a needs-based rubric?
3. **After "Frameworks and real-world allocation":** Emanuel and colleagues reject first-come in medicine. Does their reasoning apply to the crew's workshop? Why or why not?

Procedure, criteria and consent

Criteria are the standards or reasons a group uses to make a decision. The new skill is setting fair criteria before choosing and disclosing who each rule disadvantages. Case 4's **trade-off**, a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up, is unavoidable here. Every method seats ten and excludes twenty. Choosing among them means choosing which cost to accept and defend.

Each method encodes a principle. First-come rewards speed and availability, which correlate with flexible schedules rather than need or merit. A lottery embodies equal chance and treats applicants as interchangeable. A needs-based rubric pursues **equity**, a way of sharing that adjusts for different needs so everyone gets a fair chance. It also shifts costs onto applicants, who must disclose personal information. Case 6's **consent**, permission a person gives for something specific, frames that cost. Any data collection should be minimal, voluntary and limited to people who need to see it.

Procedure carries independent moral weight. The sheet shows that most names arrived before any rule was posted, so a rule adopted now will be applied to a known list. That invites the suspicion that it was chosen to produce a result. Announcing criteria before selection is a form of procedural fairness that can secure acceptance from those who lose. A decision note should therefore state the method and the reason for it, name the strongest objection and offer one mitigation for those who miss out.

Anika's proposed framing, comparing which option helps the most people and whether the method is fair to everyone, separates outcome-based and fairness-based reasoning. Holding both keeps the crew from mistaking an efficient rule for a just one.

Stop and think. How should the crew weigh equity against the privacy cost of a needs-based rubric?

Frameworks and real-world allocation

The Markkula Center's framework examines decisions through lenses of consequences, rights, fairness, the common good, character and care. It explains that ethics and law are different questions (Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, revised November 5, 2021). The Belmont Report treats justice as fairness in distribution and names five accepted bases: equal share, need, effort, societal contribution and merit. It also holds that "respect for persons requires that subjects, to the degree that they are capable, be given the opportunity to choose what shall or shall not happen to them" (Belmont Report, April 18, 1979). That principle bears directly on a rubric that asks for personal information.

High-stakes allocation debates mirror the crew's options. Emanuel and colleagues argued that first-come, first-served is a poor way to allocate scarce medical resources (New England Journal of Medicine, May 21, 2020). Commentators laid out competing vaccine criteria such as risk, fairness and benefit (Scientific American, September 3, 2020).

This page continues page 341. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 341.

Frameworks and real-world allocation, continued

New York City uses random lottery numbers for some school admissions (Chalkbeat New York, October 1, 2024). Consumer markets make similar choices. For the Eras Tour presale, more than 3.5 million people registered, about 1.5 million received codes and 2 million were waitlisted (Ticketmaster, November 19, 2022).

For public servants, ASPA asks members to "treat all persons with fairness, justice, and equality and respect individual differences, rights, and freedoms" (ASPA Code of Ethics, 2013).

Stop and think. Emanuel and colleagues reject first-come in medicine. Does their reasoning apply to the crew's workshop? Why or why not?

Sources

Real source | Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, Santa Clara University | November 5, 2021
A Framework for Ethical Decision Making

Real source | National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research; published by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare | 1979
The Belmont Report

Real source | New England Journal of Medicine (Emanuel et al.) | May 21, 2020
Fair Allocation of Scarce Medical Resources in the Time of Covid-19

Real source | Scientific American | September 3, 2020
How to Decide Who Should Get a COVID-19 Vaccine First

Real source | Chalkbeat New York | October 1, 2024
What your 'lottery' number for middle and high school applications means

Real source | Ticketmaster | November 19, 2022
The Eras Tour onsale explained

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

This page continues page 341. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 341.

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | Sign-up sheet

The workshop sign-up sheet

"Free workshop: 10 seats. Add your name to show interest. How seats will be chosen: to be announced." The sheet opened Monday at 9 a.m. By Wednesday it had thirty names. The first 22 names were added before 10 a.m. on Monday.

Look closely: When did most names arrive, and what rule was posted then?

What it shows

Thirty names for ten seats, 22 of them in the first hour, before any rule.

What it leaves out

Who signed up late and why, and whether early sign-up says anything about need.

Evidence B | Group-chat thread

The crew's thread, Sunday at 8:30 p.m.

Gia: first come is easiest to run, we just take the top ten.

Anika: I'm at rehearsal most days, I'd see it after it's full.

Mateo: lottery?

Gia: then we need a sign-up window and someone to run the drawing.

Look closely: Which cost does each person name? Which cost does nobody name?

What it shows

The crew weighs the work each method needs, and Anika raises timing.

What it leaves out

Anyone arguing for need, and any voice from the thirty applicants.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 7 min. Participants fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Say this

"Look at the times on the sign-up sheet. Who was likely to see it in the first hour?" — Wait for someone to connect the times to Anika at rehearsal.

Watch for

Misconception: Students read an early sign-up as proof of stronger interest. **Listen for:** "The first ten wanted it more." **Then:** Ask what else could explain an early name. The sheet shows timing, not need.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the crew's thread aloud with three voices.
- **Cognates:** criteria (criterios), equity (equidad), option (opción), method (método), decision (decisión), consequence (consecuencia), information (información), justice (justicia).

Stretch

- Ask which document would let the crew count need, and why none of the three can.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Whiteboard

Three options on the whiteboard

A. First come, first served: fast to run; favors whoever sees it first. B. Lottery after a three-day sign-up: equal chance for everyone; needs a sign-up window and a drawing. C. Needs-based rubric: prioritizes people who can't afford the paid version; needs personal information and someone to judge it.

Look closely: Underline the cost the crew wrote for each option.

What it shows

Each method comes with a named benefit and a named cost.

What it leaves out

Who would judge need under C, what data it collects and where that data goes.

What is still missing from the evidence?

How many applicants have the greatest need, and whether a second session is possible. Who would see personal information under option C, and how the twenty without seats want to be told.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Read Evidence C aloud. Participants fill in only its What it shows box.

Say this

"Look at the times on the sign-up sheet. Who was likely to see it in the first hour?" — Wait for someone to connect the times to Anika at rehearsal.

Watch for

Misconception: Students read an early sign-up as proof of stronger interest. **Listen for:** "The first ten wanted it more." **Then:** Ask what else could explain an early name. The sheet shows timing, not need.

Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the crew's thread aloud with three voices.
- **Cognates:** criteria (criterios), equity (equidad), option (opción), method (método), decision (decisión), consequence (consecuencia), information (información), justice (justicia).

Stretch

- Ask which document would let the crew count need, and why none of the three can.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: fair criteria

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 12 minutes.

Any way of giving out ten seats to thirty people leaves twenty people without one. A **trade-off** is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up. First-come is fast, but it favors people who see the message first. A lottery gives everyone the same chance, but it does not consider need. A needs-based rubric aims at equity by helping people who cannot afford the paid version, but applicants must share personal information. Each option has a cost, so the crew has to choose which cost to accept.

Criteria are the standards or reasons a group uses to make a decision. When the crew states its criteria early, everyone knows the rule before anyone is chosen. Even people who do not get a seat may accept the result if the rule was clear in advance. If the crew picks a rule after seeing the names, people may wonder whether it was chosen to favor someone.

The Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University suggests looking at a decision through several ethical lenses. They include consequences, rights, fairness, the common good, character and care. The lenses can point toward different options, and they do not add up to one automatic score. A strong decision explains which concern matters most in this case, who carries the cost and what could reduce it.

Professional standards

Adapted from a real source

National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research; published by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

The Belmont Report: B. Basic Ethical Principles: 3. Justice

Summary: Summary, not a quotation: the report treats justice as fairness in distribution and lists five widely accepted ways to share benefits and burdens: an equal share, individual need, individual effort, societal contribution and merit.

In plain words: The Belmont Report, written for research with people, lists several fair ways to share limited benefits, such as equal shares or need.

Question: Which whiteboard option comes closest to “an equal share,” and which comes closest to “individual need”?

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 10 min. Skip the In the news section.

Say this

“The Belmont Report lists fair ways to share benefits, such as an equal share or need. Which option matches each?” — Point out that it was written for research with people.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the Belmont Report as a law the crew must follow. **Listen for:** “They have to follow the Belmont rules.” **Then:** Say: “It was written for research with people. The crew can use it as a way to think.”

Support

- Read the code summary aloud. Point out the label: it is a summary, not a quotation.

Stretch

- Use the Informed Consent row: what should option C applicants be told before they share personal information?

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Option ___ matches an equal share and option ___ matches individual need. The limit is ___.

B matches an equal share of chances, not of seats. C matches individual need. The limit is that C requires personal information and a judge.

In the news

Real source | NPR | December 20, 2020

The Ethics Of Who Gets The COVID-19 Vaccine And When

A bioethicist explains how leaders chose who went first when there wasn't enough for everyone.

Real source | Scientific American | September 3, 2020

How to Decide Who Should Get a COVID-19 Vaccine First

Lays out competing criteria such as risk, fairness and benefit, the same lenses the crew uses.

Notes

This page continues page 346. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 346.

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow each option to its effects and write who carries the cost in each box. About 8 minutes.

Follow each method to its consequences. Who carries the cost under each one, and what makes the chosen process legitimate to the twenty who lose?

First come, first served

The ten fastest responders get seats; people at rehearsal or work see the sign-up late

Who is affected

Anika and others who check messages late

Lottery after a three-day sign-up

Each of the thirty has the same chance, and need is not considered

Who is affected

Needs-based rubric

Those with the greatest need are prioritized; applicants must share personal information

Who is affected

Applicants asked to disclose their finances

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 ___.

Applicants with the greatest need are missing. I would ask what information they would share, with whom, and what would help them trust the process.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Follow each option to its effect. Who carries the cost?" — Model the first-come row together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students list costs only for the options they dislike. **Listen for:** "The lottery has no downside." **Then:** Ask what a lottery does for someone with the greatest need. Write that cost in the box.

Support

- Let students write names or simple icons in the boxes before writing sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can lead students to talk about money at home.

Cool-down: Keep it about the applicants in the case. Nobody shares their own finances. Return to the whiteboard wording.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the note you would send, explain why and fix the two marked phrases. About 5 minutes.

Gia is drafting a note to the thirty people on the sign-up sheet. Which sentence could the crew defend?

- ☐ **A** "We picked the fairest method, so nobody loses out."
- ☑ **B** "We're holding a lottery so everyone has the same chance. A lottery doesn't favor people with the most need, so we're looking into a second session."
- ☐ **C** "Seats go to the first ten names on the sheet, because those people wanted it most."

Why I chose it

B. It is the only note that admits a real cost and names a remedy. A denies the cost, and C treats seeing the sheet first as wanting a seat most.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

We should do first come first served because (1) it's the most fair. Everyone has the same chance to sign up and if you really want it you'll sign up fast. It's simple and (2) nobody can complain because they had the same opportunity as everyone else. Also it's way less work for us than reading thirty applications or doing some random drawing. The people who don't get in can just come to the next workshop whenever we have one. This is obviously the best way.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

First-come is the fastest option to run, which matters to a busy crew.

Rewrite phrase 2

People who check messages late, like Anika, would carry the cost.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Gia has to post tonight. Which note could the crew defend to all thirty people?" — Hold a quick vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students pick the note that sounds kindest. **Listen for:** "A is nicest, nobody gets upset." **Then:** Ask whether A is accurate. Twenty people will not get a seat.

Support

- Read the three notes aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: We recommend a lottery after a three-day sign-up period. A lottery gives each of the thirty people an equal chance, while first-come, first-served favors whoever sees the message first, which leaves out people like Anika who check their phones after rehearsal. The cost is that a lottery doesn't prioritize people with the greatest need. To reduce that, we'll announce the sign-up in the group chat, at the bookshop counter and on paper, and we'll run a second session for the twenty people who don't get seats. We'd reconsider if the second session can't happen.

College

Your task

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

Write a memo to a student government committee recommending how to give out ten free workshop seats among thirty applicants. Then draft the announcement that publishes the method before sign-ups open.

Use: Case documents: the sign-up sheet, the crew's debate thread, the three options on the whiteboard and Anika's statement. Real sources: the Markkula Center framework, the Belmont Report's principles of justice and informed consent and ASPA's principle on social equity.

You'll make: Memo, 350—450 words, plus an announcement of 80—120 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. Fill in the options matrix: who gains, who carries the cost and what information each option needs.
2. Apply two ethical lenses, including one that challenges your choice.
3. Draft the memo's recommendation section on the Your draft page.
4. Finish the memo, 350 to 450 words, on lined paper or in the online workspace.
5. Write an announcement of 80 to 120 words that publishes the method.
6. Add how people who do not get a seat will be told.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Options matrix

A: fast, favors early viewers, needs no data. B: equal chance, ignores need, needs a window and a drawing. C: targets need, needs personal data and a judge.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 12 min.

Say this

"The sign-up sheet opened Monday with no rule. What would you post today to fix that?" — Point to "to be announced" in Evidence A.

Watch for

Misconception: Participants recommend a hybrid method without saying who judges need. **Listen for:** "We'll just add a need category." **Then:** Ask who reads the information, and what applicants are told first.

Support

- Options matrix: who gains, who carries the cost and what information each option needs
- Model criteria statement
- Privacy checklist for any needs-based step: what is collected, who sees it, when it is deleted
- Privacy checklist: what is collected, who sees it, when it is deleted.

Stretch

- If you choose a needs-based or hybrid method, explain how applicants give informed consent to share personal information and who will see it.

Heat check

Medium. Participants may share their own money situations when they discuss need.

Cool-down: Keep examples to the applicants in the case. Return to the privacy checklist.

Your task, continued

Two lenses, one that challenges my choice

Fairness supports a lottery: the same chance for all thirty. Care challenges it: no extra help for people who cannot afford the paid version.

Notes

This page continues page 350.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric; Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Information Has Value.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Compares all three options using the sign-up evidence: 22 of the 30 names came in before 10 a.m. on Monday
- Publishes the method and criteria before sign-ups open
- Protects any personal information a needs-based step would collect
- Explains how people who do not get a seat are told and treated
- Applies at least two ethical lenses, including one that challenges the choice

Your draft

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

Memo: recommendation section

We recommend a lottery after a three-day sign-up, with the method and criteria published before sign-ups open. The sign-up evidence shows why. Twenty-two of the thirty names came in before 10 a.m. on Monday, while the sheet still said "to be announced." First-come would reward that hour, not need or interest. A needs-based rubric would reach people who cannot afford the paid version, but it would collect personal information and require someone to judge it. The lottery gives every applicant the same chance and collects nothing private. Its cost is that it gives no extra weight to need.

Announcement, 80 to 120 words

Free workshop: 10 seats. How seats will be chosen: a lottery. Sign up any time in the next three days. Everyone on the list has the same chance, whenever they signed up. We ask for no personal information. We will draw ten names in public on the fourth day and tell all thirty people the result the same day. If you do not get a seat, you will hear first about any second session we can hold. Questions? Ask Gia.

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 28 min. Participants draft the recommendation in the session and finish the memo afterward.

Say this

"Read your announcement as one of the twenty who will not get a seat. Is anything missing?" — Partners check for the method, the date and what happens next.

Watch for

Misconception: The announcement explains the method but not what happens to people left out. **Listen for:** "Winners will be notified." **Then:** Ask how everyone else hears the result, and when.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Publishes the criteria in advance.
2. Compares the options with the sign-up evidence.
3. Names the cost of the recommended method.
4. Protects applicants' privacy in the public announcement.
5. Says how people who do not get a seat are treated.

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 8 minutes.

Does your memo compare all three options using the sign-up evidence?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does the announcement publish the method before sign-ups open?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Is any personal information protected?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does it say how people who do not get a seat are told?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No reference to who is affected.	☐ Mentions people vaguely.	☐ Names specific people and effects from the case.	☐ Uses case facts to show who gains and who pays.
Reasoning	☐ Claims an option is obviously best.	☐ Gives one reason only.	☐ Uses a lens and names the strongest objection.	☐ Uses two lenses and proposes a revision tied to the objection.
Audience & purpose	☐ Ignores the twenty who miss out.	☐ Mentions them briefly.	☐ Explains the process to all applicants.	☐ Builds legitimacy by publishing criteria and a remedy.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Wording only.	☐ Adds a named cost and revision.	☐ Explains how the revision addresses the objection.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Say this

“Find the sentence that names who carries the cost. If you cannot find it, add one.” — Circulate and ask for one named cost or one fix.

Watch for

Misconception: Students revise wording only. **Listen for:** “I fixed my spelling.” **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Ask for an added cost or a change tied to the objection.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the criteria are published before sign-ups open and that the privacy plan is specific.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Names specific people and effects from the case.
- **Reasoning:** Uses a lens and names the strongest objection.
- **Audience & purpose:** Explains the process to all applicants.
- **Revision:** Adds a named cost and revision.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I added the date of the drawing, because readers could not tell when they would hear.

Notes

This page continues page 353. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 353.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames. About 10 minutes.

1 **Whose view would most challenge the option you prefer?**

If I back a lottery, applicants with the greatest need would challenge it most. Equal chance ignores unequal starting points.

2 **Anika says she does not need a seat. What is she asking the crew for?**

She wants a clear rule and an honest count of who loses. Her request is about how the crew picks, and it holds even without a seat.

3 **Option C would help people who cannot afford the paid workshop. What would applicants give up to be chosen that way?**

They give up privacy and control over their information. They also accept that someone else judges their need.

4 **What would make the twenty people without seats accept the result as fair?**

Criteria published before anyone is chosen, one rule for everyone and a real remedy, such as a second session if one is possible.

My take

My claim: ___.

The crew should publish its criteria, then hold a lottery and plan for the twenty left out.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Use question 4 as a closing question.

Say this

“Answer with a detail from the evidence, such as a time on the sheet or a line on the whiteboard.” — Ask for one answer per question.

Stretch

- Find out how your school fills one limited spot, such as a trip or a club seat, and whether the rule is published first.
- Going further: Each method treats a different problem as the main one. For each of the three options, write the problem it tries to solve and one problem it leaves unsolved.
- Going further: Write down the option you picked first. Then find one person in the case that option treats unfairly. Decide whether you would change your criteria or explain them more carefully.
- Going further: Write two short sign-up announcements, each using a different method. Ask a friend to read both. Check whether they can tell who each plan leaves out and how to ask a question about it.
- Going further: Pick one limited spot at school, such as a class, a trip or a club seat. Find out how people are chosen and whether the rule is published. Ask who the rule helps and who it might leave out. Never ask classmates to share financial or personal information.
- Research how a real program uses a lottery and what critics say

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The sign-up times, because 22 names arrived before any rule existed.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

A needs-based rule is fairer when some applicants cannot afford the paid version.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

The evidence does not show how many applicants have the greatest need.

I would change my mind if ___.

Most of the thirty could not afford the paid version of the workshop.

Notes

This page continues page 355.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 3: Medium.** Students may bring up money at home or guess which classmates need help.

Cool-down: Say: “Answer about the applicants in the case, not anyone you know.” Return to the whiteboard wording for option C.

Talk about this case at home

Case 17: How should the crew give out ten free seats?

In this case, a group of friends has ten free workshop seats and thirty people who want one. Your student compared three ways to choose and wrote a note that explains the choice and who carries its cost.

See the case online.

Questions to talk about

1. When something is limited, like tickets or seats, what makes a way of choosing feel fair?
2. Why might it help to announce a rule before anyone signs up?
3. What is one kind way to tell people they were not picked?

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

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

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

Case 18: Why is the theater curtain still falling apart?

Overview

Students read a short story in which the theater curtain at Dec and Anika's school will not close. Meanwhile, a social post points to the district's $48 million budget. Students label a proposed-budget excerpt by year, stage and units, explain why the post compares a total with a per-pupil figure and map who decides. They then write a budget question and a 60-second comment for the school board.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- read a document's year, stage and units
- divide a total by a count and label the result
- write for a general news audience

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- fact-check the post by matching year, stage and units
- compute $15,000 per student and label it a proposed figure
- explain what the proposed budget can and cannot show about the curtain
- end with a question readers can bring to the school board

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant

Materials, continued

- Evidence A, B and C and the NCES revenue summary
- A label card and the fact-check structure: the claim, what the documents show, what is unknown, where to ask

The task in this edition

Task: Write a fact-check of the viral post for a local news site or a campus newspaper. Correct the comparison, show the math and say what the proposed budget can and cannot tell readers about the curtain.

Students make: Fact-check, 350—450 words, with a worked calculation

Pacing

Opener (page 358): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Key terms (pages 359 and 360): 4 min. Short on time: 2 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Look at the evidence (page 365): 8 min. Short on time: 7 min. Participants fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 366): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read Evidence C aloud. Participants fill in only its What it shows box.

Key idea (pages 367 and 368): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Skip the In the news section.

Pacing, continued

Sort the evidence (page 369): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 370): 5 min. Short on time: 5 min.

Your task (pages 371 and 372): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (page 373): 30 min. Short on time: 26 min. Participants draft the two sections in the session and finish afterward.

Check your work (pages 374 and 375): 8 min. Short on time: 3 min. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 376 and 377): 10 min. Short on time: 3 min. Use question 3 as a closing question.

Talk about this case at home (page 378): at home.

Periods: full chapter 106 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Standards

Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for calculating, interpreting and explaining numbers in everyday situations. In this case: Students convert a district total to a per-pupil figure and explain why the units in the post do not match (Representation; Interpretation).

Case 18 plan, continued

Standards, continued

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students check a viral post against the budget excerpt and the NCES page (Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically).

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 fact-check for local readers that shows its evidence (Sources and Evidence).

Information Creation as a Process Information is made through a process, and how it was made affects what it can be trusted for. In this case: Students explain the difference between a proposed budget and an adopted one and why the stage changes what a figure means.

Codes of ethics

- **ASPA Code of Ethics:** 5. Fully Inform and Advise.
- **SPJ Code of Ethics:** Seek Truth and Report It
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** "We advocate truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason..." (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 358):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 359 and 360):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 365):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 366):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 367 and 368):** Low

■□□ **Sort the evidence (page 369):** Low

■□□ **Practice (page 370):** Low

■□□ **Your task (pages 371 and 372):** Low

■□□ **Your draft (page 373):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 374 and 375):** Low

Try it at your school

Find one line in your school's budget.

- With a teacher or advisor, find your district's budget on its website
- Label the document's year and stage
- Find one line connected to something you use (facilities, arts, technology)
- Ask your student council how students can submit a budget question or comment

Who to ask: Student council advisor, school business office, school board clerk, principal

Safety: Get permission before photographing spaces or people at school. Stick to observed facts when posting about budgets.

Sources

- ABC, "About Abbott Elementary," No date listed
- National Center for Education Statistics, "Revenue sources for public schools by state, 2022—23 (Digest table 235.20)," No date listed

Case 18: Why is the theater curtain still falling apart?

The district's proposed budget is $48 million, the school theater curtain won't close, and Dec wants to ask the school board about it.

On your own Read What happened and underline the three dollar amounts. About 4 minutes.

Anika, Dec and Mari test a small light circuit in a theater workshop, with Pauta beside them.

Your role: You're the one who works out the per-student number before anyone repeats the post. **New skill:** Compare numbers on the same scale.

What happened

The curtain in the school theater is torn, and it no longer closes all the way. Dec, 17, pulls that curtain at every show. He and Anika, 16, are on the theater crew. The facilities office gave the theater advisor a quote to replace the curtain: $6,800.

Mari, 19, is helping them prepare a question for the school board. They find the district's proposed budget for next school year. The total is $48 million for a projected 3,200 students. One line sets aside $310,000 for building repairs at all schools. A note says the figures may change before the board adopts the budget.

On Tuesday at 6:10 p.m., a post starts going around. It compares the district's $48 million with another district, Westbrook, at $21,000 per student. "And they can't fix ONE curtain??" it asks. Dec has a photo of the torn curtain. He wants to be the one who asks the board about it.

Your question: What can the $48 million total tell Dec about the curtain, and what should he ask the school board?

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Say this

"$48 million, and the curtain still won't close. What is your first reaction?" — Collect reactions. Then ask what kind of number $48 million is.

Watch for

Misconception: Students assume a large total means money is free for any need. **Listen for:** "They have millions, they're just wasting it." **Then:** Ask what the $48 million has to cover. Write "whole district, next year" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud. List the three dollar amounts on the board with their labels.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key terms

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

Revenue Revenue is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants.

En español: ingresos

In this case: NCES reports that public schools get revenue from federal, state and local sources. That national data cannot show what Dec's district spends on a curtain.

Expenditure An expenditure is money that a government or an organization spends.

En español: gasto

In this case: The $48 million is a proposed plan for next school year. It lists planned expenditures, but none of that money has been spent yet.

Per-pupil amount A per-pupil amount is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared.

En español: monto por estudiante

In this case: $48,000,000 ÷ 3,200 students = $15,000 per student. Westbrook's $21,000 is already per student, but its year and stage are unknown.

Who is involved

Mari
Helping the theater crew with a budget question

"Forty-eight million dollars, and the curtain still won't close. Ay, bendito. Before we get mad at the big number, which line is supposed to fix it?"

Dec
Pulls the curtain at every show

"I pull that curtain every show. It doesn't close all the way anymore. That part I can show you."

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 2 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Say this

"Has any of the $48 million been spent yet?" — No. It is a proposed plan. Planned expenditures are not money already spent.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat revenue and expenditure as the same. **Listen for:** "Revenue is what they spend." **Then:** Revenue comes in and an expenditure goes out. Draw two arrows on the board.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term with a number from the case.
- **Cognates:** district (distrito), total (total), proposed (propuesto), student (estudiante), repair (reparación), comparison (comparación), calculate (calcular), federal (federal).

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, why do you think the theater curtain is still not fixed?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that the request never reached the board, because the quote went only to the theater advisor.

Notes

This page continues page 359. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 359.

Reading passage

Budget literacy and the politics of a number

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

- **Revenue**: Revenue is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants.
- **Expenditure**: An expenditure is money that a government or an organization spends.
- **Per-pupil amount**: A per-pupil amount is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared.
- **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: A local need and a viral comparison

A high school's stage curtain is torn and no longer closes. Dec, 17, pulls it at every performance. Facilities has priced a replacement at $6,800. With Anika, 16, and Mari, 19, Dec plans to raise it with the school board, and he insists on asking in person.

The district's proposed budget for next year lists $48,000,000 for a projected 3,200 students and $310,000 for building repairs across all schools. It notes that the figures may change before adoption. Then a post circulates on Tuesday evening. It pairs the district's $48 million with a neighboring district's $21,000 per student and asks why one curtain cannot be fixed.

The post is persuasive because its underlying grievance is real. The curtain is broken. Its numbers, however, are incommensurable. Mari's response models budget literacy. She reads the labels before reacting to the magnitude. "Proposed" means next year's plan, not this year's spending. The units must be checked. And she asks which line could plausibly fund a curtain at all.

Your role is to work out the per-student number before anyone repeats the post.

Stop and think. Why is a per-pupil figure a measure of resources rather than adequacy?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (729 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A local need and a viral comparison":** Why is a per-pupil figure a measure of resources rather than adequacy?
2. **After "Commensurability and the chain of decisions":** How should an advocate handle a viral claim that supports their cause but uses bad numbers?
3. **After "Finance, evidence and professional duty":** What procedural knowledge does Dec need to turn a grievance into a question the board must answer?

Commensurability and the chain of decisions

Comparisons require commensurable figures, meaning the same year, the same stage and the same unit. A **per-pupil amount** is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared. The district's proposed per-pupil figure is $15,000, which is $48,000,000 divided by 3,200. Only after that conversion does a comparison with Westbrook become possible, and it remains incomplete while Westbrook's year and stage are unknown. Even a perfect comparison would measure resources, not adequacy. A per-pupil figure cannot say whether students' needs are met.

The case's vocabulary distinguishes flows from plans. **Revenue** is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants. An **expenditure** is money that a government or an organization spends. The document at hand is a **proposal**, a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet, in Case 4's terms. It is distinct from the adopted budget and from actual spending.

The case also completes a sequence of numerical skills. Case 5 introduced line-by-line reading of a financial document. Case 11 required comparing situations on the same terms. Case 13 required keeping a claim as small as the evidence. Here, Mari applies the first two to the budget, and Dec applies the third to his own evidence. His photo establishes the tear. It says nothing about where funds went, so he declines to speculate.

Case 4's **decision-maker**, the person or group with the power to make a particular choice, locates authority. The school board adopts the budget within state and federal rules, so it, not the principal, is the right audience. An effective question names a line, a need and a procedural moment: which line covers stage equipment, what the $6,800 request would require and when the board hears requests before adoption.

Stop and think. How should an advocate handle a viral claim that supports their cause but uses bad numbers?

Finance, evidence and professional duty

School revenue combines federal, state and local sources in proportions that vary by state (NCES, May 2024). NCES publishes state-by-state revenue with per-pupil amounts for 2022—23 (NCES Digest table 235.20, March 2026). Those figures give context and cannot stand in for a district's own adopted budget. Local property-tax reliance produces large disparities (NPR, April 18, 2016). The trade-off between local control and equity is itself a policy debate (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, October 10, 2024).

Budgets also change with circumstances. The expiration of federal pandemic relief created a funding cliff for many districts (Chalkbeat, September 13, 2023). By 2026, many districts were cutting programs and staff because of inflation and falling enrollment (Chalkbeat, May 28, 2026).

This page continues page 361. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 361.

Finance, evidence and professional duty, continued

The stakes are measurable. Jackson, Johnson and Persico found that increases in per-pupil spending from school finance reforms raised educational attainment and adult earnings, particularly for low-income students (Quarterly Journal of Economics, October 1, 2015).

Professional codes apply to both sides of Dec's question. ASPA asks public administrators to give governing boards "accurate, honest, comprehensive, and timely information and advice" (ASPA Code of Ethics, 2013). The NCA credo holds "truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason" to be "essential to the integrity of communication" (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024). The TV connection adds a cultural lens. In Abbott Elementary's pilot, a principal spends money on a sign while teachers need supplies (ABC, December 7, 2021). A TV show cannot settle a real budget, but its question is the case's question: which line, and who decided?

Stop and think. What procedural knowledge does Dec need to turn a grievance into a question the board must answer?

Sources

Real source | National Center for Education Statistics | May 2024
Public School Revenue Sources (Condition of Education)

Real source | National Center for Education Statistics | March 2026
Revenue sources for public schools by state, 2022—23 (Digest table 235.20)

Real source | NPR | April 18, 2016
Why America's Schools Have A Money Problem

Real source | Lincoln Institute of Land Policy | October 10, 2024
Balancing Act: The Property Tax—School Funding Dilemma

Real source | Chalkbeat | September 13, 2023
Schools face a funding cliff. How bad will the fall be?

Real source | Chalkbeat | May 28, 2026
A financial reckoning is hitting America's public schools

Real source | The Quarterly Journal of Economics (Jackson, Johnson & Persico) | October 1, 2015
The Effects of School Spending on Educational and Economic Outcomes: Evidence from School Finance Reforms

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

This page continues page 361. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 361.

Sources, continued

Real source | National Communication Association (NCA) | 2024

Credo for Ethical Communication

Real source | ABC | No date listed

About Abbott Elementary

Notes

This page continues page 361. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 361.

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | Budget excerpt

The proposed budget for next school year

PROPOSED BUDGET, NEXT SCHOOL YEAR. Total proposed budget: $48,000,000. Projected enrollment: 3,200 students. Facilities, building repairs (all schools): $310,000. Note: figures are proposed and may change before the board adopts the budget.

Look closely: Circle the year, the stage and the unit for each number.

What it shows

Next year's proposed total and repair line, with a note that figures may change.

What it leaves out

Actual spending, the ranking of repairs and whether stage equipment is in this line.

Evidence B | Social media post

A post shared Tuesday at 6:10 p.m.

Our district: $48 MILLION. Westbrook: $21,000 per student. And they can't fix ONE curtain?? Where is the money going?

Look closely: Which number is a total, and which is per student?

What it shows

An angry comparison that mixes a total with a per-student figure.

What it leaves out

A source for Westbrook's $21,000, its year and stage, and any measure of need.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 7 min. Participants fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Say this

"Before you react to any number, find its year, its stage and its unit." — Model it on the $48 million: next year, proposed, whole district.

Watch for

Misconception: Students read the proposed budget as money already spent. **Listen for:** "They spent $48 million and didn't fix it." **Then:** Point to "PROPOSED" and "NEXT SCHOOL YEAR." Nothing here has been spent.

Support

- Give students a calculator and the budget excerpt with its labels highlighted.
- Read the budget note aloud.
- **Cognates:** district (distrito), total (total), proposed (propuesto), student (estudiante), repair (reparación), comparison (comparación), calculate (calcular), federal (federal).

Stretch

- Ask why the $310,000 line cannot show whether the curtain is funded, even though it is the right kind of line.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Repair quote

The facilities quote for a new curtain

Stage curtain replacement, main auditorium: remove the torn curtain, supply and install a flame-retardant replacement. Total: $6,800.

Look closely: What does the quote confirm, and who received it?

What it shows

The need has a price, $6,800, from the district's own facilities office.

What it leaves out

Whether the board has seen the request, and which line and ranking apply.

What is still missing from the evidence?

Whether stage equipment falls under the building-repairs line or another one, and how repair requests are ranked. Westbrook's year and stage, and what the board adopts, are also unknown.

Notes

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 4 min. Read Evidence C aloud. Participants fill in only its What it shows box.

Say this

"Before you react to any number, find its year, its stage and its unit." — Model it on the $48 million: next year, proposed, whole district.

Watch for

Misconception: Students read the proposed budget as money already spent. **Listen for:** "They spent $48 million and didn't fix it." **Then:** Point to "PROPOSED" and "NEXT SCHOOL YEAR." Nothing here has been spent.

Support

- Give students a calculator and the budget excerpt with its labels highlighted.
- Read the budget note aloud.
- **Cognates:** district (distrito), total (total), proposed (propuesto), student (estudiante), repair (reparación), comparison (comparación), calculate (calcular), federal (federal).

Stretch

- Ask why the $310,000 line cannot show whether the curtain is funded, even though it is the right kind of line.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: per-pupil amounts

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 12 minutes.

Before you compare two budget numbers, check three labels: the year, the stage and the unit. An **expenditure** is money that a government or an organization spends. A proposed budget is a plan for expenditures. An adopted budget is the plan the board approves. Actual spending is what the district really spent. The $48 million is a proposed total for the whole district. The Westbrook figure is an amount per student.

A **per-pupil amount** is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared. Dec's district proposes $48,000,000 for a projected 3,200 students. That works out to $15,000 per student. The comparison is still not complete, because Westbrook's budget year and stage are unknown. A per-pupil figure also cannot show whether either district has enough for its students' needs.

Revenue is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that public schools get revenue from federal, state and local sources. The mix differs from state to state. National data like this gives context, but it cannot say what one district spends on a curtain. In most states, an elected local school board adopts the budget within state and federal rules. That is why Dec's question should name one budget line, one need and the board's next chance to hear requests.

Professional standards

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

ASPA Code of Ethics: 5. Fully Inform and Advise

"Provide accurate, honest, comprehensive, and timely information and advice to elected and appointed officials and governing board members"

In plain words: ASPA members agree to give decision-makers, such as school board members, accurate and complete information.

Question: The $6,800 curtain quote went to the theater advisor. What should the board see to rank that repair?

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 10 min. Skip the In the news section.

Say this

"Divide $48,000,000 by 3,200 students. Compare it with $21,000. Is the comparison fair yet?" — Not yet. Westbrook's year and stage are unknown.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the ASPA code as a law for school boards. **Listen for:** "The board is breaking the ASPA code." **Then:** Say: "ASPA's code is for its members in public service. It is not a law."

Support

- Work the division on the board. Label the answer $15,000 per student, proposed.

Stretch

- Use the SPJ row: what context would a news story need before comparing the two districts?

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

The board needs ___. Without it, ___.

The board needs the quote, the photo and the proposed line. Without them, the board cannot weigh the curtain against other repairs.

In the news

Real source | NPR | April 18, 2016

Why America's Schools Have A Money Problem

Explains how local property taxes make school budgets very different from one district to the next.

Real source | Chalkbeat | May 28, 2026

A financial reckoning is hitting America's public schools

Big districts are making cuts, showing how a huge budget can still leave little for extras like a stage curtain.

Notes

This page continues page 367. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 367.

Sort the evidence

On your own Trace the curtain request from the photo to the vote and fill in each box. About 8 minutes.

Trace the curtain request from the photo to the vote. Who ranks it, who adopts the budget, which rules limit them, and where can students speak?

Fund the $6,800 curtain replacement next year

Who decides

The elected local school board, which adopts the budget

The facilities office, which ranks repair requests (how is still unknown)

Under which rule

State and federal rules and funding streams set limits on district budgets

Proposed building-repairs line: $310,000 for all schools

Who lives with it

Your way in

A written question or public comment before the budget is adopted

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 ___.

Other people who use the auditorium are missing. I would ask how the torn curtain affects their events before the crew speaks for them.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Trace the curtain request. Who ranks it, who adopts the budget and where can students speak?" — Model the first box: the facilities office.

Watch for

Misconception: Students name the principal as the decider. **Listen for:** "Just ask the principal to buy it." **Then:** Point to the chain: the elected school board adopts the budget.

Support

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

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what the crew should do first, explain why and fix the two marked phrases. About 5 minutes.

A post compares the district's $48 million total with Westbrook's $21,000 per student. Someone reposts it and adds "we get way less." What should the crew do first?

- ☐ **A** Share it. Both figures are in dollars, and the curtain really is torn.
- ☑ **B** Check that both figures use the same year, budget stage and units before comparing them.
- ☐ **C** Divide $48 million by 3,200 students, and post that the district is underfunded.

Why I chose it

B. It checks year, stage and units first. C gets the math right, $15,000 per student, but no single figure shows whether a district has enough.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Our district has a (1) $48 million budget but our theater curtain is ripped and gross. That's so much money and they can't even fix one curtain? It has been like this since before any of us joined the crew and it keeps getting worse every show. Where is all the money going? Other districts get way more. I saw a post that said so. We deserve better and (2) the board needs to explain themselves. We are honestly tired of waiting for this.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Next year's proposed budget is $48 million for the whole district.

Rewrite phrase 2

Could the board say which line covers the curtain and how repairs are ranked?

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

Short on time: 5 min.

Say this

"Someone reposts the comparison with "we get way less." What do you do first?" — Hold a quick vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students pick C because the math is right. **Listen for:** "$15,000 is less, so we're underfunded." **Then:** Ask what one per-student figure can prove. It cannot show need.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: Our question is about next year's proposed budget. The theater curtain is torn at the seam and no longer closes fully; we have a photo and a $6,800 replacement quote from the facilities office. The proposed budget lists $310,000 for building repairs across the district. We'd like to know whether stage equipment is covered by that line or a different one, how repair requests are ranked, and when the board considers them. Could a student from the theater crew submit a written request before the budget is adopted? Thank you for considering it.

College

Your task

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

Write a fact-check of the viral post for a local news site or a campus newspaper. Correct the comparison, show the math and say what the proposed budget can and cannot tell readers about the curtain.

Use: Case documents: the proposed-budget excerpt, the social post, the $6,800 repair quote and Dec's and Mari's statements. Real sources: the NCES page on public school revenue sources, NPR's explainer on school funding (April 18, 2016) and Chalkbeat's report on budget cuts (May 28, 2026).

You'll make: Fact-check, 350—450 words, with a worked calculation

Time: 75 minutes

1. Label each figure in Evidence A and B with its year, stage and units.
2. Calculate $48,000,000 ÷ 3,200 students and label the result.
3. Note what the post leaves out about Westbrook's $21,000.
4. Draft the claim and the unknowns sections on the Your draft page.
5. Finish the fact-check, 350 to 450 words, on lined paper or in the online workspace.
6. Finish with one question readers can bring to the school board.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Labels for each figure

$48,000,000: proposed total, next school year. $21,000: per student, year and stage not given.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 12 min.

Say this

"A fact-check starts with the claim in the poster's words. What exactly does the post say?" — Copy the post's figures onto the board with their units.

Watch for

Misconception: Participants call the post false. **Listen for:** "The post is fake." **Then:** Ask which part is wrong. The figures may be real; the comparison is mismatched.

Support

- Label card: year, stage and units for each figure
- Worked division: $48,000,000 ÷ 3,200 students
- Fact-check structure: the claim, what the documents show, what is still unknown, where to ask

Stretch

- Explain the difference between equity and adequacy in two sentences, and say which one the curtain question is about.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric; Information Literacy VALUE Rubric; Written Communication VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Information Creation as a Process.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Your task, continued

My calculation

___ ÷ ___ = ___

$48,000,000 ÷ 3,200 = $15,000 per student

Equity and adequacy, in two sentences

Equity asks whether money is shared fairly given different needs. Adequacy asks whether there is enough, which is closer to the curtain question.

Notes

This page continues page 371.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Computes $48,000,000 ÷ 3,200 = $15,000 per student and labels it a proposed figure
- Notes that the post gives no year or stage for Westbrook's $21,000 per student
- Explains that the $310,000 facilities line covers all schools and does not show whether the $6,800 curtain is funded
- Uses the NCES page only for the point that revenue sources differ by state
- Ends with a question readers can bring to the school board

Your draft

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

The claim and what the documents show

The claim: a post going around says the district has "$48 MILLION" but cannot fix one theater curtain. It compares that total with Westbrook's $21,000 per student. What the documents show: the $48 million is a proposed total for next school year, for the whole district. It is not money already spent. Divided by 3,200 projected students, it equals $15,000 per student, a proposed figure. The post gives no year or stage for Westbrook's $21,000, so the two figures still cannot be compared fairly.

What is unknown and where to ask

What is still unknown: the proposed budget sets $310,000 for building repairs at all schools. It does not say whether a stage curtain counts as a building repair. The facilities office priced a replacement at $6,800 for the theater advisor. Nothing in the budget shows how that request ranks against other repairs. NCES reports that revenue sources differ by state, so national data cannot answer a local question. Where to ask: which budget line covers stage equipment, and when will the board hear requests before it adopts the budget?

Pacing

Full chapter: 30 min.

Short on time: 26 min. Participants draft the two sections in the session and finish afterward.

Say this

"Could a reader check each of your numbers? Name the document for each one." — Partners circle any number without a source.

Watch for

Misconception: The fact-check claims the district is underfunded. **Listen for:** "So we get less than Westbrook." **Then:** Ask what the post leaves out about Westbrook's figure.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Labels the figure's stage.
2. Labels the per-student result correctly.
3. Notes what the comparison still lacks.
4. Explains what the $310,000 line cannot show.
5. Ends with a question for the school board.

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 8 minutes.

Is your calculation correct and labeled as proposed?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you note that the post gives no year or stage for Westbrook?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you explain what the $310,000 line cannot show?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you end with a question for the school board?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Uses an unlabeled total.	☐ Uses a figure without year or stage.	☐ Labels year, stage and line and cites the need.	☐ Adds a repair quote and notes what the figures can't show.
Reasoning	☐ Assumes waste or theft.	☐ Compares mismatched numbers.	☐ Links the need to a specific budget line.	☐ Explains process questions: ranking, timing, decision-maker.
Audience & purpose	☐ Accuses the board.	☐ Complains without a request.	☐ Asks a question the board can answer.	☐ Asks a question and offers a concrete way for students to contribute.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Say this

"Find the sentence in your question that names one budget line and one need." — Circulate and ask for the label "proposed" if it is missing.

Watch for

Misconception: Revisions only soften the tone. **Listen for:** "I took out the rude part." **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Ask for an added label or a specific budget line.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the calculation is correct and labeled, and that the fact-check claims nothing the budget excerpt does not show.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Labels year, stage and line and cites the need.
- **Reasoning:** Links the need to a specific budget line.
- **Audience & purpose:** Asks a question the board can answer.
- **Revision:** Adds labels and a specific line.

How your work is scored, continued

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Removes insults only.	☐ Adds labels and a specific line.	☐ Explains how each change makes an answer more likely.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

🔑 I labeled $15,000 as proposed, because my draft called it what the district spends.

Notes

Case 18 | Check your work | College educator edition

This page continues page 374. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 374.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames. About 10 minutes.

1 What could make spending rise without the service getting better?

Higher prices for the same work, or new costs the district must cover. Spending can rise while the curtain stays torn.

2 Dec wants to ask the board himself. Why might it matter who brings the question?

Firsthand users carry credibility and show who is affected. Students also learn how to join decisions about spaces they use.

3 What else would you want to know before saying one district gets less than another?

Matching year, stage and categories, and each district's costs and student needs. Per-pupil figures cannot settle adequacy.

My take

My claim: ___.

Dec should bring the quote, the photo and one question about the repair line to the board.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The repair quote, because it turns a complaint into a priced need.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The big total means the district is choosing not to fix the curtain.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Use question 3 as a closing question.

Say this

"Answer with a label or a number from the evidence." — Ask for one answer per question.

Stretch

- With an adult, find your district's budget, label its year and stage and find one line for a space you use.
- Going further: Write two headlines about the same budget: one with the $48 million total and one with $15,000 per student. Compare the story each headline tells. Then name one group that uses the theater but is missing from this discussion.
- Going further: Some people say every school should get the same amount. What problem does that plan assume it is solving? Name one need it might miss.
- Going further: Make a chart of the proposed budget that shows the total, the per-student amount and the building-repairs line. Label the year, the stage and the units. Ask a reader to explain what the chart cannot show.
- Going further: With a teacher or advisor, find your district's budget on its website. Label its year and stage. Find one line for something you use, such as facilities, arts or technology. Ask your student council how students can send a budget question. Get permission before you photograph spaces or people at school.
- Find your own district's adopted budget and locate the facilities or capital line

My take, continued

The limit of the evidence is ___.

The evidence does not show who ranks repair requests or how.

I would change my mind if ___.

The facilities office showed that other repairs rank ahead of the curtain for a clear reason.

Notes

This page continues page 376.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 3: Medium.** Students may compare wealthy and poor districts they know, or talk about family income.

Cool-down: Keep it to the two figures in the case. Ask what we would need to check, and list year, stage, units and need.

Talk about this case at home

Case 18: Why is the theater curtain still falling apart?

In this case, a group of friends reads a school district budget to find out why a torn theater curtain has not been fixed. Your student checked what the numbers mean and wrote a clear question for the school board.

Questions to talk about

1. Where do you think a school's money comes from?
2. Why can it be misleading to compare a total with an amount per person?
3. Who would you ask if something at school needed fixing?

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

See the case online.

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

"Read this page at home with someone you trust." — Nobody needs to share family money information to complete it.

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:

- read an agenda for its item, action and deciding body
- write for two different audiences
- rehearse a timed spoken text

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- plan a group's input across two stages of a local decision
- write a spoken comment that fits a two-minute limit
- answer the resident's noise concern with a specific request
- write a follow-up email to the full council, the body that decides

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant

Materials, continued

- Evidence A to D and Seattle City Council's public comment page
- The public-record checklist and a timer

The task in this edition

Task: Prepare the crew's input on item 4 as a small community group. Write a two-minute spoken comment for the parks committee and a follow-up email to the full council, which receives the committee's recommendation.

Students make: Spoken comment, 2 minutes (about 260 words), plus a follow-up email of 120—180 words

Pacing

Opener (page 379): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Key terms (pages 380 and 381): 4 min. Short on time: 2 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Look at the evidence (page 386): 7 min. Short on time: 6 min. Participants fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 387): 6 min. Short on time: 5 min. Participants fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Key idea (pages 388 and 389): 10 min. Short on time: 6 min. Skip In the news.

Pacing, continued

Sort the evidence (page 390): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 391): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Vote on the three openings and skip the marked draft.

Your task (pages 392 and 393): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (page 394): 25 min. Short on time: 25 min.

Check your work (pages 395 and 396): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 397 and 398): 10 min. Short on time: 7 min. Use question 3 as a closing question.

Talk about this case at home (page 399): at home.

Periods: full chapter 97 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

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 speak to the body that can act on the item and follow the decision to the full council (Civic Contexts/Structures).

Case 19 plan, continued

Standards, continued

Oral Communication VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for a prepared talk with a clear central message, organization, supporting material and delivery. In this case: Students deliver a timed comment with one central message and one supporting observation (Central Message).

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 follow-up email for a different audience than the spoken comment (Context of and Purpose for Writing).

Scholarship as Conversation Experts and communities build knowledge over time through ongoing discussion and disagreement. In this case: Students use research on who comments at local meetings (Einstein, Palmer and Glick, 2018) to decide whose view their comment should acknowledge.

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 379):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 380 and 381):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 386):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 387):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 388 and 389):** Low

■■□ **Sort the evidence (page 390):** Medium

■■□ **Practice (page 391):** Medium

■□□ **Your task (pages 392 and 393):** Low

■□□ **Your draft (page 394):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 395 and 396):** 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

Try it at your school, continued

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 4 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: 4 min.

Short on time: 3 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 4 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: 4 min.

Short on time: 2 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?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that she should cut page two, because the bus is not on this agenda.

Notes

This page continues page 380. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 380.

Reading passage

Public comment as civic craft

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

- **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: A comment built for its audience

Gia, 21, plans to speak against a parks committee proposal. Item 4 would turn off the park's court lights and close the lighted courts at 8 p.m., citing residents' complaints about evening noise. The agenda frames the action as a committee recommendation to the full council. Speakers sign up by 5 p.m., get two minutes each and become part of the public record by name. Written comments are accepted in advance.

Gia's draft reflects a common first-time pattern. It is three pages long, with page one alone at two minutes and forty seconds. It centers on a request no one can grant, "Please don't close the park," when the item concerns lights and hours. It spends a page on the bus, a real issue outside the committee's authority. It includes a friend's private circumstances. It also addresses the committee as "you guys" who "never listen to young people."

Mateo, 22, times a practice run from a bench and listens as a committee member would. His diagnosis is that the comment contains no request he could repeat back. His intervention is a question rather than an edit: if the committee remembers one sentence, what is it? The answer becomes the opening line.

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

Pacing

Reading: about 6 min (770 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: A comment built for its audience":** Why might an unrepresentative pool of commenters make Gia's comment more valuable, not less?
2. **After "Remit, sequence and the public record":** How does the committee's role as a recommending body change Gia's strategy?
3. **After "Participation, representation and professional ethics":** Where is the line between sharing lived experience and exposing someone else's private life?

Stop and think. Why might an unrepresentative pool of commenters make Gia's comment more valuable, not less?

Remit, sequence and the public record

An **agenda item** is one topic listed on a meeting's official schedule of business. A **remit** is the set of matters that a committee or other body is responsible for and can act on. Effective participation depends on matching the request to both. Item 4 is about lighting and hours, and the committee's remit extends to recommending court hours. The bus is out of scope, so under Case 10's principle of routing problems to the responsible office, it goes elsewhere.

The case assembles earlier skills into a single practical sequence. Case 4 introduced the **proposal**, a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet, and the **decision-maker**, the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. The agenda reveals a two-step structure. The committee recommends, and the council decides. That tells Gia both what to ask for and that later chances to speak may exist.

Her revised comment follows a four-part structure that works in many settings. It identifies the item, reports an observation, explains its significance and makes a single actionable request. She counted twenty or thirty people on the courts between 8 and 9, many of whom work late, and she asks for lights until 9 on weekdays this summer. The request also engages the opposing written comment, from a resident who likes the courts but hears late noise at home and has children with school in the morning. A 9 p.m. compromise gives the committee a way to act on both concerns.

The last revision concerns privacy. A **public record** is information a government keeps that anyone can ask to see, such as meeting comments. Speaking publicly means accepting that one's own words become part of that record. It does not license publishing someone else's private situation.

Stop and think. How does the committee's role as a recommending body change Gia's strategy?

Participation, representation and professional ethics

Public comment procedures are local. Seattle City Council, for example, accepts spoken comment in person or by phone and written comment by email, with up to two minutes per speaker (Seattle City Council, no date listed). The U.S. Department of Labor advises federal rulemaking commenters that comments become public and work best with specific experience and data (U.S. Department of Labor, no date listed).

Political scientists have studied who participates. Einstein, Palmer and Glick found from meeting minutes that local commenters are often unrepresentative of the broader community (Perspectives on Politics, October 14, 2018).

This page continues page 382. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 382.

Participation, representation and professional ethics, continued

Sahn examined whether and how public comment connects to policy outcomes (American Journal of Political Science, August 31, 2024). Together, these studies suggest both the limits of comment and the value of new voices. Student groups in Newark and Philadelphia have brought their own research and district data to school boards (Chalkbeat Newark, November 26, 2025; Chalkbeat Philadelphia, April 3, 2026).

The pop-culture version is instructive by contrast. In the first episode of Parks and Recreation (NBC, April 9, 2009), Ann Perkins complains at a public forum about a construction pit, and Leslie Knope promises on the spot to build a park. In our reading, real meetings run on agendas, time limits and bodies that can decide only some things.

Professional codes describe both sides of the exchange. ASPA asks public servants to "inform the public and encourage active engagement in governance" (ASPA Code of Ethics, 2013). The NCA credo endorses "freedom of expression, diversity of perspective, and acknowledgement of dissent" (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024).

Stop and think. Where is the line between sharing lived experience and exposing someone else's private life?

Sources

Real source | Seattle City Council | No date listed
Public Comment

Real source | U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division | No date listed
How to Comment on a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)

Real source | Perspectives on Politics (Einstein, Palmer & Glick) | October 14, 2018
Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes

Real source | American Journal of Political Science (Sahn) | August 31, 2024
Public comment and public policy

Real source | Chalkbeat Newark | November 26, 2025
How a Newark student coalition is using its own research to press for change in schools

Real source | Chalkbeat Philadelphia | April 3, 2026
'Not what democracy is all about': Philly students slam school leaders' approach to school closures

Real source | Peacock | 2009
Parks and Recreation

This page continues page 382. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 382.

Sources, continued

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

ASPA Code of Ethics

Real source | National Communication Association (NCA) | 2024

Credo for Ethical Communication

Notes

This page continues page 382. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 382.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document and write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 7 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

One item, one proposal and one action: a recommendation to the full council.

What it leaves out

How many residents complained, and whether the committee weighed other closing times.

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

Two ways in, speaking for 2 minutes or writing ahead, and both go on the record.

What it leaves out

How much weight the full council gives the committee's recommendation.

Pacing

Full chapter: 7 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Participants fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Say this

"Find three facts in the comment rules: the deadline, the time limit and what becomes public." — List them on the board: 5:00 p.m., 2 minutes, comments and names.

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 each document on its own half-page with the key line enlarged.
- Read Gia's draft and the resident's comment aloud.
- **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

Evidence C | **Draft**

Gia's three-page draft (excerpt)

"The park is really important to everyone and closing it is a terrible idea. I go there all the time with my friends... You guys never listen to young people. Please don't close the park."

Look closely: Find the request. Does it match what item 4 proposes?

What it shows	What it leaves out
A sincere draft whose request answers a proposal that is not on the agenda.	Item 4's real proposal, the 8 p.m. time and any specific observation.

Evidence D | **Written comment**

A comment from a nearby resident

The courts are good for the neighborhood, but the noise late in the evening carries into our apartment. We have kids with school in the morning.

Look closely: What does this resident like, and what is the problem?

What it shows	What it leaves out
An opposing interest stated fairly: the courts help, but late noise reaches home.	When the noise becomes a problem, so nobody knows whether 9 p.m. would work.

What is still missing from the evidence?

How many residents complained, and when. Whether compromise hours were weighed, how the full council usually treats the committee's recommendations, and what absent court users think.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Participants fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Say this

"Find three facts in the comment rules: the deadline, the time limit and what becomes public." — List them on the board: 5:00 p.m., 2 minutes, comments and names.

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 each document on its own half-page with the key line enlarged.
- Read Gia's draft and the resident's comment aloud.
- **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.**

Key idea: remit

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

The written route ___. It still ___.

The written route opens the process to people who work during the meeting. It still reaches only those who learn about item 4 in time.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Skip In the news.

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.**

In the news

Real source | Chalkbeat Philadelphia | April 3, 2026

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

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

Real source | Chalkbeat Newark | November 26, 2025

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

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

Notes

This page continues page 388. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 388.

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 ___.

The full council's view is missing. I would ask how it usually treats the committee's recommendations on park hours.

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 5 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. In a two-minute slot, the first sentence should tell the committee which decision the comment is about. A and C spend that time elsewhere.

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 until evening, so the hour after 8 is our time to play.

Rewrite phrase 2

Please recommend keeping the court lights on until 9 p.m. on weekdays this summer.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 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.

College

Your task

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

Prepare the crew's input on item 4 as a small community group. Write a two-minute spoken comment for the parks committee and a follow-up email to the full council, which receives the committee's recommendation.

Use: Case documents: the parks committee agenda, the comment instructions, Gia's three-page draft, the nearby resident's comment and Mateo's question. Real sources: the Seattle City Council public-comment page and research on who speaks at local meetings (Einstein, Palmer and Glick, 2018).

You'll make: Spoken comment, 2 minutes (about 260 words), plus a follow-up email of 120—180 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. Reread Evidence A and B. Note the item, the time limit and who decides after the committee.
2. Reread the resident's comment in Evidence D. Plan one request that answers it.
3. Outline the comment: item, who you are, what you saw, why it matters and the request.
4. Write a spoken comment of two minutes or less on the Your draft page.
5. Read it aloud with a partner and a timer. Cut until it fits.
6. Start the follow-up email on the Your draft page. Finish it, 120 to 180 words, on lined paper.
7. Check both texts against the public-record checklist.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Who hears it, and who decides

The parks committee hears the comment and recommends. The full council decides.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 12 min.

Say this

"Your group has two audiences: the committee tonight and the council later. What does each body need?" — The committee needs a request it can recommend. The council needs a short record.

Watch for

Misconception: Participants write one text for both audiences. **Listen for:** "We'll just send the council our speech." **Then:** Ask what the council needs that the committee already heard.

Support

- Comment outline: item, who you are, what you saw, why it matters, the request
- Timer and a read-aloud rehearsal with a partner
- Public-record checklist from the comment instructions

Stretch

- Answer the resident's concern about late noise with a specific request the committee could recommend. One example is Gia's request to keep the courts lit until 9 on weekdays through the summer.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Your task, continued

Comment outline

Item 4. A small group of court users. Twenty to thirty people between 8 and 9 on weekdays. Many work late. Lights until 9 on weekdays this summer.

How the request answers the resident

The lights go off at 9, and the committee reviews when the noise happens.

Notes

This page continues page 392.

Standards

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

ACRL Framework: Scholarship as Conversation.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Names item 4 and the parks committee, and says the committee makes a recommendation to the full council
- Fits the 2-minute limit when read aloud
- Responds to the resident's noise concern with a specific request
- Sends the follow-up email to the full council, the body that decides after the committee
- Leaves out addresses, phone numbers and anyone else's private story

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 25 minutes.

Spoken comment, two minutes or less

Good evening, members of the parks committee. I'm Gia, and I'm speaking for a small group of friends who use the park. We are commenting on item 4, the proposal to turn off the court lights and close the lighted courts at 8:00 p.m. On weekday evenings, I have counted twenty to thirty people on the courts between 8 and 9. Many of us work until evening, so that hour is when we can play. We also read the written comment from a nearby resident. The courts are good for the neighborhood, the resident wrote, but late noise carries into an apartment where kids have school in the morning. That is a fair concern. We ask the committee to recommend keeping the lights on until 9 p.m. on weekdays through the summer. We also ask the committee to review when the noise happens before it recommends any permanent change. Thank you.

Follow-up email to the full council: first paragraph

Dear council members, I spoke at the parks committee meeting on Tuesday about item 4. It proposes turning off the court lights at 8 p.m. The committee's recommendation now comes to you for final action. We asked for lights until 9 p.m. on weekdays through the summer and a review of when the noise happens.

Pacing

Full chapter: 25 min.

Short on time: 25 min.

Say this

"Read the comment aloud with a timer. Where does it pass two minutes?" — Partners mark the spot and cut before it.

Watch for

Misconception: The group speaks for people who did not ask it to. **Listen for:** "Everyone in the neighborhood wants this." **Then:** Ask who asked the group to speak. Name only the people you know about.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Names the item in the first lines.
2. Acknowledges the resident before making the request.
3. Answers the noise concern with a specific request.
4. Sends the follow-up to the body that decides after the committee.

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 8 minutes.

Does your comment name item 4 and fit in two minutes when read aloud?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your request respond to the resident's noise concern?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Is your email addressed to the full council, the body that decides?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Did you leave out addresses, phone numbers and anyone else's private story?	☑ 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: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

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: Score with the case rubric. Add checks for the time limit, the correct body at each stage and careful handling of personal information.

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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made after the timed reading

I changed ___ because ___.

I cut the sentence about the bus, because the parks committee cannot act on it and the comment ran over two minutes.

Notes

This page continues page 395. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 395.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames. About 10 minutes.

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

The body with bus routes in its remit. Sending the question there saves both meetings' time and gives it a chance of action.

2 **How could Gia's comment respond to the resident's concern about noise?**

By stating the concern fairly first. An end time of 9 p.m. and a review of the complaints give both sides part of what they need.

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

The committee hears about a use it might not know. Her count stays on the record, and she can still write to the full council.

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

Through written comments sent ahead. Einstein, Palmer and Glick found commenters often do not reflect the whole community, so the committee should not assume they do.

My take

My claim: ___.

The group should speak on item 4 tonight and write to the full council, because the decision happens in two stages.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 7 min. Use question 3 as a closing question.

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

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The comment rules, because they set the time limit, the written route and the public record.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

A two-minute comment rarely changes a recommendation, so the group should spend its time elsewhere.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

No document shows how the full council usually treats the committee's recommendations.

I would change my mind if ___.

The committee had already decided before the meeting and did not read written comments.

Notes

This page continues page 397.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 2: Medium.** Students may side with young people or with neighbors and describe either group unfairly.

Cool-down: Reread the resident's comment aloud. Ask what this family needs, in their own words, before anyone answers.

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.

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.

Case 20: Can the crew post this image as true?

Content note

The real sources include AI-generated images from disasters such as Hurricane Helene. Preview them, and do not share images of real people in distress, even to debunk them.

Overview

Students read a short story in which a realistic image captioned “Courtyard flooded today, stay away” spreads through a campus group chat. They compare the image, Sami’s zoom-in, a secondhand reply, a detector score and the campus alerts page with NIST’s overview of detection. They then write the verification note Jordy posts instead of the image.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- trace a claim to its earliest source
- write a short public note that states uncertainty
- write a memo with recommendations for a named office

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- write a verification note that reaches no unsupported verdict
- treat the 12% score and the odd hand as reasons to look closer, not proof

Objectives, continued

- recommend two changes the office that runs the alerts page could make
- represent NIST’s point that no single approach settles whether content is synthetic

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per participant
- Evidence A to D, the NIST summary and the RumorGuard check on the Helene image
- A chain chart: claim, earliest source, date, corroboration

The task in this edition

Task: Write the verification note the crew posts instead of the image. Then write a memo recommending two changes to the campus facilities alerts page that would help students check rumors.

Students make: Verification note, 50—80 words, plus a memo of 250—350 words

Pacing

Opener (page 400): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Key terms (pages 401 and 402): 4 min. Short on time: 2 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Pacing, continued

Look at the evidence (page 407): 7 min. Short on time: 6 min. Participants fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 408): 6 min. Short on time: 5 min. Participants fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Key idea (pages 409 and 410): 10 min. Short on time: 6 min. Skip In the news.

Sort the evidence (page 411): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 412): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Vote on the three options and skip the marked draft.

Your task (pages 413 and 414): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (page 415): 25 min. Short on time: 25 min.

Check your work (pages 416 and 417): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 418 and 419): 10 min. Short on time: 7 min. Use question 3 as a closing question.

Talk about this case at home (page 420): at home.

Periods: full chapter 97 minutes; one period 75 minutes.

Case 20 plan, continued

Standards

Information Literacy VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for finding, evaluating and using information for a purpose, ethically and legally. In this case: Students weigh a detector score, a secondhand reply and an alerts page for what each can show (Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically).

Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric AAC&U's rubric for exploring issues, evidence and assumptions thoroughly before forming a conclusion. In this case: Students separate whether the image was generated from whether the courtyard flooded before they reach a conclusion (Evidence).

Information Creation as a Process Information is made through a process, and how it was made affects what it can be trusted for. In this case: Students explain what provenance data, labels, watermarks and detection each record, using the NIST overview.

Searching as Strategic Exploration Searching for information is an exploration that takes planning, several sources and changes of direction. In this case: Students look for the earliest post and an independent source before they judge the claim.

Codes of ethics

- **RTDNA Code of Ethics:** Truth and accuracy above all
- **SPJ Code of Ethics:** Seek Truth and Report It
- **PRSA Code of Ethics:** Disclosure of Information

Heat map

■□□ **Opener (page 400):** Low

■□□ **Key terms (pages 401 and 402):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 407):** Low

■□□ **Look at the evidence (page 408):** Low

■□□ **Key idea (pages 409 and 410):** Low

■□□ **Sort the evidence (page 411):** Low

■□□ **Practice (page 412):** Low

■□□ **Your task (pages 413 and 414):** Low

■□□ **Your draft (page 415):** Low

■□□ **Check your work (pages 416 and 417):** Low

Try it at your school

Pause before you share an image as news.

- Find where the image first appeared before reposting
- Check an official or independent source for the event
- If you can't confirm it, say so or don't share it

Try it at your school, continued

- Suggest a "check before posting" rule for a club account you help run

Who to ask: School librarian or media specialist, journalism advisor, campus communications office

Safety: Don't download or share images of real people that could embarrass or harm them, even to debunk them. Report harmful fakes to a trusted adult and the platform.

Sources

- UC Berkeley School of Information, "Hany Farid breaks down the viral Helene image," October 4, 2024
- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), "Reducing Risks Posed by Synthetic Content: An Overview of Technical Approaches to Digital Content Transparency," No date listed

Case 20: Can the crew post this image as true?

A realistic image says the campus courtyard flooded today, and Jordy must decide what the six o'clock recap can say about it.

On your own Read What happened and underline the caption's claim. About 4 minutes.

Lupa holds a cropped photo of a courtyard next to the full photo pinned on a board. The full photo also shows a blue doorway.

Your role: You're the one who writes the verification note Jordy posts at six. **New skill:** Confirm an image with independent sources.

What happened

It is Wednesday, 3:10 p.m. For twenty minutes, an image has been going around the group chat. It looks like a photo of the campus courtyard, with water over the paving and benches. The caption says, "Courtyard flooded today, stay away." It showed up at 2:48 p.m. with no link, no date and no name.

Jordy is putting together the crew's recap, which goes out at six. Sami has zoomed in on a hand in the picture, and the fingers seem to merge at the knuckles. Someone ran the image through a free online detector. It reported "12% likely AI-generated."

A reply in the chat says the writer's roommate's friend saw water near the library. Jordy checks the campus facilities alerts page. It shows no active alerts, but its last update was Monday morning.

Your question: Did the courtyard flood today, and what should the recap say about the image?

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the key terms.

Say this

"This image lands in your chat with the caption "Courtyard flooded today, stay away." Would you share it?" — Ask for a show of hands. Do not correct anyone yet.

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide from how real the image looks. **Listen for:** "It looks totally real, so it happened." **Then:** Ask what the image cannot tell you: who took it, when and where.

Support

- Read What happened aloud. Describe the image aloud for students with low vision.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key terms

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

Provenance Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled.

En español: procedencia

In this case: The courtyard image arrived at 2:48 p.m. with no link, no date and no named poster. Its provenance is unknown.

Corroboration Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source.

En español: corroboración

In this case: A campus alert or someone's dated photo of the courtyard could corroborate the flood. A roommate's friend's report of water near the library cannot.

Verification note A verification note is a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown.

En español: nota de verificación

In this case: Instead of posting the image, the recap says what the crew checked, what it found and what is still unknown.

Who is involved

Sami

Checking where the image came from

"Everyone's zooming in on the hand. I did too, and it's weird. But I still don't know who posted this."

Jordy

Putting the six o'clock recap together

"The recap goes out at six. Right now I have an image with no source, a strange hand and an alerts page that hasn't updated since Monday."

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 2 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Say this

"Provenance asks where a file came from. What do we know about this image's provenance?" — Only when it appeared, 2:48 p.m. No link, no date, no name.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat any second report as corroboration. **Listen for:** "Someone else saw water, so it's confirmed." **Then:** Ask who saw what, where and when. The report is secondhand, and the library is a different place from the courtyard.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term with an example from the case.
- **Cognates:** image (imagen), evidence (evidencia), verification (verificación), corroboration (corroboración), original (original), confirm (confirmar), alert (alerta), independent (independiente).

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, do you think the courtyard flooded today?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

My first guess is that nobody knows yet, because the post has no link or date.

Notes

This page continues page 401. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 401.

Reading passage

Verification under deadline

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

- **Provenance**: Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled.
- **Corroboration**: Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source.
- **Verification note**: A verification note is a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown.
- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Holding statement**: A holding statement is a short update that says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more.
- **Correction**: A correction is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information.

The story: Four clues and no source

The casebook closes where it opened, with a piece of media in a group chat and a group deciding what to tell people. At 2:48 p.m. on a Wednesday, an image of the campus courtyard under water appears with the caption “Courtyard flooded today, stay away.” It carries no link, no date and no original poster. Jordy has until six to decide what the crew’s recap will say.

By 3:10, four signals have accumulated. Sami’s zoom shows a hand whose fingers seem to merge at the knuckles. A free detector reports “12% likely AI-generated.” A secondhand message says someone’s roommate’s friend saw water near the library. The campus facilities alerts page shows no active alerts, with a last update on Monday at 9:15 a.m.

The case is designed so that none of these signals resolves the question, and several tempt overinterpretation. Sami models the necessary shift. She acknowledges the anomaly she found and then sets it aside in favor of provenance. Who posted the image first, and when? Jordy models the editorial decision. Wanting a clean answer is not a reason to publish one. The recap will say what was checked and leave the image out.

Your role is to write the verification note Jordy posts at six.

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (748 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After “The story: Four clues and no source”:** How does the absence of provenance change what the other clues can prove?
2. **After “An evidentiary standard for images”:** Why does hedging language fail to travel with an image?
3. **After “Technical limits and professional norms”:** Across twenty cases, which earlier skill mattered most in this one, and why?

Stop and think. How does the absence of provenance change what the other clues can prove?

An evidentiary standard for images

Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled. For images that claim to show a news event, provenance is the primary question, and it applies the Case 1 skill of finding the original source. Its absence here shifts the burden to corroboration.

The caption asserts a **claim**, a statement that something is true that can be checked with evidence. The available signals differ in kind. The hand anomaly is diagnostic of nothing on its own, since generated images can look natural and genuine photos can look odd. The detector's output lacks the error rates that would make it interpretable, and it addresses whether the image is synthetic rather than whether the event occurred. The secondhand report is attenuated in source and mismatched in location.

Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source. The official source, Case 9's habit, is the alerts page, and its staleness means its silence is weak evidence. An independent, dated image or a same-day official notice would be probative.

The case's new skill is confirming an image with independent sources and publishing only what was verified. The chosen output is a **verification note**, a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown. It is the structural descendant of Case 1's **holding statement**, which says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more. It commits the crew to Case 3's duty of **correction**, a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information, if later evidence changes the picture. Jordy's refusal to post the image "with a question mark" reflects a practical insight. Hedging language does not travel with an image, and the image is what spreads.

Stop and think. Why does hedging language fail to travel with an image?

Technical limits and professional norms

NIST's overview of synthetic-content transparency surveys provenance metadata, labeling, watermarking and detection, and it emphasizes that each has technical limits (NIST, November 20, 2024). Perception offers no backstop. Nightingale and Farid found that people could not reliably distinguish AI-synthesized faces from real ones and rated synthetic faces as more trustworthy (PNAS, February 14, 2022).

Recent cases show the costs of skipping provenance.

This page continues page 403. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 403.

Technical limits and professional norms, continued

The Hurricane Helene "girl and puppy" image had no identifiable photographer or outlet, and forensic analysis found inconsistencies such as a boat floor with impossible perspective (UC Berkeley School of Information, October 4, 2024). Local reporting documented how emotion outran verification (KPRC Click2Houston, October 9, 2024). In 2023, a fabricated image of an explosion near the Pentagon spread through verified accounts and briefly moved markets (NPR, May 22, 2023; CNN, May 22, 2023). Critics now warn that AI content is spreading confusion across feeds (PBS NewsHour, October 22, 2025).

Professional codes treat verification and transparency about uncertainty as obligations. RTDNA says journalism "acknowledges the absence of important additional information" (RTDNA Code of Ethics, June 11, 2015). SPJ holds that the public "is entitled to as much information as possible to judge the reliability and motivations of sources" (SPJ Code of Ethics, September 6, 2014). PRSA asks practitioners to "investigate the truthfulness and accuracy of information released on behalf of those represented" (PRSA Code of Ethics, October 2000). A verification note meets all three standards, even when its conclusion is "we cannot confirm this yet."

Stop and think. Across twenty cases, which earlier skill mattered most in this one, and why?

Sources

Real source | National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) | November 20, 2024
Reducing Risks Posed by Synthetic Content: An Overview of Technical Approaches to Digital Content Transparency

Real source | PNAS (Nightingale & Farid) | February 14, 2022
AI-synthesized faces are indistinguishable from real faces and more trustworthy

Real source | UC Berkeley School of Information | October 4, 2024
Hany Farid breaks down the viral Helene image

Real source | KPRC Click2Houston | October 9, 2024
Houstonians learn the cons of a viral AI-generated photo after Hurricane Helene

Real source | NPR | May 22, 2023
Fake viral images of an explosion at the Pentagon were probably created by AI

Real source | CNN | May 22, 2023
'Verified' Twitter accounts share fake image of 'explosion' near Pentagon, causing confusion

Real source | PBS NewsHour | October 22, 2025
AI content spreads confusion and misinformation, critics say

This page continues page 403. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 403.

Sources, continued

Real source | Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) | 2015

RTDNA Code of Ethics

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) | 2014

SPJ Code of Ethics

Real source | Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) | 2000

PRSA Code of Ethics

Notes

This page continues page 403. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 403.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document and write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 7 minutes.

Evidence A | **Group-chat post**

The courtyard image and its caption

Image, described: a photo-like view of the campus courtyard with water over the paving and benches. A person in the foreground holds up a phone. Caption: “Courtyard flooded today, stay away.” Shared Wednesday at 2:48 p.m. with no link, no date on the image and no original poster named.

Look closely: Underline what the caption claims. Circle what the post is missing.

What it shows

A same-day claim carried by a realistic image that arrived with no provenance.

What it leaves out

The earliest post, its date and place, and how the file was handled.

Evidence B | **Screenshot**

Sami’s zoom-in on the hand

Zoomed screenshot of the foreground hand: the fingers seem to merge at the knuckles. Sami posted it in the crew chat on Wednesday at 3:02 p.m.

Look closely: What does the odd hand tell you? What can it not tell you?

What it shows

An anomaly that justifies a closer look. It settles no question on its own.

What it leaves out

How the image was made, and whether a real photo from another day was reused.

Pacing

Full chapter: 7 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Participants fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Say this

“For each document, ask two questions: what can it show, and what can it not show?” — Model it on the odd hand: a reason to look closer, not proof.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the detector score as a verdict. **Listen for:** “Twelve percent means it’s real.” **Then:** Ask what the tool measured and how often it is wrong. The score is silent about the flood.

Support

- Describe the image and the zoomed hand aloud.
- Give each document on its own half-page with the key line enlarged.
- **Cognates:** image (imagen), evidence (evidencia), verification (verificación), corroboration (corroboración), original (original), confirm (confirmar), alert (alerta), independent (independiente).

Stretch

- Ask which evidence bears on how the image was made and which bears on whether the courtyard flooded.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Detector result

A score from a free online detector

"12% likely AI-generated."

Look closely: What did the tool measure? Does it say anything about the flood?

What it shows

One unnamed tool's estimate, 12%, about how the image was made.

What it leaves out

Its error rates, what it measured, and whether the event happened.

Evidence D | Web page

The campus facilities alerts page, checked at 3:10 p.m.

"No active alerts. Last update: Monday, 9:15 a.m. Scheduled elevator maintenance in Science Hall, completed."

Look closely: When was this page last updated? Compare that with the caption's claim.

What it shows

An official source with no courtyard alert, last updated Monday at 9:15 a.m.

What it leaves out

How fast the office posts same-day problems, so its silence proves little.

What is still missing from the evidence?

The image's earliest post and date, and whether it shows this courtyard today. Nobody has offered a dated firsthand photo, and the alerts page's same-day speed is unknown.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Participants fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Say this

"For each document, ask two questions: what can it show, and what can it not show?" — Model it on the odd hand: a reason to look closer, not proof.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the detector score as a verdict. **Listen for:** "Twelve percent means it's real." **Then:** Ask what the tool measured and how often it is wrong. The score is silent about the flood.

Support

- Describe the image and the zoomed hand aloud.
- Give each document on its own half-page with the key line enlarged.
- **Cognates:** image (imagen), evidence (evidencia), verification (verificación), corroboration (corroboración), original (original), confirm (confirmar), alert (alerta), independent (independiente).

Stretch

- Ask which evidence bears on how the image was made and which bears on whether the courtyard flooded.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Key idea: provenance

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

Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled. Check it first when an image claims to show a news event. An image can look polished and still be generated, edited, old or shared with the wrong caption. The courtyard image arrived with no link, no date and no named poster, so its provenance is unknown.

A detail or a tool can give a clue, but it cannot settle the question. An odd-looking hand is a reason to look closer. A natural-looking hand does not prove that an image is real, either. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) describes several ways to track, label, watermark and detect synthetic content, such as AI-generated images. NIST explains that each approach has technical limits.

For a claim about a real event, look for the earliest post, its date and place, and corroboration. **Corroboration** is support for a claim from an independent source. Here, that could be a campus alert or someone's dated photo of the courtyard. If you cannot confirm the claim, write a verification note. A **verification note** is a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown.

Professional standards

Real source | **Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA)**

RTDNA Code of Ethics: Truth and accuracy above all

"Journalism verifies, provides relevant context, tells the rest of the story and acknowledges the absence of important additional information."

In plain words: The RTDNA code asks news staff to say what they checked and to admit what they still do not know.

Question: The facilities page shows no active alerts but was last updated Monday. What should Jordy's note say is still unknown?

Your answer

Still unknown: ___, because ___.

Still unknown: whether the courtyard flooded and where the image came from, because a page last updated Monday cannot settle a Wednesday claim.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 6 min. Skip In the news.

Say this

"A clue can start a question. Can it end one? Look at the hand and the score." — Neither settles the question. Both are clues.

"The RTDNA code says journalism acknowledges missing information. What is missing here?" — Wait for the first post and a dated photo.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the RTDNA code as a law. **Listen for:** "The crew could get in legal trouble." **Then:** Say: "The RTDNA code is guidance for news staff. It is not a law."

Support

- Preview the In the news sources. Do not show images of real people in distress, even to debunk them.

Stretch

- Use the SPJ row: what can the crew truthfully say about where the image came from?

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

In the news

Real source | NPR | May 22, 2023

Fake viral images of an explosion at the Pentagon were probably created by AI

A realistic fake image spread fast and briefly moved markets before officials confirmed nothing happened.

Real source | CNN | May 22, 2023

'Verified' Twitter accounts share fake image of 'explosion' near Pentagon, causing confusion

A blue check was not proof: accounts that looked trustworthy still shared an image with no real source.

Notes

This page continues page 409. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 409.

Sort the evidence

On your own Sort each piece of evidence under the claim it bears on and fill in each box. About 6 minutes.

Two claims are in play: the flood and the image. Sort each piece of evidence under the claim it actually bears on. What would settle either one?

Evidence	**Claim 1** The courtyard flooded today.	**Claim 2** The image was generated by AI.
1 The image shows water in a courtyard, with no date or source	Supports	Neither
2 Facilities alerts page at 3:10 p.m.: no active alerts	Challenges	Neither
3 Secondhand report of water near the library	Supports	Neither
4 An odd hand and a 12% detector score	Neither	Leaves open

Still open

- The image's earliest source and date

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 facilities office is missing. I would ask how quickly it posts same-day problems, since the page was last updated Monday.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

"Two claims are in play: the flood, and how the image was made. Sort each clue under the claim it bears on." — Model the hand together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students put the detector score under the flood claim. **Listen for:** "Low score, so the flood happened." **Then:** Ask whether the tool looked at the courtyard. It looked only at the file.

Support

- Let students write F for the flood claim or M for how it was made before writing sentences.

Heat check

Low.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Jordy should do, explain why and fix the two marked phrases. About 5 minutes.

The recap goes out at six. What should Jordy do about the courtyard image?

- ☐ **A** Post the image with a question: "Is the courtyard flooded?"
- ☐ **B** Say the image is fake, because the hand looks wrong.
- ☑ **C** Leave the image out, report what the crew checked and say the flood is not confirmed.

Why I chose it

C. It keeps two questions apart: how the image was made and whether the courtyard flooded. The crew can answer neither yet, and C says so.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Heads up everyone!! ❶ The courtyard flooded today so don't go over there. Some people are saying the picture is AI because the hand looks weird but I ran it through a detector and it said 12% AI so it's basically real. My roommate also said her friend saw water near the library earlier, so that pretty much confirms it. Stay safe and ❷ tell your friends, we don't want anyone getting hurt or ruining their shoes lol. We'll post more if we hear anything else about it.

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

Rewrite phrase 1

The flood is unconfirmed: we found no first post and no official alert.

Rewrite phrase 2

Please hold off on sharing. Send Jordy any dated photo or the original post.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

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

Say this

"The recap goes out at six. What should Jordy do about the image?" — Vote before any discussion.

Watch for

Misconception: Students choose B because the hand looks wrong. **Listen for:** "Look at the fingers, it's obviously fake." **Then:** Ask whether the image could be a real photo from another day. The hand cannot rule that out.

Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

A revised version: About the courtyard flood image going around: we can't confirm it yet. We couldn't find who posted it first, and the campus alerts page shows no active alerts, though its last update was Monday. A detector gave a low score, but detectors make mistakes and can't tell us whether the event happened. So we're not sharing the image as news. If you're on campus now, check the official alert page before changing plans. We'll update here by 6 p.m. Thanks for checking before sharing. If you have a dated photo or an original post, send it to Jordy.

College

Your task

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

Write the verification note the crew posts instead of the image. Then write a memo recommending two changes to the campus facilities alerts page that would help students check rumors.

Use: Case documents: the courtyard image and caption, Sami's zoom-in, the secondhand reply, the detector result and the campus facilities alerts page. Real sources: NIST's overview of synthetic content and the News Literacy Project's RumorGuard check, a model verification note.

You'll make: Verification note, 50—80 words, plus a memo of 250—350 words

Time: 75 minutes

1. Fill in the chain chart for the courtyard image: claim, earliest source, date, corroboration.
2. Write the verification note, 50 to 80 words, on the Your draft page.
3. List what the alerts page could not tell the crew on Wednesday.
4. Plan two changes the office that runs the page could make.
5. Draft the memo's recommendations on the Your draft page.
6. Finish the memo, 250 to 350 words, on lined paper or in the online workspace.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Chain chart

Claim: courtyard flooded today. Earliest source: not found. Date: none on the image; shared 2:48 p.m. Corroboration: none.

Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

Short on time: 12 min.

Say this

"Two questions need two different sources. Which one can say whether the courtyard flooded?" — The facilities office, or someone with a dated photo.

Watch for

Misconception: Participants ask the office to rule on images. **Listen for:** "The office should tell us which pictures are fake." **Then:** Ask what the office knows about: campus conditions, not how files were made.

Support

- Verification-note frame from the workshop: checked, found, still open
- Chain chart: claim, earliest source, date, corroboration
- Glossary: provenance, watermark, content credentials

Stretch

- Separate two questions in the memo, whether the image was generated and whether the courtyard flooded, and say which office or source could answer each.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Your task, continued

What the alerts page could not tell the crew

It showed no alerts at 3:10 p.m. but was last updated Monday at 9:15 a.m., so it could not answer a Wednesday rumor.

Two questions, and who can answer each

Was it generated? The hand and the 12% score are clues only. Did it flood? Only the office or a dated photo can say.

Notes

This page continues page 413.

Standards

AAC&U VALUE rubric: Information Literacy VALUE Rubric; Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric.

ACRL Framework: Information Creation as a Process; Searching as Strategic Exploration.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- The note says what was checked and what is still open, and reaches no verdict the evidence cannot support
- Treats the 12% detector score and the odd hand as reasons to look closer, not as proof
- Notes that the alerts page was last updated Monday at 9:15 a.m., so it cannot settle a claim about Wednesday
- Recommends changes the office that runs the alerts page could make, with evidence from the case
- Represents NIST's point that no single approach settles whether content is synthetic

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 25 minutes.

Verification note, 50 to 80 words

About the courtyard flood image going around: we can't confirm it yet. We couldn't find who posted it first. The campus alerts page shows no active alerts, but its last update was Monday. We're not sharing the image as news. Check the official alerts page before you change plans. If you have a dated photo or the original post, send it to Jordy.

Memo: the two recommendations

To the office that runs the campus facilities alerts page. On Wednesday at 2:48 p.m., an image captioned "Courtyard flooded today, stay away" spread in a student group chat. When students checked your alerts page at 3:10 p.m., it showed no active alerts. Its last update was Monday at 9:15 a.m. Students could not tell whether the page was current, so it could not settle the rumor. First, we recommend showing when the page was last checked, even when nothing has changed. Then an empty page would count as evidence. Second, we recommend a line that answers a spreading rumor directly, such as whether a reported flood has been confirmed. We are not asking the office to judge whether images were generated. NIST notes that no single approach settles that question. We are asking for faster answers about what happened on campus.

Pacing

Full chapter: 25 min.

Short on time: 25 min.

Say this

"Would the office adopt your recommendation tomorrow? What would it need?" — Ask for evidence from the case behind each recommendation.

Watch for

Misconception: The memo blames the office. **Listen for:** "Your page never tells us anything." **Then:** Ask for a recommendation the office could act on, with evidence from Wednesday.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Uses the case's evidence about the page.
2. A change the office could make.
3. Separates how an image was made from what happened.
4. Represents NIST's point accurately.

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 8 minutes.

Does your note say what was checked and what is still open?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Do you treat the 12% score and the odd hand as clues, not proof?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Does your memo note the Monday 9:15 a.m. update?	☑ Yes	☐ No
Could the office make both changes you recommend?	☑ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Treats the image as proof.	☐ Cites a detector or a detail as a verdict.	☐ Checks the earliest source and an independent record.	☐ Checks several sources and names what each can't show.
Reasoning	☐ Declares real or fake with no basis.	☐ Hedges without explaining why.	☐ Matches confidence to evidence.	☐ Separates authenticity of the file from truth of the event.
Audience & purpose	☐ Urges spreading.	☐ Warns without guidance.	☐ Gives followers a safe next step.	☐ Gives a next step, a follow-up time and a way to contribute evidence.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

Short on time: 5 min. Participants answer the Check your work questions only.

Say this

"Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why." — Ask for one removed verdict or one added source.

Watch for

Misconception: Revisions only soften words. **Listen for:** "I changed fake to probably fake." **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Replace the verdict with what was checked.

Heat check

■□□ **Low.**

Answer key

How to assess: Score with the case rubric. Add checks that the note reaches no unsupported verdict and that the memo describes NIST's limits accurately.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Checks the earliest source and an independent record.
- **Reasoning:** Matches confidence to evidence.
- **Audience & purpose:** Gives followers a safe next step.
- **Revision:** Replaces the verdict with a verification note.

How your work is scored, continued

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Softens words only.	☐ Replaces the verdict with a verification note.	☐ Explains how each change protects followers and credibility.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

I cut a recommendation that the office run a detector on every image, because detection has limits and the office tracks campus conditions.

Notes

This page continues page 416. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 416.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames. About 10 minutes.

1 What would you need beyond the image to support the caption's claim?

Provenance for the file and corroboration for the event. The two answer different questions, and the caption needs both.

2 Do you agree with Jordy's choice to leave the image out of the recap, and why?

Mostly yes. Leaving it out avoids spreading an unverified claim. The cost is that followers cannot see what the crew is talking about.

3 Who could be harmed if the crew called a real photo fake?

The person who took it and anyone who ignored a real hazard. A false debunk also costs the crew trust it needs for its next correction.

4 The alerts page shows nothing new since Monday. Does that prove the courtyard did not flood?

No. An empty alerts page is weak evidence when the page may not report same-day problems. It lowers confidence in the claim without disproving it.

My take

My claim: ___.

The crew should publish what it checked, say the flood is unconfirmed and invite dated evidence.

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

Short on time: 7 min. Use question 3 as a closing question.

Say this

"Answer with a detail from a document, not a feeling about the image." — Ask for one answer per question.

Stretch

- Compare the crew's note with the RumorGuard check on the Helene image. What does each say is known and unknown?
- Going further: List every place the crew could look for the first post of the courtyard image. For each one, write what it could prove and what it could not.
- Going further: Write two captions that say the flood is not confirmed. Which one makes the image feel more trustworthy than it is? Name who could be hurt if the crew gets this wrong.
- Going further: Write two short notices that tell followers the flood is not confirmed. Ask two readers what each notice lets them conclude. Rewrite any line that made them more certain than the evidence allows.
- Going further: Before you repost an image as news, find where it first appeared. Check an official or independent source for the event. If you cannot confirm it, say so or do not share it. If you help run a club account, suggest a "check before posting" rule.
- Compare how two news organizations describe their image-verification process
- Research what content credentials record and what they cannot show

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

The alerts page, because it is independent of the chat, even though it may be out of date.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

Treating the image as unverified could leave people walking into a real flood.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

No source in the case can say how the image was made or when it was taken.

I would change my mind if ___.

The original poster shared the file with its date and place.

Notes

This page continues page 418.

Heat check

■■□ **Question 3: Medium.** Students may bring up real disaster images or people they know who lived through a disaster.

Cool-down: Keep to the courtyard case. Do not show or search for images of real people in distress.

Talk about this case at home

Case 20: Can the crew post this image as true?

In this case, a realistic image in a group chat claims that a campus courtyard flooded today. Your student checked where the image came from and wrote a short note that says what is known and what is not.

Questions to talk about

1. What would you check before you share a picture of breaking news?
2. Where does your town or school post official alerts?
3. Why can saying you are not sure yet be better than guessing?

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

See the case online.

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.

Key terms

Academic credit Academic credit is credit toward a degree that a school gives for approved work, such as an internship.
En español: créditos académicos

Accountability Accountability is owning a mistake and doing what you said you would do to fix it.
En español: rendición de cuentas

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

Agenda item An agenda item is one topic listed on a meeting's official schedule of business.
En español: punto del orden del día

Attribution Attribution is naming the person who made a work, such as a song, a photo or a video.
En español: atribución

Authority Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision.
En español: autoridad

Barrier A barrier is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part.
En español: barrera

Challenge A challenge is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material.
En español: impugnación

Claim A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
En español: afirmación

Compensation Compensation is all the pay and benefits a worker receives, including hourly rates, bonuses and overtime.
En español: compensación

Consent Consent is permission a person gives for something specific, such as sharing a record with a named person.
En español: consentimiento

Context Context is the information around an event or a quote that you need to understand what it means.
En español: contexto

Correction A correction is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information.
En español: corrección

Corroboration Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source.
En español: corroboración

Criteria Criteria are the standards or reasons a group uses to make a decision.
En español: criterios

Decision-maker A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.
En español: quien toma la decisión

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

Say this

"Each definition here matches the one in the case, word for word." — Show one term in both places.

"The Spanish term follows each definition." — Invite students to add terms from other languages they know in the margin.

Watch for

Misconception: A key term means the same in everyday talk as in the case. **Listen for:** A student uses "claim" to mean "lie." **Then:** Have the student reread the definition and the case's "In this case" line together.

Support

- Let students keep this page open while they write.
- Pair students to quiz each other on three terms.

Key terms, continued

Documentation Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when.
En español: documentación

Education record An education record is a record directly about a student that a school or college keeps.
En español: expediente educativo

Eligibility Eligibility is meeting the requirements for a particular service or program.
En español: elegibilidad

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

Equal Pay Act The Equal Pay Act is a federal law from 1963 that requires equal pay for men and women who do equal work.
En español: Ley de Igualdad Salarial

Equity Equity is a way of sharing that adjusts for different needs so everyone gets a fair chance.
En español: equidad

Evaluation An evaluation is a school's formal process for learning about a student's needs, using more than one measure.
En español: evaluación

Expenditure An expenditure is money that a government or an organization spends.
En español: gasto

Fact pattern A fact pattern is the specific set of facts in a situation that a rule is applied to.
En español: conjunto de hechos

Fair Labor Standards Act The Fair Labor Standards Act is a federal law that sets minimum wage and overtime rules for most workers.
En español: Ley de Normas Justas de Trabajo

Fair use Fair use is a part of U.S. copyright law that allows some uses without permission, judged case by case with four factors.
En español: uso justo

FERPA FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a federal law about who can see student education records.
En español: FERPA (Ley de Derechos Educativos y Privacidad de la Familia)

FICA FICA is the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare.
En español: FICA (Seguro Social y Medicare)

Framing Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward.
En español: encuadre

Gross pay Gross pay is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.
En español: salario bruto

Holding statement A holding statement is a short update that says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more.
En español: comunicado provisional

Jurisdiction A jurisdiction is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority.
En español: jurisdicción

Say this

"Each definition here matches the one in the case, word for word." — Show one term in both places.

"The Spanish term follows each definition." — Invite students to add terms from other languages they know in the margin.

Watch for

Misconception: A key term means the same in everyday talk as in the case. **Listen for:** A student uses "claim" to mean "lie." **Then:** Have the student reread the definition and the case's "In this case" line together.

Support

- Let students keep this page open while they write.
- Pair students to quiz each other on three terms.

Key terms, continued

Learning goal A learning goal is the knowledge or skill that a task is meant to show.
En español: meta de aprendizaje

License A license is permission from a rights holder to use a work under specific terms.
En español: licencia

Local acceptance Local acceptance is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes.
En español: materiales aceptados en tu ciudad

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

Net pay Net pay is the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay.
En español: salario neto

Per-pupil amount A per-pupil amount is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared.
En español: monto por estudiante

Precedent A precedent is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases.
En español: precedente

Primary beneficiary test The primary beneficiary test is how the U.S. Department of Labor decides whether an intern at a for-profit company is an employee.
En español: prueba del beneficiario principal

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

Proposal A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet.
En español: propuesta

Provenance Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled.
En español: procedencia

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

Reasonable accommodation A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place.
En español: acomodo razonable

Reconsideration policy A reconsideration policy is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book.
En español: política de reconsideración

Registration Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote.
En español: inscripción electoral

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

Say this

"Each definition here matches the one in the case, word for word." — Show one term in both places.

"The Spanish term follows each definition." — Invite students to add terms from other languages they know in the margin.

Watch for

Misconception: A key term means the same in everyday talk as in the case. **Listen for:** A student uses "claim" to mean "lie." **Then:** Have the student reread the definition and the case's "In this case" line together.

Support

- Let students keep this page open while they write.
- Pair students to quiz each other on three terms.

Key terms, continued

Reuse Reuse is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use.
En español: reutilización

Revenue Revenue is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants.
En español: ingresos

Sample ballot A sample ballot is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot.
En español: boleta de muestra

Selection criteria Selection criteria are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.
En español: criterios de selección

Source reduction Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging.
En español: reducción en la fuente

Substantial disruption Substantial disruption is the standard from Tinker v. Des Moines: a public school may limit speech that would seriously disrupt school activities.
En español: alteración sustancial

Title VII Title VII is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It bans job discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.
En español: Título VII

Trade-off A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.
En español: compensación entre opciones

Verification note A verification note is a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown.
En español: nota de verificación

Voter guide A voter guide is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election.
En español: guía para votantes

Withholding Withholding is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker.
En español: retención

Say this

"Each definition here matches the one in the case, word for word." — Show one term in both places.

"The Spanish term follows each definition." — Invite students to add terms from other languages they know in the margin.

Watch for

Misconception: A key term means the same in everyday talk as in the case. **Listen for:** A student uses "claim" to mean "lie." **Then:** Have the student reread the definition and the case's "In this case" line together.

Support

- Let students keep this page open while they write.
- Pair students to quiz each other on three terms.

My progress

After each case, write the date and your level for each skill: Beginning, Developing, Proficient or Advanced.

Case	Date	Evidence	Reasoning	Audience and purpose	Revision
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					

Say this

"After each case, mark your level for Evidence, Reasoning, Audience and purpose, and Revision." — Use the rubric on the case's Check your work page.

"Pick one row you want to raise next time." — Students keep this page private.

Watch for

Misconception: My progress is a grade. **Listen for:** "Is this going in the grade book?" **Then:** Explain that it is a self-check; grades come from your scoring with the rubric.

Support

- Model one row with Case 1 before students fill in their own.

My progress, continued

Case	Date	Evidence	Reasoning	Audience and purpose	Revision
18					
19					
20					

Say this

"After each case, mark your level for Evidence, Reasoning, Audience and purpose, and Revision." — Use the rubric on the case's Check your work page.

"Pick one row you want to raise next time." — Students keep this page private.

Watch for

Misconception: My progress is a grade. **Listen for:** "Is this going in the grade book?" **Then:** Explain that it is a self-check; grades come from your scoring with the rubric.

Support

- Model one row with Case 1 before students fill in their own.

Track the work across the year

Each case has the same four rubric rows, so growth is easy to see. Mark the level each student or group reached, case by case.

Case	Evidence	Reasoning	Audience	Revision	Took a civic step
1 Is the screening canceled?					
2 Does the worksheet show what Dec knows?					
3 What should a group do after a public mistake?					
4 Who gets a say when a shared room changes?					
5 Why is my deposit smaller than what I earned?					
6 What can your family see in your college records?					
7 Did one complaint get the novel banned?					
8 Is it a recommendation or an ad?					
9 What is on your ballot, and where do you check?					
10 Whose job is it to fix the blocked route?					
11 Why are Jordy and Gia paid different rates?					
12 When can a school limit what students say?					
13 Can the crew cut waste before it reaches the bin?					
14 Does giving credit let the crew use the song?					
15 Is Rafa's unpaid internship really a job?					

Track the work across the year, continued

Case	Evidence	Reasoning	Audience	Revision	Took a civic step
16 Who wrote the new building rule?					
17 How should the crew give out ten free seats?					
18 Why is the theater curtain still falling apart?					
19 What should Gia say in her two-minute comment?					
20 Can the crew post this image as true?					

About course names and standards

AP, Pre-AP and IB activities are practice designed by No, Pero Why?. They are not official College Board or IB materials. Honors expectations are set by your school.

Framework sources

AAC&U VALUE rubrics and the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education

- American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U): VALUE Rubrics: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics
- AAC&U: Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/value-rubrics-civic-engagement
- AAC&U: Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/value-rubrics-critical-thinking
- AAC&U: Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/value-rubrics-ethical-reasoning
- AAC&U: Information Literacy VALUE Rubric: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/value-rubrics-information-literacy
- AAC&U: Oral Communication VALUE Rubric: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/value-rubrics-oral-communication
- AAC&U: Problem Solving VALUE Rubric: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/value-rubrics-problem-solving
- AAC&U: Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/value-rubrics-quantitative-literacy
- AAC&U: Written Communication VALUE Rubric: https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/value-rubrics-written-communication
- Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL): Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education: https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework

Checked September 25, 2026.