Student edition

Grades 6–8

Grades 6—8 classrooms, advisory periods and after-school groups, and older learners who need more scaffolding.

20 cases

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.

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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 8 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?

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example. Then write your first guess in the box. About 8 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."

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what do you think is going on?

I think the screening is ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Seven seconds of video

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: A clip lands in the group chat

It is Friday afternoon at the Common Room, an event space inside a bookshop in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. Mateo has spent hours setting out chairs for the crew's first screening at 6 p.m. Jordy is testing the projector and captions. Gia is helping before her café shift. Sami is on the train from the print shop.

At 4:52 p.m., a seven-second clip lands in the group chat. In it, the room coordinator says, "we are removing access." Then the video stops. The caption asks, "Screening canceled?"

Gia wants to warn everyone, because people are already asking if they should turn around. Mateo hopes the post is wrong. Jordy notices that the clip cuts off in the middle of a sentence. Jordy asks the group to find the rest before anyone reposts.

You are at the counter with them. Your job is to read the full record before Gia posts.

Stop and think. What words would you want to hear right after "we are removing access"?

Checking the full record

The caption makes a **claim**. A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence. The best evidence is the coordinator's meeting transcript: "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."

Checking the full record, continued

Context is the information around an event or a quote that you need to understand what it means. The clip left out "through that reader." Only one broken side door is closing. Mateo's booking email agrees that the screening is on. It lists a step-free front entrance with staff at the desk from 5:30 p.m.

Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward. The crop brought forward "removing access" and hid the rest. You do not have to prove that anyone meant to trick people. You only need to show what the edit leaves out.

While the crew checks, Jordy posts a **holding statement**: "We're checking the original. Hold your plans for a moment." A holding statement is a short update that says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more. Then Gia posts the correction in the same chat as the rumor. It names the time and the front entrance. Sami needs that detail, because she usually comes in the side way.

Stop and think. Which words did the clip cut off, and how do they change the meaning?

Why this skill matters in real life

In one study, Stanford researchers found that most of 3,446 students judged posts by how they looked. They did not check who made them (Stanford Graduate School of Education, November 18, 2019). Luckily, this skill can be learned. Fact-checkers leave the post, open new tabs and check who made it (CrashCourse, January 22, 2019).

The crew did the same thing with one transcript and one email. This is the first skill in the casebook: find the original source. You will use it again in almost every case that follows.

Stop and think. Why might people trust a post because of how it looks?

Sources

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 | **CrashCourse (YouTube)** | **January 22, 2019**

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

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 18 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: framing

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 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

Right after the clip ends, the transcript says ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Compare each piece of evidence with each claim. Write supports, challenges or neither in each box. About 10 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.		
2 The transcript: access is removed “through that reader,” and existing bookings remain in place.		
3 The booking email: Friday 6—9 p.m., screening confirmed, step-free front entrance.		

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the message you would send and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 8 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

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Hey everyone, so there was a clip going around that said the screening was canceled but ❶ 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 ❷ 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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Talk it through, then write a three-sentence group-chat update telling friends whether to come on Friday and which door to use.

Use: The screenshot and the booking email only, with the transcript read aloud by the teacher.

You'll make: Group-chat message, 3—4 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read the post in Evidence A. Circle the word that goes further than the clip.
2. Listen as your teacher reads the full meeting update. Raise your hand at the words the clip cut off.
3. Match each fact to its proof. Write which document gives the time and which gives the door.
4. Tell a partner what your message will say.
5. Write a group-chat message of 3 or 4 sentences in the Your draft box.
6. Check your message for the time, the door and the proof.

Show it your way

Write it: Write the 3—4 sentence group-chat message with the frame "The post says __. The email says __. So __."

Say it: Record a 30-second voice note for the chat that says whether the screening is on, which door to use and how you know.

Show it: Draw two phone screens side by side: the cropped post, then your update, with an arrow to the words the crop cut off.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

The word that goes too far

The time, and the document that shows it

The time is ___. It comes from ___.

The door to use, and the document that shows it

Use the ___. It comes from ___.

Your draft

The post says ___. The email says ___. So ___.

Notes

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 5 minutes.

Does your message say the screening is still on, with the time?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it name the front entrance?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it say which document shows this?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it avoid calling anyone a liar?	☐ 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.

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

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

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

My take

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

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 6 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?

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."

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, why do you think Dec gets stuck on the worksheet?

I think Dec gets stuck because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

The circuit Dec can explain

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: Twenty minutes before rehearsal

Anika and Dec 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 from the battery, through the switch and the LED, and back.

The written practice sheet is a different story. It has six dense paragraphs and one small diagram. Halfway through a question, Dec loses his place. He says it is like a cue sheet with no numbers.

Anika's first idea is to run the same sheet again with a timer. Then she tries something else. She draws the circuit bigger, and Dec traces the whole path correctly. Mari, on her break from the bookshop, asks Dec to walk her through it first. She does not guess why he is stuck.

Dec wants help with this task. He does not want a diagnosis from the group chat. "Say what happened," he tells his friends, "not that you've figured out what's wrong with me."

Stop and think. Why do you think Dec can explain the circuit out loud but gets lost on the page?

What is the sheet checking?

In Case 1, you learned to go back to the original source. Here, the original source is the practice brief itself. Its goal line says: "Explain how a simple circuit works."

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

What is the sheet checking?, continued

The goal does not mention speed. It does not mention reading six dense paragraphs either. So when Dec gets lost on the page, the sheet may be testing reading and layout as much as circuits.

This is a lot like the cropped clip in Case 1. One written answer, without **context**, can give the wrong picture. Dec's spoken explanation is the missing context. Together, the two answers tell you more than either one alone.

The crew also knows what it cannot decide. 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. Anika says it plainly: "We're not an evaluation team." Dec decides whether to ask his teacher, Ms. R, how that process starts.

Stop and think. What is the learning goal on the sheet, and what else does the sheet seem to test?

What real schools and laws say

A federal law called IDEA says a public school must use a variety of tools in an evaluation. No single measure can be the only basis for deciding eligibility (U.S. Department of Education, IDEA regulations, 34 CFR 300.304). Design guides for teachers also suggest giving students more than one way to show what they know (CAST, Universal Design for Learning Guidelines 3.0, 2024).

Your role in this case is to read the goal line before anyone decides what Dec knows. That habit, checking what a task is meant to measure, is the new skill you will carry into later cases.

Stop and think. Why should Dec, and not his friends, decide what his teacher hears?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Department of Education | No date listed

IDEA regulations, 34 CFR § 300.304 (evaluation procedures)

Real source | CAST | 2024

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines 3.0

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 12 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: learning goals

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 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?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

The part that tests something else is ___.

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

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**

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 ___.

Notes

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what the crew should try and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 8 minutes.

What should the crew try at the study table?

- ☐ **A** Run the same timed sheet again so Dec gets more practice.
- ☐ **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

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Redesign Dec's practice sheet so it still checks circuit understanding, then explain your changes to a partner.

Use: The practice brief and Dec's study-table notes; the legal rule is summarized by the teacher.

You'll make: Annotated sketch plus 3—5 sentence explanation

Time: 45 minutes

1. Find the goal line in Evidence A. Say it in your own words.
2. List two parts of the sheet that got in Dec's way.
3. Sketch a new sheet with a bigger diagram and numbered steps.
4. Label two changes on your sketch.
5. Write three to five sentences in the Your draft box that explain your changes.
6. Check that your sheet still asks for an explanation of how the circuit works.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—5 sentences with the frame "The goal is __. I changed __ so that __."

Say it: Explain your redesigned sheet to a partner in one minute: the goal, two changes and why the goal stays the same.

Show it: Sketch the new practice sheet with a larger diagram and numbered steps, and label your two changes.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

The learning goal, in my words

The goal is ___.

What got in the way: 1

What got in the way: 2

Change 1 on my sketch

Change 2 on my sketch

Your draft

Your explanation

The goal is ___. I changed ___ so that ___.

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 explanation name the learning goal?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you make at least two changes to the format?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does your new sheet still ask how the circuit works?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you leave out any guess about a diagnosis?	☐ 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.

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

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then finish My take. About 8 minutes.

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

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

My take

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

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 6 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?

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."

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what should Gia's correction say first?

I think the correction should start with ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

The caption that blamed the wrong people

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 4 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 recap goes up

Remember the screening you helped save in Case 1? It happened. On Saturday morning, the crew posted a short recap video that Caio edited. Gia wrote the caption: “Great night, once the younger crowd finally got organized.”

The caption sounded believable. A few people did arrive late. But on Sunday, Jordy opens the setup log from Friday night. It says the projector failed at 5:40 p.m. Everyone was seated at 6:00. The replacement projector was not connected until 6:20. The log also says Anika and Dec helped carry chairs before the doors opened.

Then Anika sends the crew a voice note. “We were helping you set up. Why are we the problem in this post?”

Gia wrote the caption, and she wants to fix it. Her first draft says, “Sorry if this came across wrong. We love our younger neighbors and would never want anyone to feel excluded.” It is kind. It also never mentions the projector.

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

From sorry to a real fix

You met the word **claim** in Case 1. A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence. The caption claimed the younger crowd caused the late start. Jordy’s log is the original source, and it shows a broken projector instead.

From sorry to a real fix, continued

A **correction** is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information. It should appear where people saw the mistake. So the crew edits the recap caption itself. Caio says it simply: they fix the same post instead of burying it under a new one.

Accountability is owning a mistake and doing what you said you would do to fix it. That means naming who does each job. Gia corrects the caption. Caio keeps a visible correction note with the video. Jordy adds a source check before the crew posts again. Anika and Dec do not have to do any of the repair work.

How will the crew know the fix worked? Jordy has an idea. Ask a few people who saw the first post why the screening started late. If they still say "the younger crowd," the correction did not land.

Stop and think. What does a correction need that Gia's first draft is missing?

What research says about apologies

Researchers have studied what makes an apology work. A 2016 study found that two parts matter most: taking responsibility and offering to repair the harm (The Ohio State University News, April 12, 2016). Gia's first draft does neither.

Real newsrooms correct mistakes too. NPR's public editor explains how the network names an error and fixes it on the story. NPR also keeps a public list of corrections (NPR, October 21, 2022). Your job in this case is to check the log's times before the correction goes up.

Stop and think. How could the crew check that readers now understand why the screening started late?

Sources

Real source | **The Ohio State University News** | **April 12, 2016**

The 6 elements of an effective apology, according to science

Real source | **NPR Public Editor** | **October 21, 2022**

That was wrong

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 | 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Key idea: corrections

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 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

First, the crew should change ___ in ___.

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

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 8 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

Where they differ

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what goes first in the correction and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 8 minutes.

What should go first in the correction?

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

Why I chose 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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Fix Gia's apology using a four-line template, then read it aloud as Anika would hear it.

Use: The caption, the event log and Gia's first draft.

You'll make: Four-sentence correction

Time: 45 minutes

1. Find the claim in Evidence A. What did it say caused the delay?
2. Check the log in Evidence B. Write what happened at 5:40 and at 6:20.
3. Choose one change the crew will make next time.
4. Write a four-sentence correction with the template in the Your draft box.
5. Read your correction aloud as Anika would hear it.
6. Cross out any sentence that is only about how sorry Gia feels.

Show it your way

Write it: Fill in the template: "We said __. The record shows __. We changed __. Next time __ will __."

Say it: Read your correction aloud as Anika would hear it, then say which line she needed most and why.

Show it: Make a three-box comic strip: the caption, the log entry that challenges it and the fixed caption posted in the same place.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

The wrong claim

What happened at 5:40

What happened at 6:20

One change the crew will make

Your draft

Your correction

We said ___. The record shows ___. We changed ___. Next time ___ will ___.

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 5 minutes.

Does your correction name the wrong claim?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it say what the log shows?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it name one change?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you leave out how sorry Gia feels?	☐ 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.

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

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then finish My take. About 8 minutes.

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

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

My take

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

See the case online.

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.

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 6 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?

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?"

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what do you think the crew should ask the board for?

I think the crew should ask for ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Two free evenings and a $200 gap

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 4 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: The room might change

The Common Room is more than a screening space. A small neighborhood nonprofit runs it alongside the bookshop. Now the nonprofit's board is thinking about renting the room to paying groups on two evenings a week. The money would help pay the evening staff. No vote has happened yet.

The crew cares about the room, but each friend sees the plan differently. Mateo already has a petition headline. Mari works the bookshop counter and closes the shop at night. "Free nights matter," she writes. "So does paying whoever stays to lock up. That's me." Sami runs a print workshop in the room after her afternoon shift. It is one of the few step-free rooms nearby. She asks a question nobody has answered: "Has anyone asked the evening regulars?"

Stop and think. Why might Mari see both sides of this plan more clearly than Mateo?

Reading the options

In Case 1, you learned to find the original source. Here, that means reading the board's agenda instead of a petition headline. The agenda lists three options. Option A keeps the free evenings, but the money gap stays. Option B replaces the free Tuesday and Thursday evenings with paid rentals. Option C tests one rental evening for six weeks while the board looks for more funding.

Each option is a **proposal**. A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet. Each one is also a **trade-off**. A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.

Reading the options, continued

The budget note gives the numbers. Evening staffing and utilities cost $600 a week. Grants and donations bring in $400. That leaves a $200 gap. Each rental is expected to add $120. Two rentals would cover the gap if people book them. One rental would leave $80 still missing. Your job is to check these figures before the crew speaks to the board.

Case 1 taught you that **framing** is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward. Option B frames the $200 gap as the problem. It brings forward the money. It leaves out who loses those evenings.

Stop and think. What does Option B cost, and who pays that cost?

Who gets a say in real life

A **decision-maker** is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. Here, it is the nonprofit's board. In New York City, the decision-maker for library hours was the city. Budget cuts ended Sunday hours at library branches in 2023, and Brooklyn's last Sunday was December 17, 2023 (NY1, November 17, 2023). In 2024, the city restored the money, and Sunday service returned (NYC Mayor's Office, July 1, 2024). Council members thanked New Yorkers who called and wrote (New York City Council, July 14, 2024).

Stop and think. How is the Common Room's board different from the city government that restored library Sundays?

Sources

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

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: trade-offs

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 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 tell the board ___.

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

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?

Dec loses Thursday rehearsals and Mari's late evenings stop being usable

Who is affected

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?

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 ___.

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

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Make a people map of who uses the room, then write a short note to the board asking one budget question and one access question.

Use: The agenda and listening notes; the budget note with the $200 example worked out.

You'll make: People map plus a 4—6 sentence note

Time: 45 minutes

1. Circle the board on the agenda and underline "No vote has been taken."
2. Find the gap: $600 − $400 = $200.
3. Put each person from the listening notes on the people map.
4. Mark one person who might miss the meeting.
5. Write a note of four to six sentences in the Your draft box.
6. Ask one question about money and one about who can use the room.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 4—6 sentences with the frame "I use the room when __. Could the board explain __?"

Say it: Practice a 45-second comment with a partner who plays a board member and asks you one question.

Show it: Finish the people map: who uses the room, on which evening, and who might miss the meeting, with a question mark beside each missing voice.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

Who decides

The weekly gap

$600 − $400 =

Someone who might miss the meeting

Your draft

Your note to the board

I use the room when ___. Could the board explain ___?

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 5 minutes.

Does your note name the board as the decision-maker?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it ask one question about money?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it ask one question about who can use the room?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it treat the agenda as a proposal, not a final decision?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then finish My take. About 8 minutes.

1 **Mari is paid to close the shop and also uses the room at night. How does that shape what she asks for?**

2 **If the board chooses an option the crew did not support, how should the crew tell the group what happened?**

My take

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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

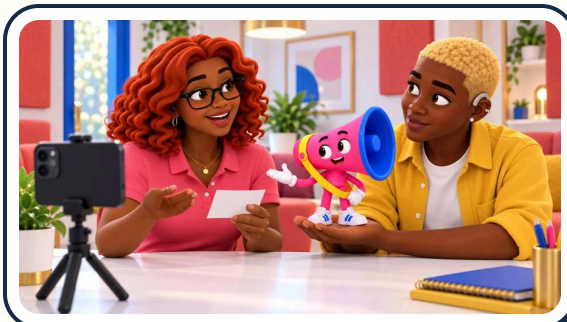
1. Who decides the hours at a public library or community center?
2. What should a group know before it asks a board for a change?
3. How can people give input if they cannot attend a meeting?

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

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 5 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, why do you think Gia's deposit is smaller than she expected?

I think the deposit is smaller because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Where did three hours go?

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 4 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: Payday for Gia

It is Thursday evening, and it is payday. Gia works café shifts around her college classes. She opens her bank app and frowns. The deposit is smaller than the pay she worked out.

Gia keeps a shift log in her notes app. It lists five shifts and 18 hours. Her pay statement says 15 hours. “I counted twice,” she says. “So where did three hours go?”

Jordy works event shifts, and their deposit looks different too. But Jordy’s shifts fall on other dates and hours, so their pay cannot explain Gia’s. Jordy asks Gia not to post her whole statement. Just name the line that worries you.

You are sitting next to Gia. Your job is to add up her hours before she writes to payroll.

Stop and think. What is the first thing you would check when a paycheck looks too small?

Reading the statement line by line

Gia thinks payroll shorted her. That is a **claim**, a word you learned in Case 1. A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence. So check the original source: the pay statement.

Reading the statement line by line, continued

The statement covers the pay period ending Friday the 12th. It lists 15 hours at $17.00 an hour. That makes $255.00. **Gross pay** is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.

Now look at the log. Four shifts fall on or before Friday the 12th, and they add up to 15 hours. The fifth shift, 3 hours, was on Saturday the 13th. It belongs to the next pay period. Gia still wants payroll to confirm that.

Next come the tax lines. Social Security tax is $15.81 and Medicare tax is $3.70. Together they are **FICA**, the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare. Then comes federal income tax withheld, $8.40, and state and local tax, $6.10. **Withholding** is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker. What is left is $220.99. **Net pay** is the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay.

Stop and think. Why does the Saturday shift not appear on this statement?

FICA is not a person

On the TV show Friends, Rachel opens her first paycheck and asks, “Who’s FICA? Why’s he getting all my money?” (TBS, Friends clip, December 14, 2019). The joke works because the money you earn and the money you receive are two different numbers.

The IRS explains that federal income tax withholding depends partly on Form W-4. A worker fills out that form for the employer (Internal Revenue Service, updated May 1, 2026). Gia wonders whether the W-4 she filled out on her first day explains that line. That is a good question to ask payroll.

Stop and think. Which line on Gia’s statement would you ask payroll about, and why?

Sources

Real source | TBS | December 14, 2019
Rachel Gets Her First Paycheck from Central Perk

Real source | Internal Revenue Service | May 1, 2026
Understanding employment taxes

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the pay statement and the shift log, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 10 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

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 6 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?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Payroll should confirm ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Compare each piece of evidence with each claim and write supports, challenges or neither in each box. About 8 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		
2 The period ended Friday the 12th; the 3-hour shift was Saturday the 13th		
3 Gross pay of $255.00 matches 15 × $17.00		
4 FICA and withholding lines account for the gap between gross and net		

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Gia should do first and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 6 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

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Label a practice pay statement and explain to a partner where the money went.

Use: The pay statement and a one-paragraph explanation of FICA.

You'll make: Labeled statement plus 3—4 sentence explanation

Time: 45 minutes

1. Mark the earnings line green and each tax line orange on Evidence A.
2. Check the earnings line by multiplying 15 hours by $17.00.
3. Circle the net pay in blue. This is the amount in Gia's deposit.
4. Find the shift in Evidence B that falls after Friday the 12th.
5. Write 3 or 4 sentences in the Your draft box that explain where Gia's money went.
6. Check your sentences for gross pay, FICA and net pay.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—4 sentences with the frame "Gross pay is __. After __, net pay is __."

Say it: Walk a partner through the statement from top to bottom: what Gia earned, what was taken out and what reached her bank.

Show it: Color the statement (earnings green, deductions orange, deposit blue) and draw an arrow from the Saturday shift to the next pay period.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

Gross pay, and how you checked it

Gross pay is ___. I checked it by ___.

The two FICA lines

The shift for the next pay period

Your draft

Your explanation, 3 or 4 sentences

Gross pay is ___. After ___, net pay is ___.

Check your work

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

Did you find gross pay and net pay?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you name FICA as Social Security and Medicare?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you explain one deduction in your own words?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you use only the practice statement, not real pay information?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

2 **Why might a new worker think that every missing dollar went to taxes?**

3 **Before a first job, what would you want to know about how and when you will be paid?**

My take

I think Gia should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

See the case online.

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?

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

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 5 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what do you think Rafa's parents are allowed to see?

I think Rafa's parents can see ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

One envelope, two boxes

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 4 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 family chat wants an answer

Rafa is 18 and has just started college. He commutes from the next block and helps at his family's shop after class. His parents help pay his tuition bill.

At the end of August, the college mailed Rafa a family-access form. He has not opened the envelope. On Sunday night, the family group chat lights up. His mom writes, "Did the tuition form come? We want to help with the bill." His dad goes further: "Send us the login and we'll take care of everything."

Rafa is glad to share the bill. But he wants to read the rest of the form first. His older friend Caio sits with him and reads it with Rafa, not for him. "Being the older friend doesn't make this my decision," Caio says.

You are at the table too. Your job is to read each box on the form before Rafa signs.

Stop and think. Why might Rafa want to share the bill but wait on his grades?

Reading the form section by section

In Case 5, you read a pay statement line by line. A form works the same way. Rafa's form has three sections. Section 1 is about billing: his parents could view statements and make payments. Section 2 is about academic records: his parents could get information about his grades, enrollment and standing. Section 3 says his choice lasts until he changes it in writing.

Reading the form section by section, continued

Each section has its own yes-or-no box. That means Rafa does not have to choose all or nothing. He can check yes for billing. He can wait on grades until he talks with his family.

In Case 4, you learned that a **decision-maker** is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. Here, the decision-maker is Rafa. **Consent** is permission a person gives for something specific, such as sharing a record with a named person. Giving his dad his login would skip that choice entirely.

Stop and think. What would Rafa give up if he just sent his dad his login?

The real law behind the form

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. Grades and schedules can be education records. Under the general rule, FERPA rights move from parents to the student at age 18 or when the student starts college (U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office, no date listed).

There are exceptions. A college may share records with parents if the student is a dependent for federal tax purposes. But the Education Department says this sharing is allowed, not required. So Rafa should ask his records office what his college does.

Stop and think. What is one question Rafa could ask the records office?

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 | No date listed
Must postsecondary institutions provide a parent with access to an eligible student's education records?

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the form and the notice, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 10 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: education records

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

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

The registrar would need ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Fill in the diagram to show who decides each question, which rule applies and who can ask. About 8 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	**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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose who holds Rafa's rights and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 6 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?

- ☐ **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

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Rafa, ❶ 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. ❷ 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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Make a “my records, my family” card explaining who holds FERPA rights for a middle-school student and what changes at 18.

Use: The FERPA FAQ summary read aloud and the case quiz.

You’ll make: Illustrated card, 4—6 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

1. Find who holds FERPA rights for a student under 18 in K—12.
2. Find what changes at 18 or when a student starts college.
3. Write who holds the rights for a student who starts college at 17.
4. Draw the timeline: middle school, high school, then 18 or college.
5. Write 4 to 6 sentences for your card in the Your draft box.
6. Add one question for the school office, using no real records.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 4—6 sentences with the frame “Right now, __ can see my records. At 18 or in college, __.”

Say it: Tell a partner in three sentences who can see your school records now and what changes at 18 or in college.

Show it: Draw the picture timeline (middle school, high school, 18 or college) and write who holds the rights at each stop.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

Right now, in K—12

Right now, ___ hold the rights.

At 18 or in college

A student starts college at 17. Who holds the rights?

Your draft

Your card, 4 to 6 sentences

Right now, ___ can see my records. At 18 or in college, ___.

Check your work

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

Does your card say that parents hold the rights for students under 18 in K—12?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it explain what changes at 18 or in college?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it include a question for the school office?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it leave out real student information?	☐ 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.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Fixes one fact.	☐ Fixes the rule and adds a next step.	☐ Explains why each correction matters for Rafa's decision.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

2 **Why might Rafa want to talk with his family before he checks the box for grades?**

3 **Someone says, "Parents can never see college records." How would you revise that claim after reading this case?**

My take

I think Rafa should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

My take, continued

One question I still have is ___.

Notes

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.

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 5 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what do you think happened to the novel?

I think the novel is ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Banned, or under review?

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 4 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: A rumor on Thursday night

On Thursday night, a message spreads through a group chat. It is about a novel in the library at Anika's high school. The message says one parent complained, so the novel is now banned and gone from the library. Gia replies fast: "censorship, full stop."

On Friday, the school library posts a notice about the novel. Mari reads it. Mari works the counter at the neighborhood bookshop, and she is halfway through the novel on audio. She compares the notice with the chat. "The chat says the book is gone from the library," she says. "The notice says it stays available during the review. Those can't both be true."

Gia deletes her first reply. She had not read the notice, or the book.

Your job in this case is to read the library notice before anyone replies "banned."

Stop and think. Why do you think the rumor said "banned" instead of "under review"?

What stage is the process in?

In Case 1, you learned to find the original source. Here, the original source is the library's notice. It says a request for reconsideration has been received. The book stays available during the review. A committee will read the whole book and judge it against the district's selection criteria.

What stage is the process in?, continued

People can send written input by the 15th. The decision can be appealed.

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 **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.

So the chat's **claim**, that the book is banned, does not match the notice. In Case 3, you learned that a **correction** is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information. The chat needs one. The book is under review, it is still on the shelf, and anyone who cares can send input by the 15th.

Mari plans to use the input form. It asks whether you read the whole book, so she is finishing it first. Gia plans a discussion at the bookshop. She has one rule: nobody goes after the parent. "They used the process too," she says.

Stop and think. Which sentence in the notice tells you where the book is right now?

Book challenges in real life

The American Library Association recommends that libraries adopt a reconsideration policy. Its example has a committee read the whole work (American Library Association, updated January 2018). That is professional advice, not a law. Rules differ by state. In Tennessee, reporters found that a stricter state law changed the review steps (Chalkbeat Tennessee, September 17, 2024).

Stop and think. Why does Gia say nobody should go after the parent who asked for the review?

Sources

Real source | **American Library Association** | **January 2018**

Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: formal reconsideration

Real source | **Chalkbeat Tennessee** | **September 17, 2024**

Under stricter Tennessee law, some school library books quietly disappear

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the notice and the input form, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 10 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: book challenges

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

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

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

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what to check first and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

A group chat says, "One parent complained, so that novel is banned." What should you check first?

- ☐ **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

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Draw the steps of a book review and write a message correcting the group chat.

Use: The Matilda extract, the chat claim and a simplified district process.

You'll make: Flowchart plus 3—4 sentence message

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read the chat message in What happened, and underline what it says happened.
2. Circle the sentence in Evidence A that says where the book is now.
3. Write the four stages on the flowchart in order.
4. Mark the stage the novel is at now.
5. Write a message of 3 or 4 sentences in the Your draft box.
6. Write one question you would ask the librarian.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—4 sentences with the frame "A complaint was made. Right now, __. The next step is __."

Say it: Explain the steps of a book review to a partner, pointing to where the novel is right now.

Show it: Fill in the flowchart (request filed, under review, decision, appeal) and put a sticker on the current stage.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

The four stages, in order

Where the novel is now

The next step

My question for the librarian

Your draft

Your message, 3 or 4 sentences

A complaint was made. Right now, ___. The next step is ___.

Check your work

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

Does your message separate the complaint from the decision?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it name the stage the novel is at now?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it avoid attacking the parent?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you write a real question for the librarian?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

2 **Gia says nobody should go after the parent who asked for the review. Why might that matter for her bookshop discussion?**

3 **How does calling the same action a "review," a "restriction" or a "ban" change what people think happened?**

My take

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

My take, continued

One question I still have is ___.

Notes

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.

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 6 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

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

I think Gia ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

The free book in the first three seconds

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 review that is almost ready

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

There is one thing the video does not say. Two weeks ago, the book's publisher emailed Gia. The publicity team offered her a free copy 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 says, "You guys, I have to tell you about this book because I literally could not put it down!" The only sign of the publisher is a tag in the caption below the video.

Gia is ready to post. Caio asks her to wait and watch it once on mute. Your role is to be that viewer with the sound off. You check the first three seconds.

Stop and think. Why might Gia think a tag in the caption is enough?

What viewers need to know

An **endorsement** is a message that shares someone's opinion or experience of a product to promote it. Gia's review is an endorsement, and her opinion is honest.

What viewers need to know, continued

A **material connection** is a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect. The free copy is a material connection. It does not prove Gia's opinion is false. It is simply something viewers would want to know.

A **disclosure** is a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know. Gia thinks the tag is enough. Caio disagrees. A tag says who made the book. It does not say they sent it to her free. And the tag sits in the caption, which many people never open.

Case 1 taught you that **framing** is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward. Right now, the video brings forward Gia's excitement and hides the free copy. Caio suggests a new opening: "Quick heads-up, the publisher sent me this free." Gia would say it out loud and show it on screen, so it works with the sound off. Then comes her hook.

Gia also makes one more change. She drops the idea of calling it the best book of the year. She will just say what happened: two nights, and she could not put it down.

> **Stop and think.** How would you test whether a stranger with the sound off can tell the book was free?

The real rules

The Federal Trade Commission, a federal agency, writes guides about endorsements. It says that for a video, the disclosure belongs in the video itself, ideally both spoken and on screen (Federal Trade Commission, updated December 3, 2024). In 2023, the FTC warned a dozen influencers about posts that did not clearly disclose they were paid (Federal Trade Commission, November 14, 2023).

> **Stop and think.** Would knowing the book was free change how much you trust the review? Why or why not?

Sources

Real source | **Federal Trade Commission | December 3, 2024**

Disclosures 101 for Social Media Influencers

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

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 12 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: material connections

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

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

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

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

Professional standards

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

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

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

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

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

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

The email says ___. Gia still ___ because ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow each choice to its results. Then write whose view is missing. About 8 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

Disclose aloud and on screen in the first seconds

Viewers weigh the recommendation knowing the relationship

Who is affected

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the change that makes the relationship clearest. Then fix the two marked phrases. About 8 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

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Add a clear disclosure to Gia's review script and explain where you put it and why.

Use: The review description, the publisher email and three FTC key points.

You'll make: Storyboard plus 3—4 sentence explanation

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read the email in Evidence A. Circle what Gia got for free.
2. Read the first cut in Evidence B. Underline the only place the publisher appears.
3. Choose words from the word bank for a disclosure of one sentence.
4. Draw three storyboard frames. Put your disclosure in frame 1, spoken and on screen.
5. Write 3 or 4 sentences in the Your draft box. Explain where you put the disclosure and why.
6. Test frame 1 with a partner. Could a viewer with the sound off tell the book was free?

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—4 sentences with the frame "I put it __ because viewers __."

Say it: Perform or record the first five seconds of the review with your spoken disclosure, then explain why you put it there.

Show it: Draw the three-frame storyboard and show where the words "sent to me free" appear on screen for a viewer with the sound off.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

What Gia got for free

Where the first cut names the publisher

Frame 1: what Gia says and what the screen shows

Gia says ___. The screen shows ___.

Frame 2

Frame 3

Your draft

Your explanation, 3 or 4 sentences

I put it ___ because viewers ___.

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 5 minutes.

Does your disclosure say the book was free?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Is the disclosure in frame 1?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Could a viewer with the sound off see it?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you keep Gia's honest opinion?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

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

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

My take

I think Gia should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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?

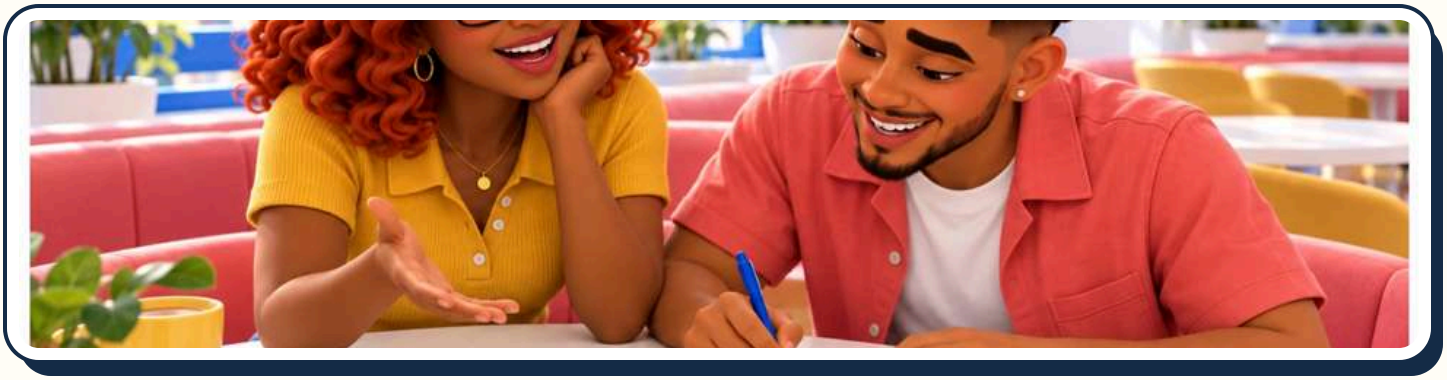
Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.

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 6 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what do you think is on Dec's ballot?

I think Dec's ballot has ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Flip the ballot over

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 4 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: More than one race

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. The front shows the big race from Dec's feed. Then Mateo flips it over. The second page has a school board race, a city council seat and Measure T, a transit bond. "Nobody's posting about Measure T," Mateo says.

A creator's voter guide is going around too. It says registration closes "the 14th." It never says which state. It also tells people how to vote on the school board race and Measure T.

Dec is clear about what he wants. "I don't need someone picking for me," he says. He needs to know what is on his ballot and whether he is registered in time. Your job is to find his official sample ballot before anyone tells him how to vote.

Stop and think. Why might a feed show only one race when the ballot has five or more?

Facts, picks and your own address

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. The two do different jobs. Start with the sample ballot. Then check a guide's facts apart from its picks.

In Case 1, you learned that a **claim** can be checked with evidence. "Registration closes the 14th" is a claim. But the 14th of what month, in which state? Gia asks, "Whose 14th?" The picks, like "Measure T: yes, obviously," are opinions, not facts.

In Case 8, you learned to ask about a **material connection**, a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect. The guide never says who wrote it or who pays for it. That is worth asking.

Your address decides which contests appear on your ballot. A **jurisdiction** is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority. Mateo realizes he may still be registered at his mom's address in New Bedford, Massachusetts. His ballot and deadline could be different from Dec's. **Registration** is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote.

Stop and think. Which lines in the creator's guide are facts you can check, and which are picks?

How voting rules really work

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment protects the right to vote for citizens 18 and older (National Constitution Center, no date listed). Rules for registering differ by state. Most states let teens preregister before they turn 18 (Ballotpedia News, September 26, 2025). Gia's reminder for the group chat sends everyone to Vote.gov to check their own registration and sample ballot.

Stop and think. Why could Mateo's ballot be different from Dec's?

Sources

Real source | National Constitution Center | No date listed

The 26th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution

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 | Vote.gov | No date listed

Your state or territory's voting information

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 12 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: sample ballots

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 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

A fact I can check is ___. A pick is ___.

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

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 8 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

Who decides

His address and district lines, drawn through redistricting

Under which rule

Who lives with it

Your way in

Whether Dec can register and vote in November

Who decides

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

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 ___.

Notes

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 8 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

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Guys the election is coming up and it's a big one!! ❶ 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 ❷ 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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Match offices on a sample ballot to the everyday things they decide, then make a poster for families about finding their own ballot.

Use: A sample ballot and one-line office descriptions.

You'll make: Matching sheet plus a poster

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read the sample ballot in Evidence A. Circle three contests at the state or local level.
2. Match each circled contest to something it decides. Use the office cards.
3. Read Gia's reminder in Evidence C. Find where a family gets its own ballot.
4. Write your poster text in the Your draft box, 3 to 5 sentences.
5. Add one sentence on why a friend's ballot might look different.
6. Check that your poster does not tell anyone how to vote.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3 sentences with the frame "The __ decides __. To find your ballot, __."

Say it: Explain to a partner which office on the sample ballot decides something about your school, and how a family can find its own ballot.

Show it: Make the family poster: three offices, each with a picture of what it decides, plus the steps to find your own ballot.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

Board of Education, District 3, decides:

Measure T asks voters about:

U.S. Representative votes on:

Where a family finds its own ballot

Your draft

Your poster text, 3 to 5 sentences

The ___ decides ___. To find your ballot, ___.

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 5 minutes.

Does your poster match at least three contests to what they decide?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it send families to vote.gov or their election office?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it avoid telling anyone how to vote?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it say why a friend's ballot might differ?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

2 **Mateo may still be registered in New Bedford. Why might his ballot differ from Dec's?**

3 **Anika is 16. How can she be part of this election before she can vote?**

My take

I think Dec should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

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 6 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

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

I think it is ___'s job because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Twelve minutes at Elm and 4th

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

- **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 starts with stairs

It is Tuesday at 4:05 p.m., at the corner of Elm Street and 4th Avenue. Sami is heading 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 Sami.

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

Mateo already has the sign on video. His first idea is to post it. Sami asks one question: does that get 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. The report can wait an hour.

Stop and think. Why does Sami care more about the bus than about the video right now?

What one video can show

Later, Mateo wonders whether the city is breaking the Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA. That is a big **claim**, a word from Case 1. A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence. But one video of one corner cannot prove what a whole city is doing. It can show what happened, where and when.

What one video can show, continued

A **barrier** is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part. The fenced ramp is one barrier. The workshop flyer may be another. It says "All welcome!" but gives no way to ask about an accessible entrance.

In Case 9, you learned that a **jurisdiction** is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority. The city runs the workshop, so the city is responsible. An **ADA coordinator** is the staff member a government names to handle disability access questions and complaints. That is who should get the report, not Mateo's followers.

Program access is an ADA rule that a city's services, taken as a whole, must be usable by people with disabilities. A good report names the corner, the day and time and where the sign points. It asks one question: is there an accessible detour, and how long will the ramp be blocked? Mateo will send it only if Sami says yes. Your job is to write down the corner, the time and the sign before anyone posts.

Stop and think. What can Mateo's video prove, and what can it not prove?

How the ADA began

On March 12, 1990, about 60 disabled activists set aside their wheelchairs and other mobility aids and climbed the steps of the U.S. Capitol. The youngest was eight-year-old Jennifer Keelan. The protest became known as the Capitol Crawl. It showed Congress what stairs do to public life. The ADA was signed that July (HISTORY, July 24, 2020).

Stop and think. Why should Mateo ask Sami before he reports a barrier she faced?

Sources

Real source | **HISTORY** | **July 24, 2020**

When the 'Capitol Crawl' Dramatized the Need for Americans with Disabilities Act

Notes

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 12 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: program access

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 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 ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Mark whether each piece of evidence supports or narrows each claim. Then write whose view is missing. About 8 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.		
2 Detour sign points to a path that starts with stairs		
3 DOJ: Title II requires program access, not every facility to be accessible		

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Mateo should do and explain why. Then fix the two marked phrases. About 8 minutes.

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

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

Why I chose it

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Map Sami's trip from home to the workshop and mark each place something could go wrong.

Use: The route map, the detour sign description and Sami's conversation.

You'll make: Annotated map plus 3—4 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read the route map in Evidence B. Number the five stages of Sami's trip.
2. Mark the stage where the ramp is blocked.
3. Read the detour sign in Evidence A. Circle where its arrow points.
4. Decide whether Sami can use that detour. Look for stairs.
5. Write 3 or 4 sentences in the Your draft box, with one question for the city.
6. Check that your question matches what Sami wants.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—4 sentences with the frame "At __, the barrier was __. We could ask __."

Say it: Walk a partner through Sami's trip stage by stage, pointing to where something could go wrong and what you would ask the city.

Show it: Mark the printed route map with a symbol at each barrier and a question mark wherever you need more information.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

The stage where the ramp is blocked

Where the detour sign points

A stage nobody has checked

Your draft

Your sentences, 3 or 4

At ___, the barrier was ___. We could ask ___.

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 5 minutes.

Does your map mark at least three stages of the trip?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it describe the blocked ramp correctly?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it ask the city one question?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you check your question against what Sami wants?	☐ 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.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone only.	☐ Adds specifics and removes the legal conclusion.	☐ Explains how each change helps the city act and respects Sami.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then finish My take. About 8 minutes.

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

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

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

My take

I think Sami and Mateo should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

Talk about this case at home

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

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

Questions to talk about

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

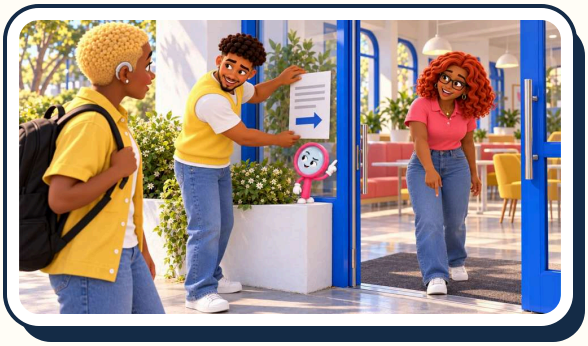
Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.

See the case online.

Case 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?

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example. Then write your first guess about the pay difference. About 6 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."

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, why do you think Gia is paid more than Jordy?

I think Gia is paid more because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Same event, different rate

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: Comparing pay statements

Jordy and Gia work event shifts for the same company. Last Saturday, they both worked an event from 3 to 11 p.m. Both helped set up and close. Jordy also ran the caption and audio check.

On Sunday afternoon, they compare pay statements. Jordy's says eight hours at $16.50 an hour. Gia's says $18.00 an hour for the same event. "Wait what," Gia texts. "Is it because I'm shift lead?"

The crew schedule does list Gia as "shift lead." But it never says what that job includes. That day, Gia opened up and handled one guest issue. She honestly does not know if that explains the $1.50 difference.

Jordy wants to ask Dana, the supervisor, how rates are set. Jordy will not post anything before Dana answers. Your role is to line up both shifts side by side before Jordy writes to Dana.

Stop and think. What facts are the same for Jordy and Gia, and what facts are different?

Lining up the facts

In Case 5, you read a pay statement line by line. You learned that **gross pay** is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out. Jordy's gross pay for the event is $132.00, which is 8 hours times $16.50.

Lining up the facts, continued

Now compare the two jobs on the same terms. The hours match. Setup and closing match. Jordy did the caption and audio check. Gia had the shift lead title, opened up and handled one guest issue. **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 statements show the rates. They do not show how the rates were set.

In Case 10, you learned to take a question to the office responsible. Here, that is Dana. Jordy's message can say what Jordy knows for sure: the hours, the duties and Jordy's own rate. Then it can ask one clear question: what does "shift lead" include, and how are rates set?

Gia is fine with Jordy knowing her rate. But she does not want her statement posted anywhere. That choice belongs to Gia, and posting Jordy's own pay is Jordy's choice.

Stop and think. What could explain the $1.50 difference?

The laws and a famous pay fight

Two federal laws limit how employers 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.

In 2022, the U.S. women's national soccer team won a $24 million settlement in its equal pay fight (NPR, February 22, 2022). The whole fight turned on what to compare. Jordy's question starts the same way.

Stop and think. Why does Jordy want Dana's answer before posting anything?

Sources

Real source | NPR | February 22, 2022

The U.S. national women's soccer team wins $24 million in equal pay settlement

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 10 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Key idea: equal pay

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

Jordy would need a written ___ that says ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Line up the accounts in the diagram. Then name one view that is missing. About 8 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

Where they differ

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Jordy should do first and explain why. Then fix the two marked lines. About 6 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

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 ❶ 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. ❷ 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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Make a side-by-side chart of Jordy's and Gia's work, then write one question Jordy could ask.

Use: The two statements and the event schedule.

You'll make: Chart plus a one-sentence question

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read Jordy's pay statement in Evidence A. Circle the hours and the rate.
2. Read the schedule in Evidence B. Underline each person's job title and duties.
3. Fill in the chart for Jordy and for Gia: duties, hours, title and rate.
4. Circle the row where Jordy and Gia are different.
5. Write one question for Dana in the Your draft box. Do not guess the reason.

Show it your way

Write it: Write one question under your chart with the frame "Both __. But __. I want to ask __."

Say it: Tell a partner one way Jordy's and Gia's work was the same and one way it might have been different, then say Jordy's question aloud.

Show it: Complete the side-by-side chart with icons for duties, hours, title and rate, and circle the row that is different.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

What is the same for Jordy and Gia

Both ___.

What is different

But ___.

Your draft

Jordy's question for Dana

I want to ask ___.

Notes

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 5 minutes.

Does your chart show the hours, duties, title and rate for each person?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Does your question ask for the reason instead of guessing it?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Does your question keep Gia's pay statement private?	☐ **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.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone only.	☐ Replaces conclusion with a question.	☐ Explains how changes protect Jordy and get an answer.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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 **What information could explain the $1.50 difference, and what might challenge that explanation?**

2 **Whose choice is it to make Jordy's pay public, and why?**

3 **What answer from Dana would satisfy Jordy, and what answer would not?**

My take

I think Jordy should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

My take, continued

One question I still have is ___.

Notes

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?

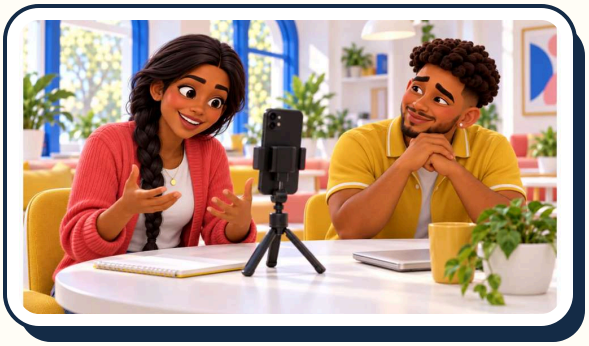
Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.

See the case online.

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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, can the school do anything about the poster or the walkout?

I think the school ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

The poster, the blue shirts and the walkout

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 4 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 poster about lunch

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: “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.

On Wednesday night, a message appears in the group chat: “If they take the poster down we walk out Thursday. Tinker says they can’t touch us.” Someone replies, “Wait, wear blue AND walk out??”

Anika is surprised. “I never asked anyone to leave class,” she says. Mateo notices something else. The school logo makes the poster look like the school made it. He decides to redo the photo.

Your role is to compare Tinker with each action before anyone says “can’t touch us.”

Stop and think. Why did Anika’s poster turn into a walkout plan in the group chat?

One real case, three actions

The chat mentions a real Supreme Court case, Tinker v. Des Moines, from 1969. A **precedent** is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases. In Tinker, public-school students wore black armbands to protest the Vietnam War. The school suspended them. The Supreme Court ruled for the students.

One real case, three actions, continued

Substantial disruption is the standard from Tinker v. Des Moines: a public school may limit speech that would seriously disrupt school activities. The Court said a mere fear of disruption was not enough.

A precedent guides a new case only as far as the facts match. A **fact pattern** is the specific set of facts in a situation that a rule is applied to. In Case 11, you compared two jobs on the same terms. Now compare Tinker with each action. Wearing blue is quiet, like the armbands. A walkout is different, because students leave class, and the school's attendance rule covers that. The poster raises its own question. The handbook says posters need office approval and a student's name. Anika's poster has no name. "That part's on me," she says.

"Tinker says they can't touch us" is a **claim**, a word from Case 1. It goes much further than the case does. And Mateo's logo is a kind of **framing**, also from Case 1. It brings the school forward as the speaker, even though the school did not make the poster.

Stop and think. Which action matches Tinker's facts most closely: the poster, wearing blue or the walkout?

Student speech today

In Tinker, the Court wrote that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate" (Legal Information Institute, 1969). In 2026, students in several states walked out of class. Some schools counted it as an unexcused absence, and one high school gave one-day suspensions (Chalkbeat Indiana, February 11, 2026).

Stop and think. Why might it matter whether a poster looks like the school made it?

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 | Chalkbeat Indiana | February 11, 2026

How schools in Marion County responded to anti-ICE student protests

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 10 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: precedent

On your own Read the key idea and the Professional standards card. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 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?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Honest advice would say ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Link each piece of evidence to the claim it supports or challenges. Then name one missing view. About 8 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			
2 A walkout means leaving class, which falls under the attendance rule			
3 The logo photo makes the poster look like school-sponsored speech			

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 ___.

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 6 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

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Make a two-column chart comparing the Tinker armbands with Anika's wear-blue plan, then explain one way they're alike and one way they're different.

Use: The U.S. Courts Tinker summary (read aloud) and the poster description.

You'll make: Chart plus 3—5 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

Notes

Your task, continued

1. Listen to the Tinker summary. Write what the students did and what the school did.
2. Write Tinker's rule in your own words: when can a public school limit student speech?
3. Fill in the chart for the armbands and the wear-blue plan.
4. Circle the plan that raises a different question: the walkout.
5. Write 3 to 5 sentences in the Your draft box. Use "Both ___. But ___."

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—5 sentences with the frame "Both __. But __."

Say it: Explain to a partner one way the armbands and the wear-blue plan are alike and one way they are different, using the picture cards.

Show it: Build the two-column chart with the picture cards (armband, blue shirt, poster, empty classroom) and circle the one that raises a different question.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

What happened in Tinker

Tinker's rule in my words

Your task, continued

Armbands

Wear-blue plan

Your draft

Your sentences

Both ___. But ___.

Notes

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 5 minutes.

Does your chart describe Tinker's facts correctly?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you name one way the plans are alike and one way they differ?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you explain why the walkout is a different question?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you avoid saying students can say anything, or that they have no rights?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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 **Which changed fact would make Tinker a weaker comparison for the wear-blue plan?**

2 **Why might it matter whether a poster looks like it comes from the school?**

3 **If the poster had Anika's name and no school logo, what would change?**

My take

I think Tinker fits ___ best because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

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?

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."

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what is the best way for the crew to cut waste?

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Half a box of air

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 4 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: Air pillows and 120 cups

It is Tuesday in the theater shop. Dec opens a box of replacement parts. Three small orders of LED connectors and switches came together in one big box. About half of the box is plastic air pillows and foam. “Three tiny orders,” Dec says. “One giant box.”

There is a second problem. The supply list from last Friday’s screening at the Common Room shows the crew used about 120 single-use cups. The cups say “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 role is to count the cups before and after the change.

Stop and think. Why does Dec want to fix the order form before the recycling sign?

Stopping waste before the bin

Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging. Dec’s idea is source reduction: order the parts together, not every time one breaks, and ask the supplier about packaging.

Stopping waste before the bin, continued

Reuse is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use. The bookshop has washable cups the crew could borrow. But reuse has costs too. Washing takes water and someone's time.

A "recyclable" label does not tell you where a cup will go. **Local acceptance** is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes. In Case 9, you learned to check an official source for your own area. Here, that source is the city's list. It does not take plastic-lined cups, and it does not take items labeled compostable either.

Anika's plan is a test. At one screening, the crew borrows washable cups. They count what they use and compare it with 120. Water and washing time go on the sheet too. That makes it a fair **proposal**, a word from Case 4. A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet. It is also a **trade-off**: fewer cups in the trash, but more washing. The crew will keep some disposable cups and straws for people who ask.

Stop and think. Why is the word "recyclable" on the cups not enough?

Real companies, real straws

In 2018, Starbucks said it would phase out plastic straws in its stores by 2020 (NPR, July 9, 2018). Two days later, NPR reported that some people with disabilities need flexible plastic straws to drink (NPR, July 11, 2018). Cutting waste works best when it still works for everyone.

Stop and think. What would the crew need to count to know if washable cups worked?

Sources

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

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 10 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: source reduction

On your own Read the key idea and the Professional standards card. Then answer the question in the box. About 6 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

I would need to know ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow each choice to its consequences in the diagram. Then name one view that is missing. About 8 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

About 120 cups go to the trash because the city does not accept them

Who is affected

Borrow washable cups and run a wash station

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

New costs: water, washing time and volunteers

Who is affected

Check: Count cups and bags after the next event and compare with last time

Combine parts orders into one shipment

Less packaging arrives before anything reaches a bin

Who is affected

Notes

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 ___.

Notes

Practice: choose a response

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

- ☐ **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

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Make a materials sheet for the next Common Room screening and pick one change to try.

Use: The EPA hierarchy graphic and the supply list.

You'll make: Materials sheet plus 3—4 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

1. Count the items on the supply list in Evidence A. Write the number for each.
2. Place each item on the hierarchy: reduce, reuse, recycle or throw away.
3. Check the city list in Evidence C. Does it accept the cups?
4. Pick one change for the next screening.
5. Write 3 or 4 sentences in the Your draft box. Say how you would count whether it worked.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—4 sentences with the frame "We use __. We could __. A problem might be __."

Say it: Explain to your group which item you would change, what you would do instead and one problem your change might cause.

Show it: Draw the waste hierarchy as a staircase and place each item from the supply list on the step where it is now and the step it could move to.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

Item I will change, and how many were used

Where it is on the hierarchy now

My change

Your draft

Your sentences

We use ___. We could ___. A problem might be ___.

Notes

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 5 minutes.

Does your sheet list the items and how many were used?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you pick a reduce or reuse change?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you name a problem the change could cause?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you say how you would count whether it worked?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

2 **How does “add more bins” define the problem differently from “order less packaging”?**

3 **What would the crew need to count before saying a change saves money?**

My take

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

My take, continued

One question I still have is ___.

Notes

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.

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?

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example, then write your first guess in the box. About 8 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."

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, do you think a credit in the caption lets the crew use the song?

I think the credit ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Credit is not permission

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 4 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: A song that carries the scene

It is Friday night, and Caio is editing the crew's festival film. It 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 it 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?" Caio writes back one question: "Credit gets us what, exactly?" Mateo does not have an answer.

Your role is to fill in the rights log before the film goes up.

Stop and think. Why might Mateo think a credit in the caption is enough?

Two 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 a different question: "Did the owner say yes to this use?" Mateo's caption would give attribution. It would not give the crew a license.

Two different questions, continued

In Case 8, you learned that a **disclosure** is a clear statement that tells people about a relationship or fact they would want to know. Naming the artist is honest, like a disclosure. But being honest about where something came from is not the same as having permission to use it.

Pitching the song up does not make it the crew's song either. "It's still their song, just a little higher," Caio says.

The crew starts a rights log. It lists each borrowed piece, who made it, where it came from and whether there is permission. Right now, both rows say "permission unknown." Mateo thought Stitch covered the TikTok clip. But Stitch works inside TikTok. A festival film is somewhere else.

Caio has two backup plans. The crew can use a library track with clear terms, or Dec can record a drum loop the crew owns. Either way, they post Sunday.

Stop and think. What is the difference between attribution and a license?

When the music went silent

In February 2024, a licensing deal between Universal Music Group and TikTok ended. Videos using songs by artists like Taylor Swift and Olivia Rodrigo went silent (NPR, February 1, 2024). Nobody forgot to credit Taylor Swift. The license was the problem.

Fair use is a part of U.S. copyright law that allows some uses without permission, judged case by case with four factors (U.S. Copyright Office, updated July 2026).

Stop and think. Why doesn't Stitch permission cover a festival film?

Sources

Real source | NPR | February 1, 2024

TikTok removes music from UMG artists, including Olivia Rodrigo and Taylor Swift

Real source | U.S. Copyright Office | July 2026

Fair Use Index

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document, then fill in both boxes under it. About 12 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: fair use

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 8 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?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

For the song, Caio needs ___. For the clip, he needs ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Match each piece of evidence to the claim it supports, challenges or narrows. About 10 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		
2 Copyright Office: no formula makes a set amount safe; the heart of a work matters		
3 The sample is background mood, not commentary on the song		
4 Stitch permission applies inside TikTok, not to a downloaded clip in another film		

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the plan you would pick and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 8 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.
- ☐ **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

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

We're good to post! ❶ 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. ❷ 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.

Improve a draft, continued

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Rewrite phrase 2

Notes

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Make a rights log for the crew's short film and suggest a way to use music they're allowed to use.

Use: The case scenario and a kid-friendly summary of the Copyright Office page.

You'll make: Rights log plus 3—4 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

Notes

Your task, continued

1. Circle each part of the rough cut in Evidence A that the crew did not make.
2. Write who made each part, using the rights log in Evidence C.
3. Mark each part with a check for permission or a question mark for unknown.
4. Choose music the crew is allowed to use in place of the song.
5. Write 3 or 4 sentences in the Your draft box that explain your plan.
6. Check that your sentences say what credit does and what permission means.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—4 sentences with the frame "Credit tells people __. Permission means __."

Say it: Explain to a partner the difference between giving credit and having permission, using the song in Caio's film as your example.

Show it: Fill the rights log as a picture table: a small drawing of each clip or sound, who made it and a check or question mark for permission.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Borrowed part 1, and who made it

Permission for part 1

Borrowed part 2, and who made it

Permission for part 2

Your task, continued

Music the crew is allowed to use

Your draft

Credit tells people ___. Permission means ___.

Notes

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 rights log list both borrowed parts?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it say who made each part?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do your sentences explain credit and permission separately?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does your plan avoid promising that the use is legal?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

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?**

My take

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

See the case online.

Questions to talk about

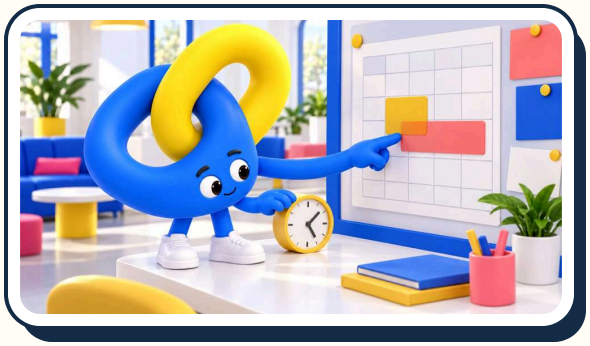
1. What is the difference between giving credit and getting permission?
2. Why might a short part of a song still need permission?
3. Where could a student find music they have permission to use?

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

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?

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example, then write your first guess in the box. About 8 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."

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, is Rafa's offer more like training or more like a job?

I think it is more like ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Looking for the editing

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

- **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: An internship with a catch

Rafa is 18. He is in his first year of college, commutes to class and helps at his family's shop. In April, a studio posts a listing on the campus job board: "Summer Editing Intern (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 his message. "Since interns get college credit, it's totally legal for us not to pay," the email says. The studio wants him to start right after finals.

At lunch, Rafa talks it over with Gia. She asks a sharp question: didn't the studio pay someone to run the inbox last year? Yes, Rafa says. Their assistant did. Taking the internship would also cost Rafa paid shifts at the shop.

Your role is to check each part of the test before Rafa says yes.

Stop and think. Why does Rafa read the listing twice?

A test with seven parts

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 who mainly benefits from the internship, the intern or the company. An intern who counts as an employee must be paid under the **Fair Labor Standards Act**. That is a federal law that sets minimum wage and overtime rules for most workers.

A test with seven parts, continued

The test has 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 asks whether the intern's work adds to paid workers' work or replaces it. No single factor decides the test.

So the studio's email does not settle anything. Rafa put it well: "Credit is one factor out of seven. So that's one. What about the other six?"

In Case 12, you compared facts to a court case. Here, you compare facts to a test, one factor at a time. Some facts point one way. The main job is the inbox, and a paid assistant did it last year. Other facts are missing. Who trains Rafa? How many hours a week? In Case 11, you learned that **compensation** is all the pay and benefits a worker receives. Here, the offer includes none.

Gia almost told Rafa to take it because it would look good. Then she stopped. "Easy for me to say," she admits. She is not the one giving up a summer. She leaves the decision to him.

Stop and think. Why doesn't college credit settle whether Rafa should be paid?

Real interns who sued

Two unpaid interns on the 2010 film Black Swan sued Fox Searchlight. They said they should have been paid. In 2015, a federal appeals court said the question is who is the primary beneficiary of the internship (LAist, July 2, 2015). That is the test used today.

Stop and think. What questions should Rafa ask the studio before he decides?

Sources

Real source | **LAist (AirTalk) | July 2, 2015**

Appeals court reverses 'Black Swan' interns' victory over Fox

Notes

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document, then fill in both boxes under it. About 12 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

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 8 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

The career office should ask ___.

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

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 10 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		
2 The listing: Rafa runs the customer inbox all summer		
3 A paid assistant ran the inbox last year		
4 The role is openly unpaid and offers credit (factors 1 and 3)		

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Rafa should do next and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 8 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

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 **1** if this is legal since it's unpaid? My friend said unpaid internships aren't allowed. Also how many hours is it? **2** 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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Sort the internship's daily tasks into "learning" and "working," then tell a partner whether it looks more like school or a job.

Use: The listing and a kid-friendly summary of the seven factors.

You'll make: Sorted chart plus 3—4 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

1. Underline each task Rafa would do in the listing in Evidence A.
2. Sort each task into the Learning box or the Working box.
3. Count the tasks in each box and circle the bigger box.
4. Tell a partner whether the offer looks more like school or a job.
5. Write 3 or 4 sentences in the Your draft box, ending with one question for the studio.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3—4 sentences with the frame "Most of the tasks are __, so __."

Say it: Tell a partner whether the internship looks more like school or a job, using two task cards as your proof.

Show it: Sort the task cards into two columns, learning and working, and star the task Rafa would do most.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

Learning

Working

Your draft

Most of the tasks are ___, so ___.

Notes

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.

Did you sort every task from the listing?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do your sentences give a reason from the evidence?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you end with a question Rafa could ask?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you avoid saying the internship is illegal?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

2 **If Rafa's school grants credit, does that settle whether the studio should pay him? Why or why not?**

My take

I think Rafa should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

See the case online.

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.

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?

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example, then write your first guess in the box. About 7 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.”

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, should Sami follow the new notice?

I think Sami should ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

The notice with no name

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

- **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 new sign by the door

On Monday morning, a new notice appears beside the common-room door in Sami's apartment building. In bold capital letters, 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." At the bottom: "NO BUSINESS USE."

The notice has no name, no date and no contact. That matters to Sami. She lives in apartment 3B and uses a manual wheelchair. The rear door 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.

Before anyone starts arguing, Sami takes a photo of the notice. She writes down when and where she found it. Caio brings last year's house rules to compare.

Your role is to help Sami keep a clear record of what the notice says and when it appeared.

Stop and think. Why does Sami take a photo before anyone argues about the notice?

Who made this rule?

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. As Caio says, somebody made it look official. He still does not know who.

Who made this rule?, continued

In Case 4, you learned that a **decision-maker** is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. Sami needs to find out who the decision-maker is here. In Case 1, you learned to find the original source. Last year's house rules say residents may reserve the common room for "gatherings, classes and resident-run workshops." The new notice does not say whether it replaces those rules. It also never says what "business use" means.

In Case 10, you learned that a **barrier** is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part. A locked rear door would be a barrier for Sami after 8 p.m. **Documentation** is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when. Sami's photo and note are documentation.

Sami keeps two questions apart. Who has the authority behind this notice? And how does she get in after 8? 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, a key fob for the rear door could work. Neither Sami nor Caio calls the notice illegal. They do not know enough yet.

Stop and think. What is missing from the notice that a real building rule should include?

Real tenants, real doors

In 2018 and 2019, tenants in a Brooklyn apartment complex learned their landlord wanted to install a face-scanning entry system. Because the change needed a state agency's permission, the tenants had a place to object. In November 2019, the landlord dropped the plan (Gothamist, November 21, 2019).

Stop and think. What two questions does Sami keep separate, and why?

Sources

Real source | Gothamist | November 21, 2019

Brooklyn Landlord Does An About Face On Facial Recognition Plan

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document, then fill in both boxes under it. About 10 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: authority

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 8 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?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Before Sami says the notice breaks the law, she needs to know ___.

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

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

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Sami should do first and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 8 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

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

Improve a draft, continued

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Rewrite phrase 2

Notes

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Rewrite the building notice so every resident knows who wrote it, what changed, when and who to ask.

Use: The notice and a short excerpt from the older house rules.

You'll make: Rewritten notice, 60—90 words

Time: 45 minutes

1. List what the notice in Evidence A leaves out.
2. Compare it with last year's rules in Evidence B and write what changed.
3. Find the step-free door on the entrance plan in Evidence C.
4. Rewrite the notice in 60 to 90 words in the Your draft box.
5. Add one line that tells residents who need the step-free door how to get in after 8 p.m.
6. Leave a blank for the name of whoever issued the notice.

Show it your way

Write it: Write the 60—90 word notice with the checklist, including one line about getting in after 8 p.m.

Say it: Read your rewritten notice aloud to a partner who plays a resident using the step-free door; answer the one question they ask.

Show it: Redesign the notice as a poster with five labeled boxes: who, what changed, when, who it affects, who to ask.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

What the notice leaves out

What changed from last year

The step-free door

Your draft

Notice from ___.

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 notice have a space for who issued it and the date?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it say what changed and when?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it give a contact?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it tell residents who need the step-free door how to get in after 8 p.m.?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

2 **The notice bans “business use” without saying what that means. What would you need to know to decide whether Sami’s workshop counts?**

My take

I think Sami should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

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 6 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, how do you think the crew should choose who gets the ten seats?

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Ten seats, thirty names

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: The sheet fills up fast

The crew has ten free seats for a workshop. 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, there are thirty. The sheet still says, “How seats will be chosen: to be announced.”

Gia is running the sign-up. She wants to give the seats to the first ten names. It is simple, she can post it tonight and she has a shift at seven. Mateo suggests a lottery instead. A third idea on the whiteboard would give seats to people who cannot afford the paid version of the workshop.

Anika is 16 and at rehearsal most days. She checks her phone after rehearsal ends. “By the time I see the message, ten people will have answered,” she says. “I don’t even need a seat. I just want to know how you’re picking.”

Your role is to write down the rule before the crew picks the ten names.

Stop and think. Why did most names arrive in the first hour, before any rule was posted?

Every rule has a cost

Any way of giving out ten seats to thirty people leaves twenty people without one. In Case 4, you learned that a **trade-off** is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.

Every rule has a cost, continued

Look at the three options on the whiteboard. First come, first served is fast, but it favors whoever sees the message first. A lottery gives everyone the same chance, but it takes more work, and it does not consider need. A needs-based option helps people who cannot afford the paid workshop. **Equity** is a way of sharing that adjusts for different needs so everyone gets a fair chance. But that option asks people to share personal information. In Case 6, you learned that **consent** is permission a person gives for something specific. Applicants would need to agree to share that information, and the crew would need to protect it.

Criteria are the standards or reasons a group uses to make a decision. The crew should write its criteria down before anyone is chosen. Then everyone knows the rule ahead of time. Even people who do not get a seat may accept the result if the rule was clear. If the crew picks a rule after seeing the names, people may wonder if it was chosen to favor someone.

Anika is not asking the plan to revolve around her. “Just don’t tell me nobody loses out,” she says, “because I would.” Gia admits she mostly wanted the job off her list.

Stop and think. Which option would you choose, and who would it leave out?

How real sellers choose

In November 2022, more than 3.5 million people registered for presale codes for Taylor Swift’s Eras Tour. Ticketmaster says about 1.5 million got codes. The other 2 million went on a waitlist (Ticketmaster, November 19, 2022). Someone chose a method for deciding who got a chance.

Stop and think. Why should the crew write down its rule before choosing names?

Sources

Real source | Ticketmaster | November 19, 2022

The Eras Tour onsale explained

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: fair criteria

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 8 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”?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

The option closest to an equal share is ___. The option closest to need is ___.

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

Sort the evidence

On your own Follow each option to its effects and write who carries the cost in each box. About 10 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

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

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose the note you would send, explain why and fix the two marked phrases. About 8 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

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

We should do first come first served because ❶ 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 ❷ 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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Hold a small-group discussion, then write a short note to the thirty students explaining how the ten seats will be given out.

Use: The three options and Gia and Anika's perspectives.

You'll make: Note, 4—6 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read the three options on the whiteboard in Evidence C.
2. Fill in the chart: who gains and who pays a cost under each option.
3. Discuss your choice in your group, using your role card.
4. Write your choice and your reason in the planner.
5. Write a note of 4 to 6 sentences in the Your draft box.
6. Add one change that helps people who do not get a seat.

Show it your way

Write it: Write a 4—6 sentence note with the frame "We chose __ because __. This is hard for __."

Say it: In your group, take a role (facilitator, recorder or questioner) and explain aloud which method you picked and who it is harder for.

Show it: Fill the who-gains, who-pays chart for all three options, with a simple icon for each person affected.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

First come, first served: who gains, who pays

Gains: ___. Pays: ___.

Lottery: who gains, who pays

Gains: ___. Pays: ___.

Needs-based rubric: who gains, who pays

Gains: ___. Pays: ___.

My choice and my reason

We chose ___ because ___.

Your draft

We chose ___ because ___. This is hard for ___.

Check your work

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

Does your note say how the seats will be given out?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it give a reason?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it name who the choice is harder for?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it offer one fix?	☐ 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.

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

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?**

2 **Anika says she does not need a seat. What is she asking the crew for?**

3 **What would make the twenty people without seats accept the result as fair?**

My take

I think the crew should use ___ because ___.

This choice is harder for ___.

One change that would help is ___.

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.

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.

See the case online.

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 6 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, why do you think the theater curtain is still not fixed?

I think the curtain is not fixed because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

$48 million and one torn curtain

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: The curtain that won't close

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 has priced a new curtain at $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.

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.

Mari's first question is simple: where are those numbers from? Your role is to work out the per-student number before anyone repeats the post.

Stop and think. Why is comparing $48 million with $21,000 per student unfair?

Same scale, fair comparison

In Case 11, you learned to compare two things on the same terms. The post does not. It compares a total for a whole district with an amount per student. That is like comparing a whole pizza with one slice.

Same scale, fair comparison, continued

A **per-pupil amount** is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared. Do the math: $48,000,000 divided by 3,200 students is $15,000 per student. Now the two numbers are on the same scale. Even so, the comparison is not complete. Nobody knows Westbrook's budget year or stage.

An **expenditure** is money that a government or an organization spends. **Revenue** is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants. The budget is marked "proposed." In Case 4, you learned that a **proposal** is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet. The figures may change before the board adopts the budget.

In Case 5, you read a pay statement line by line. A budget works the same way. Mari looks for the line that might pay for a curtain. The building repairs line is one guess. Dec starts with what he can show: the curtain, his photo and the $6,800 quote. "I don't know where the money went," he says, "so I'm not guessing."

In Case 4, you also learned that a **decision-maker** is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. Here, the school board adopts the budget. So Dec's question goes to the board: which line pays for stage equipment, and when does the board hear requests?

Stop and think. What does the word "proposed" tell you about the budget?

A TV show asks the same question

In the first episode of the TV comedy Abbott Elementary (ABC, December 7, 2021), teachers need rugs and supplies. The principal gets money and spends it on a new sign instead. The money existed. The question is which line it was in, and who decided.

Stop and think. Why does Dec start with his photo and the quote instead of guessing?

Sources

Real source | ABC | No date listed

About Abbott Elementary

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document and write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 12 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

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 8 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?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

The board should see ___.

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

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

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what the crew should do first, explain why and fix the two marked phrases. About 8 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

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Our district has a ❶ $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 ❷ 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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

Make a source card for the district budget and write one question the theater crew could bring to the school board.

Use: A one-page budget excerpt with the facilities line and a photo of the curtain.

You'll make: Source card plus a 2—3 sentence question

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read the top of the budget in Evidence A. Write its year and stage on the source card.
2. Check the units. Write whether $48 million is a total or a per-student number.
3. Find the line that might pay for repairs. Copy it onto the card.
4. Write a question of 2 or 3 sentences in the Your draft box.
5. Name the curtain, the $6,800 quote and the budget line in your question.
6. Read your question aloud and check that it blames no one.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 2—3 sentences with the frame "The budget says __. We noticed __. Could the board explain __?"

Say it: Practice asking your board question aloud in 30 seconds, holding up the photo of the curtain.

Show it: Build the source card as sticky notes on the budget excerpt: year, stage, units and the line that might pay for the curtain.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

Year

Stage

Units

The line that might pay for the curtain

Your draft

The budget says ___. We noticed ___. Could the board explain ___?

Notes

Check your work

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

Does your question say the budget is proposed and for next year?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it name the curtain and the $6,800 quote?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it name one budget line?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does it ask without blaming anyone?	☐ 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.

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

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

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

1 **Dec wants to ask the board himself. Why might it matter who brings the question?**

2 **What else would you want to know before saying one district gets less than another?**

My take

I think Dec should ask ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

One question I still have is ___.

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.

See the case online.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

What happened

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

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

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

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

Key terms

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

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

En español: punto del orden del día

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

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

En español: competencia

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

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

En español: registro público

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

Who is involved

Gia

Speaking at a public meeting for the first time

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

Mateo

Timing Gia's practice run from a bench

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what do you think Gia should say in her two minutes?

I think Gia should say ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Two minutes at the microphone

On your own Read the passage. At each Stop and think box, pause and answer the question in your head or with a partner. About 5 minutes.

Words to know

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

The story: Three pages, two minutes

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

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

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

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

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

What the committee can do

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

What the committee can do, continued

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

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

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

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

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

Real students at real meetings

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

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

Sources

Real source | **Chalkbeat Philadelphia** | **April 3, 2026**

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

Real source | **Chalkbeat Newark** | **November 26, 2025**

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

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | Meeting agenda

Item 4 on the parks committee agenda

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

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

What it shows

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: remit

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

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

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

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

Professional standards

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

ASPA Code of Ethics: 3. Promote democratic participation

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

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

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

Your answer

Written comments help because ___.

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

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

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

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

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

Why I chose it

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

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

Use: The agenda item summary and comment instructions.

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

Time: 45 minutes

Notes

Your task, continued

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

Show it your way

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

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

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

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The item

I'm here about item ___.

What I saw

I noticed ___.

Why it matters

What I ask

Your task, continued

My time limit

Notes

Your draft

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

Your comment, about 130 words

Good evening. I'm here about item ___.

Notes

Check your work

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

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

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

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

Check your work, continued

One change I made

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

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

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

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

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

My take

I think Gia should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

My take, continued

One question I still have is ___.

Notes

Talk about this case at home

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

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

Questions to talk about

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

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

See the case online.

Case 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 5 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?

Key terms

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

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, do you think the courtyard flooded today?

I think the courtyard ___ because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

The flood nobody can confirm

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: An image with no source

It is Wednesday at 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 the 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 zooms in on a hand in the picture. The fingers seem to merge at the knuckles. Someone runs the image through a free online detector. It says “12% likely AI-generated.” Someone else says their 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.

This is the last case in the casebook, and it uses almost every skill you have learned. Your role is to write the verification note Jordy posts at six.

Stop and think. Why does Sami care more about who posted the image first than about the hand?

Where did it come from?

In Case 1, a real clip in a group chat seemed to cancel a screening. You learned to find the original source. That is the first move here too. **Provenance** is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled. This image has no link, no date and no named poster, so its provenance is unknown.

The caption makes a **claim**, a statement that something is true that you can check with evidence. The hand is a clue, not proof. The detector score is a clue, not proof. As Sami asks, "Twelve percent of what?" And a roommate's friend is not a source. Near the library is not the courtyard, either.

Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source. A campus alert would count. So would someone's dated photo of the courtyard. In Case 9, you learned to check an official source. The alerts page is official, but it has not been updated since Monday, so it cannot prove there was no flood.

Should Jordy post the image with a question mark? No. "A question mark still spreads the picture," Jordy says. Instead, Jordy writes a **verification note**, a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown. It works like the **holding statement** from Case 1: it says what is known, what is being checked and when people will hear more. If better evidence appears, the crew will post an update. In Case 3, you learned that a **correction** is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information. If the note turns out to be wrong, the crew will post one where people saw it.

Stop and think. Why is the alerts page not enough to prove there was no flood?

Real fake images

After Hurricane Helene in October 2024, an image of a crying girl holding a puppy in a rescue boat spread fast. Fact-checkers found no original photographer or news source. A digital-forensics expert pointed to details that did not hold together (UC Berkeley School of Information, October 4, 2024).

Stop and think. Why is a verification note better than posting the image with a question mark?

Sources

Real source | **UC Berkeley School of Information** | **October 4, 2024**

Hany Farid breaks down the viral Helene image

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | 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

One question I still have

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

One question I still have

Look at the evidence, continued

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: provenance

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

The note should say we don't know ___.

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

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		
2 Facilities alerts page at 3:10 p.m.: no active alerts		
3 Secondhand report of water near the library		
4 An odd hand and a 12% detector score		

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 ___.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Jordy should do, explain why and fix the two marked phrases. About 6 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

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

Rewrite phrase 2

Grades 6—8

Your task

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

With a partner, fill an image-check card and write two sentences telling friends whether to trust the courtyard picture.

Use: The image description, caption and campus facilities page only.

You'll make: Completed card plus 2—3 sentences

Time: 45 minutes

1. Read the caption in Evidence A. Write what it says happened, and when.
2. Write who posted the picture first and when. Write "unknown" if you cannot find out.
3. Check the alerts page in Evidence D. Write what it says about a flood.
4. Decide with your partner: is the claim confirmed, false or unverified?
5. Write 2 or 3 sentences in the Your draft box that tell friends whether to trust the picture.
6. Check that your sentences do not blame the person who posted it.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 2—3 sentences with the frame "The picture shows __. It doesn't show __."

Say it: Tell a partner in 30 seconds whether you would share the picture and which proof you would want first.

Show it: Draw the image-check card as a four-box chart and circle the box that is still empty.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Your task, continued

The claim

Who posted it first

Date on the image

Other proof

Confirmed, false or unverified?

Your draft

The picture shows ___. It doesn't show ___.

Check your work

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

Do your sentences say what the picture shows and what it doesn't show?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do they name a better source to check?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do they use the word "unverified" correctly?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do they avoid blaming the person who posted it?	☐ 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.

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

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

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

1 **What would you need beyond the image to support the caption's claim?**

2 **Do you agree with Jordy's choice to leave the image out of the recap, and why?**

3 **The alerts page shows nothing new since Monday. Does that prove the courtyard did not flood?**

My take

I think the crew should ___ because ___.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

My take, continued

One question I still have is ___.

Notes

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.

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

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

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

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

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					

My progress, continued

Case	Date	Evidence	Reasoning	Audience and purpose	Revision
18					
19					
20					