Student edition

IB Diploma Programme: Global politics

IB Diploma Programme Global politics classes at SL and HL, mainly for engagement-project rehearsal and thematic-study practice.

11 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.

Contents

4	Who gets a say when a shared room changes?	3
5	Why is my deposit smaller than what I earned?	23
7	Did one complaint get the novel banned?	43
9	What is on your ballot, and where do you check?	63
10	Whose job is it to fix the blocked route?	84
11	Why are Jordy and Gia paid different rates?	104
12	When can a school limit what students say?	124
13	Can the crew cut waste before it reaches the bin?	144
16	Who wrote the new building rule?	165
18	Why is the theater curtain still falling apart?	186
19	What should Gia say in her two-minute comment?	206

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 6 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?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

What is the problem represented to be?

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

Words to know

- **Proposal**: A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet.
- **Trade-off**: A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.
- **Decision-maker**: A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.
- **Framing**: Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward.

The story: The meeting nobody can attend

The Common Room's board meets Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. The small nonprofit that runs the room alongside the bookshop is weighing paid evening rentals to help cover staffing. The agenda item is marked "for discussion," and no vote has been taken. By Friday, the crew's group chat has split along predictable lines. Mateo, who likes turning "we should" into a plan, has drafted a petition headline. Others are less sure a petition is the right tool.

Mari holds both sides of the problem in one job. She is paid to lock up the bookshop and then stays for zine night with her friends. She wants the free time protected, but she knows the bookshop has costs, and she proposes asking which hours earn money and testing a different arrangement. Sami raises a procedural objection. The crew keeps speaking for evening users without asking them. For her own part, she wants three things from the meeting: the actual proposal, a way to give input without speaking on the spot and a clear answer about what that input can change.

Caio, 24, runs the crew's Tuesday film night, one of the evenings Option B would rent out. Dec rehearses on Thursdays. The proposed meeting time overlaps several people's shifts. The people most affected by the decision are among those least able to attend it.

Stop and think. Sami wants to know what her input can change. Why does that question matter before anyone speaks?

Reading an agenda like an analyst

The documents lay out the choice. Option A keeps the current free evenings and leaves the funding gap. Option B replaces Tuesday and Thursday evenings with paid rentals. Option C pilots one rental evening for six weeks while seeking additional funding. Each is a **proposal**, a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet. The budget note puts evening staffing and utilities at $600 a week against $400 in grants and donations. Each rental is projected to add $120 after costs, so two would cover the $200 gap and one would leave $80. The note adds a caution the headline would never carry: demand is uncertain.

A **trade-off** is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up. Every option has one. Option A protects the evenings and leaves the deficit. Option B closes the deficit on paper and ends two free nights. Option C limits the loss and leaves a smaller gap. It also leaves open what the board will do if the pilot falls short.

The policy scholar Carol Bacchi offers a sharper tool. Her approach asks what a proposed solution assumes the problem is (Carol Bacchi, "What's the problem represented to be?", November 1, 2017). Option B represents the problem as a $200 gap and treats two free evenings as the price. That representation is a form of **framing**, the Case 1 idea of choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward. It brings the budget forward and pushes Sami, Dec, Mari and Caio into the background. Bacchi's question applies to the crew's own preferences too. A petition to "keep it free" represents the problem as a threat to free space and leaves the staffing cost out of view.

Stop and think. Apply Bacchi's question to Option C. What does it assume the problem is?

Decision-makers and public participation

A **decision-maker** is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. The board controls its own schedule, so a strong comment names the proposal, explains one effect with evidence and asks for something the board can decide. Public agencies follow different rules. New York's community boards, for example, have advisory authority (NYC.gov, Brooklyn Community Board 13, no date listed).

New York's libraries show how funding decisions reach ordinary schedules. City budget cuts ended Sunday hours at every branch that still had them, and Brooklyn's last Sunday was December 17, 2023 (NY1, November 17, 2023). Restored funding, part of a $58.3 million investment, brought Sunday service back starting July 14, 2024 (NYC Mayor's Office, July 1, 2024). Council members thanked residents who called and wrote (New York City Council, July 14, 2024).

Professional codes speak to the board's side of the table. The American Society for Public Administration asks public servants to "inform the public and encourage active engagement in governance" (ASPA Code of Ethics, 2013). The crew's plan puts that into practice.

Decision-makers and public participation, continued

It sends the board a joint question that leaves room for disagreement. Mari checks the figures, Sami proposes a way to send written feedback and Mateo rewrites the petition as a request the board can answer. Your role is to check the budget figures before the crew speaks to the board.

Stop and think. A petition to keep the room free is also a frame. What does it bring forward, and what does it leave out?

Sources

Real source | Carol Bacchi | November 1, 2017
What's the problem represented to be?

Real source | NYC.gov, Brooklyn Community Board 13 | No date listed
About community boards

Real source | NY1 | November 17, 2023
Public libraries over the next two weeks to begin closing on Sundays

Real source | NYC Mayor's Office | July 1, 2024
Mayor Adams Celebrates $58.3 Million Investment in City's Three Library Systems

Real source | New York City Council | July 14, 2024
NYC Council, Library Leaders, and New Yorkers Celebrate Library Budget Restorations to Restore Full Service, as Branches Reopen and Reinstate Services on Sunday for First Time in Months

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

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 | 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

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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 12 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 say ___, because ___.

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 10 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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 15 minutes.

Use the room decision to rehearse scoping an engagement project: define the political issue, map the actors and the power each holds, identify whose voices are missing and plan two ways to engage people directly. Then write a short proposal explaining how power and legitimacy shape the decision.

Use: The agenda, the budget note and the listening notes, plus one real local example the student identifies, such as a library, rec-center or community-board decision.

You'll make: Engagement-project proposal, 500—700 words, with an actor map

Time: 100 minutes

1. Write the political issue in one sentence.
2. Map the actors: formal authority, resources, influence and voice.
3. Mark whose voices are missing.
4. Plan two ways to engage people directly, with consent and safety.
5. Draft the proposal's opening and legitimacy section on the Your draft page.
6. Finish the proposal, 500 to 700 words, in the online workspace.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The political issue

Formal authority

Resources

Your task, continued

Voice, and who lacks it

Two ways to engage people directly

Notes

Your draft

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

Your proposal's opening

Your legitimacy section

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 10 minutes.

Does your issue concern power over a shared resource?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you map the actors and their sources of power accurately?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Is your engagement plan ethical and feasible?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you use power and legitimacy precisely?	☐ 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

My real local example

One change I made after feedback

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. **Option B treats the $200 gap as the problem. What does that way of stating the problem leave out?**

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

3. **How is the Common Room's board different from the City Council that helped restore library Sundays?**

My take

My claim: ___.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

Notes

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

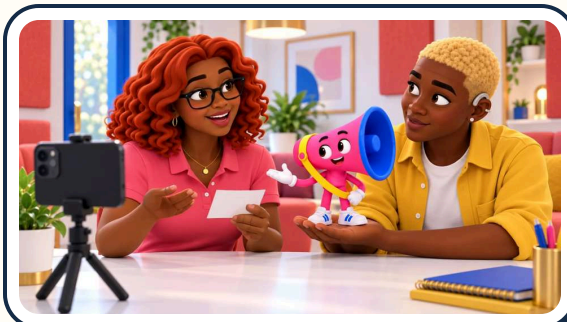
1. Who decides the hours at a public library or community center?
2. What should a group know before it asks a board for a change?
3. How can people give input if they cannot attend a meeting?

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 5 minutes.

Gross pay Gross pay is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.

En español: salario bruto

In this case: Gia's statement pays 15 hours at $17.00 an hour, so her gross pay is $255.00.

Net pay Net pay is the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay.

En español: salario neto

In this case: The $220.99 that reached Gia's bank account is her net pay, not the amount she earned.

FICA FICA is the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare.

En español: FICA (Seguro Social y Medicare)

In this case: On Gia's statement, FICA appears as two lines: Social Security tax, $15.81, and Medicare tax, $3.70.

Withholding Withholding is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker.

En español: retención

In this case: Federal income tax withheld, $8.40, is a separate line from FICA. The IRS says its amount depends partly on the W-4.

Who is involved

Gia

Works café shifts and keeps her own shift log

"My notes say 18 hours. The statement says 15. I counted twice, so where did three hours go?"

Jordy

Works event shifts on different dates

"Mine is event work. Different dates, different hours. My deposit can't tell Gia anything about hers."

Your first guess

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

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Reading the document behind the deposit

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

Words to know

- **Gross pay**: Gross pay is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.
- **Net pay**: Net pay is the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay.
- **FICA**: FICA is the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare.
- **Withholding**: Withholding is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker.
- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.

The story: Eighteen hours or fifteen

Gia works café shifts around her college classes, and like many students with jobs, she checks her pay the way most people check the weather: quickly, on her phone, expecting nothing unusual. On this Thursday, the deposit is smaller than the number in her head. She does not guess. She opens the shift log she keeps in her notes app. Five shifts, 18 hours. Then she opens her pay statement. Fifteen hours.

She posts in the group chat that her deposit is much lower than expected. Jordy, who works event shifts, notices their own deposit looks different too, and then immediately sees why that comparison is useless. Their shifts fall on different dates and hours. Two deposits cannot explain each other. Jordy's next message sets a boundary that protects them both. Gia should not post her whole statement. She should name the line that worries her. Jordy also does not want Gia mentioning their pay to her payroll office. It proves nothing about Gia's pay and puts Jordy's pay in front of Gia's payroll office.

Your role is to add up Gia's hours before she writes to payroll. That sounds simple. It is also the step most people skip.

Stop and think. Why does Jordy not want Gia to mention Jordy's pay in her message?

A statement is an argument you can check

Gia's working theory is that payroll shorted her.

A statement is an argument you can check, continued

That is a **claim**, a statement that something is true that can be checked with evidence. Case 1 taught you to test a claim against the original source, and Case 4 taught you to read dollar figures carefully, as Mari did with the board's budget note. A pay statement combines both skills. It is the employer's account of how it got from your work to your deposit, and each line can be checked.

The statement covers the pay period ending Friday the 12th, paid the following Thursday. It lists 15 hours at $17.00, for $255.00 in **gross pay**, the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out. Gia's log explains the difference in hours. Her shifts on the 8th, 10th, 11th and 12th total 15 hours. Her 3-hour Saturday shift on the 13th fell after the period closed. The likely answer is that those hours will appear on the next statement. A likely answer is not a confirmed one, so Gia still plans to ask.

The rest of the gap is taxes. Social Security tax of $15.81 and Medicare tax of $3.70 together form **FICA**, the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare. Federal income tax withheld, $8.40, is a separate line, as is state and local income tax, $6.10. **Withholding** is money an employer takes out of each paycheck to pay taxes or other costs for the worker. The total left, $220.99, is Gia's **net pay**, the money left after taxes and other deductions, often called take-home pay.

Stop and think. What is the difference between a likely answer and a confirmed one, and why does Gia still write to payroll?

The system behind the lines

The IRS explains that the federal taxes an employer withholds include income tax, Social Security and Medicare. It says income-tax withholding depends partly on the worker's Form W-4 (Internal Revenue Service, updated May 1, 2026). Federal income tax taken from each paycheck counts toward what a worker owes for the whole year, so one paycheck cannot show that yearly total. The IRS Tax Withholding Estimator is the official tool for checking whether withholding is on track (Internal Revenue Service, updated June 27, 2026). The IRS has also written directly to teens starting a first job, explaining withholding and the W-4 (IRS Tax Tip 2019-62, May 20, 2019).

FICA can feel abstract until you ask what it funds. The Peter G. Peterson Foundation explains where the Social Security and Medicare money taken from a paycheck goes (Peter G. Peterson Foundation, May 26, 2026). NPR's The Indicator devoted an episode to the Social Security portion and why it comes out of nearly every check (NPR, June 6, 2018).

Gross pay has its own rules. Many states set a minimum wage above the federal one, and 19 states raised theirs in January 2026 (Money, January 1, 2026). Payroll professionals hold themselves to a standard, too. The PayrollOrg code asks members "to strive for perfect compliance, accuracy, and timeliness of all payroll activities" (PayrollOrg Code of Ethics, no date listed).

The system behind the lines, continued

A worker who can read the statement is the best check on that promise.

Stop and think. Why can one paycheck not show how much federal income tax a worker will owe for the year?

Sources

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

Real source | Internal Revenue Service | June 27, 2026
Tax Withholding Estimator

Real source | Internal Revenue Service | May 20, 2019
It's summertime... and these tips can help make livin' easy for teens with jobs (IRS Tax Tip 2019-62)

Real source | Peter G. Peterson Foundation | May 26, 2026
Payroll Taxes: What Are They and What Do They Fund?

Real source | NPR, The Indicator from Planet Money | June 6, 2018
Social Insecurity

Real source | Money | January 1, 2026
Minimum-Wage Workers in These 19 States Just Got a Raise

Real source | PayrollOrg | No date listed
PayrollOrg Code of Ethics

Notes

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the pay statement and the shift log, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Pay statement

Gia's pay statement

Pay period ending Friday the 12th, paid the following Thursday. Hours: 15.00 at $17.00. Gross pay: $255.00. Social Security tax: $15.81. Medicare tax: $3.70. Federal income tax withheld: $8.40. State and local income tax withheld: $6.10. Net pay: $220.99.

Look closely: Which line shows gross pay? Which two lines together make up FICA?

What it shows

What it leaves out

Evidence B | Notes app

Gia's shift log for the last two weeks

Mon the 8th: 4 hrs. Wed the 10th: 4 hrs. Thu the 11th: 3 hrs. Fri the 12th: 4 hrs. Sat the 13th: 3 hrs. My total: 18 hrs.

Look closely: Which shift falls outside the pay period? Add the hours inside it.

What it shows

What it leaves out

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 10 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 ___. Item 2 matters here because ___.

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 6 minutes.

Before calling it an error, sort the evidence. Which facts explain the smaller deposit, and which question is still worth asking payroll?

Evidence	**Claim 1** Payroll shorted Gia's pay.	**Claim 2** The missing 3 hours belong on the next statement.
1 Shift log shows 18 hours; the statement shows 15		
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 5 minutes.

Gia's deposit is smaller than the pay she worked out. What should she do first?

- ☐ **A** Compare her deposit with Jordy's.
- ☐ **B** Check her hours and the pay period, then read each line of her statement.
- ☐ **C** Treat the whole gap as taxes and let it go.

Why I chose it

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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 25 minutes.

Compare how Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights frames social security with how the United States funds Social Security and Medicare through payroll taxes. Then evaluate one argument about whether social insurance is best understood as a right or as a national policy choice.

Use: The pay statement, the Social Security Administration overview, the text of Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and one teacher-selected source on social insurance in another country.

You'll make: Analytical response, 700—900 words

Time: 100 minutes

1. Find the two FICA lines in Evidence A and note what they fund.
2. Read Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
3. Fill in the grid: what the declaration states and what the U.S. program funds.
4. Fill in the perspective table: young worker, retiree, employer and government.
5. Draft your opening and your evaluation in the Your draft boxes.
6. Finish the response on lined paper, 700 to 900 words.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

How the U.S. funds the programs

Your task, continued

A declared right and a funded program

A declared right ___. A funded program ___.

Two perspectives

Notes

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 45 minutes.

Opening paragraph

Evaluation paragraph

Check your work

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

Do you describe the declaration's article and the U.S. funding method accurately?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you distinguish a declared right from a funded program?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you evaluate at least two perspectives fairly?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you use sovereignty, legitimacy and interdependence precisely?	☐ **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 after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames below. About 12 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

My claim: ___.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

Notes

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 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 5 minutes.

Challenge A challenge is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material.

En español: impugnación

In this case: A parent's request about a novel at Anika's school started a review. The novel stays available while the committee reads it.

Reconsideration policy A reconsideration policy is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book.

En español: política de reconsideración

In this case: The library's notice follows district policy: a committee review, the selection criteria, written input by the 15th and an appeal.

Selection criteria Selection criteria are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.

En español: criterios de selección

In this case: The committee judges the whole novel against the district's selection criteria. The input form asks which criteria your comment addresses.

Who is involved

Mari

Works the bookshop counter

"The chat says the book is gone from the library. The notice says it stays available during the review. Those can't both be true."

Gia

Planning a book discussion at the bookshop

"I called it censorship before I'd read the notice. Now I'm planning a discussion at the bookshop, so I'd better get this right."

Your first guess

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

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Where is the book in the process?

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

Words to know

- **Challenge**: A challenge is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material.
- **Reconsideration policy**: A reconsideration policy is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book.
- **Selection criteria**: Selection criteria are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.
- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Correction**: A correction is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information.

The story: Two messages, two days

On Thursday night, a claim about a novel in the library at Anika's high school moves through a group chat. One parent complained, it says, so the novel has been banned and removed. Gia answers with the certainty of someone who cares about the freedom to read: "censorship, full stop." The reply fits her values. It does not fit the evidence, because there is no evidence in the chat yet.

The evidence arrives Friday, when the school library posts a notice. Mari, who works the bookshop counter, reads it against the chat. She is dyslexic and moves between print and audiobooks, and she is halfway through this novel on audio. She points out the contradiction plainly. The chat says the book is gone. The notice says it remains available during the review. Both cannot be true.

Gia deletes her first reply. She had not read the notice or the book. She is now organizing a discussion at the bookshop and wants it to be useful, which means getting people to the input form before the 15th with something to say. She also sets a boundary that many online arguments skip. Nobody goes after the parent who asked for the review, because that parent used the process too.

Your role is to read the library notice before anyone replies "banned."

Stop and think. The chat collapsed a complaint, a temporary change and a final decision into one word. Why is that collapse so common?

Stages, not verdicts

The new skill in this case is finding what stage a process has reached. It depends on two earlier ones. From Case 1, you go to the original source, here the library's notice. From Case 3, you know that a **correction** replaces wrong information with accurate information where people saw the mistake.

The notice describes a sequence. A request for reconsideration has been received. The title remains available during the review. A committee will read the full work and evaluate it against the district's selection criteria. Written input is due by the 15th. The committee's decision may be appealed. A **challenge** is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material. It opens that sequence, but it does not end it. A **reconsideration policy** is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book, and **selection criteria** are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.

With the sequence in view, the chat's **claim** can be judged precisely. It collapses three different events into one: a complaint, a possible temporary change and a final decision. Only the first has happened. The notice also has gaps. It does not name the novel, list the committee members or quote the criteria, so a careful reply should not fill those in.

Mari's approach to the input form shows how to join the process rather than just comment on it. The form asks whether you have read the entire work and which criteria your input addresses, with a 300-word limit. She is finishing the book first. Her experience with books like this explains why she cares, but it is not the policy, so she plans to connect the two.

Stop and think. What should a careful correction leave out, given what the notice does not say?

Professional guidance, state law and the courts

The American Library Association recommends that libraries adopt a formal reconsideration policy, and its model process has a committee read the whole work (American Library Association, updated January 2018). Its separate guidance on selection criteria explains how libraries evaluate resources (American Library Association, updated January 2018). That guidance is professional advice. Districts adopt their own policies, and states write their own laws. Colorado legislators advanced a bill to require clear reconsideration policies (Chalkbeat Colorado, February 10, 2025). In Tennessee, reporters found that a revised state law changed the review steps and that some books quietly left shelves (Chalkbeat Tennessee, September 17, 2024).

The constitutional question remains unsettled. A law-firm analysis explains that the Fifth Circuit treated public library book removals as government speech, creating a split with the Eighth Circuit (Cahill Gordon and Reindel, September 22, 2025). The answer to whether a removal is legal can depend on where you live.

Professional guidance, state law and the courts, continued

Professional codes sit on both sides of Gia's evolving view. The ALA code says, "We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources" (ALA Code of Ethics, 2021). The NCA credo asks communicators to "understand and respect other communicators' intent before evaluating and responding to their messages" (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024). Holding both is the discipline this case asks for.

Stop and think. How can someone oppose removing a book and still respect the parent who filed the challenge?

Sources

Real source | American Library Association | January 2018
Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: formal reconsideration

Real source | American Library Association | January 2018
Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: selection criteria

Real source | Chalkbeat Colorado | February 10, 2025
Colorado bill to curb school library book challenges clears first legislative hurdle

Real source | Chalkbeat Tennessee | September 17, 2024
Under stricter Tennessee law, some school library books quietly disappear

Real source | Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP (law-firm client alert) | September 22, 2025
Fifth Circuit Holds That Government Speech Doctrine Applies to Public Library Book Removals, Creating Circuit Split With Eighth Circuit

Real source | American Library Association (ALA) | 2021
ALA Code of Ethics

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

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the notice and the input form, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Library notice

Reconsideration notice, posted Friday by the school library

A request for reconsideration has been received for one title in the library collection. Under district policy, the title remains available during the review. A review committee will read the full work and evaluate it against the district's selection criteria. Written input may be submitted by the 15th. The committee's decision may be appealed.

Look closely: Which sentence tells you where the book is right now? Underline it.

What it shows

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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 10 minutes.

A **challenge** is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material. A challenge starts a review. On its own, it does not remove a book. A complaint, a temporary change and a final decision can happen at different times. Check which stage a process has reached before you repeat a claim.

A **reconsideration policy** is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book. The American Library Association (ALA) recommends that libraries adopt one, and its example has a committee read the whole work. **Selection criteria** are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include. ALA's guidance is a professional recommendation, not a law. Each district's adopted policy and the applicable law govern its own process.

Whether removing a book breaks the law is a harder question. Federal courts disagree about how the First Amendment applies when a library removes a book. The answer can depend on where you live. Right now, the notice at Anika's school describes a review, and the novel is still available.

Professional standards

Real source | **American Library Association (ALA)**

ALA Code of Ethics: Principle 2 (of 9)

"We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources."

In plain words: Library workers who follow the ALA code support people's freedom to read and oppose censorship of library materials.

Question: The district notice says the title stays available during review. Does that match the group chat's claim that it's "gone"?

Your answer

The notice says ___, so ___.

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 10 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 5 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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 25 minutes.

Rehearse an engagement project on library governance: frame the political issue (who decides what stays on public school shelves, and by what process), map the actors (families on different sides, librarians, the school board, the state legislature, students, advocacy groups), plan ethical engagement with people who disagree with each other, and compare the local process with the freedom to seek and receive information in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Use: The chat message, the reconsideration notice, the input form, ALA's reconsideration guidance, one state or district policy and the text of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

You'll make: Engagement-project proposal, 600—800 words, with an actor map

Time: 100 minutes

1. Frame the issue as one question in the planner.
2. Map the actors: families on different sides, librarians, the board, the legislature, students and advocacy groups.
3. Note each actor's formal authority, resources, influence and voice.
4. Plan how you would talk with at least two actors who disagree.
5. Compare the district process with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
6. Draft your proposal's three core sections in the Your draft boxes.
7. Finish the proposal on lined paper, 600 to 800 words, with the actor map.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The issue in one question

Your task, continued

Who holds formal authority

How I will engage people who disagree

Notes

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 45 minutes.

Framing the issue

The actors

The local process and Article 19

Check your work

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

Do you frame a political issue about authority over shared public resources?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you map actors on different sides fairly?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you plan ethical engagement across disagreement?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you use power, legitimacy and rights precisely?	☐ **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 after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames below. About 12 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

My claim: ___.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

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.

See the case online.

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?

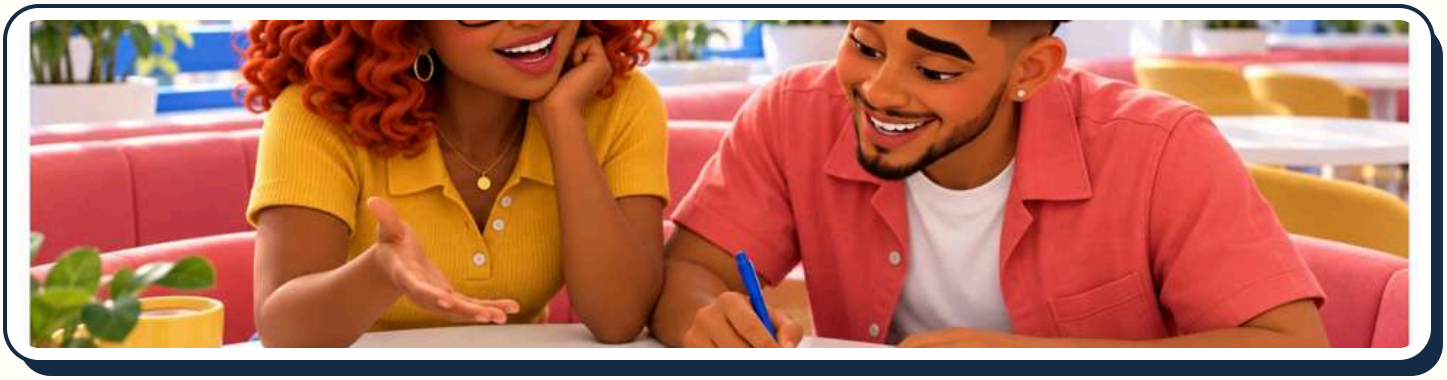
Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.

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 5 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 5 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?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Down the ballot and back to the source

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

Words to know

- **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: One race in the feed, five on the ballot

Dec, a high school senior who drums on weekends and helps build theater sets, turns 18 in October. The general election is November 3, 2026. His social feed treats it as a single contest, one big race covered from every angle. On Sunday, at the library desk, Mateo and Gia help him find out what the feed leaves out.

The sample ballot for November is organized by level of government. Federal: U.S. Representative. State: State Senator and a Superior Court judge up for retention. Local: two seats on the Board of Education in District 3 and a City Council seat in Ward 5. And one measure: Measure T, a transit improvements bond. Mateo notices that the lower half of the ballot has almost no online presence. Nobody is posting about Measure T.

What is circulating instead is a creator's voter guide. It promises "all you need for November," announces that registration closes "the 14th" and tells readers to vote for Candidate B for school board and "yes, obviously" on Measure T. Dec's response sets the terms for the case. He does not need anyone picking for him. He needs to know what is on his ballot and whether he is registered in time.

Mateo has a problem of his own. He moved from New Bedford, Massachusetts, for college and may still be registered at his mom's address there. Different state, different ballot, different deadline. Your role is to find Dec's official sample ballot before anyone tells him how to vote.

Stop and think. Why does the lower half of a ballot get so little attention online?

Separating information from advocacy

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 distinction matters because the two serve different purposes. The sample ballot tells you what you will decide. A guide tells you what someone thinks you should decide, and sometimes also what the choices mean.

The new skill here builds on two earlier ones. From Case 1, you go to the original source and treat each statement as a **claim** that can be checked. The guide's deadline is a claim with no jurisdiction attached, so it cannot be verified and should not be repeated. From Case 8, you ask about a **material connection**, a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect. Here, the guide leaves out who wrote and who funds it. That missing information does not make its picks wrong. It does mean they should be read as advocacy from an unnamed source.

A **jurisdiction** is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority. Your address determines which contests appear on your ballot, which is why Mateo cannot assume his ballot matches Dec's. Jurisdiction also shapes research. A school board and a city council have different powers, so a voter who cares about buses should learn which body runs them before comparing candidates. Mateo starts Measure T with two questions: what it would pay for, and who runs the buses.

Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote. Because rules and deadlines vary by state, Gia's group-chat reminder deliberately contains no deadline. It sends everyone to Vote.gov for their own registration and sample ballot, and it asks people not to post their addresses.

Stop and think. The guide's picks are not labeled as advocacy. How would labeling them change how Dec reads the guide?

The constitutional floor and the state rules

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment protects the right of citizens 18 and older to vote (National Constitution Center, no date listed). The National WWII Museum traces its origins to the wartime argument that people old enough to fight were old enough to vote (The National WWII Museum, October 27, 2020). Above that floor, states set the details. Most allow preregistration before 18, and some let 17-year-olds vote in primaries if they will be 18 by the general election (Ballotpedia News, September 26, 2025). NPR has reported on state efforts to raise youth registration, including preregistration (NPR, August 6, 2023).

Turnout data show both engagement and variation. CIRCLE estimates that about 47 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds voted in 2024, with large differences by state (CIRCLE, April 14, 2025).

The constitutional floor and the state rules, continued

Journalism codes draw the same line the case draws. The SPJ code tells journalists to "label advocacy and commentary" (SPJ Code of Ethics, September 6, 2014). The RTDNA code says journalism "empowers viewers, listeners and readers to make more informed decisions for themselves; it does not tell people what to believe or how to feel" (RTDNA Code of Ethics, June 11, 2015). A nonpartisan guide for Dec should meet that second standard.

Stop and think. Anika is 16. How can she take part in this election before she can vote?

Sources

Real source | Vote.gov | No date listed
Your state or territory's voting information

Real source | National Constitution Center | No date listed
The 26th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution

Real source | The National WWII Museum | October 27, 2020
"Old Enough to Fight, Old Enough to Vote": The WWII Roots of the 26th Amendment

Real source | Ballotpedia News | September 26, 2025
Most states allow teenagers to pre-register to vote before turning 18, and some let them vote in primaries

Real source | NPR | August 6, 2023
Some states are trying to boost youth voter registration. Here's what they're doing

Real source | CIRCLE (Tufts University) | April 14, 2025
New Data: Nearly Half of Youth Voted in 2024

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) | 2014
SPJ Code of Ethics

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

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | **Sample ballot**

Sample ballot for the November general election

Federal: U.S. Representative. State: State Senator; Superior Court judge (retention). Local: Board of Education, District 3 (vote for two); City Council, Ward 5. Measures: Measure T, transit improvements bond.

Look closely: Which contests sit below the big race, and which one touches Dec's school?

What it shows

What it leaves out

Evidence B | **Voter guide post**

A creator's voter guide

All you need for November!! Registration closes the 14th. School board: vote Candidate B, the only one who cares about students. Measure T: yes, obviously.

Look closely: Which line could you check, and which lines tell you how to vote?

What it shows

What it leaves out

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | **Group-chat draft**

Gia's reminder

Check your registration and your own sample ballot at vote.gov. Deadlines depend on your state. Please don't post your address here.

Look closely: What does Gia share, and what does she ask friends to keep private?

What it shows

What it leaves out

Evidence D | **Statement**

What Dec needs

"I turn 18 in October. I don't need someone picking for me. I need to know what's on my ballot and whether I'm registered in time for November."

Look closely: What two questions does Dec need answered, and which source answers each?

What it shows

What it leaves out

What is still missing from the evidence?

Key idea: sample ballots

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

A **sample ballot** is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot. A measure is a question that voters decide directly, such as Measure T. A **voter guide** is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election. The two have different purposes. Start with the ballot for your address, and then check a guide's facts apart from its picks.

Your address decides which contests appear on your ballot. A **jurisdiction** is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority. A friend two districts over may see different local races. A school board and a city council have different jobs, so each one makes different decisions. Before you research candidates, find out which office has power over the issue you care about.

Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote. Rules and deadlines vary by state, so do not copy a friend's deadline. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment protects the right to vote for citizens 18 and older. Most states let people preregister before they turn 18. Several states let 17-year-olds vote in a primary if they will be 18 by the general election.

Professional standards

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ)

SPJ Code of Ethics: Seek Truth and Report It

"Label advocacy and commentary."

In plain words: Journalists who follow the SPJ code mark opinions and recommendations so readers can tell them apart from facts.

Question: The creator's guide mixes a registration deadline with "vote Candidate B." Which lines are checkable facts, and which are picks?

Your answer

The checkable fact is ___; the picks are ___.

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 6 minutes.

You live at a new address. A friend sends their sample ballot and says, "Just use this one." What should you do?

- ☐ **A** Use it, because you and your friend live in the same state.
- ☐ **B** Check your registration and find the official sample ballot for your address.
- ☐ **C** Use a creator's voter guide instead, since it covers the whole election.

Why I chose it

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Guys the election is coming up and it's a big one!! (1) Registration closes on the 14th so do it now. Here's the voter guide I use, it tells you exactly who to vote for so you don't have to research. Also (2) drop your addresses and I'll check if you're registered for you. Only the big race really matters anyway, the rest is small stuff. My cousin in another state said the same deadline works for her too, so just use mine. Let's go vote!!

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Rewrite phrase 2

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 25 minutes.

Rehearse an engagement project on youth participation in local elections: frame a nonpartisan political issue, such as why young people vote less in local contests, map the actors (election office, schools, parties, youth organizations, candidates), plan ethical, nonpartisan engagement with an election office or youth civic group, and analyze how turnout affects the legitimacy of local decisions, comparing voting age or registration in one other country.

Use: The sample ballot, Vote.gov's guidance for people 18 and under, one source on local turnout and one official source on voting rules in another country.

You'll make: Engagement-project proposal, 600—800 words, with an actor map

Time: 100 minutes

1. Frame a nonpartisan issue about young people and local elections.
2. Map the actors: election office, schools, parties, youth groups and candidates.
3. Plan one contact with an election office or youth civic group, with consent and safety notes.
4. Explain legitimacy two ways: by procedure and by participation.
5. Plan how you will compare voting age or registration in one other country.
6. Write your proposal of 600 to 800 words, starting on the Your draft page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Political issue

Your task, continued

Actor map

Engagement plan

Two views of legitimacy

Notes

Your draft

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

Proposal: issue, actors and engagement

Legitimacy and the comparison

Check your work

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

Is your issue political and nonpartisan?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does your actor map show each actor's source of power accurately?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Is your engagement plan ethical, with consent and no collection of personal information?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you use legitimacy in two precise senses?	☐ 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 after feedback

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?**

4 **When could a voter guide that recommends choices help a first-time voter?**

My take

My claim: ___.

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

Notes

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.

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?

See the case online.

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 4 minutes.

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

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

What happened

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

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

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

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

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

Key terms

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

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

A barrier, a bus and the right office

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

Words to know

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

The story: The next twelve minutes

Sami studies design and photographs things most people walk past. She also uses a manual wheelchair and wants access planned before an event, not offered as an apology afterward. At 4:05 p.m. on a Tuesday, at the corner of Elm Street and 4th Avenue, she is on her way to a free parks department workshop that starts at 5. Her bus comes in 12 minutes.

The northeast curb ramp is fenced off for construction. The posted detour, “SIDEWALK CLOSED AHEAD. PEDESTRIAN DETOUR,” points to a path that begins with stairs. Sami says it without drama. The sign says detour, the detour starts with stairs, so no.

Mateo is with Sami, and his reflex is a filmmaker’s. He has the sign on video before he has thought about what the video is for. When he offers to post it, Sami asks whether that gets her on the bus. It does not. Mateo puts the camera down and checks the other corners for a ramp while Sami looks up the next stop. The order of priorities is the first lesson of the case. The person facing the barrier decides what the moment needs and what gets said about her. The report can wait an hour.

Your role is to write down the corner, the time and the sign before anyone posts, so that the later report rests on a clean record.

Stop and think. Why does the case put Sami’s bus ahead of Mateo’s video?

Evidence, barriers and program access

Mateo's next question is whether the city is violating the Americans with Disabilities Act. That is a **claim**, a statement that something is true that can be checked with evidence, and Case 1 taught you to match a claim to what the evidence can support. Mateo draws the limit himself. His video shows one fenced ramp and one sign at 4:05. It cannot show whether another way around exists, so he cannot call the whole route illegal.

The route map widens the frame. Sami's trip has five stages: home to the corner, the northeast ramp, the bus stop, the ride to the parks department building and the workshop entrance and room. The last stage has not been checked. The flyer adds a different kind of gap. It invites everyone, lists a front desk number and says nothing about accessible entrances or how to request access.

A **barrier** is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part. The fenced ramp is a physical barrier. The flyer's silence may be an informational one. **Program access** is an ADA rule that a city's services, taken as a whole, must be usable by people with disabilities. The standard applies to the program, not to each building separately. It generally does not require every older building to be accessible, and a city can relocate a service to an accessible place. Existing buildings and new construction have different requirements. Access still covers the whole visit: finding the information, getting there, going in, taking part and leaving.

The last question is who can fix it. Case 9's term **jurisdiction**, the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority, points to the city, which both runs the workshop and manages the street. An **ADA coordinator** is the staff member a government names to handle disability access questions and complaints. Mateo's planned report is short: the corner, the time, the sign and one question. Is there an accessible detour, and how long will the ramp be blocked? It goes out only if Sami agrees.

> **Stop and think.** Program access applies to the program as a whole. How does that change what a report should ask?

The law's origins and its limits

The Justice Department's guide for cities explains that Title II of the ADA covers state and local programs, including keeping curb ramps usable during street work (U.S. Department of Justice, updated February 24, 2020). The law's history explains its focus on steps and routes. On March 12, 1990, activists climbed the Capitol steps to show what stairs do to access, and the ADA was signed that July (HISTORY, July 24, 2020). Minnesota's disability council notes that the protest involved ADAPT, which began as Americans Disabled for Accessible Public Transit (Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, March 1, 2015).

The law's origins and its limits, continued

Enforcement is uneven. In New York, a North Bronx subway station is set to get elevators nearly a decade after an ADA lawsuit (THE CITY, October 3, 2025). Federal auditors found gaps in checking whether paratransit services for disabled riders actually work (GAO, November 15, 2012).

Professional codes speak to both people at the corner. The ASPA code asks public servants to "respect and assist all persons in their dealings with public organizations" (ASPA Code of Ethics, 2013). The NPPA code asks visual journalists to "be complete and provide context when photographing or recording subjects" (NPPA Code of Ethics, no date listed).

Stop and think. What is the difference between recording a barrier and making Sami the content?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Department of Justice | February 24, 2020
The ADA and City Governments

Real source | HISTORY | July 24, 2020
When the 'Capitol Crawl' Dramatized the Need for Americans with Disabilities Act

Real source | Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities | March 1, 2015
The Capitol Crawl

Real source | THE CITY | October 3, 2025
North Bronx Subway Station to Get Elevators, Nearly a Decade After ADA Lawsuit

Real source | U.S. Government Accountability Office | November 15, 2012
ADA Paratransit Services: Demand Has Increased, but Little Is Known About Compliance (GAO-13-17)

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

Real source | National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) | No date listed
NPPA Code of Ethics for Visual Journalists

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | Construction sign

The detour sign

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

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

What it shows

What it leaves out

Evidence B | Route map

Sami and Mateo's route map

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

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

What it shows

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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 10 minutes.

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

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

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

Professional standards

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

ASPA Code of Ethics: 3. Promote democratic participation

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

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

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

Your answer

The flyer should add ___, so that ___.

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 5 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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 25 minutes.

Rehearse an engagement project on accessibility where you live: frame a political issue about who is responsible for accessible public routes, map the actors (city departments, contractors, the ADA coordinator, disability advocacy groups, residents), plan consent-based engagement that treats disabled residents as decision-makers, and compare the ADA's approach at a general level with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which the United States has signed but not ratified.

Use: The route map, detour sign and flyer, the DOJ ADA and City Governments page, the text of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and one local accessibility page.

You'll make: Engagement-project proposal, 600—800 words, with an actor map

Time: 100 minutes

1. Frame a political issue about who keeps public routes accessible where you live.
2. Map the actors: city departments, contractors, the ADA coordinator, advocacy groups and residents.
3. Plan one contact that treats disabled residents as decision-makers, with consent.
4. Compare the ADA and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the grid.
5. Explain what signing without ratifying means for a resident on a blocked sidewalk.
6. Write your proposal of 600 to 800 words, starting on the Your draft page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Political issue

Your task, continued

Actor map

Engagement plan

The ADA and the UN Convention

Notes

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 35 minutes.

Proposal: issue, actors and engagement

The ADA and the UN Convention

Check your work

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

Is your issue political and clearly framed?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Does your actor map show each actor's source of power accurately?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Does your engagement plan treat disabled residents as decision-makers, with consent?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you compare the ADA and the UN Convention accurately?	☐ **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.

How your work is scored, continued

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

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

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

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

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

My claim: ___.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

Notes

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?

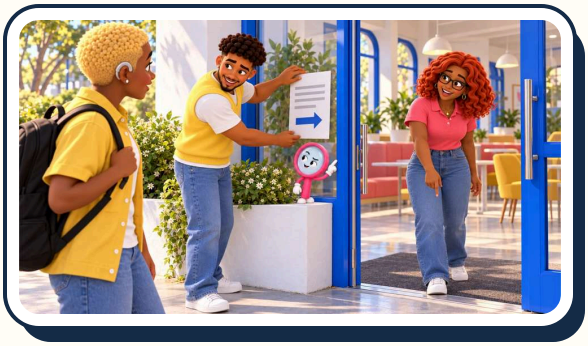
Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.

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 4 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 4 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?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

A pay gap is a question, not a finding

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: Two statements on a Sunday

Jordy is Black, nonbinary and hard of hearing, studies part time and works event shifts. Gia studies communication and works café shifts, and she also picks up event work for the same company as Jordy. On Saturday, they both worked a 3 to 11 p.m. event. The crew schedule shows the division of labor. Everyone did setup from 3 to 5 and closing from 10 to 11. Jordy ran the caption and audio check. Gia is listed as “shift lead,” with no description of what that means.

On Sunday, Jordy shares a pay statement with Gia: eight hours at $16.50. Gia’s says $18.00. Her first reaction is a guess, that the difference must be the shift lead title. Her second is honesty. She opened up and handled one guest issue, and she does not know whether that is why she is paid $1.50 more. Gia only found out because Jordy showed her.

The friends agree on the facts and on a boundary. Gia is fine with Jordy knowing her rate but does not want her statement posted. Jordy will not post anything before asking Dana, the supervisor, how rates are set. Asked whether this is discrimination, Gia says she does not know yet. Maybe shift lead pays more. Ask Dana what it covers first.

Your role is to line up both shifts side by side before Jordy writes to Dana.

Stop and think. Gia’s first guess and her honest answer differ. Why is the honest answer more useful to Jordy?

Comparing on the same terms

The skill in this case is comparing two situations on the same terms before calling a difference unfair. It builds on Case 5, where you read a pay statement line by line. Jordy's statement shows 8.0 hours at $16.50 and **gross pay** of $132.00, the money earned before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.

A fair comparison lists every dimension the evidence covers. Hours, setup and closing are identical. Jordy had a technical duty, the caption and audio check. Gia had a title and two tasks attached to it. The documents leave three things unknown: what "shift lead" formally includes, whether it carries a set rate and how rates are set in general. **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 lawfully explain a difference. So can a mistake. The comparison does not reveal which.

That is why the case turns on a question rather than a verdict. Case 10's skill, reporting to the office responsible, points to Dana, who sets rates. Jordy's message can state the observation, list what Jordy knows for sure and ask what shift lead includes and how rates are set. It does not need to name Gia's rate. Jordy keeps the next decision too. If the answer does not make sense, Jordy decides what to do.

Stop and think. The judge and the players disagreed about what to compare. How would each approach apply to Jordy and Gia?

The legal frame and the soccer comparison

Two federal laws limit the reasons employers 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. The EEOC enforces both. Its youth pages list the kinds of compensation the laws cover and the ban on retaliation (EEOC, no date listed). The NLRB adds that most private-sector workers may discuss pay with coworkers, with or without a union (NLRB, no date listed). That right does not make Gia's statement Jordy's to share.

The U.S. women's national soccer team's case shows how much depends on the comparison. In 2020, a federal judge dismissed their equal pay claim, pointing to differences in contract structure (NPR, May 2, 2020). The players appealed, arguing that he had not compared rates of pay. In February 2022, they settled for $24 million with a promise of equal pay rates (NPR, February 22, 2022), and the new terms were later written into signed contracts (PBS NewsHour, September 6, 2022). The settlement was an agreement between the parties, not a court finding.

Policy is moving toward more visible pay. New salary transparency laws put pay ranges in job ads, which makes differences easier to notice and ask about (NPR, January 3, 2023). HR professionals have their own standard.

The legal frame and the soccer comparison, continued

The SHRM code asks members to "foster fair, consistent and equitable treatment for all" (SHRM Code of Ethics, April 24, 2023).

Stop and think. Why does the case treat Jordy's choice to wait for Dana as belonging to Jordy alone?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) | No date listed

Pay Discrimination

Real source | National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) | No date listed

Your Right to Discuss Wages

Real source | NPR | May 2, 2020

Federal Judge Dismisses U.S. Women's Soccer Team's Equal Pay Claim

Real source | NPR | February 22, 2022

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

Real source | PBS NewsHour (Associated Press) | September 6, 2022

U.S. men's and women's soccer teams formally sign equal pay agreements

Real source | NPR | January 3, 2023

The impact that new salary transparency laws could have

Real source | Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) | 2023

SHRM Code of Ethics

Notes

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 6 minutes.

Evidence A | Pay statement

Jordy's pay statement

Event crew, Saturday. Hours: 8.0 at $16.50. Gross pay for the event: $132.00.

Look closely: Multiply the hours by the rate. Does it match the gross pay?

What it shows

What it leaves out

Evidence B | Work schedule

The crew schedule

Saturday event, 3:00—11:00 p.m. Crew: Gia (shift lead), Jordy and two other crew members. Setup, 3:00—5:00: all crew. Caption and audio check: Jordy. Closing, 10:00—11:00: all crew.

Look closely: Circle "shift lead." Does the schedule say what that job includes?

What it shows

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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 10 minutes.

Before you can say why Jordy is paid less, you need to know what each job included. **Compensation** is all the pay and benefits a worker receives, including hourly rates, bonuses and overtime. A job title, extra duties or more experience can explain a pay difference. So can a mistake. The pay statements show the rates, but they do not show how the rates were set.

Federal laws limit the reasons an employer can use to set pay. The **Equal Pay Act** is a federal law from 1963 that requires equal pay for men and women who do equal work. **Title VII** is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It bans job discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Both laws apply to covered employers, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces them. A legitimate reason, such as different job duties, can lawfully explain a pay difference.

Talking about pay is protected too. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) says most private-sector workers have a right to discuss pay with coworkers. That right holds with or without a union. It does not make Gia's pay statement Jordy's to share. Jordy can ask Dana how rates are set without naming Gia's rate.

Professional standards

Real source | **Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)**

SHRM Code of Ethics: Fairness and Justice

"Develop, administer, and advocate policies and procedures that foster fair, consistent and equitable treatment for all."

In plain words: HR professionals who belong to SHRM agree to use workplace policies that treat workers fairly and consistently.

Question: The schedule lists Gia as shift lead. What written policy would show whether that title explains the higher rate?

Your answer

The policy would need to state ___, so that ___.

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 6 minutes.

Line up the accounts. Where do they agree, where do they differ, and which difference could be a legitimate factor? What would you need to find out before calling it unfair?

Account 1

Jordy's record: 8 hours, setup, caption and audio check, closing, $16.50

Account 2

Gia's account: same hours, setup and closing, opened up and handled one guest issue, $18.00

Account 3

The schedule: Gia listed as shift lead, with no description of the role

Where they agree

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 4 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 **1** this is discrimination. I know it's because of who I am. I want the same rate as her starting now or I'm going to post about it everywhere so people know how this company treats workers. **2** I have her pay stub as proof. I've worked here longer than some people and I always show up on time. Let me know by tomorrow. Jordy

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

Rewrite phrase 1

Rewrite phrase 2

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 20 minutes.

Compare the statement of equal pay for equal work in Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with how U.S. federal law (the Equal Pay Act and Title VII) and one state or city pay-transparency law approach it. Then evaluate whether transparency laws change the balance of power between employers and workers like Jordy.

Use: Jordy's statement and schedule, the EEOC pay-discrimination page, the NLRB page on discussing wages, the text of Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and one pay-transparency law chosen with the teacher.

You'll make: Analytical response, 700—900 words

Time: 100 minutes

1. Read Article 23 and the EEOC page. Note who states each right and who enforces it.
2. Fill in the rights-versus-law grid for Article 23, the two federal laws and your chosen law.
3. Answer the power prompts: who holds pay information in Jordy's case, and who can act on it?
4. Draft your evaluation of the transparency law on the Your draft page.
5. Write the full 700- to 900-word response on lined paper or in the online workspace.
6. Evaluate at least two perspectives fairly: worker, employer or regulator.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Article 23: who states the right

Your task, continued

Equal Pay Act and Title VII: who enforces them

Who holds pay information, and who can act on it

Notes

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 40 minutes.

Evaluation: does the law change the balance of power? About 150 words

A second perspective, about 40 words

Check your work

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

Do you explain Article 23 and U.S. federal law accurately?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you analyze information as a source of power?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you evaluate at least two perspectives fairly?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you use power and legitimacy precisely?	☐ 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 after feedback

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 10 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?**

4 **In the soccer case, the judge looked at contract structures, and the players wanted him to compare rates of pay. Why does that choice matter?**

My take

My claim: ___.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

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.

See the case online.

Questions to talk about

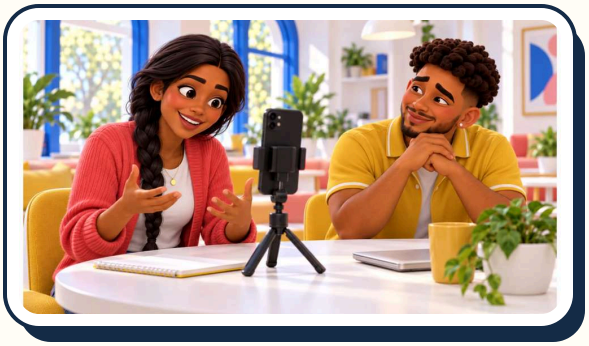
1. What questions could someone ask about pay when starting a new job?
2. Why might a person want to keep their pay private?
3. What makes a question to a boss sound respectful?

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

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 4 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 4 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?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Reasoning from precedent

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

Words to know

- **Precedent**: A precedent is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases.
- **Fact pattern**: A fact pattern is the specific set of facts in a situation that a rule is applied to.
- **Substantial disruption**: Substantial disruption is the standard from Tinker v. Des Moines: a public school may limit speech that would seriously disrupt school activities.
- **Claim**: A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Framing**: Framing is choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward.

The story: Three actions, one slogan

Anika is a junior at a public high school who helps with theater sets and likes solving a problem herself before anyone jumps in. The problem she wants solved now is small and concrete. She wants the school library open at lunch. On Tuesday at 3:15 p.m., she prints a poster: “KEEP OUR LIBRARY OPEN AT LUNCH. Wear blue Thursday.” Mateo designed it and, for visual impact, put a photo of the school’s sign and logo across the top. The poster names no student or group.

On Wednesday at 9:02 p.m., the group chat escalates. Someone writes, “If they take the poster down we walk out Thursday. Tinker says they can’t touch us.” Another person asks whether the plan is to wear blue and walk out. Anika answers that she never asked anyone to leave class.

Then both friends look at their own part. Anika checks page 14 of the handbook. Students may post on the boards outside the cafeteria and the library if the main office approves and the material shows the responsible student’s or group’s name. Her poster has no name, and she says that part is on her. Mateo realizes his photo changed the poster’s apparent author. With the school’s sign on top, it reads like an official announcement. Before reprinting, he plans to get office approval, add Anika’s name or her group’s and leave off the logo.

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

Stop and think. Why does a precedent’s reach depend on how closely the facts match?

From precedent to fact pattern

A **precedent** is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases. The chat's precedent is Tinker v. Des Moines (1969). Public-school students wore black armbands to protest the Vietnam War. They were suspended, and the Supreme Court ruled for them. **Substantial disruption** is the standard from Tinker v. Des Moines: a public school may limit speech that would seriously disrupt school activities. The Court held that a mere fear of disruption was not enough.

Precedent works by analogy, so its reach depends on how closely a new situation matches. A **fact pattern** is the specific set of facts in a situation that a rule is applied to. The skill here extends Case 11, where you compared two jobs on the same terms. Build a fact pattern for each action and set it beside Tinker's. The wear-blue plan is silent, symbolic and done while attending class, which closely tracks the armbands. The walkout involves leaving class, so a separate attendance rule governs the conduct regardless of the message. The poster raises a question Tinker does not reach. With the school's logo and no student name, it may look like school speech, and schools have more control over speech that appears to come from the school.

Case 1's vocabulary sharpens the analysis. "Tinker says they can't touch us" is a **claim** that stretches a narrow holding into a blanket immunity. The logo is **framing**, choosing which parts of a situation a message brings forward, and it brings the institution forward as the speaker. Mateo's redesign corrects the frame.

Stop and think. Build a fact pattern for the walkout. Which fact moves it furthest from Tinker?

Courts, classrooms and current events

The Tinker majority wrote that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate" (Legal Information Institute, 1969). The federal judiciary's own teaching materials pair that holding with a walkout scenario, separating the message from the act of leaving class and noting the usual attendance consequences (U.S. Courts, no date listed).

The Court revisited student expression in Mahanoy Area School District v. B. L., the case of a cheerleader's off-campus Snapchat post. The 8 to 1 decision protected the student but said schools may still regulate some off-campus speech, such as threats (Supreme Court of the United States, June 23, 2021). Analysts noted how one changed fact pattern changed the answer (EdSurge, June 23, 2021).

Recent walkouts show the attendance question in practice. In early 2026, students in Indiana and other states walked out to protest federal immigration enforcement. Some Indianapolis-area schools treated it as an unexcused absence, and one high school issued one-day suspensions (Chalkbeat Indiana, February 11, 2026). An Indiana public media guide separated speech rights, attendance rules and discipline in the same way this case does (WFYI, February 1, 2026).

Courts, classrooms and current events, continued

Designers carry a related duty. The AIGA standards ask designers to "represent messages in a clear manner" and to avoid "false, misleading and deceptive promotion" (AIGA Standards of Professional Practice, no date listed). Mateo's logo was not a lie, but it misled about the speaker.

Stop and think. Mateo's logo did not state anything false. Why can it still mislead?

Sources

Real source | Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School | 1969

Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969)

Real source | U.S. Courts | No date listed

Fictional Scenario: Tinker v. Des Moines

Real source | Supreme Court of the United States | June 23, 2021

Mahanoy Area School District v. B. L. (opinion)

Real source | EdSurge | June 23, 2021

In a Win for Student Speech, Supreme Court Rules in Favor of the 'Snapchat Cheerleader'

Real source | Chalkbeat Indiana | February 11, 2026

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

Real source | WFYI Indianapolis Public Media | February 1, 2026

A guide to your rights at Indiana protests, in the streets, and at school

Real source | AIGA, the professional association for design | No date listed

AIGA Standards of Professional Practice

Notes

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 6 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

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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 10 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

Candid advice would say ___, even though ___.

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 6 minutes.

Test the slogan against the facts. Which evidence supports each claim, which challenges it, and which fact would you still need?

Evidence	**Claim 1** Tinker means nobody can face consequences for walking out.	**Claim 2** The **wear-blue** plan closely matches Tinker's facts.	**Claim 3** The poster should carry a student byline instead of the school logo.
1 Tinker's facts: silent armbands, no substantial disruption, a public school			
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 4 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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 20 minutes.

Compare how the U.S. Tinker framework and Article 13 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child treat young people's freedom of expression, noting that the United States has signed but not ratified the convention. Then evaluate the legitimacy of the school's posting policy from the perspectives of students, staff and the district.

Use: The Tinker summary, the posting-policy excerpt, the walkout chat and the text of Article 13 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

You'll make: Analytical response, 700—900 words

Time: 100 minutes

1. Read Article 13 and the Tinker summary. Fill in the grid: source, who is bound, stated limits.
2. Note what it means that the United States has signed but not ratified the convention.
3. Answer the legitimacy prompts about the posting policy: who made it, how, and can it be challenged?
4. Fill in the perspective table for students, staff and the district.
5. Draft your evaluation on the Your draft page.
6. Finish the 700- to 900-word response on lined paper or in the online workspace.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Tinker: source, who is bound, stated limits

Your task, continued

Article 13: source and status in the United States

Who made the posting policy, and can it be challenged?

Notes

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 40 minutes.

Evaluation of the posting policy's legitimacy, about 140 words

Rights and sovereignty, about 40 words

Check your work

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

Do you explain both frameworks accurately, including the signed-but-not-ratified status?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you analyze power and legitimacy in the school setting?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you represent students, staff and the district fairly?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you link the case to rights and justice without overstating it?	☐ 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 after feedback

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 10 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

My claim: ___.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

Notes

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 4 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 4 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?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

A claim as small as the evidence

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

Words to know

- **Source reduction**: Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging.
- **Reuse**: Reuse is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use.
- **Local acceptance**: Local acceptance is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes.
- **Proposal**: A proposal is a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet.
- **Trade-off**: A trade-off is a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up.

The story: Following waste upstream

Dec is a high school senior who drums, builds sets and is considering an electrical apprenticeship. He tends to follow a problem into the small places where it starts. On Tuesday, that place is the theater shop. Three orders of LED connectors and switches, placed separately over one week, have arrived together in one box. About half the box is plastic air pillows and foam.

Anika, a junior who tracks the crew's parts and budget, brings the second data point. The supply list from last Friday's screening at the Common Room shows about 120 single-use cups, plastic-lined paper and labeled "recyclable." The same list includes 80 paper plates, 150 printed flyers and 40 paper straws given out on request. The crew's first instinct might be a better recycling sign. Dec wants to start earlier, at the order form. Order parts together rather than each time one breaks, and ask the supplier about packaging.

Anika agrees and sets a standard. Nobody gets to say a change saves money without numbers, and right now the evidence is one box and a guess. She also sets a boundary. Some people need a disposable cup or a straw, so a plan that works only for most people does not work.

Your role is to count the cups before and after the change.

Stop and think. Why is a claim about one counted screening more trustworthy than a claim about "saving money"?

Hierarchy, labels and baselines

Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging. **Reuse** is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use. Both sit upstream of the bin. Dec's combined orders are source reduction, and borrowing the bookshop's washable cups is reuse.

The cup label raises a verification problem that Case 9 prepared you for. There, you learned to check the official source for your own area rather than a general claim. Here, the official source is the city's recycling list. It accepts metal cans, glass bottles and jars, rigid plastic bottles and containers and flattened cardboard. It excludes plastic-lined paper cups, plastic bags and film, foam and items labeled compostable. **Local acceptance** is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes. By that standard, the crew's "recyclable" cups are trash, and a switch to compostable cups would be too.

The new skill is counting a starting point before claiming a change works. The baseline is about 120 cups from one screening. The intervention is washable cups at the next one. The measurement includes cups used and left over, plus the costs reuse adds, water and someone's washing time. Case 4 supplies the frame for presenting the result. The plan is a **proposal**, a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet, and every option is a **trade-off**, a choice where getting one benefit means accepting a cost or giving something up. Anika's rule keeps the eventual claim honest. Whatever the crew reports should be as small as one counted screening.

Stop and think. How does the Green Guides standard apply to the crew's cups?

Evidence from agencies, reporters and schools

The EPA's materials management hierarchy ranks source reduction and reuse first, followed by recycling and composting, energy recovery, and treatment and disposal. It also notes that no single approach suits every material or situation (EPA, updated December 19, 2025). For food, the EPA's Wasted Food Scale likewise ranks prevention above composting or recycling (EPA, updated September 16, 2026). An NPR investigation reported that less than 10 percent of plastic has ever been recycled (NPR, September 11, 2020).

Labels are regulated for a reason. The FTC's Green Guides say a product or package "should not be marketed as recyclable unless it can be collected, separated, or otherwise recovered from the waste stream through an established recycling program" (16 CFR Part 260, 2012).

Access belongs in the same analysis. When Starbucks announced its straw phase-out in 2018, it said a sippable lid could mean a billion fewer straws a year (NPR, July 9, 2018). Two days later, NPR reported that some people with disabilities need flexible plastic straws and that advocates saw little awareness of the exemption in Seattle's ban (NPR, July 11, 2018). Schools offer models that measure first.

Evidence from agencies, reporters and schools, continued

New Jersey schools have used waste audits, share tables and reusable trays to cut waste before it reaches the bin (New Jersey School Boards Association, October 15, 2025). Each of those programs starts the way Anika does, by counting what is thrown away now.

Stop and think. How does "add more bins" define the problem differently from "order less packaging"?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) | December 19, 2025
Sustainable Materials Management: Non-Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Hierarchy

Real source | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency | September 16, 2026
Wasted Food Scale

Real source | NPR | September 11, 2020
How Big Oil Misled The Public Into Believing Plastic Would Be Recycled

Real source | Federal Trade Commission (FTC) | 2012
FTC Green Guides (16 CFR Part 260)

Real source | NPR | July 9, 2018
Starbucks To Eliminate Plastic Straws In Its Stores By 2020

Real source | NPR | July 11, 2018
Why People With Disabilities Want Bans On Plastic Straws To Be More Flexible

Real source | New Jersey School Boards Association | October 15, 2025
How New Jersey Schools Are Tackling Food Waste—One Tray at a Time

Notes

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, fill in both boxes. About 6 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

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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 10 minutes.

Source reduction is preventing waste before it is created, for example by buying less packaging. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ranks ways to handle waste. Source reduction and reuse come first. Recycling and composting come next, then energy recovery, then treatment and disposal. The EPA also notes that no single approach fits every item or situation.

Reuse is using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use. Borrowing washable cups from the bookshop is one example. Reuse has costs too. Washing takes water and someone's time, so a fair comparison counts those costs along with the cups.

A "recyclable" label does not tell you where an item will go. **Local acceptance** is the list of materials that your own city's recycling or compost program actually takes. The crew's cups say "recyclable," but their city's list does not take plastic-lined paper cups. The list does not take items labeled compostable either. So the crew has to check the list before choosing any new cup.

Professional standards

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

FTC Green Guides (16 CFR Part 260): § 260.12 Recyclable claims

"A product or package should not be marketed as recyclable unless it can be collected, separated, or otherwise recovered from the waste stream through an established recycling program"

In plain words: FTC guidance says a company should call a product recyclable only when recycling programs can collect and process it.

Question: The crew's city rejects plastic-lined paper cups. What else must you know before saying the "recyclable" label breaks the guide?

Your answer

I would need to know ___, because the guide ___.

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 6 minutes.

Follow each choice to its consequences, including new costs. Which consequence would you measure first, and what would count as success?

Keep buying "recyclable" single-use cups

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 4 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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 20 minutes.

Rehearse an engagement project on local waste policy: frame a political issue about who decides and who bears the costs of waste where you live (collection, landfill siting, recycling contracts), map the actors (sanitation department, council, contractors, residents, schools), plan ethical engagement with a sanitation or recycling office, and connect the issue to the development and sustainability thematic study.

Use: The case materials, the EPA hierarchy page, your city's recycling guide and one teacher-selected source on where your area's waste goes.

You'll make: Engagement-project proposal, 600—800 words, with an actor map

Time: 100 minutes

1. Frame your issue as a question: who decides, and who bears the costs of waste where you live?
2. Map the actors: sanitation department, council, contractors, residents and schools.
3. Mark each actor's power: formal authority, resources or influence.
4. Plan your engagement: who you will contact, how, what you will ask, and consent and safety.
5. Draft your issue statement and engagement plan on the Your draft page.
6. Write the full 600- to 800-word proposal on lined paper or in the online workspace.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Political issue

Your task, continued

Actors and their power

Who lives near the costs

Notes

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes. Use your planner from the page before. About 40 minutes.

Issue statement, about 80 words

Engagement plan, about 60 words

Check your work

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

Does your issue focus on who decides and who bears the costs?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does your actor map show each actor's source of power?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Is your engagement plan ethical and feasible?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you connect the issue to sustainability without overstating it?	☐ 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 after feedback

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 10 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

My claim: ___.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

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.

See the case online.

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.

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 5 minutes.

Authority Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision.

En español: autoridad

In this case: The notice uses bold type and capital letters but names no issuer. Sami has to find out who has the power to make this rule.

Reasonable accommodation A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place.

En español: acomodo razonable

In this case: Sami could ask the building for a key fob for the rear door, so she can get in after 8 p.m.

Documentation Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when.

En español: documentación

In this case: Sami photographs the notice and writes down when and where she found it, before anyone argues about what it said.

Who is involved

Sami

Lives in 3B and runs a workshop in the common room

"Rear door locked at 8. That's the only door I can get through. My workshop runs later. So, questions. Plural."

Caio

Reading last year's house rules beside the notice

"All caps, bold, no name, no date. Somebody made it look official. I still don't know who."

Your first guess

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

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Who wrote the rule?

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

Words to know

- **Authority**: Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision.
- **Reasonable accommodation**: A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place.
- **Documentation**: Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when.
- **Decision-maker**: A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.
- **Barrier**: A barrier is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part.

The story: An anonymous notice

Sami, 23, lives in apartment 3B, studies design and uses a manual wheelchair. On Monday morning, she finds a new notice beside her building's common-room door. It announces two changes "effective immediately." The rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. nightly, and the common room is for resident social use only, with "NO BUSINESS USE" in capitals. The notice carries no name, no date and no contact.

Each change touches her directly. The building's entrance plan lists a front entrance with four steps and no ramp, a side door for service use only and a rear door that is step-free and opens to the elevator hallway. After 8 p.m., the notice would lock the only door she can use. It would also cloud the future of the workshop she runs in the common room, which goes past 8.

Sami does not start with outrage. She photographs the notice and writes down when and where she found it, before anybody starts arguing about what it said. Caio, the oldest in the crew, brings last year's house rules, handed out at lease signing. He reads the notice the way an editor reads copy. All caps, bold, no name, no date. Somebody made it look official, and he still does not know who.

Your role is to help Sami keep a clean record of the notice before anyone starts arguing.

Stop and think. Why does formatting signal authority without proving it?

Authority, sources and missing definitions

Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision. The case separates the look of authority from its substance. Formatting signals power but does not prove it. An unsigned notice is not automatically invalid, but its force depends on who issued it and what it claims to change.

The new skill is finding who has the authority to make a rule. It draws on three earlier skills. From Case 1, you compare the notice with an original document, last year's house rules, which let residents reserve the room for "gatherings, classes and resident-run workshops" through the building office. From Case 7, you ask what stage the rule is at. From Case 10, you take the question to the office that can answer it, here the building manager. Case 4's **decision-maker**, the person or group with the power to make a particular choice, names what Sami is looking for.

Caio's comparison finds a definitional gap. The old rules explicitly allow resident-run workshops. The new notice bans "business use" without defining it, so nobody can yet say whether Sami's workshop is affected. The notice also does not say whether it replaces the old rules or adds to them.

Case 10's **barrier**, something that blocks or limits a person from taking part, describes the locked rear door. A **reasonable accommodation** is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place, such as a key fob for the rear door. **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 will matter if the facts are disputed later. She keeps her two questions apart: who has the authority, and how she gets in after 8. Neither friend calls the notice illegal, because they do not yet know who wrote it or how the building handles access requests.

Stop and think. How does the undefined phrase "business use" change what Sami can conclude?

The law, the process and a Brooklyn example

A landlord's policy and the law are different sources of rules. HUD says the Fair Housing Act bars housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability, and covers most housing with some exceptions (HUD, no date listed). Guidance can change even when the law does not. In 2025, HUD withdrew several fair housing guidance documents, but the Act itself stayed the same (National Association of Realtors, October 7, 2025). Enforcement continues. In 2026, the Justice Department announced a $750,000 settlement with a property management company in a disability discrimination case (U.S. Department of Justice, April 30, 2026).

Process can give tenants leverage. At Atlantic Plaza Towers in Brownsville, Brooklyn, the landlord applied to install a facial-recognition entry system. Tenants say they learned about it from the state housing agency, not the landlord.

The law, the process and a Brooklyn example, continued

Because the change needed that agency's permission, they filed opposition (Legal Services NYC, May 1, 2019), and in November 2019 the landlord withdrew the application (Gothamist, November 21, 2019). That case turned on New York's rent-stabilization rules, which may not apply to Sami's building.

The NCA credo describes the posture Sami takes: "We strive to understand and respect other communicators' intent before evaluating and responding to their messages" (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024).

Stop and think. Why might the Atlantic Plaza Towers example not apply directly to Sami's building?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) | No date listed
Fair Housing Act overview

Real source | National Association of Realtors (Washington Report) | October 7, 2025
HUD Withdraws Fair Housing Guidance Documents

Real source | U.S. Department of Justice | April 30, 2026
Justice Department Settles Disability Discrimination Case Against Property Management Company for $750,000

Real source | Legal Services NYC | May 1, 2019
Brooklyn tenants file legal opposition to landlord's application to install facial recognition entry system in building

Real source | Gothamist | November 21, 2019
Brooklyn Landlord Does An About Face On Facial Recognition Plan

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

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document, then fill in both boxes under it. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | **Posted notice**

Unsigned notice by the common-room door, found Monday morning

NOTICE TO ALL RESIDENTS. Effective immediately, the rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. nightly. The common room is for resident social use only. NO BUSINESS USE.

Look closely: Which features give the notice an official look? What is missing?

What it shows

What it leaves out

Evidence B | **House rules (excerpt)**

Last year's house rules, given out at lease signing

"Residents may reserve the common room for gatherings, classes and resident-run workshops. Reservations are made through the building office."

Look closely: What did last year's rules allow in the common room?

What it shows

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

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 10 minutes.

A building rule should name who made it, give a date and list a contact. This notice has none of them. **Authority** is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision. Bold type and capital letters do not show who has that power. An unsigned notice is not automatically invalid, either. Sami has to find out who issued it and which document it claims to change.

A landlord's policy and the law are different sources of rules. The Fair Housing Act is a federal law. HUD, the federal housing department, says it bars housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability. It covers most housing, with some exceptions. Under the Act, a person with a disability can ask a building for a **reasonable accommodation**. A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place. For Sami, that could be a key fob for the rear door.

Sami cannot yet say the notice breaks the law. She does not know who wrote it, whether it replaces the house rules or how the building handles access requests. Whether a building grants an accommodation also depends on the facts. **Documentation** helps her keep those facts straight. Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when. Her photo of the notice, with the date and place she found it, is documentation.

Professional standards

Adapted from a real source | **American Bar Association (ABA), Center for Professional Responsibility**

ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct: Rule 3.1 Meritorious Claims and Contentions

Summary: Summary, not a quotation: a lawyer may not bring or defend a proceeding, or argue an issue in it, without a basis in law and fact that is not frivolous. The ABA comment says lawyers must first learn the facts and the applicable law.

In plain words: Before lawyers bring a claim, they must have facts and law that support it.

Question: Before claiming a Fair Housing Act violation, what should Sami learn about the notice's author and the building's access process?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

Sami first needs ___, because ___.

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 10 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 6 minutes.

The notice says the rear door, the building's only step-free entrance, locks at 8 p.m. It also bans "business use" of the common room. It has no name, no date and no contact. What should Sami do first?

- ☐ **A** Ignore it until someone signs it, since an unsigned notice may not be official.
- ☐ **B** Photograph it, compare it with last year's house rules and ask the manager who issued it and how residents get in after 8.
- ☐ **C** Post online that the building is breaking disability law.

Why I chose it

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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 25 minutes.

Rehearse an engagement project on local housing: frame a political issue about who makes and enforces rules in rental housing, map the actors (owners, managers, tenants, tenant associations, city agencies, HUD), plan how you would engage a tenant organization or housing agency ethically, and explain how power and legitimacy show up in Sami's case.

Use: The notice, the older house rules, the entrance plan, HUD's Fair Housing Act overview and one local tenant-resource page.

You'll make: Engagement-project proposal, 500—700 words, with an actor map

Time: 100 minutes

1. Write a political issue about who makes and enforces rules in rental housing.
2. Fill in the actor map: owners, managers, tenants, tenant associations, city agencies and HUD.
3. Note each actor's source of power: formal authority, resources, influence or voice.
4. Plan how you would contact a tenant organization or housing agency, with consent and safety.
5. Draft your issue statement and engagement plan on the Your draft page.
6. Finish a proposal of 500 to 700 words with your actor map.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

My political issue

Your task, continued

Actors with formal authority

Actors with voice or influence

Power and legitimacy in Sami's case

Notes

Your draft

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

First draft: your issue statement

First draft: your engagement plan

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 proposal frame a political issue about power over housing rules?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does your actor map show each actor's source of power?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Is your engagement plan ethical and feasible?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you use power, legitimacy and rights precisely?	☐ 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 after feedback

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?**

3 **A building may want a door locked at night. How could it keep that door secure and still let Sami in?**

My take

My claim: ___.

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

Notes

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 18: Why is the theater curtain still falling apart?

The district's proposed budget is $48 million, the school theater curtain won't close, and Dec wants to ask the school board about it.

On your own Read What happened and underline the three dollar amounts. About 4 minutes.

Anika, Dec and Mari test a small light circuit in a theater workshop, with Pauta beside them.

Your role: You're the one who works out the per-student number before anyone repeats the post. **New skill:** Compare numbers on the same scale.

What happened

The curtain in the school theater is torn, and it no longer closes all the way. Dec, 17, pulls that curtain at every show. He and Anika, 16, are on the theater crew. The facilities office gave the theater advisor a quote to replace the curtain: $6,800.

Mari, 19, is helping them prepare a question for the school board. They find the district's proposed budget for next school year. The total is $48 million for a projected 3,200 students. One line sets aside $310,000 for building repairs at all schools. A note says the figures may change before the board adopts the budget.

On Tuesday at 6:10 p.m., a post starts going around. It compares the district's $48 million with another district, Westbrook, at $21,000 per student. "And they can't fix ONE curtain??" it asks. Dec has a photo of the torn curtain. He wants to be the one who asks the board about it.

Your question: What can the $48 million total tell Dec about the curtain, and what should he ask the school board?

Key terms

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

Revenue Revenue is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants.

En español: ingresos

In this case: NCES reports that public schools get revenue from federal, state and local sources. That national data cannot show what Dec's district spends on a curtain.

Expenditure An expenditure is money that a government or an organization spends.

En español: gasto

In this case: The $48 million is a proposed plan for next school year. It lists planned expenditures, but none of that money has been spent yet.

Per-pupil amount A per-pupil amount is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared.

En español: monto por estudiante

In this case: $48,000,000 ÷ 3,200 students = $15,000 per student. Westbrook's $21,000 is already per student, but its year and stage are unknown.

Who is involved

Mari

Helping the theater crew with a budget question

"Forty-eight million dollars, and the curtain still won't close. Ay, bendito. Before we get mad at the big number, which line is supposed to fix it?"

Dec

Pulls the curtain at every show

"I pull that curtain every show. It doesn't close all the way anymore. That part I can show you."

Your first guess

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

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Reading a budget before reacting to it

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: Where is the money going?

Dec, 17, a senior on the theater crew, pulls the stage curtain at every show. It is torn and no longer closes all the way. The facilities office has already priced a flame-retardant replacement, removal and installation included, at $6,800. Dec has a photo of the tear. He wants to take the problem to the school board, and he wants to be the one who asks.

Mari, 19, is helping him and Anika, 16, prepare. The district's proposed budget for next school year is posted online. The headline figure is $48,000,000, with projected enrollment of 3,200 students. A facilities line provides $310,000 for building repairs across all schools. A note warns that the figures are proposed and may change before adoption.

On Tuesday at 6:10 p.m., a post begins circulating. It sets the district's $48 million beside Westbrook's $21,000 per student and asks why the district cannot fix one curtain. The post has the emotional logic of a good question. It also has the arithmetic of a bad one. Mari's instinct is to ask where the numbers are from.

Your role is to work out the per-student number before anyone repeats the post.

Stop and think. The post "has the emotional logic of a good question." What makes it feel convincing?

Putting numbers on the same scale

Budget numbers carry three labels that must match before a comparison means anything: year, stage and unit. The post mismatches all three. It pairs a proposed district total for next year with a per-student figure of unknown year and stage.

A **per-pupil amount** is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared. The new skill in this case is comparing numbers on the same scale. It extends Case 11's habit of comparing like with like. Dividing $48,000,000 by 3,200 gives $15,000 per student. The recalculation changes the post's implied story, but it does not settle it. Westbrook's year and stage are still unknown, and a per-pupil figure cannot show whether either district's funding matches its students' needs.

The vocabulary of public finance keeps other distinctions straight. **Revenue** is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants. An **expenditure** is money that a government or an organization spends. This document is a **proposal**, the Case 4 term for a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet. A proposed budget, the adopted budget and actual spending are three different records.

The crew's method draws on earlier cases. Mari reads the budget line by line, the skill from Case 5, looking for the line that could plausibly cover a stage curtain. She is not sure a curtain counts as a building repair, and she wants to find out. Dec follows Case 13's rule of keeping a claim as small as the evidence. His photo proves the tear and nothing about where money went, so he brings the photo, the quote and a question rather than an accusation. Case 4's **decision-maker**, the person or group with the power to make a particular choice, points to the school board, which adopts the budget within state and federal rules. His question should name one budget line, one need and the board's next chance to hear requests.

Stop and think. Why can't a per-pupil figure show whether a district has enough money?

Funding, spending and outcomes

National data give context but not local answers. NCES reports that public-school revenue comes from federal, state and local sources, with a mix that varies by state (NCES, May 2024). Its state-by-state table for 2022—23 includes per-pupil amounts (NCES Digest table 235.20, March 2026). Reliance on local property taxes produces large differences between districts (NPR, April 18, 2016).

Budgets also change over time. When temporary federal pandemic relief ran out, districts faced what reporters called a funding cliff (Chalkbeat, September 13, 2023). In 2026, many districts made cuts and layoffs tied to inflation and enrollment declines (Chalkbeat, May 28, 2026). Spending levels matter for students.

Funding, spending and outcomes, continued

A major study of school finance reforms found that more per-pupil spending raised graduation rates and adult earnings, especially for low-income students (Jackson, Johnson and Persico, Quarterly Journal of Economics, October 1, 2015).

The SPJ code offers a rule for anyone writing about budgets: “Provide context. Take special care not to misrepresent or oversimplify in promoting, previewing or summarizing a story” (SPJ Code of Ethics, September 6, 2014). The viral post fails that test, and Dec’s question passes it.

Stop and think. What would Dec need to know to show that the curtain belongs in the building repairs line?

Sources

Real source | National Center for Education Statistics | May 2024
Public School Revenue Sources (Condition of Education)

Real source | National Center for Education Statistics | March 2026
Revenue sources for public schools by state, 2022—23 (Digest table 235.20)

Real source | NPR | April 18, 2016
Why America's Schools Have A Money Problem

Real source | Chalkbeat | September 13, 2023
Schools face a funding cliff. How bad will the fall be?

Real source | Chalkbeat | May 28, 2026
A financial reckoning is hitting America’s public schools

Real source | The Quarterly Journal of Economics (Jackson, Johnson & Persico) | October 1, 2015
The Effects of School Spending on Educational and Economic Outcomes: Evidence from School Finance Reforms

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) | 2014
SPJ Code of Ethics

Look at the evidence

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

Evidence A | Budget excerpt

The proposed budget for next school year

PROPOSED BUDGET, NEXT SCHOOL YEAR. Total proposed budget: $48,000,000. Projected enrollment: 3,200 students. Facilities, building repairs (all schools): $310,000. Note: figures are proposed and may change before the board adopts the budget.

Look closely: Circle the year, the stage and the unit for each number.

What it shows

What it leaves out

Evidence B | Social media post

A post shared Tuesday at 6:10 p.m.

Our district: $48 MILLION. Westbrook: $21,000 per student. And they can't fix ONE curtain?? Where is the money going?

Look closely: Which number is a total, and which is per student?

What it shows

What it leaves out

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | **Repair quote**

The facilities quote for a new curtain

Stage curtain replacement, main auditorium: remove the torn curtain, supply and install a flame-retardant replacement. Total: $6,800.

Look closely: What does the quote confirm, and who received it?

What it shows

What it leaves out

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 12 minutes.

Before you compare two budget numbers, check three labels: the year, the stage and the unit. An **expenditure** is money that a government or an organization spends. A proposed budget is a plan for expenditures. An adopted budget is the plan the board approves. Actual spending is what the district really spent. The $48 million is a proposed total for the whole district. The Westbrook figure is an amount per student.

A **per-pupil amount** is a total divided by the number of students, so that districts of different sizes can be compared. Dec's district proposes $48,000,000 for a projected 3,200 students. That works out to $15,000 per student. The comparison is still not complete, because Westbrook's budget year and stage are unknown. A per-pupil figure also cannot show whether either district has enough for its students' needs.

Revenue is money that comes into a government or an organization, such as taxes and grants. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that public schools get revenue from federal, state and local sources. The mix differs from state to state. National data like this gives context, but it cannot say what one district spends on a curtain. In most states, an elected local school board adopts the budget within state and federal rules. That is why Dec's question should name one budget line, one need and the board's next chance to hear requests.

Professional standards

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

ASPA Code of Ethics: 5. Fully Inform and Advise

"Provide accurate, honest, comprehensive, and timely information and advice to elected and appointed officials and governing board members"

In plain words: ASPA members agree to give decision-makers, such as school board members, accurate and complete information.

Question: The $6,800 curtain quote went to the theater advisor. What should the board see to rank that repair?

Professional standards, continued

Your answer

The board needs ___. Then it can ___.

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 12 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 5 minutes.

A post compares the district's $48 million total with Westbrook's $21,000 per student. Someone reposts it and adds "we get way less." What should the crew do first?

- ☐ **A** Share it. Both figures are in dollars, and the curtain really is torn.
- ☐ **B** Check that both figures use the same year, budget stage and units before comparing them.
- ☐ **C** Divide $48 million by 3,200 students, and post that the district is underfunded.

Why I chose it

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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 25 minutes.

Rehearse an engagement project on school funding: frame the political issue (who decides how facilities money is shared, and by what criteria), map the actors from the state legislature to the school board to student groups, plan an ethical way to engage a board member or budget office, and explain how power and legitimacy shape which requests get funded.

Use: The proposed-budget excerpt, the repair quote, the NCES revenue overview and the student's own district's published budget calendar.

You'll make: Engagement-project proposal, 500—700 words, with an actor map

Time: 100 minutes

1. Frame the political issue as one question in the planner.
2. Map the actors: formal authority, resources, influence and voice.
3. Find one date on your district's budget calendar when the board hears the public.
4. Plan one ethical engagement: who, how, what you will ask, consent and safety.
5. Draft the issue and engagement sections on the Your draft page.
6. Finish the proposal, 500 to 700 words, on lined paper or in the online workspace.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The political issue

Your task, continued

Actor map

My engagement plan

Notes

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 35 minutes.

Issue section

Engagement section

Check your work

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

Does your proposal frame a political issue about sharing public resources?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does your actor map cover each level of government accurately?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Is your engagement plan ethical and feasible?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Do you use power and legitimacy precisely?	☐ 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 after feedback

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 **What could make spending rise without the service getting better?**

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

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

My take

My claim: ___.

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

Notes

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 5 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?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

Notes

Reading passage

Two minutes, one ask

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

Words to know

- **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: The first time at the microphone

Gia, 21, has spent her life in Fort Greene, and the park is part of her week. On Tuesday, the parks committee meets at 6 p.m. Item 4 on its agenda proposes turning off the court lights and closing the lighted courts at 8 p.m., citing complaints about evening noise from nearby residents. The agenda lists the action as a committee recommendation to the full council. Gia wants to speak against it. She has never spoken at a public meeting before.

The rules give her two minutes. Speakers sign up by 5 p.m., written comments may be submitted in advance and comments and names become part of the public record. At 5:40, Gia reads her draft aloud on a bench while Mateo, 22, times her. The draft runs three pages, and page one alone takes two minutes and forty seconds. It also contains a friend's private situation and a page about the bus.

Mateo's feedback is precise without being a rewrite. He followed every word and still cannot say what she wants the committee to do. His question is the most useful editing tool in the case. If the committee remembers one sentence, what is it? That sentence goes first.

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

Stop and think. Why does Mateo's one-sentence question work better than line edits?

Matching a request to a body

An **agenda item** is one topic listed on a meeting's official schedule of business. A **remit** is the set of matters that a committee or other body is responsible for and can act on. The two concepts define what Gia can usefully ask. Item 4 concerns lighting and closing time. The committee's remit includes recommending court hours. It does not include buses. Her draft's central plea, "Please don't close the park," misstates the item, since no one has proposed closing the park.

The new skill is fitting a request to the body's remit and time limit, and it assembles earlier skills. Case 4 introduced the **proposal**, a change that someone suggests and that has not been approved yet, and the **decision-maker**, the person or group with the power to make a particular choice. Here the chain has two links. The committee recommends, and the full council decides. Case 10 taught you to route a problem to the office responsible, which is why the bus page belongs with a transit office rather than this committee.

A strong two-minute comment does four jobs. It names the agenda item, reports an observation, explains why it matters and makes one request. Gia's revised comment does exactly that. It names item 4. It reports that she counted twenty or thirty people on the courts between 8 and 9. It notes that many of them work late. And it asks for lights until 9 on weekdays this summer. The request also engages the resident who wrote that late noise carries into their apartment and that their kids have school in the morning. Asking for 9 rather than no change gives the committee a middle path that answers both concerns in part.

The final cut is ethical. A **public record** is information a government keeps that anyone can ask to see, such as meeting comments. Everything Gia says will be attached to her name and kept. Her friend's situation belongs to her friend, so it comes out.

> **Stop and think.** How does asking for 9 p.m. instead of no change affect the committee's choices?

Research and real practice

Rules differ by body. Seattle City Council accepts spoken comment in person or by phone and written comment by email, with up to two minutes per speaker (Seattle City Council, no date listed). That is one city's process, not a rule for every council. Research raises a harder question about who shows up. A study of meeting minutes found that local commenters often do not reflect the whole community (Einstein, Palmer and Glick, Perspectives on Politics, October 14, 2018). Other peer-reviewed work examines whether and how public comment connects to policy outcomes (Sahn, American Journal of Political Science, August 31, 2024).

Young people are using the process well. Philadelphia students testified at board meetings about school closures, drawing on district data (Chalkbeat Philadelphia, April 3, 2026).

Research and real practice, continued

Journalists hold a related privacy standard. The SPJ code says "private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than public figures" (SPJ Code of Ethics, September 6, 2014). Gia applies that principle to her friend.

Stop and think. The research shows commenters often do not reflect the whole community. What does that suggest about who should speak?

Sources

Real source | Seattle City Council | No date listed

Public Comment

Real source | Perspectives on Politics (Einstein, Palmer & Glick) | October 14, 2018

Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes

Real source | American Journal of Political Science (Sahn) | August 31, 2024

Public comment and public policy

Real source | Chalkbeat Philadelphia | April 3, 2026

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

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) | 2014

SPJ Code of Ethics

Notes

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

What it leaves out

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

What it leaves out

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | **Draft**

Gia's three-page draft (excerpt)

"The park is really important to everyone and closing it is a terrible idea. I go there all the time with my friends... You guys never listen to young people. Please don't close the park."

Look closely: Find the request. Does it match what item 4 proposes?

What it shows

What it leaves out

Evidence D | **Written comment**

A comment from a nearby resident

The courts are good for the neighborhood, but the noise late in the evening carries into our apartment. We have kids with school in the morning.

Look closely: What does this resident like, and what is the problem?

What it shows

What it leaves out

What is still missing from the evidence?

Key idea: remit

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 15 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 ___, but ___.

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 10 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 5 minutes.

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

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

Why I chose it

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

DP Global politics

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 40 minutes.

Carry out an engagement-project rehearsal on the court-lights item: frame the political issue, identify stakeholders (court users, nearby residents, the parks committee, the full council), hold one consented conversation with a park user or neighbor or observe a real public meeting with a trusted adult, and write a report on how power and legitimacy shape the decision, including whose voices are missing.

Use: The agenda item, the comment instructions, the resident's written comment, Seattle's public-comment page and the student's own engagement notes.

You'll make: Engagement report, 800—1,000 words, with a stakeholder map and engagement log

Time: 150 minutes

1. Frame the political issue in item 4 as one question.
2. Map the stakeholders: court users, nearby residents, the parks committee and the full council.
3. Hold one consented conversation with a park user or neighbor, or observe a meeting with a trusted adult.
4. Record what you learned in the engagement log.
5. Draft the power and legitimacy section on the Your draft page.
6. Finish the report, 800 to 1,000 words, on lined paper or in the online workspace.
7. Name the voices missing from your findings and the limits of your evidence.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The political issue, framed as a question

Your task, continued

Stakeholders and their sources of power

Who can reach the meeting, and who cannot

Notes

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 40 minutes.

Power and legitimacy section

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 10 minutes.

Does your report frame a real local issue with competing interests?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Did you engage people ethically and record what you learned?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you analyze power and legitimacy with evidence?	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
Do you name missing voices and the limits of your findings?	☐ **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 after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

Notes

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames. About 15 minutes.

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

2 **How could Gia's comment respond to the resident's concern about noise?**

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

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

My take

My claim: ___.

My take, continued

The best evidence is ___, because ___.

Someone who disagrees might say ___.

The limit of the evidence is ___.

I would change my mind if ___.

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.

Key terms

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

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

Compensation Compensation is all the pay and benefits a worker receives, including hourly rates, bonuses and overtime.
En español: compensación

Decision-maker A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.
En español: quien toma la decisión

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

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

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

FICA FICA is the federal payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare.
En español: FICA (Seguro Social y Medicare)

Gross pay Gross pay is the money you earn before any taxes or other deductions are taken out.
En español: salario bruto

Jurisdiction A jurisdiction is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority.
En español: jurisdicción

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

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

Key terms, continued

Precedent A precedent is an earlier court decision that judges use as a guide in similar later cases.
En español: precedente

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

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

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

Key terms, continued

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
4					
5					
7					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
16					
18					
19					