



TEACHER FIELD GUIDE

PR / strategic communications

The apology is not the repair

What makes a correction more useful than “sorry”?

Clubs, schools and companies all post things that turn out to be wrong, and how they fix it decides who keeps trusting them. Students who can tell a real correction from a nice-sounding apology can hold groups, including their own, to a higher standard.

WHAT STUDENTS MAKE

Four-sentence correction

THE CIVIC IDEA

Words that do the work.

Communications plan Plan de comunicación

A plan naming your goal, audiences, key message, channels and how you will check it worked.

Caio's question "Who needs the correction, and what should they understand afterward?" starts the plan.

Key message Mensaje clave

The one idea every audience should walk away with.

The projector failed; younger attendees did not cause the delay.

Correction Corrección

A clear replacement of inaccurate information, published where the error was seen.

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

Stereotype Estereotipo

A broad assumption about people because of a group label.

"Once the younger crowd finally got organized" blames an age group without evidence.

Claim vs. evidence Afirmación y prueba

A claim is what someone says happened; evidence is the record that supports or challenges it.

The caption claims a cause. Jordy's event log is the evidence that challenges it.

Measurement Medición

Checking whether a message changed what people understand, not just how many saw it.

Jordy wants to know if readers now know about the projector, not how many views the fix got.



LUPA

⦿ 5:40 p.m. projector failure. The log answers the question the caption guessed at.



We were carrying chairs at 5:30. Don't tell me how sorry you feel. Tell people what actually happened.

THE EVIDENCE

Handle the case file.

Every artifact comes with a question. The captions are the lesson.

ORIGINAL STATEMENT

EXHIBIT A

The published caption

“Great night, once the younger crowd finally got organized.” The caption names no evidence for the delay and gives viewers a group to blame.

SUPPORTS The statement itself is evidence of what the crew communicated, not proof of the cause.

JORDY'S SETUP RECORD

EXHIBIT B

The event log

5:40 p.m. projector failure reported. 6:00 p.m. attendees seated. 6:20 p.m. replacement projector connected. Anika and Dec helped carry chairs before doors opened.

SUPPORTS It challenges the caption's explanation. It does not describe every attendee's experience.

1 Which group does this caption ask readers to blame, and on what evidence?

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

DRAFT, NOT POSTED

EXHIBIT C

Gia's first correction

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

SUPPORTS The draft describes intent without correcting the cause or naming a practical change.

- 3 What fact does this apology actually correct?

**ONDA**

◆ Anika helped set up and got blamed in public. That shapes whether she comes back.

THE WORKSHOP

45 minutes, block by block.

5 MIN

Read the caption

TEACHER

Show the caption alone. Keep discussion on the fictional event.

STUDENTS

Silently note the claim and the group it blames.

CHECK

Students name “younger crowd” as the group blamed.

10 MIN

Build the timeline

TEACHER

Hand out Jordy’s event log.

STUDENTS

Build a timeline from 5:40 to 6:20 and mark which entry challenges the caption.

CHECK

Timelines show the projector failure as the cause of delay.

8 MIN

Examine the apology

TEACHER

Project Gia’s first draft. Ask: what does it correct?

STUDENTS

Highlight words about intent in one color, facts in another.

CHECK

Students find zero corrected facts in the draft.

15 MIN

Write the plan

TEACHER

Introduce the plan parts: goal, audience, key message, channel, repair owner, measure.

STUDENTS

Draft a 70–100 word correction plus one repair with an owner and a check.

CHECK

Correction names the error, the evidence, the fix and who does what.

5 MIN

Editorial desk

TEACHER

Assign roles: fact-checker, reach-checker, responsibility-checker.

STUDENTS

Partners check one role each and suggest one edit.

CHECK

Each draft receives one specific edit tied to a role.

2 MIN

Exit

TEACHER

Frame: “Our next recap will change because __.”

STUDENTS

Complete the frame.

CHECK

Answer names a repeatable process, not a feeling.

DIFFERENTIATED ROUTES

One case. Seven ways in.

Each route changes what students read, make and prove, not only how long it takes.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grades 6–8: Fix Gia’s apology using a four-line template, then read it aloud as Anika would hear it.

SOURCES

The caption, the event log and Gia’s first draft.

PRODUCT

Four-sentence correction

RAISES THE RIGOR

Add one sentence that tells people who saw the original where the fix is posted.

Supports

- Template: “We said __. The record shows __. We changed __. Next time __ will __.”
- Timeline already started
- Word bank: correction, cause, evidence, blame
- Pair reading

Success looks like

- ☐ Names the wrong claim
- ☐ States what the log shows
- ☐ Names one change
- ☐ Leaves out how sorry Gia feels

HIGH SCHOOL

Grades 9–10: Write a correction and a one-paragraph repair plan with a named owner and a date to check it.

SOURCES

All three evidence cards and the decision feedback.

PRODUCT

Correction (70–100 words) plus repair paragraph (80–120 words)

RAISES THE RIGOR

Explain why asking Anika to vouch for Gia puts the work on the wrong person.

Supports

- Plan grid: action / owner / when / how we'll know
- Model correction to annotate

Success looks like

- ☐ Correction owns the error and cites the log
- ☐ Repair is specific and feasible
- ☐ Names who does what by when
- ☐ Avoids asking the harmed person for reassurance

HIGH SCHOOL

Grades 11–12: Build a full crisis communications plan for the recap error: goals, audiences, key message, channels, holding statement, correction and measurement.

SOURCES

Case evidence plus PRSA Code of Ethics and SPJ Code of Ethics excerpts on correcting errors.

PRODUCT

Communications plan, one page (about 400 words)

RAISES THE RIGOR

Resolve a tension between protecting the crew's reputation and minimizing harm, citing a professional code.

Supports

- Plan template with seven headings
- Example measurement questions

Success looks like

- ☐ Every audience has a matching channel
- ☐ Key message is accurate and consistent
- ☐ Measurement checks understanding, not views
- ☐ Cites a professional code to resolve a tension

HIGH SCHOOL

Honors: Argue whether deleting the post is ever the right correction strategy.

SOURCES

Case evidence, decision 1 feedback, and the SPJ guidance on corrections.

PRODUCT

Argument, 500–600 words

RAISES THE RIGOR

Consider screenshots, archives and the people who never see the update.

Supports

- Claim/counterclaim chart
- Example of an edited post with a visible correction note

Success looks like

- ☐ Takes a clear position
- ☐ Uses case and code evidence
- ☐ Addresses the strongest counterargument
- ☐ Proposes a standard the crew could follow

AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE

AP Lang: Write a rhetorical analysis comparing Gia's first draft with the model correction.

SOURCES

Gia's first draft and the model correction from the case.

PRODUCT

Comparative rhetorical analysis, about 500 words, 40 minutes

RAISES THE RIGOR

Explain how each text constructs the speaker's ethos, and why the model earns credibility by conceding error.

Supports

- Side-by-side annotation sheet
- Commentary stems: "This choice positions readers to..."

Success looks like

- ☐ Thesis explains how purpose differs between drafts
- ☐ Analyzes specific word choices
- ☐ Links choices to Anika and other readers
- ☐ Commentary explains effect, not just device

MIDDLE YEARS

IB MYP: Create an inquiry statement on fairness and representation and a corrections checklist for a student club.

SOURCES

Case evidence; global context: Fairness and development.

PRODUCT

Checklist (8–10 items) plus 200-word justification

RAISES THE RIGOR

Test the checklist on one other real or invented club post.

Supports

- Inquiry statement frame
- Checklist example from a school newspaper

Success looks like

- ☐ Inquiry statement connects fairness to communication
- ☐ Checklist items are specific and testable
- ☐ Justification cites the case
- ☐ Applies checklist to a second example

DIPLOMA

IB DP: Write a reflective commentary on intent versus impact: does it matter what Gia meant?

SOURCES

Gia's draft, Anika's message and the event log as three perspectives.

PRODUCT

Commentary, 600–800 words

RAISES THE RIGOR

Evaluate intent and impact as competing ways of judging communication; relate to one broader context.

Supports

- Perspective chart
- Prompt: “Who has to live with the explanation after the post?”

Success looks like

- ☐ Analyzes at least three perspectives
- ☐ Distinguishes intent, impact and accountability
- ☐ Connects to a broader context
- ☐ Offers a reasoned, personal conclusion

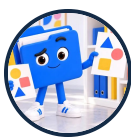
Access for every learner

- Pre-build the timeline with blanks for three times
- Read Anika's message aloud in a neutral voice
- Spanish vocabulary: corrección, estereotipo, reparación
- Allow students to annotate a provided draft instead of writing from scratch
- Reduce the plan to three parts: fix, owner, check

Extension

- Draft how the crew would measure whether younger neighbors come back

- Compare a real published correction policy from a newsroom with the crew's plan



PAUTA

Ⓢ A wrong post isn't automatically a legal problem. It's still an ethical one to fix.

ANNOTATED STUDENT WORK

What a draft shows us.

Write the correction the crew should post under the recap.

FIRST DRAFT

We want to apologize for our last post. ¹ We didn't mean to offend anyone and we love having younger people at our events. It was a really stressful night and ² things were hectic so we said something we shouldn't have. Honestly we were all tired and trying to get everything set up on time, and it's been a lot. ³ We are sorry if anyone was hurt. ⁴ We promise it won't happen again and ⁵ we hope everyone keeps coming! Thank you all for your support and understanding, it means a lot to us.

¹ **GAP** Talks about intent. It still doesn't say what was wrong.

² **EVIDENCE** This is where the fact goes: the projector failed at 5:40.

³ **AUDIENCE** "If" puts the problem on readers. Name who was blamed.

⁴ **GAP** Impossible to check. Name a specific process instead.

⁵ **STRENGTH** Good goal, but a repair makes that more likely than a hope.

REVISED

Correction: our recap said the screening started late because younger attendees were disorganized. That was wrong. Jordy's event log shows the projector failed at 5:40 p.m. and

the replacement was connected at 6:20. Anika and Dec actually helped carry chairs before doors opened. We have edited the original caption and messaged the people it blamed. Starting with the next event, Gia and Jordy will check any claim about causes against the event log before we post. We're sorry we blamed people who were helping us. If you see something we got wrong, message Jordy.

ASSESSMENT

One-page rubric.

Mark the evidence you see. Leave room for a comment and a next step.

CRITERION	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	ADVANCED
Evidence	☐ No evidence about the delay.	☐ Mentions “technical issues” vaguely.	☐ Cites the projector failure from the log.	☐ Cites specific times and corrects who actually helped.
Reasoning	☐ Apologizes for feelings only.	☐ Admits error but not what it was.	☐ Names the inaccurate claim and replaces it.	☐ Explains why the claim harmed a group and how the repair prevents a repeat.
Audience & purpose	☐ Does not consider who saw the post.	☐ Speaks to readers in general.	☐ Reaches the people who were blamed.	☐ Reaches the original audience and the blamed group through appropriate channels.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Softens tone only.	☐ Adds facts and a repair.	☐ Adds facts, an owner, a check and removes shifting of blame.

Evidence I saw

Next step

STANDARDS

What this case teaches, by the book.

CCSS 6–8

4

RI.7.6 Students analyze how Gia’s first draft centers her feelings instead of the facts.

RI.8.8 Students evaluate whether the caption offers any evidence for its explanation of the delay.

W.6.1 Students write a correction that states a claim and supports it with the event log.

RH.6–8.6 Students identify loaded language (“finally got organized”) that shows point of view.

CCSS 9–10

3

RI.9–10.6 Students analyze how the caption’s rhetoric advances a point of view about younger attendees.

W.9–10.5 Students revise the apology into a correction and explain the purpose of each change.

SL.9–10.1 Students discuss Anika’s message and respond to diverse perspectives without asking anyone to represent a group.

CCSS 11–12

3

RI.11–12.6 Students evaluate how style and content in Gia’s draft fail its purpose.

W.11–12.1 Students argue what an organization owes people it wrongly blamed.

SL.11–12.4 Students present a repair plan with a clear line of reasoning and named owners.

C3 Framework

3

D2.Civ.7.6–8 Students apply civic virtues like honesty and fairness to a group’s public post.

D2.Civ.10.9–12 Students analyze how personal interest (protecting the crew’s image) competes with fairness.

D4.3.9–12 Students adapt the correction for the people who saw the original post.

AP English Language

3

Rhetorical Situation (RHS) Students analyze how Gia's draft misreads its audience: Anika needs a fact, not reassurance.

Reasoning and Organization (REO) Students reorder the correction so the inaccurate claim and the evidence come first.

Style (STL) Students analyze how "Sorry if this came across wrong" shifts responsibility onto readers.

IB MYP

3

Language and Literature A: Analysing Students analyse the effect of the caption's word choices on readers.

Language and Literature D: Using language Students choose precise, account language for the correction.

Individuals and Societies D: Thinking critically Students evaluate how a stereotype in a cartoon affects participation next.

IB DP**2****Language A: language and literature — Readers, writers and texts**

Students examine how the writer's intent and the readers' experience diverge.

Global Politics — key concepts: power and legitimacy

Students ask how an organization rebuilds legitimacy after a public error.

TAKE IT OFF THE PAGE

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

1. Ask the editor or advisor of a school newsletter, club account or yearbook how they fix mistakes
2. Suggest a three-step checklist: name the error, show the evidence, say what changes
3. Offer to test it on an old post together
4. Keep any real examples anonymous

WHO TO ASK

School newspaper or yearbook advisor, club advisor, student council secretary

STAY SAFE

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



VOZ

➔ Name the owner: Gia and Jordy check cause claims against the log before posting.