

Audience, Thesis, and Supporting Evidence

AP English Language ■ Unit 2

AP English Language



What we will cover

- 1 Understanding an Audience's Beliefs and Needs
- 2 Writing for an Audience's Beliefs and Needs
- 3 Identifying Claims and Evidence
- 4 Developing a Paragraph with Claim and Evidence
- 5 Identifying the Overarching Thesis
- 6 Writing a Thesis Statement

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Understanding the audience

Each appeal reaches for something different in the reader

Complete practice situation — an evening library trial

Recommend whether the principal should try one evening library session each week for four weeks. Consider access, staffing and cost.

Survey	18 of 30 volunteer respondents say they would attend.
One response	"I share a room and need somewhere quiet.
Unknown	Staffing and transport costs have not been checked.

All evidence here is fictional teaching material. Do not report it as a real survey or AP question.

Appeals: target and limits

The modes of persuasion - and what each one reaches for

ETHOS	PATHOS	LOGOS
writer's credibility	emotions and values	reasoning and evidence
reaches for the audience's trust in who is speaking	reaches for what the audience already values	reaches for the audience's sense of what follows
<i>can fail if the claimed credibility is unsupported</i>	<i>fails when the feeling is not tied to the claim</i>	<i>fails when evidence is present but the reasoning is not</i>

An answer that names the appeal has labelled it. Explain the wording, target and connection to the purpose.

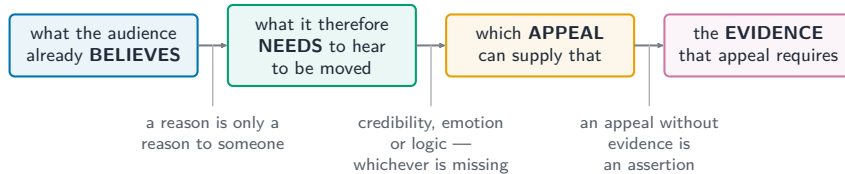
To achieve a purpose, writers make choices in an attempt to **relate to an intended audience's emotions and values** 情感与价值观.

Understanding an Audience's Beliefs and Needs

Principal	May need staffing, cost and safe-travel information before approving a trial.
Students	May value a quiet place and need clear times and access arrangements.
Perceptions	These are audience hypotheses to check, not proof that every person has the same priorities.

The same evidence can serve different readers; explain how wording and emphasis address this audience.

From audience to appeal



The audience comes **first**. Check its needs alongside purpose and context, then explain why the selected evidence matters

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Writing for the audience

Writing for an Audience's Beliefs and Needs

Your turn: adapt the recommendation

Using the supplied evidence, write two sentences to the principal and two to interested students. Keep the same facts and limitations. Change emphasis where their needs differ.

Attempt before the models. Do not invent staffing approval, actual attendance or a free service.

Writing for an Audience's Beliefs and Needs, continued

To principal	Trial one session a week for four weeks, subject to staffing and safe travel; record visits and costs before continuing.
To students	A proposed trial could offer quiet study space. Register interest and check confirmed opening and travel arrangements before attending.
Why different	Approval needs feasibility evidence; attendance needs practical access information.

These are possible drafts. Shared concerns can justify some shared wording.

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Identifying Claims and Evidence

Identifying Claims and Evidence

Illustrate	The shared-room response makes “access need concrete.
Describe	18 of 30 describes stated interest among these volunteer respondents.
Qualify	Unconfirmed staffing and travel prevent interest from proving feasibility.
Connect	Together they support considering a limited trial, not an assured permanent service.

Explain the evidence's job and its limit; no single count or quotation proves the whole recommendation.

Identifying Claims and Evidence, continued

- 1 **Quantity** The sample has 30 volunteer responses, not a whole-school survey.
- 2 **Quality** Stated intention is not recorded attendance; volunteers may differ from other students.
- 3 **Missing support** Costs and staffing remain unconfirmed.
- 4 **Proportionate claim** Consider a conditional trial and collect the missing evidence before permanent opening.

What each kind of evidence cannot prove

Your turn: test the claim

“Eighteen students will certainly attend every week, so the library should open permanently. Identify two unsupported steps and write a more proportionate recommendation.

Use the sample, intention-versus-behaviour distinction and missing feasibility information.

What each kind of evidence cannot prove, in detail

TYPE	WHAT IT CAN ESTABLISH	WHAT IT CANNOT
facts and statistics	measured scale or pattern, within the data's limits	that the pattern matters to a reader
anecdotes and examples	a particular case or experience, if documented	that it is typical
analogies	a potentially useful comparison between cases	anything, if the two cases differ where it counts
expert opinion	that informed people hold the view	that they are right

Evidence types sorted by what each can and cannot establish

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Claim, evidence and commentary

Developing a Paragraph with Claim and Evidence

Original complete model letter

Please trial one evening library session a week for four weeks, subject to confirmed staffing and safe travel arrangements. In our practice survey, 18 of 30 volunteer respondents said they would attend; one explained that sharing a room makes quiet study difficult. Those responses suggest a reason to test access, not a guarantee of attendance. Record visits and costs during the trial before deciding whether to continue.

Read the recommendation, evidence, explanation and limit before labelling the appeals.

Developing a Paragraph with Claim and Evidence, continued

- 1 **Claim** A limited evening trial is worth considering, subject to feasibility.
- 2 **Evidence** Survey intention and the concrete shared-room need.
- 3 **Commentary** These suggest access demand but cannot guarantee usage or affordable staffing.
- 4 **Next decision** Record actual visits and costs before continuation. Explained limits can support credibility without guaranteeing persuasion.

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Identifying the Overarching Thesis

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Main position	Test one evening session for four weeks, subject to feasibility.
Supporting reason	Respondents express an access need.
Qualification	Interest does not establish attendance; costs remain unknown.
Reading method	Read the whole letter: the opening recommendation and closing review condition work together.

A thesis is the overarching claim, not automatically the first sentence in a fixed paragraph.

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Writing a Thesis Statement

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Topic only	There are arguments for and against evening opening.
Defensible position	The school should test one evening session for four weeks: responses suggest an access need, but uncertain attendance and costs make permanent opening premature.
Reasoning to develop	Explain need, evidence limits and how the trial answers a useful question.

A factual claim can need evidence too. The task here calls for a supported recommendation.

Writing a Thesis Statement, continued

Your turn: test a thesis

Write a recommendation that answers the actual library prompt, includes one reason and acknowledges one important uncertainty. Explain what evidence would make you revise it.

A prompt restatement alone states no position. One sentence does not determine every part of an essay's assessment.

Exam tips

- 1 **Audience** Identify likely needs, then check your assumptions.
- 2 **Evidence** Explain its relevance and limits; do not equate sample interest with certain attendance.
- 3 **Thesis** State the task's position and develop the reasoning that supports it.
- 4 **Revision** Use new or contrary evidence to qualify the recommendation.

Same subject, only one arguable

A TOPIC STATEMENT

This essay will discuss the author's use of humour.

announces a subject; nothing in it could be argued against

A DEFENSIBLE THESIS

The author's humour disarms an audience that would have refused the same argument made plainly.

takes a **position**, and implies the reasoning that will defend it

Both name the same subject. Only one of them can be **disagreed with**, and its position still needs evidence and explained reasoning

Worked example – a thesis that can be disagreed with

A conditional thesis still takes a position

The school should try one evening session each week for four weeks if staffing and safe travel can be confirmed. The responses suggest a need worth testing, while actual attendance and cost data should determine continuation.

- 1 Position** Support a trial, rather than automatic permanent opening or no action.
- 2 Reason** Evidence suggests a need but leaves feasibility uncertain.
- 3 Limit** This is a model for the authored task, not a guaranteed mark or authentic exam response.

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Recap

Unit 2 – key takeaways

1

Audience

check needs and values; do not assume them

2

Evidence job

illustrate, clarify, associate, amplify

3

Sufficiency

quantity and quality, not volume

4

Thesis

state a position and explain its support

Check yourself

- 1 **Audience** Which concern should the principal's letter address that students may not prioritise?
- 2 **Evidence** Why does 18 of 30 not guarantee 18 weekly attendees?
- 3 **Reasoning** What do the quotation and sample each add?
- 4 **Thesis** Defend a trial or rejection, using one limitation and one relevant reason.