

Sample Situation Statements: To a Particular Audience and To an “Ideal Audience”

Situation 1a: Alex Wilson is one of my best friends. He is currently a senior at Xavier High School in New York. Since his junior year, he and his parents have been traveling all over the south and east coast in search of colleges that best fit his two interests, academics (especially business) and track. As a member of Notre Dame track and field team, I am writing Alex to tell him of my current experience as a member of the team, while convincing him that Notre Dame would be the best place for him to pursue his two interests. (Alex verbally committed to Dartmouth two weeks ago, but has not completely made up his mind and is still open to opinions).

Situation 1b: As a freshman at Notre Dame and a member of the track and field team, I am arguing in favor of attending Notre Dame for both academics and athletics. My ideal audience is a high school senior who is currently researching colleges and track and field programs, not sure what university and team would be best for him.

Situation 2a: Having been home schooled for ten years, and believing it did me a great service, I am writing to my aunt, Cathy, to convince her that she should home school her daughter Emily. Aunt Cathy is an educator, and is highly critical of both public and private schools for being too rigid and formulaic. She has considered home schooling Emily in the past, but does not think the home schooling is a viable or competitive strategy. Despite this, she remains unsatisfied with the education Emily is currently receiving, and is open to any feasible solution. I hope to persuade her to reconsider home schooling as an option.

Situation 2b: Having been home schooled for ten years, and believing it did me a great service, I am writing in favor of home schooling as an option for parents who are unsatisfied with the education their child is currently receiving. They are open to any feasible solution. I hope to persuade them to consider home schooling as an option, dispelling many of the myths people believe about home schooling.

Situation 3a: As a former student at Nixa High School in Nixa, Missouri, I took upper-level classes during my senior year. I am writing to my friend Courtney, who is currently a junior at Nixa High School. Courtney has a 4.0 GPA and is not sure if taking upper level classes is worth the risk of losing her 4.0. Courtney has not ruled out taking these more challenging classes next year, but is leaning towards not taking them in order to preserve her GPA. I am writing to convince Courtney to take the upper level courses, regardless of their effects on her GPA, because I believe they will help more adequately prepare her for college.

Situation 3b: As a former student at Nixa High School in Nixa, Missouri, I took upper-level classes during my senior year. My ideal reader is currently a junior at Nixa High School. This reader has a perfect GPA, a 4.0 GPA, and is not sure if taking upper level classes is worth the risk of losing the 4.0. The ideal reader has not ruled out taking these more challenging classes next year, but is leaning towards not taking them in order to preserve the GPA. I hope to convince this person to take the upper level courses, regardless of their effects on GPA, because I believe they more adequately prepare one for college.

Situation 4a: As a participant in the Cathedral High School International Baccalaureate (IB) program in Indianapolis, Indiana, I am writing to my younger sister, Olivia. She is a sophomore at Cathedral, trying to decide between taking IB classes or AP classes during her junior and senior years in high school. Although my sister is hesitant to commit, I hope to demonstrate to her the benefits of IB and ultimately, persuade her to participate in the program.

Situation 4b: As a participant in the Cathedral High School International Baccalaureate (IB) program in Indianapolis, Indiana, I am arguing in favor of the IB program over the Advanced Placement (AP) program. My ideal reader is a trying to decide whether to take the IB track or the AP classes during the last two years of high school. I hope to demonstrate the benefits of IB and ultimately, persuade the reader to participate in the program.