

Name _____

Date _____

Nursery Closing

Virginia O. Malcolm 12 Corley Way

Savannah, GA 31401

July 10, 2011

Jay Palmer, Director Williams Athletic Center

The Medical University of Savannah 120 Stanley Street

Savannah, GA 31403



Dear Mr. Palmer,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the Athletic Center has chosen to terminate its on-site nursery. The nursery provides an indispensable service for mothers who wish to exercise and be physically fit. It also affirms the Center's commitment to the health of the community. By closing the nursery, the Athletic Center is endangering the wonderful, family-oriented atmosphere that its members so appreciate. I hope you will reconsider this discouraging decision.

For mothers like me, a gym nursery is absolutely essential. Many of us cannot afford to hire babysitters just so we can go to the gym. Hiring a decent babysitter for just a couple of hours each weekday easily could cost \$150 or more per week. By running a nursery, the Athletic Center enables mothers of all income levels to work out without much inconvenience or expense. I have really benefited from this service and would hate to see it go.

I also believe that providing a nursery has helped the Athletic Center to fulfill its mission of "building a healthier Savannah." By making it easier for mothers to exercise, the gym has reached out to a demographic that often struggles to stay fit. I worry that by closing the nursery, the Center will not be as effective at putting its own principles into action. I deeply respect the Center for its contributions to the health of our whole community, and I would love to see those contributions continue.

I know that many other gym members also believe that the Center's commitment to "a healthier Savannah" is what sets it apart from other local gyms. I enjoy working out in such an inclusive, family-friendly atmosphere, and I consider many of my fellow gym members to be close friends. I have heard that if the nursery closes, many mothers will leave the Center in favor of a gym that can offer childcare. Their departure will negatively affect all members by changing the wonderful atmosphere that we currently enjoy.

I would very much appreciate it if you would reconsider closing the nursery. It is an important part of our gym's welcoming identity, and it means a great deal to members, mothers or not. I would be very disheartened to see it go.

Sincerely,

Virginia O. Malcolm

- 1) It can be inferred that the author believes that
- I. gyms have a responsibility to serve the community
 - II. gyms without nurseries are inconvenient for mothers
 - III. member satisfaction is affected by the gym atmosphere
- A. I only
B. I and II only
C. II and III only
D. I, II, and III
- 2) As used in paragraph 1, which is the best synonym for **indispensable**?
- A. helpful
B. essential
C. unnecessary
D. useful
- 3) Which of the following accurately describes the overall organization of this passage?
- A. The author addresses her concerns in order from least to most important.
B. Before explaining why the gym nursery should remain open, the author states her expectations in the event of its closure.
C. The author addresses the Athletic Center's argument for closing the nursery before refuting that argument.
D. After introducing the subjects she will address, the author devotes the following paragraphs to addressing each subject.
- 4) In paragraph 3, the author most likely quotes the phrase "building a healthier Savannah" in order to
- A. accuse Jay Palmer of hypocrisy
B. remind the Center of its commitment to community health
C. suggest a new priority that the Center ought to adopt
D. reference the stated goal of other local gyms
- 5) The author suggests that the Athletic Center should not close its nursery for all of the following reasons EXCEPT which one?
- A. The nursery provides an essential service for mothers.
B. The Athletic Center promotes a healthy community.
C. The nursery contributes to a family-friendly atmosphere at the gym.
D. The nursery's babysitters will lose their jobs if it closes.

6) The author's tone can best be described as

- A. sentimental
- B. outraged
- C. disappointed
- D. cautious

7) Which of the following best describes the author's overall argumentative strategy?

- A. The author praises the Center's current operations in order to argue that the nursery should remain open.
- B. The author attempts to bully Jay Palmer into keeping the Center's nursery open.
- C. The author repeatedly cites the cost of childcare in order to argue that the nursery should remain open.
- D. The author describes how an expanded nursery would improve the gym's current operations.

8) Which of Malcolm's arguments do you think is the weakest or least effective? Why?

Answers and Explanations

1) C

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

Although the author indicates in paragraph 3 that the Athletic Center has taken on a mission to build “a healthier Savannah,” the author does not say that this mission is the Center’s responsibility.

Rather, the author praises the Center for choosing to make “contributions to the...whole community,” and notes that these contributions “set [the Center] apart from other local gyms.” This means the author acknowledges that serving the community is a gym’s choice, rather than a responsibility. This eliminates **option (I)**.

In paragraph 2, the author writes that “by running a nursery, the Athletic Center enables mothers...to work out without much inconvenience.” If the author believes that a gym nursery helps mothers avoid “inconvenience,” then we can infer that the author believes that gyms without nurseries are inconvenient for mothers. This supports **option (II)**.

In paragraph 4, the author states that the departure of some mothers from the gym “will negatively affect all members by changing the wonderful atmosphere that we currently enjoy.” In this statement, the author implies that members will be less satisfied with this change in atmosphere. Thus, we can infer that the author believes member satisfaction is affected by the gym atmosphere. This supports **option (III)**.

Therefore **(C)** is correct.

2) B

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

indispensable (*adjective*): absolutely necessary, essential, or required.

In paragraph 1, the author introduces the subjects that she will address in the following paragraphs of her letter. One of the subjects that the author introduces involves the fact that “the nursery provides an indispensable service for mothers who wish to exercise.” In paragraph 2, the author addresses this same subject, writing “for mothers like me, a gym nursery is absolutely essential.” This sentence restates the author’s earlier statement that “the nursery provides an indispensable service for mothers.” From this context we can understand that *indispensable* and *essential* are synonyms. Therefore **(B)** is correct.

Something indispensable is more than just *helpful*, it’s necessary. This means **(A)** is incorrect.

Unnecessary is an antonym for indispensable, not a synonym, so **(C)** is incorrect.

Something indispensable is more than *useful*, it’s necessary. This makes **(D)** incorrect.

3) DCore Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In paragraph 1, the author states that she is disappointed that the “Athletic Center has chosen to terminate its on-site nursery.” Then, the author lists two reasons for her disappointment. These reasons are that the nursery provided an “indispensable service,” and that the nursery “affirms the Center’s commitment to the health of the community.” To conclude paragraph 1, the author states that closing the nursery will endanger the Athletic Center’s “family-friendly atmosphere,” and that the author hopes the Center’s director will “reconsider” closing the nursery. In each of the four paragraphs that follow paragraph 1, the author addresses one of the subjects that she brought up in paragraph 1. For example, the author begins the final paragraph by writing, “I would very much appreciate it if you could reconsider closing the nursery.” This sentence refers back to the author’s statement in paragraph 1, “I hope you will reconsider this discouraging decision.” Thus, after introducing the subjects she will address, the author devotes one paragraph to addressing each subject. Using this information, we can understand that **(D)** is correct.

The author does not indicate that she addresses her concerns in order from least to most important. For that statement to be true, the author would have to be more concerned about the Center’s “atmosphere,” which she addresses in paragraph 4, than about her own ability to exercise “without much inconvenience or expense”, which she addresses in paragraph 2. Because we can reasonably suspect that the author is equally—if not more—concerned with her own ability to exercise than she is with the Center’s atmosphere, **(A)** must be incorrect.

Although the author explains why the gym nursery should remain open, she does not give this explanation *after* she states her expectations in the event of its closure. In fact, she does not discuss this topic at all. Because the author lists reasons why the gym should remain open in paragraph 1, before addressing any other topic, **(B)** is incorrect.

The author does not give the Center’s argument for closing the nursery, nor does she directly refute it. Instead, she builds her argument by addressing her own concerns about the nursery closing. This means **(C)** is incorrect.

4) BCore Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In paragraph 3, the author states that “providing a nursery has helped the Athletic Center to fulfill its mission of ‘building a healthier Savannah.’” By using quotation marks to offset a phrase in the sentence, the author implies that she did not generate the phrase. The author’s use of quotation marks indicates that the Center itself has stated that its mission is “building a healthier Savannah” and that the author is merely repeating these words. The author invokes the Center’s own statement to remind the Center of its commitment to community health. Therefore **(B)** is correct.

Although the author could be viewed as accusing the Center of hypocrisy, implying that it will jeopardize its own mission by closing the nursery, the author does not directly accuse Jay Palmer of hypocrisy. Also, by frequently referring to “the Center” and “the gym,” the author makes it clear that her concern is about the Center rather than about any individual associated with the Center. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect.

“Building a healthier Savannah” is part of the Center’s mission, and we can therefore conclude it is already one of the Center’s priorities. This means **(C)** is incorrect.

The author does not suggest that this is the goal of other local gyms; instead, she suggests it is the Center’s own goal. This means **(D)** is incorrect.

5) D

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

The easiest way to arrive at the correct answer to this question is to use process of elimination. In paragraph 1, the author claims, “The nursery provides an indispensable service.” Later she calls the gym’s nursery “essential.” From these details it is clear that she does state that the nursery provides an essential service for mothers, so we can eliminate **(A)**.

In paragraph 3, the author states, “Providing a nursery has helped the Athletic Center to fulfill its mission of ‘building a healthier Savannah.’” From this information we can infer that the author believes that the Center promotes a healthy community. This eliminates **(B)**.

In paragraph 4, the author attributes the “inclusive, family-friendly atmosphere” of the gym in part to the presence of the nursery. She also notes, “If the nursery closes, many mothers will leave the Center in favor of a gym that can offer childcare.” From this we can infer that the nursery closing would decrease the family-friendly atmosphere at the gym. This eliminates **(C)**.

Although the author briefly discusses babysitters in paragraph 2 when she writes, “many of us cannot afford to hire babysitters just so we can go to the gym,” the author is discussing babysitters hired by mothers so they could visit the gym. The author does not imply that these babysitters work at the gym’s nursery. Because the author never mentions babysitters who work at the gym’s nursery, we know that the author does not list the nursery’s babysitters losing their jobs as a reason why the Center should keep the nursery open. Therefore **(D)** is the correct answer.

6) C

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In paragraph 1, the author states that she is “writing to express [her] disappointment that the Athletic Center has chosen to terminate its on-site nursery.” The author supports the statement that she is “disappointed” by using words such as “discouraging” and “disheartened” and by praising the “essential” service that the nursery provides. From the author’s language we can understand that she is disappointed. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

The author expresses her feelings about the nursery closing, but both her tone and her argument are more rational than sentimental. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect.

Although the author certainly is let down by the “discouraging” decision to close the gym’s nursery, outraged is too strong an adjective to describe the author’s tone. By expressing her “hope” that the nursery’s closing can be avoided and often praising the gym’s current status as “welcoming” and “wonderful,” the author avoids sounding angry to the point of outrage. This makes **(B)** incorrect.

As explained above, the author is straightforward in her tone, not cautious.
Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

7) A

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In paragraph 1, the author describes the helpfulness of the Center's "essential" nursery and writes, "I have really benefited from [the nursery] and would hate to see it go." By emphasizing the positive impact that the Center's nursery has had, the author argues that the nursery should remain open.

The author continues this strategy throughout the passage. For example, in paragraph 4, the author writes that she enjoys "working out in such an inclusive, family-friendly atmosphere." Rather than attacking the Center's leadership for planning to close the nursery, the author restates her current satisfaction with the Center's operations to argue that Palmer should "reconsider closing the nursery." The author therefore argues that the nursery should remain open by praising the Center's current operations. This means **(A)** is correct.

The author is not so aggressive as to attempt to bully the Center or Jay Palmer. This makes **(B)** incorrect.

Although the author does mention the cost of childcare in paragraph 2, she does not mention this cost anywhere else in the passage. This tells us the author does not make the cost of childcare the focus of her overall argumentative strategy. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

The author does not describe the benefits of an expanded nursery at all in the passage.

Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.