

Section 1:

#1 "The Riverdale Public Library is not merely a building; it is a sanctuary for the curious, a haven for the weary, a lighthouse for the lost. Its warm, oak-paneled walls have heard the first stuttered words of eager readers, the soft hum of scholarly discussions, and the quiet sighs of those who sought refuge among its shelves."

Strengths: Your use of metaphors creates a vivid image of what the library means to the community. Your descriptive language appeals to emotions effectively.

Weaknesses: Overreliance on metaphors → While your metaphors are powerful, using three in succession (sanctuary, haven, lighthouse) dilutes their impact. The focus shifts from the actual value of the library to poetic descriptions, which may not convince practical-minded council members who are looking for concrete benefits.

Exemplar: ***"The Riverdale Public Library serves as a sanctuary for our community, where students like me find resources for schoolwork, elderly neighbours gather for reading groups, and families without home internet access can connect to essential online services."***

#2 "Imagine the painful image of its destruction: bricks cracking, glass shattering, shelves collapsing in a deafening, dusty funeral for literacy. That is not just debris—that is the collapse of culture, the downfall of decades of dreams."

Strengths: Your vivid imagery creates a powerful emotional impact. You effectively connect the physical destruction to deeper cultural loss.

Weaknesses: Dramatic language → The description focuses on emotional appeal through dramatic imagery but lacks specific consequences that would matter to decision-makers. The "funeral for literacy" and "collapse of culture" statements are too extreme and might make your argument seem exaggerated.

Exemplar: ***"The demolition of our library wouldn't just remove a building—it would eliminate the only free after-school study space for students like me, force our community book clubs to disband, and remove computer access for the many Riverdale families who rely on the library's technology."***

#3 "In closing, I beseech you to stand with us—students, elders, families, and future generations—in preserving the Riverdale Public Library. There are solutions that do not involve demolition: restoration, repurposing, or expansion. Let us work together to write a new chapter for this beloved space, rather than close the book forever."

Strengths: Your conclusion identifies specific alternatives to demolition. You cleverly use a book metaphor that ties to the library theme.

Weaknesses: Vague alternatives → While you mention "restoration, repurposing, or expansion," you don't provide any specific details about how these alternatives could work. Without concrete suggestions, council members might dismiss these as unrealistic options.

Exemplar: ***"I urge you to consider alternatives like the restoration plan proposed by Riverdale Primary's Year 6 class, which includes a community fundraising initiative to repair the roof and update the children's section, allowing our library to serve future generations while preserving its historic charm."***

■ Your persuasive letter shows strong passion and emotional appeal, but could be more effective by balancing emotion with practical reasons. You've created beautiful imagery about what the library means, but council members need specific examples of how it serves the community right now. Try mentioning actual library programs and community uses in paragraphs 4-5 instead of focusing only on the building's atmosphere. Also, when you mention alternatives to demolition in your final paragraph, give one specific example of how restoration might work or what repurposing could look like. Your rhetorical questions are powerful, but you could make a stronger case by answering some of them with real examples from your experience as a student. Your voice as a Year 6 student is unique—share more about how you and your classmates use the library for school projects or after-school activities.

Score: 43/50

Section 2:

Dear Esteemed Members of the City Council,

I am writing to you with deep concern and heartfelt urgency regarding the proposed demolition of the Riverdale Public Library—a treasured institution that has stood at the heart of our community for generations. I implore you to reconsider this devastating decision, which threatens not just the physical structure of a library, but the very soul of our neighbourhood.

Have we so quickly forgotten the quiet sanctuary that libraries offer in an increasingly chaotic world?

Can we, in good conscience, allow bulldozers to erase a space where knowledge, comfort, and community have bloomed for decades?

And most pressingly—how will we explain to our children why we allowed a cornerstone of their future to be reduced to rubble?

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You might ask, "But isn't progress inevitable? Mustn't we make way for modern development?"

To that, I answer: Progress that erases the past is not progress—it is loss in disguise.

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This is not just about sentiment. It's about logic, ethics, and duty.

Logically, the library provides free internet, educational resources, and a safe communal space—essentials many Riverdale residents rely on.

Ethically, it is our obligation to protect institutions that serve the public good.

And emotionally—how can we ignore the deep pain this loss would inflict on our neighbors [neighbours], our children, and our future?

Let me paint for you a vivid picture of what we risk losing: as you step through its heavy wooden doors, you're greeted by the scent of aged paper and polished floors. The children's corner bursts with color—plush beanbags, whimsical murals, shelves of fairy tales and picture books that beg to be opened. Upstairs, the reference section stands proud, rows upon rows of encyclopedias, biographies, and local histories bathed in natural light from the high skylight. The librarian greets each patron not with formality, but with the warmth of an old friend. This is not just a place—it is a presence, a heartbeat, a home.

We ask you to act not out of convenience, but out of conviction. Not out of pressure, but out of principle. Not out of obligation, but out of genuine care.

Use your power not to destroy but to protect. Use your voice not to silence but to save. Use your position not to erase but to elevate.

Is it not our duty, as citizens and as leaders, to preserve the spaces that nurture minds and uplift spirits? Should we not champion institutions that offer opportunity to all, regardless of background or income?

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Yours sincerely, George Thomas Riverdale Year 6 student