Beyond the Bell

Build a responsible argument from research

11.RL.27 "Synthesize research results, using responsible, ethical practices to gather information, and write clear, coherent products demonstrating command of language that is suitable for the target audience and purpose."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline findings supported by research, circle each named source, and number the places where the writer limits a claim. Notice how those choices help the school board judge the argument.

A Later Start for Our Schools?

1 To the members of our school board: A later bell might sound like a simple fix for tired teenagers, but the decision deserves more than a slogan. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says teenagers ages 13 to 18 need 8 to 10 hours of sleep per 24 hours. Separately, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later. These sources serve different purposes: one describes a health need, while the other proposes a school schedule that may help students meet it. Neither tells us how our district's buses would run.

2 Evidence from a schedule change adds a useful, narrower perspective. In a 2018 study published in *Science Advances*, researchers compared students' sleep at two Seattle high schools before and after start times moved later. They reported that students slept about 34 minutes longer on school nights after the change. This finding suggests that a later start can create room for more sleep, not that every student will sleep longer. Because the study took place in one city, its result cannot predict our district's exact outcome. I have not turned the reported average into a promise about any individual student.

3 For this board, the strongest case joins the health guidance to the Seattle result without disguising uncertainty. The CDC's sleep range explains why the issue matters; the pediatricians' recommendation offers a possible target; the Seattle study shows a change that accompanied longer sleep. Yet a local decision also requires information those sources do not provide, including transportation costs and students' after-school obligations. I ask the board to weigh those local factors before changing the bell. By naming each source and stating the study's limits, this argument gives readers a way to check its evidence rather than asking them to trust an unsupported claim.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the CDC guidance and the pediatricians' recommendation serve different roles in the argument?

2. How does the Seattle study add to those two sources, and why does its finding not settle the question for this district?

3. Choose one research finding in the passage. How does naming its source help the board evaluate the argument?

4. Which statement keeps the Seattle finding from becoming a promise about every student? Explain why that distinction matters to the board.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75-to-100-word statement to the school board proposing a specific way to gather local evidence before changing start times. Draw on two named sources from the passage, identify a limit of the Seattle study, and use a professional tone.

ANSWER KEY

Beyond the Bell

GRADE 11 · 11.RL.27

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline findings supported by research, circle each named source, and number the places where the writer limits a claim. Notice how those choices help the school board judge the argument. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the CDC guidance and the pediatricians' recommendation serve different roles in the argument?	**The CDC guidance establishes how much sleep teens need. The pediatricians' recommendation proposes a school start time that may help them get it.**
2	How does the Seattle study add to those two sources, and why does its finding not settle the question for this district?	**It reports longer sleep after a later start at two Seattle high schools. A result from one city cannot predict this district's outcome.**
3	Choose one research finding in the passage. How does naming its source help the board evaluate the argument?	**For example, naming the CDC alongside the 8-to-10-hour sleep range lets board members identify and check the source of that claim.**
4	Which statement keeps the Seattle finding from becoming a promise about every student? Explain why that distinction matters to the board.	**The passage says the finding does not mean every student will sleep longer. The board should not assume an average result guarantees an individual or local outcome.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Board members, I recommend an anonymous, voluntary survey of student sleep and bus travel before any vote on a later bell. The CDC says teens ages 13 to 18 need 8 to 10 hours of sleep, and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later. A Seattle study found longer sleep after a schedule change, but its result may not match ours. Ask families about transportation barriers without collecting student names, then compare responses across bus routes before choosing a schedule.

Accept other accurate source-and-claim pairs in question 3. For the open task, look for a feasible local evidence-gathering method, accurate attribution to two sources, and a clear limit on applying the Seattle result locally.