

Questions Move Plans

Use evidence-focused questions to advance a policy discussion.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1c “Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions...”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each question that probes evidence, clarifies an idea, challenges an assumption, or invites a perspective that might be missed. Number the questions in the order they move the conversation forward.

A Later Bell Debate

- ① At a student advisory meeting, the principal introduced a proposal to move the high school’s first bell from 7:25 to 8:20. She cited district survey results: 68 percent of students reported sleeping fewer than eight hours on school nights. Maya supported the change, noting that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later when possible. Jordan asked, “What evidence shows that a later bell, rather than better bedtime habits, would improve attendance?” His question shifted the group from preferences to the proposal’s reasoning.
- ② The principal replied that the survey could not prove why students missed school. She pointed to attendance records from two nearby districts that had changed their schedules, then asked the transportation director, “Can we verify whether their bus routes, course offerings, and student populations were similar to ours?” The director said the comparisons were incomplete because the districts used different bus systems. Eli challenged an assumption behind the proposal: “Are we treating the current elementary schedule as fixed, or could staggered routes make a later high school start possible?” His question opened a practical alternative without dismissing Maya’s concern about sleep.
- ③ A parent representative worried that a later dismissal could push sports practices and after-school jobs into the evening. The activities director agreed that this risk deserved attention, but asked, “Do we know how many students would be affected, and have we heard from students who rely on those jobs?” Nia, a student athlete, proposed a one-semester pilot with adjusted practice times and a survey of workers, athletes, bus riders, and families. The group did not reach a final decision. Instead, members agreed to gather comparable transportation costs, attendance data, and comments from people whose schedules might be changed before recommending a plan.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How does Jordan’s question probe the reasoning behind the later-start proposal?

2 What limitation does the principal clarify about the district sleep survey?

3 Why does the transportation director say the comparisons with nearby districts are incomplete?

4 How does Nia’s proposal ensure that more than one position is considered before a decision is made?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school or community proposal, such as a phone policy, parking rule, or lunch schedule. Write four labeled discussion comments, 90 to 120 words total: one that probes evidence, one that clarifies a claim, one that invites an overlooked perspective, and one that offers a creative next step.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each question that probes evidence, clarifies an idea, challenges an assumption, or invites a perspective that might be missed. Number the questions in the order they move the conversation forward. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Jordan's question probe the reasoning behind the later-start proposal?	It asks for evidence that a later bell, not better bedtime habits, would improve attendance.
2	What limitation does the principal clarify about the district sleep survey?	The survey cannot prove why students missed school.
3	Why does the transportation director say the comparisons with nearby districts are incomplete?	The other districts used different bus systems.
4	How does Nia's proposal ensure that more than one position is considered before a decision is made?	Her pilot and survey would gather views from workers, athletes, bus riders, and families.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Probe: What attendance, nurse-visit, or classroom-disruption data show that phone-locking pouches would solve the problem rather than simply move it outside class? Clarify: When you say emergency access, do you mean students need phones during class, or that families need a reliable way to reach the office? Include: Before deciding, can we hear from students who use phones to manage medical needs, translation, or transportation changes? Create: Could the school test pouches in two volunteer grade levels for six weeks, compare results with similar classes, and revise the plan after students, families, and teachers review the evidence?

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect each question or proposal to evidence, clarification, challenge, inclusion, or a creative next step. For Part 3, responses should include all four labeled moves and use a specific, relevant proposal.