

Pick the Position

Sort claims from opposing counterclaims.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.1a "Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

CLAIM

A claim states a writer's arguable position on an issue. It may include a reason, but it does not have to.

The town ought to turn its vacant lot into a community garden.

COUNTERCLAIM

A counterclaim states a different position that challenges the claim. It must actually disagree with the claim, not merely add another idea.

The town ought to build affordable homes on the vacant lot instead of a community garden.

1 SORT 8 items

The district is considering an 8:30 a.m. high school start time, so circle CLAIM or COUNTER for each statement, then choose two items and explain in one or two sentences each how you identified them.

- | | | | |
|----|---|-------|---------|
| 1. | The district should move the high school start time to 8:30 a.m. | CLAIM | COUNTER |
| 2. | The district should approve an 8:30 start because teens need more sleep. | CLAIM | COUNTER |
| 3. | The district should keep the 7:30 start because a later start could complicate bus routes. | CLAIM | COUNTER |
| 4. | Moving the start time later would help students arrive more alert. | CLAIM | COUNTER |
| 5. | The district should not change the start time because later dismissal could interfere with after-school jobs. | CLAIM | COUNTER |
| 6. | The school board should reject an 8:30 start because changing schedules would cost too much. | CLAIM | COUNTER |
| 7. | The school board should adopt the later start time, even if dismissal shifts later. | CLAIM | COUNTER |
| 8. | The district should keep the current schedule because some families rely on the existing pickup times. | CLAIM | COUNTER |

2

PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

3

MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new claim that supports the 8:30 a.m. start-time proposal and one new counterclaim that opposes it.

CLAIM

COUNTER

CHALLENGE

Write exactly two sentences about a different school proposal: state a claim and explain why the issue matters in the first sentence, then write a counterclaim that directly opposes it in the second sentence.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The district should move the high school start time to 8:30 a.m.	CLAIM	Supports the proposed later start time.
2	The district should approve an 8:30 start because teens need more sleep.	CLAIM	Supports the proposal and gives a reason.
3	The district should keep the 7:30 start because a later start could complicate bus routes.	COUNTER	Opposes the proposed later start time.
4	Moving the start time later would help students arrive more alert.	CLAIM	Supports the proposal by stating a benefit.
5	The district should not change the start time because later dismissal could interfere with after-school jobs.	COUNTER	Opposes the proposal and gives a drawback.
6	The school board should reject an 8:30 start because changing schedules would cost too much.	COUNTER	Opposes the proposal because of cost.
7	The school board should adopt the later start time, even if dismissal shifts later.	CLAIM	Clearly supports adopting the proposal.
8	The district should keep the current schedule because some families rely on the existing pickup times.	COUNTER	Opposes changing the current schedule.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **CLAIM:** The district should start high school at 8:30 a.m. because students would have more time to sleep.
- **COUNTER:** The district should keep the current start time because a later dismissal could leave less time for homework.

Challenge: The school should provide free breakfast because hunger can make it harder for students to focus in class. However, the school should not provide free breakfast because the program could require money needed for classroom materials.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Items 1, 2, 4, and 7 are claims. Items 3, 5, 6, and 8 are counterclaims. For Part 2, accept explanations that correctly identify whether the statement supports or opposes the later-start proposal and refer to the statement's position or reason.