

Speak With Purpose

Study how a short oral statement organizes evidence and persuasion.

ELA.11.C.2.1 "Present information orally, with a logical organization, coherent focus, and credible evidence, while employing effective rhetorical devices where appropriate."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the speaker's main claim and final call to action, circle each source or factual evidence detail, and number the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 by their role in the argument. These marks will help you trace how the speaker builds a focused, credible oral presentation.

A Later Bell for High School

- ① Members of the school board, I urge you to begin high school no earlier than 8:30 a.m. Teenagers are not simply choosing to stay up late. During adolescence, biological sleep timing shifts later, while early bells still demand pre-dawn routines. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later to help students obtain enough sleep. Our decision should match what we know about adolescent health, not what our old schedule assumes. That is a practical standard, not a luxury for learning and safety.
- ② Evidence also shows why the time matters. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that teenagers ages 13 to 18 need 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night. Too little sleep can harm attention, mood, and safety. A later bell will not solve every sleep problem, since homework, jobs, and screens also affect rest. Still, the schedule is one barrier the board controls. If a fire alarm rang at 6:20 each morning, we would not blame students for being tired. Why treat an unnecessarily early bell differently when evidence points elsewhere?
- ③ Some families may worry that a later start would complicate transportation, sports, or child care. Those concerns deserve planning, not dismissal. The board could ask the transportation department to publish route options and could phase in the change for one year while tracking attendance and first-period tardiness. But inconvenience is not the same as impossibility. We can adjust bus times, practice times, and meeting times. We cannot adjust a teenager's biology by ringing a bell earlier. Approve an 8:30 start, then measure the results openly.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What is the speaker's central recommendation, and how does the first paragraph establish a clear focus for it?

- 2 Identify two pieces of credible evidence from the speech. Name the source connected to each piece.

- 3 What rhetorical device does the speaker use in the fire alarm comparison, and what effect does it have on the audience?

- 4 How does the final paragraph address a counterargument while keeping the speech focused on its main claim?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a 130 to 160 word oral statement to a school leader recommending one change at your school or in your community. State your recommendation, support it with at least one credible source, acknowledge one limitation or concern, and use one rhetorical device before ending with a clear call to action.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the speaker's main claim and final call to action, circle each source or factual evidence detail, and number the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 by their role in the argument. These marks will help you trace how the speaker builds a focused, credible oral presentation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the speaker's central recommendation, and how does the first paragraph establish a clear focus for it?	The speaker recommends an 8:30 a.m. or later high school start. The opening connects the recommendation to adolescent biological sleep timing and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation.
2	Identify two pieces of credible evidence from the speech. Name the source connected to each piece.	The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends middle and high school starts at 8:30 a.m. or later. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that teens ages 13 to 18 need 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night.
3	What rhetorical device does the speaker use in the fire alarm comparison, and what effect does it have on the audience?	The speaker uses an analogy and a rhetorical question. The comparison makes it seem unreasonable to blame students for tiredness caused by an early schedule.
4	How does the final paragraph address a counterargument while keeping the speech focused on its main claim?	It acknowledges concerns about transportation, sports, and child care, offers planning steps, then returns to the claim that schedules can change but adolescent biology cannot.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Principal Rivera, our school should place a hand-sanitizer dispenser at each cafeteria entrance and beside the library computers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention explains that hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol can reduce many germs when soap and water are unavailable. At lunch, hundreds of hands touch trays, doors, and keyboards before students return to class. A dispenser will not replace sinks, and students should still wash visibly dirty hands with soap and water. However, it gives students a quick option at crowded times. This is a small change with a clear purpose: fewer shared germs, fewer interruptions, and more time for learning. We lock classroom doors to protect our space. Should we not also provide a simple tool to protect the people inside? Fund the dispensers this semester and track supply use and nurse visits next semester.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately identify the speech's claim, evidence, organization, counterargument, and rhetorical choices. For the oral statement, accept varied topics when the response has a logical sequence, a credible named source, a relevant rhetorical device, and a specific call to action.