

One Survey, Two Plans

Compare how two speakers build opposing arguments from shared evidence.

ELA.11.R.2.4 “Compare the development of multiple arguments on the same topic, evaluating the effectiveness and validity of the claims, the authors’ reasoning, and the ways in which the authors use the same information to achieve different ends.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each speaker’s central claim, circle every reference to the district survey, and number the reasons each speaker gives for using the survey evidence. Your marks will show how the same information supports different arguments.

The Brookdale Start-Time Debate

- ① At a public hearing, the Brookdale school board considered whether high school should begin at 8:30 a.m. instead of 7:45. Both speakers cited a district survey of 1,200 students conducted last spring. In the survey, 62 percent of students reported sleeping fewer than eight hours on school nights, and 54 percent reported arriving late at least once during the month. The survey recorded students’ answers, not their grades, attendance records, work schedules, or causes of missed sleep. Board members also received state guidance saying teens generally need eight to ten hours of sleep each night.
- ② Speaking for the Student Health Coalition, Maya Chen argued that the later start time would improve learning and attendance. She paired the survey with the state sleep guidance, reasoning that students who sleep longer will be more alert in first-period classes. Chen noted that 54 percent reported lateness and said an 8:30 start would give families a realistic chance to reset morning routines. She proposed a one-year trial and asked the board to compare attendance and course grades before and after the change. Her claim treats the students’ reports as evidence that the present schedule harms learning, although the survey did not measure learning.
- ③ Business owner Daniel Reed opposed moving the start time. Using the same survey figures, he argued that reports of short sleep and lateness do not show that a school schedule caused either problem. Reed pointed to student jobs, family duties, and late-night phone use as possible influences on sleep and morning travel. He warned that a later dismissal could conflict with sports practices and after-school jobs. Reed asked the board to keep the current schedule while gathering bus data, activity schedules, and attendance records. He described Chen’s proposed trial as an expensive change based on incomplete information.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What is Chen’s central claim, and what is Reed’s central claim about the school start time?

2 How does each speaker use the survey reports about short sleep and lateness to reach a different end?

3 Which speaker makes a claim that is more directly supported by the survey alone, Chen or Reed? Explain using one limit of the survey.

4 What additional information does Reed want the board to gather, and how could that information strengthen or test an argument?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 95 to 115 word recommendation to the board. Compare Chen’s and Reed’s reasoning, use two survey findings, evaluate the limits of the evidence, and name information the board should examine before deciding.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each speaker's central claim, circle every reference to the district survey, and number the reasons each speaker gives for using the survey evidence. Your marks will show how the same information supports different arguments. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is Chen's central claim, and what is Reed's central claim about the school start time?	Chen claims that Brookdale should move to an 8:30 start time to improve learning and attendance. Reed claims that Brookdale should keep the current schedule because the survey does not show that the start time caused short sleep or lateness.
2	How does each speaker use the survey reports about short sleep and lateness to reach a different end?	Chen uses the reports to support changing to a later start time. Reed uses the same reports to argue that the board should not change the schedule yet because they do not prove cause.
3	Which speaker makes a claim that is more directly supported by the survey alone, Chen or Reed? Explain using one limit of the survey.	Reed's claim about the survey's limit is more directly supported. The survey recorded student reports but did not measure causes of missed sleep, grades, or attendance records, so it cannot prove that the current schedule caused the problems.
4	What additional information does Reed want the board to gather, and how could that information strengthen or test an argument?	Reed requests bus data, activity schedules, and attendance records. These sources could show whether transportation, after-school commitments, or actual attendance patterns affect the decision.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The board should not treat either proposal as proven by the survey alone. Chen uses the finding that 62 percent of students reported fewer than eight hours of sleep and that 54 percent reported lateness to argue for a later start. Yet these reports do not establish that the current schedule caused either problem. Reed makes a stronger point about that limit, but his concerns about sports and jobs are possibilities, not evidence that a change would create conflicts. Before deciding, the board should examine actual attendance records, bus data, and activity schedules. It should also compare grades and attendance during a carefully designed trial.

Accept responses that accurately distinguish the speakers' opposing claims and explain that shared survey data can support different purposes. For Part 3, accept a defensible recommendation that evaluates both causal limits and the strength of the writers' reasoning.