Bell Time Debate

Read an argument and evaluate how its reasoning builds support.

ELA.7.R.2.4 "Track the development of an argument, analyzing the types of reasoning used and their effectiveness."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the central claim and each reason. Circle evidence or examples, then write E by expert evidence, D by data, C by cause-and-effect reasoning, and R by a response to a concern so you can judge how the argument develops.

A Later First Bell

(1) Riverton Middle School should move its first bell from 7:30 to 8:15 next year. The change would give students more time to sleep, especially those who ride early buses. The American Academy of Pediatrics has said that middle and high schools should aim for start times of 8:30 a.m. or later to support teen sleep needs. A later bell would not guarantee that every student sleeps more, but it would remove one barrier. For this reason, the school board should study a new schedule.

(2) Sleep is connected to learning because a rested brain can pay attention and store new information. In a spring survey at Riverton, 312 of 400 seventh graders said they felt tired during first period at least three days each week. This result does not prove that an earlier bell causes every student's tiredness. Still, it shows that fatigue is common enough to examine. The board could compare attendance, nurse visits, and first-period grades before and after a one-year trial. If these measures improve, the schedule change would have stronger support.

(3) Some families and staff members may prefer the earlier bell because changing bus routes, sports practices, and child care can be difficult. That concern matters. However, difficulty is not the same as impossibility. Riverton could adjust bus routes in stages and survey families before choosing a plan. The board should not approve a later start only because experts recommend it. It should weigh health guidance, local survey results, and practical costs. Using several kinds of evidence would make the final decision more careful and fair.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the author's main claim, and what action does the author say the school board should take?

2. What type of reasoning does the author use by mentioning the American Academy of Pediatrics in paragraph 1? How does it support the claim?

3. How does the survey in paragraph 2 support the argument, and what limitation does the author point out?

4. How does paragraph 3 respond to the concern about bus routes, sports, and child care? Why is the final advice to weigh several kinds of evidence effective?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one school change you think should happen. Write a four-sentence argument that includes a claim, cause-and-effect reasoning, a counterclaim with a response, and a second type of reasoning. In your final sentence, name the two reasoning types and explain why they are effective.

ANSWER KEY

Bell Time Debate

GRADE 7 · ELA.7.R.2.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the central claim and each reason. Circle evidence or examples, then write E by expert evidence, D by data, C by cause-and-effect reasoning, and R by a response to a concern so you can judge how the argument develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the author's main claim, and what action does the author say the school board should take?	**The author claims Riverton should move to a later first bell. The board should study a new schedule and weigh evidence before approving it.**
2	What type of reasoning does the author use by mentioning the American Academy of Pediatrics in paragraph 1? How does it support the claim?	**The author uses expert evidence. The recommendation from a health organization supports the idea that later starts can better meet adolescents' sleep needs.**
3	How does the survey in paragraph 2 support the argument, and what limitation does the author point out?	**The survey data shows that tiredness is common among Riverton seventh graders. The author notes that it does not prove an early bell causes every student's tiredness.**
4	How does paragraph 3 respond to the concern about bus routes, sports, and child care? Why is the final advice to weigh several kinds of evidence effective?	**It acknowledges that the concern is real, then suggests adjusting routes in stages and surveying families. Weighing health guidance, local data, and costs makes the decision more balanced and practical.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should add a water-bottle filling station near the gym. Students who exercise need easy access to water, so a nearby station would make refilling faster than walking across the building. Some people may say installation costs too much, but the school can compare the cost with the time and disposable bottles saved over several years. Cause-and-effect reasoning and cost comparison are effective because they connect the proposal to daily needs and a practical concern.

Accept equivalent descriptions of expert evidence, data-based reasoning, cause-and-effect reasoning, and counterclaim responses when students connect them to effectiveness. For Part 3, accept varied school changes if the response has four sentences and includes all required argument parts.