Bell Time Debate

Analyze how an editorial builds its case.

10.T.T.3.a "Read, discuss, evaluate, and critique a variety of texts, considering the argumentative techniques used to present and design content and their associated implications on meaning or central idea. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the main claim and factual evidence, then circle the concession, rhetorical question, and concrete scenario. In the margin, write 1, 2, 3, and 4 beside places where the writer states a claim, gives evidence, responds to an objection, and calls for action.

Start Later, Learn More

1. At 7:20 a.m., many high school classrooms begin while students' bodies are still primed for sleep. During puberty, the release of melatonin shifts later at night, making it harder for many teenagers to fall asleep early. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later. Our district should move the high school start time to 8:45. This change is not about giving students an easier day, it is about giving their brains a fairer chance to learn.

2. Critics may worry that a later bell would disrupt sports, family schedules, and bus routes. Those concerns deserve planning, not dismissal. Districts that change schedules can coordinate buses and adjust practice times, while families can receive schedules well before the new year. More important, an early bell does not erase the need for sleep. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says teens ages 13 to 18 need 8 to 10 hours each night. If we know sleep supports attention, mood, and health, why should the school schedule make enough sleep so difficult?

3. Picture a first-period lab: a student who lay awake past midnight may struggle to follow directions involving heat or chemicals. That image makes the cost of the current schedule visible, but the solution also needs practical steps. The school board should form a transportation committee this fall, publish possible schedules, and vote before spring registration. These steps make the proposal measurable rather than vague. Starting later will not solve every challenge teenagers face, yet it is a responsible decision the district can make now for students.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the writer's central claim? Include one factual detail that supports it.

2. How does the writer's concession about sports, family schedules, and bus routes affect the argument?

3. How does the rhetorical question at the end of paragraph 2 support the central claim?

4. Evaluate the first-period lab scenario in paragraph 3. Why might it persuade readers, and what is one limit of this technique?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 90 to 120 word mini-argument urging a school decision. Include a clear claim, one factual detail, a concession and response, and either a rhetorical question or a concrete scenario. End with a specific call to action.

ANSWER KEY

Bell Time Debate

GRADE 10 · 10.T.T.3.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the main claim and factual evidence, then circle the concession, rhetorical question, and concrete scenario. In the margin, write 1, 2, 3, and 4 beside places where the writer states a claim, gives evidence, responds to an objection, and calls for action. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's central claim? Include one factual detail that supports it.	**The district should move the high school start time to 8:45. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later.**
2	How does the writer's concession about sports, family schedules, and bus routes affect the argument?	**It acknowledges a reasonable objection, then makes the writer seem practical by offering ways to plan for those concerns.**
3	How does the rhetorical question at the end of paragraph 2 support the central claim?	**It pushes readers to see an early start time as inconsistent with the evidence that teens need sleep for attention, mood, and health.**
4	Evaluate the first-period lab scenario in paragraph 3. Why might it persuade readers, and what is one limit of this technique?	**It gives readers a vivid, concrete image of a possible safety concern. However, one hypothetical scenario does not prove that all students or all classes will have that result.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should install two water-refill stations near the gym and cafeteria. Students may carry single-use plastic bottles or wait in line at fountains during busy passing periods. A refill station works with reusable bottles, so one bottle can serve a student throughout the day. Some people may say installation costs too much. However, the school can compare prices, seek community grants, and begin with two high-traffic locations. When students can easily refill a bottle, why make the healthier, less wasteful choice inconvenient? The principal should request cost estimates this semester and present a plan to the school board.

Accept equivalent wording for the central claim and reasonable analysis supported by specific passage details. For the open task, check for the required techniques and whether the order of ideas builds toward the final call to action.