Bell Time Debate

Trace how a writer builds support for a school policy.

10.T.T.3.c "Apply argumentative techniques strategically to enhance writing and engage audiences. (C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the central claim and each supporting reason, circle evidence or concrete examples, and number each move that invites readers to consider the issue, such as a concession or rhetorical question.

A Later Bell for Riverton High

(1) Riverton High should begin classes at 8:30 a.m. rather than 7:45. Many teenagers are not simply choosing to stay up late. During adolescence, biological changes can shift the body's sleep schedule later, making early sleep and early waking harder. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later to support student health, safety, and learning. If our district wants alert students who can participate fully, its schedule should match what sleep research says about adolescent development and learning needs.

(2) Some families may worry that a later bell would complicate bus routes, sports, or after-school jobs. That concern deserves a practical response, not dismissal. The district could survey families, coordinate transportation with nearby schools, and adjust practice times before changing the schedule. These steps would take planning, but planning is less costly than accepting tired drivers and exhausted learners as normal. Consider the first period classroom: when students fight sleep, teachers repeat directions, discussions slow, and important instruction must be revisited. A schedule that protects attention gives every class a stronger start.

(3) Later starts are not a cure for every challenge students face, and a new schedule will not guarantee that every teenager sleeps enough. Still, the district controls one important condition: when school begins. Why keep a timetable that works against the sleep patterns of many adolescents? A pilot program at Riverton High could compare attendance, tardiness, and student feedback before and after a later start. That evidence would help leaders revise the plan if problems appear. By beginning at 8:30, the district would show that student readiness matters as much as efficient routines.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the writer's central claim, and what expert recommendation strengthens it?

2. What concern does the writer concede about a later start, and how does the writer respond to it?

3. How does the first-period classroom example support the writer's argument? Use two details from the passage.

4. What rhetorical question does the writer ask, and what idea does it challenge?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 90-to-120-word argument for a school or community policy that is different from the passage topic. Include a clear claim, one verifiable fact or data point, a concession and response, and either a rhetorical question or a concrete scenario that engages readers.

ANSWER KEY

Bell Time Debate

GRADE 10 · 10.T.T.3.c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the central claim and each supporting reason, circle evidence or concrete examples, and number each move that invites readers to consider the issue, such as a concession or rhetorical question. 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, and what expert recommendation strengthens it?	**Riverton High should start at 8:30 a.m. instead of 7:45. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later.**
2	What concern does the writer concede about a later start, and how does the writer respond to it?	**The writer concedes that bus routes, sports, and after-school jobs could become more difficult. The response proposes surveys, transportation coordination, and adjusted practice times.**
3	How does the first-period classroom example support the writer's argument? Use two details from the passage.	**It shows that tired students cause teachers to repeat directions, slow discussions, and revisit important instruction.**
4	What rhetorical question does the writer ask, and what idea does it challenge?	**"Why keep a timetable that works against the sleep patterns of many adolescents?" It challenges keeping the current early schedule.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Riverton High should place clearly labeled recycling bins beside every cafeteria trash station. The Environmental Protection Agency reports that recycling aluminum uses far less energy than producing new aluminum from raw materials. At lunch, students often toss cans into crowded trash bins because recycling containers are hard to find. Some people may say more bins will create clutter and require staff time. However, placing bins next to existing stations would make sorting simple, and student volunteers could explain the system during the first week. Why send usable materials to a landfill when one visible change could reduce waste? The principal should begin with a one-month trial.

Accept responses that use the passage accurately and explain how a technique supports the argument or engages readers. For Part 3, accept varied policy positions if the response is 90 to 120 words and includes all required argumentative moves.