The Persuasion Plan

Analyze how a proposal builds support for a later school start.

11.T.T.3 "Argumentative Techniques: Evaluate and apply argumentative techniques to enhance text's appeal to audiences or achieve specific purposes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline evidence or source-based reasoning, circle words that appeal to the school board's responsibilities or values, and write C beside a counterargument or rebuttal. These marks will help you evaluate how the writer tries to persuade this audience.

A Better First Bell

1. Members of the school board, our high school should begin at 8:30 a.m. or later. Adolescents are not simply older children: their body clocks shift later during puberty, making very early sleep difficult. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 or later, and teenagers ages 13 to 18 generally need eight to ten hours of sleep. When the first bell rings before many students are fully alert, classes ask them to learn during a biological low point. A later schedule would give learning a fairer start.

2. Some families worry that a later bell will disrupt bus routes, athletics, and after-school jobs. Those concerns deserve planning, not dismissal. District leaders could phase in the change, coordinate transportation, and protect activity time with adjusted practice schedules. More important, the cost of preserving an early bell is visible in classrooms. A student who struggles to stay awake during first period may miss directions, participate less, and carry unfinished work into the evening. That student is not lazy or careless. The schedule may be forcing school demands to collide with a well-documented developmental need. Is convenience a strong enough reason to ignore that conflict?

3. Board members, you are responsible for balancing competing needs, so this decision cannot rest on habit alone. Review local attendance, tardiness, and first-period grade data before setting next year's calendar. Then invite students, families, transportation staff, and coaches to compare workable options at a public meeting. This proposal does not promise that a later bell will solve every challenge. It asks the district to weigh measurable local results alongside medical guidance about adolescent sleep. By testing a later start with a clear review plan, the board can protect both community routines and students' readiness to learn.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the reference to the American Academy of Pediatrics strengthen the writer's argument?

2. Identify one concern the writer acknowledges in paragraph 2. How does the writer respond to that concern?

3. What effect does the rhetorical question at the end of paragraph 2 have on the school board audience?

4. How does paragraph 3 adapt the argument to its specific audience differently from paragraph 1?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 90 to 120 word message to your principal advocating one school improvement other than changing the start time. Include a clear claim, a concrete reason or piece of evidence, a counterargument with a response, and either a rhetorical question or a direct appeal to the principal's responsibilities.

ANSWER KEY

The Persuasion Plan

GRADE 11 · 11.T.T.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline evidence or source-based reasoning, circle words that appeal to the school board's responsibilities or values, and write C beside a counterargument or rebuttal. These marks will help you evaluate how the writer tries to persuade this audience. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the reference to the American Academy of Pediatrics strengthen the writer's argument?	**It adds credible medical expertise and supports the claim with evidence about adolescent sleep and school start times.**
2	Identify one concern the writer acknowledges in paragraph 2. How does the writer respond to that concern?	**The writer acknowledges possible disruption to bus routes, athletics, or after-school jobs, then argues that planning, phased changes, and adjusted schedules can address those problems.**
3	What effect does the rhetorical question at the end of paragraph 2 have on the school board audience?	**It pushes board members to question whether convenience should outweigh students' developmental need for sleep.**
4	How does paragraph 3 adapt the argument to its specific audience differently from paragraph 1?	**Paragraph 3 directly addresses board members, appeals to their duty to balance needs, and proposes local data and public review. Paragraph 1 mainly builds logical support through medical guidance and sleep information.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Principal Nguyen, please keep the library open for one hour after the final bell on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Many students wait for late buses or need a quiet place to finish assignments, and the library already offers tables, computers, and research materials. Some may argue that extended hours would require too much staff time. However, a rotating schedule of volunteer teachers and trained student aides could limit that burden. As the leader responsible for equitable access to learning, you can give students a dependable workspace. Why should a bus schedule decide whether a student has a place to study?

Accept responses that accurately identify techniques and explain how each technique could influence school board members. For the open task, accept varied topics and positions when the response meets the word range and uses all required argumentative moves.