Bell Time Debate

Trace how a model argument builds from claim to conclusion.

6.T.T.3.a "Recognize and explain argumentative techniques used to present and design content, including an author's claim, supporting relevant evidence, an identified counterclaim, and a conclusion that logically follows the argument. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the author's claim, box two pieces of supporting evidence, circle the counterclaim, and write 1 beside the conclusion. Your marks should show how the author builds the argument.

A Better Start Time

1 Riverview Middle School should begin classes at 8:30 a.m. instead of 7:45 a.m. Many students arrive tired, and sleep supports learning, health, and safe travel. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later so teenagers can get enough sleep. This change would not make school easier. It would give students a better chance to be alert when lessons begin and to participate fully in class.

2 Some families may worry that a later start would disrupt bus schedules, sports, or after-school jobs. That concern deserves planning, but it is not a reason to keep a schedule that leaves students sleepy. Districts can adjust bus routes and practice times. In Seattle, public high schools moved to later start times in 2016. A study of two Seattle high schools found that students slept about 34 minutes longer on school nights after the change, and their median grades rose 4.5 percent.

3 For these reasons, Riverview should test an 8:30 start time for one year and ask students, families, and staff to report what changes. The school can compare attendance, tardiness, and student sleep surveys with results from the year before. A trial would let leaders solve transportation problems while checking whether students are more ready to learn. A later start is a practical step because it responds to the scheduling concern and is supported by evidence about sleep.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the author's claim?

2. Identify two pieces of relevant evidence the author uses to support the claim. Explain how each piece supports the claim.

3. What counterclaim does the author identify, and how does the author respond to it?

4. What does the conclusion recommend, and why does that conclusion logically follow the argument?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one change you think would improve your school. Write a four-sentence argument: state a claim, give relevant evidence, name and respond to a counterclaim, and end with a conclusion that follows your argument.

ANSWER KEY

Bell Time Debate

GRADE 6 · 6.T.T.3.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the author's claim, box two pieces of supporting evidence, circle the counterclaim, and write 1 beside the conclusion. Your marks should show how the author builds the argument. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the author's claim?	**Riverview Middle School should begin classes at 8:30 a.m. instead of 7:45 a.m.**
2	Identify two pieces of relevant evidence the author uses to support the claim. Explain how each piece supports the claim.	**The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 8:30 a.m. or later starts, which supports the idea that later starts help teenagers get enough sleep. The Seattle study found students slept about 34 minutes longer and median grades rose 4.5 percent after later starts, which supports the benefits of a later schedule.**
3	What counterclaim does the author identify, and how does the author respond to it?	**The counterclaim is that later starts could disrupt bus schedules, sports, or after-school jobs. The author responds that districts can adjust bus routes and practice times, and that the concern should be planned for rather than used to keep students sleepy.**
4	What does the conclusion recommend, and why does that conclusion logically follow the argument?	**The conclusion recommends testing an 8:30 start time for one year. It follows because the evidence supports later starts, while a trial could also address transportation and scheduling concerns.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should add a water-bottle filling station near the cafeteria. Reusable bottles can be filled many times, which could reduce the number of single-use bottles students throw away. Some people may worry about the cost, but the school could install one station first and review its use. Therefore, one station is a practical first step toward less waste.

Accept equivalent wording that correctly identifies the claim, relevant evidence, counterclaim, response, and conclusion. For the open response, accept varied school-change topics if all four required argument parts are present and the conclusion fits the reasons given.