The Last Bus

Investigate how a school policy may shape access to clubs.

S.7.4 "Conduct research and analysis on an issue associated with social structure or social institutions."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the district bus rule, circle one finding from club records and one from interviews, and number two questions the district notice leaves unanswered.

Who Can Stay After School?

1. At fictional Cedar High, the last school bus leaves at 3:20 p.m., twenty minutes after classes end. Debate club meets until 4:15, and some students say the schedule keeps them from joining. The bus schedule is a rule set by the school district, not a choice each student can change alone. A student research team asks whether the schedule limits access to clubs, especially for students who cannot get a ride home. They plan to compare the written bus schedule with club records and student accounts. Each source can reveal something different about the same issue.

2. The team reviews debate club sign-in sheets for September and October. Of 18 students who attended at least once, 11 listed the district bus as their usual ride home on an anonymous survey. Six of those 11 stopped attending by October, compared with one of the seven who used other rides. In interviews, three bus riders say they left meetings early to catch the bus. These sources suggest a link between transportation and participation, but they do not prove the bus schedule caused every absence. Students may also miss meetings because of jobs, sports, or family duties.

3. The team also reads a district notice explaining that a later bus was canceled the previous year because too few students used it. The notice gives a reason for the policy, but it does not say whether students knew the later bus existed or whether its route served their neighborhoods. Club records cover only debate club, and interviews include only students who agreed to speak. The team recommends asking students in several clubs about their routes and collecting ridership counts from a short trial of a 4:30 bus. That evidence could help the district weigh costs against access before changing the schedule.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why is the bus schedule an issue about a social institution rather than only about students' personal choices?

2. What do the club records and survey suggest about transportation and participation? Use both groups' results, and explain one limit of the finding.

3. How do the interviews and the district notice offer different evidence about the bus schedule? What can neither source establish on its own?

4. How would the team's proposed research address a limit of the evidence it has already collected?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

The district proposes a 4:30 bus that stops only at the community center. Write a short research plan that names two kinds of evidence you would collect, explains how you would use them to judge access and cost, and identifies one limit your research might still have.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the district bus rule, circle one finding from club records and one from interviews, and number two questions the district notice leaves unanswered. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is the bus schedule an issue about a social institution rather than only about students' personal choices?	**The school district sets the bus schedule. Students who depend on that bus cannot simply choose to stay for a club that ends after it leaves.**
2	What do the club records and survey suggest about transportation and participation? Use both groups' results, and explain one limit of the finding.	**Six of 11 bus riders stopped attending, compared with one of seven students using other rides. This suggests a link, but jobs, sports, or family duties could also explain absences.**
3	How do the interviews and the district notice offer different evidence about the bus schedule? What can neither source establish on its own?	**Three bus riders reported leaving meetings early, while the notice says a later bus was canceled because too few students used it. Neither source alone establishes whether a later bus would serve students well now.**
4	How would the team's proposed research address a limit of the evidence it has already collected?	**Asking students in several clubs would extend the research beyond debate club. A trial bus would provide ridership counts for a possible new schedule.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would survey students in several clubs about where they live, whether they could reach the community center, and how they get home now. I would also request the district's estimated cost and ridership counts from a short trial of the proposed bus. I would compare the survey responses with the trial counts to see who could use the stop, then weigh the number of riders against the cost. Students who do not attend clubs now might be missing from my survey, even though the new bus could help them join.

Accept reasonable inferences that distinguish evidence of a possible link from proof of cause. For the research plan, look for two relevant evidence sources, a way to assess both access and cost, and a specific limitation.