

Bell Time Debate

Trace a claim, test its evidence, and spot a distraction.

7R8 "Trace and evaluate the development of an argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient and recognizing when irrelevant evidence is introduced. (RI&RL)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the main claim and each piece of evidence, circle any fact that does not support the claim, and number the reasoning that connects evidence to the claim.

Should Riverbend Start Later?

- ① At a Riverbend Town Council meeting, student Maya Ortiz argued that Riverbend Middle School should move its opening bell from 7:35 to 8:00 next fall. Her main claim was that a later start would help students arrive more alert and ready to learn. Maya noted that many seventh graders ride buses before sunrise, then begin difficult classes soon after reaching school. She asked the council to consider a schedule that gives students more morning rest without changing the length of the school day.
- ② To support this idea, Maya presented two pieces of evidence. First, a school survey found that 126 of 180 seventh graders felt tired during first period on most days. Second, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later. The recommendation supports Maya's broad point that starting later could benefit students. However, it does not specifically show that an 8:00 start, rather than 8:30 or another time, is the best choice for Riverbend.
- ③ Maya also told the council that Riverbend's robotics team had won a regional award. This fact may make people proud, but it does not show whether an 8:00 opening bell would improve alertness or learning. Her evidence suggests that tiredness is a concern, yet it does not prove that the proposed time will solve it. Before deciding, the council would need information about bus routes, transportation costs, and effects on after-school activities and family schedules.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Which broader part of Maya's argument does the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation support? Explain why it does not directly prove that 8:00 is the right opening time.

2 Is the school survey relevant evidence for Maya's claim? Explain what the survey shows and what it does not show.

3 Which detail is irrelevant to Maya's argument? Explain why it is irrelevant.

4 Name two kinds of information the council still needs before deciding. Explain how one of them could help the council assess Maya's 8:00 proposal.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a seven-sentence mini-argument for one change at your school. State a clear claim, use two relevant pieces of evidence with reasoning, then include an "Irrelevant:" fact and explain why it does not support your claim.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the main claim and each piece of evidence, circle any fact that does not support the claim, and number the reasoning that connects evidence to the claim. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which broader part of Maya's argument does the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation support? Explain why it does not directly prove that 8:00 is the right opening time.	It supports Maya's general claim that a later school start could benefit students. It does not prove that 8:00 is best because the recommendation says 8:30 a.m. or later.
2	Is the school survey relevant evidence for Maya's claim? Explain what the survey shows and what it does not show.	Yes. It shows that many seventh graders report feeling tired during first period, but it does not show that moving the bell to 8:00 will solve the problem or improve learning.
3	Which detail is irrelevant to Maya's argument? Explain why it is irrelevant.	The robotics team's regional award is irrelevant. It does not provide evidence about start times, student alertness, or learning.
4	Name two kinds of information the council still needs before deciding. Explain how one of them could help the council assess Maya's 8:00 proposal.	The council needs information about bus routes, transportation costs, and effects on after-school activities and family schedules. For example, bus-route information could show whether buses can realistically bring students at the proposed later time.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should add a covered bike rack near the front entrance. A survey of 80 students found that 29 ride bicycles to school at least once a week. This evidence shows that many students could use the rack. On three rainy mornings, bicycles were left against the fence because the rack was full. This matters because the current parking area does not hold enough bicycles. Irrelevant: The cafeteria added fruit cups last month. That change does not show whether students need a covered place to park bicycles.

Accept equivalent explanations that distinguish support for a later start in general from proof that 8:00 is the best specific time. For Part 3, accept any clear claim with two relevant evidence-based reasons and an accurately identified irrelevant fact.