

Position or Pushback?

Sort statements that support an argument from statements that challenge it.

8W1.a "Introduce a precise claim, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from a counterclaim, and organize the reasons and evidence logically."

NAME _____ DATE _____

MAIN CLAIM

A main claim states the writer's position on an issue. It is specific enough to support with reasons and evidence.

The city library should stay open on Sundays because weekend hours help families use its services.

COUNTERCLAIM

A counterclaim gives a reasonable position that disagrees with the main claim. It is not the writer's final position.

Some residents say that Sunday library hours would cost too much to staff.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For Part 1, circle CLAIM or OPPOSING for each statement, then in Part 2, choose two items and explain which words helped you sort them.

- | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Our school should require uniforms because they can reduce distractions about clothing. | <input type="button" value="CLAIM"/> | <input type="button" value="OPPOSING"/> |
| 2. | Because uniforms can create a clearer dress code, our school should adopt them. | <input type="button" value="CLAIM"/> | <input type="button" value="OPPOSING"/> |
| 3. | Some families argue that required uniforms create an extra expense. | <input type="button" value="CLAIM"/> | <input type="button" value="OPPOSING"/> |
| 4. | Our school should require uniforms to build a stronger sense of community. | <input type="button" value="CLAIM"/> | <input type="button" value="OPPOSING"/> |
| 5. | Opponents say students should be able to show their identity through their clothing. | <input type="button" value="CLAIM"/> | <input type="button" value="OPPOSING"/> |
| 6. | Required uniforms may limit students' freedom to choose what they wear. | <input type="button" value="CLAIM"/> | <input type="button" value="OPPOSING"/> |
| 7. | A uniform policy would make the dress code clearer for everyone, so our school should require uniforms. | <input type="button" value="CLAIM"/> | <input type="button" value="OPPOSING"/> |
| 8. | Our school should adopt uniforms because a consistent dress code can reduce arguments about clothing rules. | <input type="button" value="CLAIM"/> | <input type="button" value="OPPOSING"/> |

2

PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM #

HOW I KNEW

ITEM #

HOW I KNEW

3

MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Using the topic of adding 10 minutes to lunch, write one CLAIM that supports the change and one OPPOSING statement that challenges it.

CLAIM

OPPOSING

CHALLENGE

Write exactly two sentences about a later school start time: state a precise claim with evidence in the first sentence, then acknowledge a counterclaim and explain why your claim is stronger in the second sentence.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Our school should require uniforms because they can reduce distractions about clothing.	CLAIM	States the writer's position in favor of required uniforms and gives a reason.
2	Because uniforms can create a clearer dress code, our school should adopt them.	CLAIM	Supports the position that the school should adopt uniforms.
3	Some families argue that required uniforms create an extra expense.	OPPOSING	Presents a reason against the uniform policy.
4	Our school should require uniforms to build a stronger sense of community.	CLAIM	States a position in favor of uniforms and gives a reason.
5	Opponents say students should be able to show their identity through their clothing.	OPPOSING	Presents an opposing position against required uniforms.
6	Required uniforms may limit students' freedom to choose what they wear.	OPPOSING	Gives a reason that challenges the uniform policy.
7	A uniform policy would make the dress code clearer for everyone, so our school should require uniforms.	CLAIM	States a clear position in favor of uniforms with a supporting reason.
8	Our school should adopt uniforms because a consistent dress code can reduce arguments about clothing rules.	CLAIM	States a position in favor of uniforms and supports it with a reason.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **CLAIM:** Our school should add 10 minutes to lunch because students need enough time to eat.
- **OPPOSING:** Some people argue that lunch should stay the same length because a longer lunch could shorten class time.

Challenge: Our middle school should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m. because the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 8:30 a.m. or later for middle and high schools to support healthy sleep. Although some families may worry that a later start would complicate schedules, schools can plan bus and activity times, while an earlier start cannot give students the sleep they lose.

Answers: 1 CLAIM, 2 CLAIM, 3 OPPOSING, 4 CLAIM, 5 OPPOSING, 6 OPPOSING, 7 CLAIM, 8 CLAIM. A counterclaim disagrees with the main position, while a claim states or supports the writer's position.