

Words That Convince

How precise vocabulary and evidence sharpen an argument.

8W1.c "Use precise language and content-specific vocabulary to argue a claim."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the claim, circle at least four precise or content-specific terms, and number two places where the author provides evidence to support the claim.

A Later Bell

- ① Our district should move the middle and high school start time from 7:25 to 8:15 a.m.
Adolescents' circadian rhythms naturally shift later during puberty, making it difficult for many students to fall asleep early enough. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later. A later schedule would better match students' biological sleep patterns and give them a stronger chance to arrive alert and ready to learn.
- ② Sleep loss affects more than yawning in first period. In a 2018 study published in *Science Advances*, researchers found that Seattle students slept 34 minutes longer after their school start time moved later. Their median grades rose by 4.5 percent, although the study cannot prove that extra sleep alone caused the increase. This measured evidence supports a practical prediction: students who begin class rested may sustain attention, process new material, and participate more consistently each day.
- ③ Critics may argue that a later dismissal would disrupt sports, jobs, and family transportation. Those concerns deserve planning, but they do not outweigh the health and learning benefits. District leaders could coordinate practice times, expand late buses, and survey families before changing schedules. A careful transition would address logistical constraints instead of ignoring them. Because the proposal responds to both adolescent biology and local scheduling needs, the district should adopt a later start time next year.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Quote the author's main claim. Which precise scheduling details make the claim specific?

2 How does the phrase "circadian rhythms naturally shift later" strengthen the author's reason for a later start time?

3 What numerical evidence from Seattle supports the argument, and what limitation does the author state about that evidence?

4 What counterclaim does the author acknowledge? Name two actions the district could take to address it.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence argument recommending one change at your school. State a clear claim, use at least three precise, content-specific terms, and include one specific piece of evidence or example that supports your reason.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the claim, circle at least four precise or content-specific terms, and number two places where the author provides evidence to support the claim. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Quote the author's main claim. Which precise scheduling details make the claim specific?	The claim is that the district should move the middle and high school start time from 7:25 to 8:15 a.m. The current and proposed start times make it specific.
2	How does the phrase "circadian rhythms naturally shift later" strengthen the author's reason for a later start time?	It gives a biological explanation: during puberty, adolescents' internal sleep patterns shift later, so falling asleep early is difficult.
3	What numerical evidence from Seattle supports the argument, and what limitation does the author state about that evidence?	Seattle students slept 34 minutes longer, and their median grades rose by 4.5 percent. The author states that the study cannot prove extra sleep alone caused the grade increase.
4	What counterclaim does the author acknowledge? Name two actions the district could take to address it.	The author acknowledges that later dismissal could disrupt sports, jobs, and family transportation. The district could coordinate practice times, expand late buses, or survey families.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should install additional water refill stations near the gym and cafeteria. During physical education, students need hydration to replace fluids lost through perspiration. At present, the nearest fountain to the gym often has a line after class. Refill stations with filtration would let students fill reusable bottles efficiently and could reduce disposable plastic waste. The principal should include this equipment in the next facilities budget.

Accept equivalent wording when students identify the claim, relevant numerical evidence, and the stated limitation. In Part 3, look for a clear recommendation, at least three topic-specific terms used accurately, and a relevant specific example or fact.