Behind the Bell

Weigh sources before making a recommendation

11.6.R.2 "Students will synthesize relevant information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, following ethical and legal citation guidelines."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one claim drawn from each source, circle a limitation or assumption connected to each claim, and number the three sources so you can track where the information began.

Should the First Bell Ring Later?

1 At fictional Cedar Ridge High, a proposal to move the first bell from 7:30 to 8:15 raised a question: whose evidence counts? The Cedar Ridge Student Council's *Start-Time Survey Summary* (October 2025) is a primary source because it reports the council's own survey. Of 600 enrolled students, 120 responded; 84 respondents favored the later bell. That is 70 percent of respondents, not 70 percent of the school. The summary says the survey link was shared in homeroom for three days, but it does not show whether students who skipped it had different views.

2 Another primary source, the Cedar Ridge School Board's *Transportation Committee Minutes* (November 2025), records a bus coordinator's estimate: changing routes could add $18,000 to annual transportation costs. The minutes also record the coordinator saying, "This estimate assumes we keep the same number of buses" (Cedar Ridge School Board, 2025). That condition matters because a different bus plan could change the cost. Minutes preserve what was said at a meeting, not a verified final budget. Both primary records illuminate the decision, but neither shows whether a later bell would improve sleep or attendance at this particular school.

3 In *Later Bell, Longer Debate* (December 2025), reporter Lena Ortiz of the fictional *Ridge Ledger* summarizes both records and calls support "overwhelming." Her article is a secondary source: she interprets evidence gathered by others. Ortiz repeats the $18,000 figure without the coordinator's stated assumption and does not give the number of students who received the survey link. She also interviews a student who says early alarms make concentrating difficult, an experience the two primary records do not measure. When you borrow Ortiz's interpretation, cite her article as (Ortiz, 2025); when you quote the minutes, use quotation marks and cite the board.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Ortiz calls support for the later bell "overwhelming." Use the survey results to explain why that word may mislead a reader. Cite both sources.

2. What can the survey and the board minutes together tell a decision-maker, and what important outcome can neither establish? Cite both sources.

3. Ortiz repeats the $18,000 figure. What condition should appear beside it, and why should a writer check the minutes rather than rely only on her article?

4. Could Ortiz's student interview and the council survey together prove that a later bell would improve concentration across the school? Explain using both sources.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an editor's note of 70 to 100 words recommending a next step on the bell proposal. Synthesize all three sources, cite each by creator and year, quote the coordinator's exact words with quotation marks, and identify one limit of the evidence.

ANSWER KEY

Behind the Bell

GRADE 11 · 11.6.R.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one claim drawn from each source, circle a limitation or assumption connected to each claim, and number the three sources so you can track where the information began. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Ortiz calls support for the later bell "overwhelming." Use the survey results to explain why that word may mislead a reader. Cite both sources.	**Ortiz calls support "overwhelming" (Ortiz, 2025), but only 84 of 600 enrolled students expressed support in the survey. The 70 percent figure describes the 120 respondents, not the whole school (Cedar Ridge Student Council, 2025).**
2	What can the survey and the board minutes together tell a decision-maker, and what important outcome can neither establish? Cite both sources.	**The survey shows that 84 respondents favor a later bell (Cedar Ridge Student Council, 2025), while the minutes record a possible transportation cost (Cedar Ridge School Board, 2025). Neither establishes whether a later bell would improve sleep or attendance at Cedar Ridge.**
3	Ortiz repeats the $18,000 figure. What condition should appear beside it, and why should a writer check the minutes rather than rely only on her article?	**The estimate assumes the school keeps the same number of buses. The minutes record that condition directly (Cedar Ridge School Board, 2025), but Ortiz's article omits it (Ortiz, 2025).**
4	Could Ortiz's student interview and the council survey together prove that a later bell would improve concentration across the school? Explain using both sources.	**No. One student's account describes an individual experience (Ortiz, 2025), and the council survey measures preferences rather than changes in concentration (Cedar Ridge Student Council, 2025).**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Cedar Ridge should test a later bell for one semester before making a permanent change. In the student council survey, 84 of 120 respondents supported it, but only one-fifth of enrolled students responded (Cedar Ridge Student Council, 2025). Ortiz calls that support "overwhelming," a judgment that may hide the low response rate (Ortiz, 2025). The bus coordinator warned, "This estimate assumes we keep the same number of buses" (Cedar Ridge School Board, 2025). Before voting, the board should survey more students and request updated route plans and cost estimates.

Accept other qualified recommendations that distinguish respondents from all students and treat the bus cost as an estimate. Citations must identify the source of each borrowed claim, and the coordinator's copied words must match the minutes.