A Later Bell

Trace how a writer builds and answers an argument

8.3.W.3 "Students will compose argumentative essays that: • introduce precise claims • acknowledge counterclaims • organize claims, counterclaims, and evidence in a logical sequence • provide relevant evidence to develop arguments..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the precise claim, circle two pieces of evidence and their sources, and label the counterclaim 1 and the writer's response 2 to trace the argument.

Should Middle School Start Later?

(1) At 7:15 a.m., a student may be sitting in science class while still fighting sleep. Our district should begin middle school at 8:30 a.m. or later on school days. This change addresses a specific problem: early bells can cut into the sleep teenagers need. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), teens ages 13 to 17 need 8 to 10 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. A later bell would give students a better chance to meet that need.

(2) The timing matters, not just the number of hours. In a 2014 policy statement, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later. The AAP explained that puberty shifts adolescents' natural sleep cycles toward later bedtimes and wake times. That research makes the proposed bell time more than a guess. Starting later cannot guarantee that every student will sleep more, but it removes one school-imposed barrier to getting enough rest before first period.

(3) Changing the bell schedule could disrupt bus routes and after-school activities, and families may reasonably worry about those costs. However, those challenges call for planning, not for keeping an early start without discussion. Before changing the schedule, the district could ask transportation staff to map bus routes and ask families which activities would be affected. District leaders could then compare options and publish a plan before any vote. Because the health guidance supports a later start, the district should investigate how to make one work rather than dismiss the idea.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What precise change does the writer want the district to make? Include the proposed time.

2. How does the CDC evidence support the writer's claim?

3. Why is the AAP recommendation especially relevant to the writer's proposed start time?

4. What concern does the writer acknowledge, and what step does the writer propose in response?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) states that reducing and reusing materials can prevent waste before it is created. Write one formal paragraph arguing that your school should replace disposable cafeteria trays with washable trays; include a precise claim, relevant EPA evidence, a counterclaim, and your response in a logical order.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the precise claim, circle two pieces of evidence and their sources, and label the counterclaim 1 and the writer's response 2 to trace the argument. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What precise change does the writer want the district to make? Include the proposed time.	**Begin middle school at 8:30 a.m. or later on school days.**
2	How does the CDC evidence support the writer's claim?	**The CDC says teens ages 13 to 17 need 8 to 10 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. A later start could give students a better chance to get enough sleep.**
3	Why is the AAP recommendation especially relevant to the writer's proposed start time?	**The AAP recommends an 8:30 a.m. or later start for middle and high schools, matching the writer's proposed time. Its explanation of adolescents' later sleep cycles supports the reason for that change.**
4	What concern does the writer acknowledge, and what step does the writer propose in response?	**A later start could disrupt bus routes and after-school activities. The writer proposes gathering information from transportation staff and families, then comparing options before a vote.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should replace its disposable cafeteria trays with washable trays to reduce lunchroom waste. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explains that reducing and reusing materials prevents waste before it is created. Since washable trays can be used repeatedly, they would reduce the number of trays thrown away after lunch. Some families may worry about the cost of buying and washing them. However, the school could compare those costs with current spending before making a change. A careful plan would let the school cut waste while addressing its budget.

Accept paraphrases that accurately connect each source to the claim. In Part 3, look for a formal, logically ordered paragraph that uses the supplied EPA evidence and responds to a relevant counterclaim.