

Weigh the Evidence

Develop fair claims and counterclaims from shared records.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1b "Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB This school proposal is fictional. Underline the main claim and counterclaim. Circle support for each, then mark a strength with S and a limitation with L.

Should Riverton High Start Later?

- ① Riverton High should begin at 8:30 a.m., thirty minutes later than its current schedule. A 2014 American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 or later because many adolescents naturally fall asleep later and still need adequate sleep. A later bell could help students arrive more alert for first-period classes. This claim is strongest for families concerned about learning and safety, since tired teen drivers may be less attentive. Still, the recommendation does not guarantee that every student will sleep longer. Students who keep late jobs, use screens late at night, or have early responsibilities might not gain the full benefit.
- ② Others argue that Riverton High should keep its 8:00 a.m. start. The district shares buses with elementary schools, and changing the high school schedule could require new routes, additional buses, or altered elementary schedules. Coaches also worry that later dismissal would shorten practice time before games, especially when daylight fades early. These are practical concerns, not excuses to ignore. Their strength is that they identify costs and effects on younger students and activities. Their limitation is that they do not show that the current start time is best for teenagers. The board should ask for route estimates and schedules before deciding.

- ③ Riverton could test the later start for one semester instead of changing it permanently. During the trial, the district could compare attendance, first-period tardiness, bus costs, and students' reported sleep with the same measures from the previous semester. This evidence would address families who want better rest but also taxpayers who worry about spending. A trial has limits: one semester may include unusual weather or sports schedules, and surveys measure what students report rather than every hour they sleep. Even so, the test would give the board local evidence, rather than relying only on a national recommendation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What is the writer's main claim? Give one piece of evidence used to support it.

- 2 What strength and what limitation does the passage give for the later-start claim?

- 3 State the counterclaim and explain why the passage treats it as a reasonable concern.

- 4 How does the proposed one-semester trial respond to two different audience concerns? Include one limit of the trial.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Use these fictional records: at noon on one rainy Tuesday, all 20 bike-rack spaces were occupied and 22 other bicycles were locked to railings. An installation estimate prices 20 additional covered spaces at \$2,400; maintenance costs and year-round demand are unknown. Write a 130-180-word recommendation to the school board in two paragraphs.

Develop both positions fairly

Support your claim and a reasonable counterclaim with the supplied records. Explain a strength and limitation of each position, address an audience concern, and justify your recommendation. Do not invent measurements. Leave a blank line between paragraphs.

[illegible]

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

This school proposal is fictional. Underline the main claim and counterclaim. Circle support for each, then mark a strength with S and a limitation with L. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's main claim? Give one piece of evidence used to support it.	Riverton High should start at 8:30 a.m. One supporting piece of evidence is that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 8:30 or later for middle and high schools.
2	What strength and what limitation does the passage give for the later-start claim?	A strength is that a later start could support alertness, learning, and safety. A limitation is that some students may not sleep longer because of jobs, screens, or early responsibilities.
3	State the counterclaim and explain why the passage treats it as a reasonable concern.	The counterclaim is that the school should keep its 8:00 a.m. start. It is reasonable because a schedule change could affect shared bus routes, elementary students, costs, and after-school activities.
4	How does the proposed one-semester trial respond to two different audience concerns? Include one limit of the trial.	The trial would provide information about sleep and attendance for families who want better rest, and bus costs for taxpayers concerned about spending. One limitation is that a single semester could include unusual weather or sports schedules.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Recommendation: The board should investigate adding bicycle parking because the fictional Tuesday count shows demand beyond the twenty available spaces: twenty-two other bicycles were locked to railings. This local observation supports considering more parking and addresses families concerned about where students can leave bicycles. However, a single rainy-day count cannot show year-round demand or establish that a roof is necessary. It also suggests that twenty extra spaces would not accommodate all forty-two bicycles observed that day.

A reasonable counterclaim is to delay the project because the quoted installation would cost \$2,400 and maintenance costs remain unknown. This position takes taxpayers' budget concerns seriously and uses a specific estimate, but the price alone does not establish poor value or compare other options. I recommend collecting counts on additional days and obtaining maintenance and alternative-design estimates before approving a purchase. These checks could clarify demand, capacity and cost without dismissing either current parking needs or competing uses of school funds.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Require two paragraphs, 130-180 words, fair development of claim and counterclaim, supplied evidence for each, genuine strengths and limits, a board/family/taxpayer concern, and a justified recommendation. Accept other supported positions. All local school details and bike records are fictional practice material. Forty-two bicycles were observed simultaneously, not forty-two distinct users over a week; twenty added spaces would yield forty spaces. A rainy-day observation does not establish demand for a cover. The \$2,400 is an installation estimate only; neither affordability nor life-cycle value is known. Do not reward invented observations. Reading background: AAP, School Start Times for Adolescents (2014), <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2014-1697>. Its recommendation does not prove outcomes for fictional Riverton. Accept accurate claim/counterclaim annotations and equivalent evidence-based answers.