

Start Time Spotlight

Analyze how evidence and page design shape an argument.

9.T.T.3.a “Read, discuss, evaluate, and critique a variety of texts, considering the argumentative techniques used to present and design content and their associated implications on meaning or central idea. (I)”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read the publication mockup. Underline its claim and each piece of evidence. Circle two design choices, such as a heading, illustration, quotation box, sidebar, or button. Use the Design Notes lines to explain how each might shape a reader’s response.

RIVERVIEW VOICE | Student opinion | September issue

Classroom simulation: Riverview, Maya and the petition are fictional. Named research and health guidance are real.

Sleep Is a School Issue

Should Riverview Start Later?

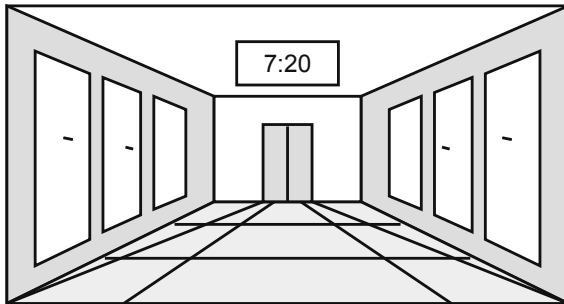


Illustration: an empty hallway at 7:20 a.m.

Riverview High should move first period from 7:20 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. Many students reach school in darkness during winter. A later start could help them arrive more alert and ready to learn. A schedule change would also affect bus routes, sports practices, and family routines.

RIVERVIEW VOICE | Evidence and action

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later. A 2018 study by Dunster and colleagues compared different groups of biology students at two Seattle high schools before and after a 55-minute start-time delay in 2016. Median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer afterward. Median biology grades were 77.5 percent before and 82 percent afterward, a difference of 4.5 percentage points. These associations do not prove that the schedule alone caused the grade difference or that every student benefited.

Research sources: American Academy of Pediatrics (2014), School Start Times for Adolescents; Dunster et al. (2018), Sleepmore in Seattle, Science Advances.

"By second period, I can follow the discussion instead of fighting sleep."

Maya Chen, fictional junior

Planning the Change

- Who would revise bus schedules?
- How might teams travel to evening events?
- Could elementary schools keep their current times?

Support an 8:30 start by signing our petition before the school board's September meeting. Ask district leaders to examine whether a later start could work for Riverview. Let's put student sleep on the agenda.

Add Your Name

A healthier morning begins with a choice.

Design Notes

Name the two design choices you circled and explain how each might shape a reader's response.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1** What is the article's central claim? How do the opening heading and illustration help introduce that claim?

- 2 Which offers stronger support for the idea that later starts could affect many students, the Seattle study or Maya Chen's quotation? Explain your evaluation.

- 3 What is one likely effect of printing Maya Chen's quotation in a shaded box and larger type than the research details?

- 4 Evaluate the request to sign the petition. Name two kinds of missing information that could make a reader hesitate, then explain how the request and button at the bottom of the page could influence a reader's decision.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Source for Your Turn

You may use this source summary for a mini-argument about shade trees; you do not need to open the link. For another improvement, obtain a credible source before writing. Paraphrase the summary. The task asks for a bracketed design idea and its effect, not a finished image.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2026). Benefits of Trees and Vegetation.

Editorial summary: Trees and vegetation can lower surface and air temperatures through shade and evapotranspiration. Water evaporating from leaves and surrounding soil uses heat, helping cool the air.

Scope and limits: This general explanation does not identify the hottest locations at your school or establish the costs of a local planting plan.

<https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/benefits-trees-and-vegetation>

Write a 4-sentence mini-argument about one improvement at your school, using 65 to 85 words. Include a clear claim, one fact from a named source, a bracketed design feature such as [photo] or [chart] and explain its effect, then end with a specific action readers should take.

Write your mini-argument

Write exactly four sentences and 65–85 words. Include the claim, named-source fact, bracketed design idea and its effect, and a specific action.

[illegible]

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Read the publication mockup. Underline its claim and each piece of evidence. Circle two design choices, such as a heading, illustration, quotation box, sidebar, or button. Use the Design Notes lines to explain how each might shape a reader's response. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the article's central claim? How do the opening heading and illustration help introduce that claim?	The article claims Riverview High should begin at 8:30 a.m. The heading frames sleep as an issue connected to school, and the empty hallway illustration draws attention to the early-morning setting.
2	Which offers stronger support for the idea that later starts could affect many students, the Seattle study or Maya Chen's quotation? Explain your evaluation.	The Seattle study offers stronger support because it reports measured sleep and biology-grade outcomes across groups of students, although it does not prove sole causation or benefits for everyone. Maya's simulated quotation makes a personal appeal; it is not independent research evidence.
3	What is one likely effect of printing Maya Chen's quotation in a shaded box and larger type than the research details?	The design makes Chen's experience more noticeable and memorable, which may lead readers to focus on the personal impact of the issue.
4	Evaluate the request to sign the petition. Name two kinds of missing information that could make a reader hesitate, then explain how the request and button at the bottom of the page could influence a reader's decision.	Readers may want a cost estimate, a transportation plan, or a school-board response; none is supplied. The request and high-contrast button direct attention to signing and encourage immediate action. The printed button is part of the mockup, not a working petition.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should plant shade trees beside the south playground and the track bleachers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explains that trees and vegetation can lower surface and air temperatures through shade and evapotranspiration, although this source does not identify our hottest campus areas. [Large photo: students resting under a tree] makes heat feel immediate and supports the claim through a visual appeal. Ask the school board to fund a planting plan this spring.

Accept evidence-based evaluations of how layout affects meaning. The illustration is actually drawn; students should not call it a documentary photograph. Maya's invented quotation models a personal appeal and is not a real interview. Costs, a transport plan and a board response are intentionally absent for question 4. The sidebar names questions but does not answer them. For Your Turn, the unchanged model is 74 words and four sentences (U.S. is an abbreviation); count the bracketed phrase as part of sentence 3. The supplied EPA summary supports the model, but not a claim about measured conditions at this school. The proposal is the student's recommendation, not an EPA recommendation. Seattle results compare separate groups, not individual gains, and do not establish sole causation. Sources: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25156998/> ; <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aau6200> .