

The Bell Time Case

Trace how a writer builds an evidence-based argument.

ELA.9.C.1 "Communicating Through Writing"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's claim, circle the two sentences with source-based evidence, and put a star beside the sentence that acknowledges an opposing view. These marks show how the argument is built.

A Better Time to Begin

- ① Our school should begin classes at 8:30 a.m. or later. This change would help students arrive ready to learn, rather than asking teenagers to do demanding work before many have had enough sleep. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later because adolescent sleep patterns shift later during puberty. A later bell would not solve every challenge students face, but it would make the schedule fit teen biology better. Therefore, the school board should study a later start time.
- ② First, sleep affects the attention students need during class. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that teenagers ages 13 to 18 need 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night. Yet early bus schedules and homework can make that goal difficult. When students sleep too little, they may struggle to focus, remember information, and stay awake. Thus, a later start could support learning in every subject by giving more students a realistic chance to get the sleep health experts recommend for healthy development.
- ③ Some families may worry that a later bell would interfere with sports, jobs, or child care. Those concerns matter, especially because schedule changes affect more than students. However, the school can examine bus routes and practice times before choosing a plan. It could also ask families and staff to compare possible schedules. This careful process does not guarantee an easy answer, but it makes the decision more responsible. Because sleep supports students' ability to learn, a later start deserves serious consideration. The board can publish its findings before making a final decision.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What is the writer's central claim?

2 What two organizations does the writer use as sources, and what information does each source provide?

3 How does the CDC sleep recommendation support the writer's claim? Explain the reasoning in one or two sentences.

4 What concern does the writer acknowledge in paragraph 3, and how does the writer respond to it?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Sources for Your Turn

These brief editorial summaries support a shaded-seating argument. You may cite the source letters and agencies. They are not measurements of your school. For a different policy, obtain two approved sources before writing.

Source A: CDC. Reducing Risk for Skin Cancer (June 17, 2026).

Editorial summary: Too much ultraviolet radiation can damage skin cells and cause skin cancer. CDC recommends shade as one part of sun protection, along with other protective measures.

Scope and limits: This supports reducing UV exposure, not a claim that a particular seating design eliminates risk or has a measured cooling effect.

<https://www.cdc.gov/skin-cancer/prevention/index.html>

Source B: U.S. EPA. Sun Safety Tips (accessed September 8, 2026).

Editorial summary: EPA advises seeking shade and limiting exposure during the middle of the day, when UV rays are strongest.

Scope and limits: General guidance does not establish local construction costs, seating demand or the performance of a particular shade structure.

<https://www.epa.gov/sunsafety/sun-safety-tips>

Choose a school policy you think should change. Write a three-paragraph argument of 150 to 190 words with a clear claim, two relevant pieces of evidence from credible sources, reasoning, a counterclaim and response, and at least three transitions. Use the supplied sources for a shaded-seating proposal, or use two credible sources your teacher approves for another policy. Identify each source in your argument.

Write your three-paragraph argument

Leave a visible paragraph break when your argument moves to its next main point. Check all required elements and the word range.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's claim, circle the two sentences with source-based evidence, and put a star beside the sentence that acknowledges an opposing view. These marks show how the argument is built. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's central claim?	The school should begin classes at 8:30 a.m. or later.
2	What two organizations does the writer use as sources, and what information does each source provide?	The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends middle and high school starts of 8:30 a.m. or later because adolescent sleep patterns shift later. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says teens ages 13 to 18 need 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night.
3	How does the CDC sleep recommendation support the writer's claim? Explain the reasoning in one or two sentences.	Teens need substantial sleep, but early schedules can make getting enough sleep difficult. A later start may give students a more realistic chance to get the sleep they need and be ready to learn.
4	What concern does the writer acknowledge in paragraph 3, and how does the writer respond to it?	The writer acknowledges that a later start could affect sports, jobs, and child care. The response is that the school can study bus routes and practice times and ask families and staff to compare schedules before deciding.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Schools should add more shaded tables to outdoor lunch areas. Students eat, talk, and wait outside, often when sunlight is strong.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention explains that ultraviolet, or UV, rays can damage skin and contribute to skin cancer. Therefore, shade structures would give students a safer place to spend time during the school day. Shade would also make outdoor spaces more usable. The Environmental Protection Agency advises people to seek shade when UV radiation is strong, especially around midday. If tables stayed cooler and less glaring, more students could comfortably use them for lunch or quiet work. In addition, the school could place structures near existing seating, so the project would improve an area students already use.

Some people may argue that shade structures cost too much. However, the school could request bids, phase the installation, or seek support from a parent organization before spending money. These steps would allow leaders to compare costs openly. Because the project addresses a health concern and improves a shared space, the school should make shaded tables a budget priority.

Accept accurate paraphrases of the claim, evidence, reasoning, and counterclaim response. For the open task, accept varied school-policy topics if the response has three paragraphs, meets the word range, and includes a claim, credible evidence, reasoning, a counterclaim response, and transitions. The three sample paragraphs must remain visibly separate. The two supplied source summaries support the sample's health-based reasoning; its comfort and budget proposals are the writer's inferences, not measured results. Prepare approved sources in advance for alternative topics. Background check: <https://www.cdc.gov/physical-activity-education/staying-healthy/sleep.html>