

The Later Bell

Analyze how a model argument connects claims, evidence, and reasoning.

ELA.12.C.1.3 "Write arguments to support claims based on an in-depth analysis of topics or texts using valid reasoning and credible evidence from sources, elaboration, and demonstrating a thorough understanding of the subject."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Cited health guidance and Seattle research are real; local proposals and any pilot figures are fictional classroom examples. Underline the writer's central claim, circle each piece of cited evidence, and number the sentences that explain how the evidence supports the claim so you can trace the argument's reasoning.

Why Riverton Should Start Later

- ① Riverton should begin its high school day at 8:30 a.m. rather than 7:35. This change is not simply a convenience for teenagers. The American Academy of Pediatrics states that middle and high schools should aim for start times of 8:30 a.m. or later because adolescent sleep patterns shift later during puberty. A district deciding whether to change its schedule should weigh that medical guidance heavily. When a policy affects students' daily alertness, attendance, and learning, evidence about sleep is more relevant than adult assumptions that an earlier bell builds discipline.
- ② Evidence from a real schedule change strengthens the case. A 2018 study compared different groups of biology students at two Seattle high schools before and after a 55-minute start-time delay in 2016. Median sleep on school nights was 34 minutes longer after the change. Median biology grades were 77.5 percent before and 82 percent afterward, a difference of 4.5 percentage points. The study does not prove that every district will get identical results, since communities differ in transportation and course schedules. Still, it measures outcomes after a specific policy change, so it offers stronger support than a personal story about feeling tired. Its results connect the later bell to both more sleep and an academic outcome.

- ③ Opponents reasonably note that later dismissal could complicate bus routes, sports, and after-school jobs. Those costs deserve planning, not dismissal. Riverton could coordinate with transportation providers, adjust practice times, and review attendance, sleep surveys, and course performance after one year. The CDC reported that 72.7 percent of U.S. high school students slept less than eight hours on an average school night in 2015, showing that insufficient sleep is widespread rather than a matter of individual irresponsibility. Because the expected benefit is substantial and the logistical problems can be measured and managed, the district should adopt the later start with a public evaluation plan.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① State the writer's central claim. Then explain why the American Academy of Pediatrics is a relevant source for that claim.

- ② What two outcomes did the Seattle study measure after the later start time, and how do those outcomes support the writer's claim?

- ③ Why does the writer call the Seattle study stronger evidence than a personal story about being tired? Include the limitation the writer acknowledges.

4 How does the final paragraph respond to the counterclaim about buses, activities, and jobs?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 120 to 160 word recommendation to Riverton’s school board that takes a position on a later high school start time. Use at least two pieces of evidence from the passage, name their sources, address the transportation or activities concern, and explain why your evidence supports your claim.

Develop your response

Write 120-160 words. Use the task's required evidence and explain your reasoning. Review your claim, supporting details and response to a concern before finishing.

This image shows a blank 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

Cited health guidance and Seattle research are real; local proposals and any pilot figures are fictional classroom examples. Underline the writer's central claim, circle each piece of cited evidence, and number the sentences that explain how the evidence supports the claim so you can trace the argument's reasoning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	State the writer's central claim. Then explain why the American Academy of Pediatrics is a relevant source for that claim.	The writer argues that Riverton should start high school at 8:30 a.m. The Academy is relevant because it provides medical guidance about adolescent sleep patterns and recommended school start times.
2	What two outcomes did the Seattle study measure after the later start time, and how do those outcomes support the writer's claim?	Median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer, and median biology grades were 4.5 percentage points higher (77.5 to 82 percent). These outcomes associate a later start with more sleep and higher grades; they do not establish that the schedule alone caused higher grades.
3	Why does the writer call the Seattle study stronger evidence than a personal story about being tired? Include the limitation the writer acknowledges.	The study measured outcomes after a specific policy change, whereas a personal story is only one person's experience. The writer acknowledges that other districts may not get identical results because transportation and course schedules differ.
4	How does the final paragraph respond to the counterclaim about buses, activities, and jobs?	It accepts that the concerns are real but argues they can be planned for through transportation coordination, adjusted practice times, and a one-year review of outcomes.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Riverton should move its high school start time to 8:30 a.m. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that secondary schools start at 8:30 or later because adolescent sleep schedules shift during puberty. That medical guidance matters because a bell schedule should fit students' developmental needs, not merely adult habits. The 2018 Seattle study also found that median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer after a 55-minute delay, alongside higher median biology grades. Although bus routes and practices would need revision, the district can plan those changes before the new schedule begins. The CDC's national data show that insufficient sleep is widespread, so Riverton should treat the issue as a school responsibility. A later start is practical because it joins medical evidence with measured classroom results.

Accept equivalent statements of the claim, accurate source-based evidence, and explanations that connect evidence to the recommendation. For the open response, accept different positions if the student uses at least two accurate sources from the passage, addresses a logistical concern, and gives valid reasoning. The CDC's 72.7 percent figure concerns student short sleep in the 2015 national survey, reported in 2018: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6703a1.htm> . Seattle findings compare separate cohorts, not individual gains: median school-night sleep differed by 34 minutes and median biology grades by 4.5 percentage points. The observational study does not establish that the schedule alone caused the grade difference. Local proposals and pilot examples are fictional; students should evaluate their reasoning. Sources: AAP (2014), <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25156998/> ; Dunster et al. (2018), <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30547089/> .