

# Start Time Case

Trace how evidence builds an argument about a school policy.

**10.W.1.B.ii** "Write arguments that: Support well-defined points of view effectively with relevant evidence and clear reasoning in ways that logically advance the claim(s)."

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 sentence that states the writer's central claim. Circle specific evidence details, then number the sentences that explain how the evidence supports the claim.

### A Better First Bell

- ① High schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m. because teenagers learn better when their schedules match their sleep needs. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends eight to 10 hours of sleep per 24 hours for teenagers ages 13 to 18. During puberty, many students' body clocks shift later, so falling asleep very early can be difficult even when they avoid screens. An early bell therefore does not simply reward students who are more responsible. It can require students to arrive before they have had enough rest. A later start would give more students a realistic chance to be alert during first-period classes.
- ② Evidence from a school schedule change supports that claim. 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. More sleep does not guarantee that every student will earn higher marks, since teaching, attendance, and effort also matter. Still, the results make sense: rested students can pay attention longer, remember new information, and participate more fully. When a schedule gives students additional sleep, it removes one barrier to using those learning skills.

- ③ Some families may worry that a later start would complicate buses, sports, jobs, or child care. Those concerns deserve planning, not dismissal. District leaders can examine bus routes, coordinate practice times, and ask families which conflicts are most serious before changing a schedule. They can also review attendance, course performance, and student sleep after the change. If a district adjusts transportation but ignores whether students benefit, it has solved only a logistical problem. Because the goal of school is learning, leaders should weigh practical costs against evidence about students' health and classroom readiness. A later start is justified when the plan addresses both.

**2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE** \_\_\_\_\_ Use the passage

- ① What central claim does the writer make about high school start times?

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- ② What two results from the Seattle study does the writer use as evidence?

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- ③ How does the writer connect additional sleep to improved learning?

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- ④ How does the third paragraph answer concerns about transportation, sports, and family schedules while still advancing the claim?

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### 3 YOUR TURN

## Your own words

Write a 120- to 150-word recommendation to a school board about whether to pilot an 8:30 a.m. start time. State a clear claim, use at least two specific evidence details from the passage, explain how each detail supports your claim, and respond to one practical concern.

## Develop your response

Write 120-150 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 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**

Cited health guidance and Seattle research are real; local proposals and any pilot figures are fictional classroom examples. Underline the sentence that states the writer's central claim. Circle specific evidence details, then number the sentences that explain how the evidence supports the claim. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                                                         | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | What central claim does the writer make about high school start times?                                                           | <b>High schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m.</b>                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2 | What two results from the Seattle study does the writer use as evidence?                                                         | <b>Median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer, and median biology grades differed by 4.5 percentage points (77.5 percent before and 82 percent afterward).</b>                                           |
| 3 | How does the writer connect additional sleep to improved learning?                                                               | <b>The writer explains that rested students can pay attention longer, remember new information, and participate more fully.</b>                                                                               |
| 4 | How does the third paragraph answer concerns about transportation, sports, and family schedules while still advancing the claim? | <b>It says leaders should plan for logistical conflicts through route changes, practice coordination, and family input, then review student results and weigh costs against learning and health benefits.</b> |

**PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

Riverton High should pilot an 8:30 a.m. start for one year and study the results. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends eight to 10 daily hours for ages 13 to 18, yet puberty can make an early bedtime difficult. This evidence supports a later start because the current schedule may prevent students from arriving rested, even when they try to sleep responsibly. Seattle researchers found that median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer after later starts, and the study reported a 4.5-percentage-point increase in median biology grades. These findings do not prove identical results in Riverton, but they give the school a sound reason to test the change. Bus and sports schedules may be difficult to revise. Riverton should adjust routes, gather family feedback, and compare attendance, sleep, and course performance before making the policy permanent.

Accept equivalent statements of the claim and explanations that accurately connect the passage's evidence to learning or readiness. For the open response, look for a clear position, two relevant details used as evidence, logical explanation, and a workable response to a practical concern. Duration recommendation: AASM, <https://aasm.org/advocacy/position-statements/teen-sleep-duration-health-advisory/> . Statistical source detail: the paper's Results section explicitly labels the grade values as medians: median2016 = 77.5%, median2017 = 82%. Subtracting these percentages gives 4.5 percentage points. See Dunster et al., Results, <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aau6200> . 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/> .