

Bell Time Case

Analyze how a model argument organizes evidence, a counterclaim, and a solution.

11.W “The student will write in a variety of forms for diverse audiences and purposes linked to grade eleven content and text with an emphasis on argumentative and analytical writing...”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the thesis, circle each source-based piece of evidence, and box the counterclaim and the writer’s response to it. These marks show how the argument builds and qualifies its position.

Why High Schools Should Start Later

- ① Teenagers’ alarms often ring before their bodies are ready to wake. Because adolescent sleep cycles shift later during puberty, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later. Our district should move its high school start time from 7:35 to 8:30. This change would better match students’ biology, reduce sleep-related risks, and improve readiness to learn. The proposal would require planning, especially for buses and activities, but health and learning evidence make a later schedule the stronger choice.
- ② The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies insufficient sleep among high school students as a public-health concern and notes that early school schedules can contribute to it. In a 2018 Science Advances study, researchers measured sleep in students at two Seattle high schools before and after a 55-minute later start. Median sleep duration on school nights increased by 34 minutes, and median biology grades were 77.5 percent before the schedule change and 82 percent afterward, a difference of 4.5 percentage points. This evidence does not prove that schedule alone caused every improvement, since teachers and students also shape achievement. Still, the measured sleep gain directly supports the claim that a later bell gives adolescents more opportunity to rest.

- ③ Critics reasonably point out that later starts can complicate bus routes, athletics, and family schedules. Those costs matter, yet they are problems to solve, not reasons to ignore the evidence. The district could phase in the change over one year, publish revised bus routes before summer, and coordinate activity schedules with families. It should also track attendance, first-period tardiness, and student sleep surveys during the first year. If those results show no meaningful benefit, leaders could adjust the plan. A careful rollout answers the counterclaim while preserving the central conclusion: high schools should begin at 8:30 because students learn better when schedules respect their need for sleep.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

- ① State the writer's thesis. What three benefits does the introduction preview?

- ② How does the writer contextualize the Seattle study before using its results as evidence?

- ③ What limitation does the writer acknowledge about the study's grade results, and why does that acknowledgment strengthen the argument?

- ④ Identify the counterclaim and explain how the proposed rollout responds to it.

3

YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one 120-150-word analytical paragraph recommending whether Riverview High should install water-refill stations. Use a thesis, evidence from both notes, a counterclaim/response and a conclusion. Source A: CDC says school drinking-water access helps students stay hydrated and offers an alternative to sugary drinks. Source B (fictional Riverview report): 18,000 plastic beverage bottles entered waste or recycling last year; the proposed installation costs \$24,000, with a \$10,000 city conservation grant. Exclude planning notes from the word count.

1. Plan with both sources

Plan a position, evidence from A and B, and a response to the cost concern.

2. Write the analysis

Write one 120-150-word paragraph. Revise and edit your reasoning and conventions.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the thesis, circle each source-based piece of evidence, and box the counterclaim and the writer's response to it. These marks show how the argument builds and qualifies its position. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	State the writer's thesis. What three benefits does the introduction preview?	The district should move its high school start time from 7:35 to 8:30. The introduction previews a better match with students' biology, fewer sleep-related risks, and improved readiness to learn.
2	How does the writer contextualize the Seattle study before using its results as evidence?	The writer identifies the 2018 Science Advances study, explains that researchers studied two Seattle high schools, and notes that they measured sleep before and after a 55-minute later start.
3	What limitation does the writer acknowledge about the study's grade results, and why does that acknowledgment strengthen the argument?	The writer acknowledges that the schedule alone may not have caused every grade improvement because teachers and students also affect achievement. This qualification makes the claim more careful and credible while focusing on the directly measured sleep gain.
4	Identify the counterclaim and explain how the proposed rollout responds to it.	The counterclaim is that later starts can complicate bus routes, athletics, and family schedules. A phased change, early publication of bus routes, activity coordination, and first-year data tracking address logistical concerns and allow leaders to adjust the plan if needed.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Scenario: Riverview's local report, grant and costs are fictional classroom data.

Plan: Position: install if funding and maintenance are secured. Source A: CDC access/hydration. Source B: bottle count and net \$14,000 cost. Concern: expense. Response: confirm funding and evaluate results.

Revised paragraph: Riverview High should install the proposed water-refill stations because dependable water access and reduced bottle waste are worthwhile school goals. CDC explains that drinking-water access helps students stay hydrated and offers an alternative to sugary drinks, supporting convenient stations where students gather. In addition, Riverview's fictional report records 18,000 plastic beverage bottles in waste or recycling last year. That count suggests an opportunity, although it does not prove every bottle would be avoided. Critics may question the installation cost. However, the \$10,000 grant would reduce the stated \$24,000 expense to \$14,000. The school should confirm that it can fund that balance and maintain the equipment. Staff should then track refill use and discarded bottles to evaluate the result. Therefore, I recommend proceeding with the proposed installation once funding and maintenance are confirmed.

Review note: I separated the bottle count from any claim of guaranteed waste savings, checked the subtraction, and edited the source attributions.

Riverview, its bottle count, installation cost and grant are fictional Source B case data. Require accurate use of both sources, a counterclaim/response and a concluding recommendation. \$24,000 minus \$10,000 leaves \$14,000; the bottle count is not proof that every bottle would disappear. The model assesses the proposed installation without assigning its full cost/grant to an unspecified smaller pilot. Seattle sleep result applies to school nights and uses medians; association does not establish sole causation of grade changes. Sources: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30547089/> ; <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/134/3/642/74175/School-Start-Times-for-Adolescents> ; <https://www.cdc.gov/school-nutrition/water-access/index.html> .