

Evidence in Concert

Trace how credible sources build and qualify a policy claim.

11.T.RA.1.b “Synthesize information from a variety of credible sources to support a central thesis, citing appropriately. (I)”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB The local proposal is a fictional classroom example; named research and health guidance are real. Underline the central thesis. Number one piece of evidence from each cited source, then circle words or phrases that limit what the evidence proves.

The Case for Later Starts

- ① High schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m. because later schedules better match adolescents’ biology and can improve outcomes. The American Academy of Pediatrics explains that puberty shifts many teenagers’ natural sleep timing later, making very early wake times especially difficult (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2014). Its policy statement recommends middle and high school start times of 8:30 a.m. or later. This medical organization supplies a biological reason for the claim, rather than relying on student preference. A schedule that asks teens to learn before they can regularly obtain enough sleep may create a barrier to attention, attendance, and learning.
- ② 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 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. (Dunster et al., 2018). The comparison offers local evidence that sleep and school performance can move together. However, it does not prove that the new schedule alone caused better grades or that every Seattle student benefited. Findings from participating students should not become a districtwide guarantee.

- ③ National data show why local studies matter but do not settle every question. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that 82.3 percent of U.S. public middle, high, and combined schools started before 8:30 a.m. in 2011-12 (CDC, 2015). This report documents how common early schedules were, not whether a particular later schedule caused better grades. Taken together, the medical recommendation, Seattle study, and national survey support an 8:30 start as a well-supported policy goal. Still, districts should examine transportation, family schedules, and results in their own schools before predicting identical effects everywhere.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What central thesis does the writer support?

- 2 How does the American Academy of Pediatrics source support the thesis? Include the type of evidence it provides.

- 3 What Seattle finding supports the thesis, and what limitation does the writer place on that finding?

- 4 Why does the writer include the CDC report with the medical recommendation and Seattle study? Explain what the CDC source can and cannot show.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Sources for Your Turn

Use the supplied source summaries to write about testing school drinking water for lead. You may cite these cards without opening their links. For another permitted topic, obtain the required number of credible sources before writing. Quote only wording labeled as an exact source quotation; paraphrase summaries.

Source A: CDC (2024). Preventing Childhood Lead Poisoning.

Editorial summary: No safe blood lead level in children has been identified. Even low levels can harm learning and attention, and most exposed children have no obvious symptoms. CDC is a federal public-health agency.

Scope and limits: This health guidance does not measure lead in any particular school's water.

<https://www.cdc.gov/lead-prevention/prevention/>

Source B: EPA (2018). 3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water.

Editorial summary: EPA's school and child-care guidance organizes action around Training, Testing and Taking Action. It includes communicating results and planning how to address lead detected at outlets. EPA is the federal environmental agency.

Scope and limits: The manual supplies a process; local water-test results are needed to identify affected outlets and select responses.

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/3ts-reducing-lead-drinking-water>

Choose a school policy question. Write a 90-120 word paragraph that states a clear thesis, synthesizes evidence from at least two credible sources with parenthetical citations, and explains one limit or boundary of the evidence.

Write your response

Write 90-120 words. Use and explain the required sources, keep their limitations clear, and include every element in the task.

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

The local proposal is a fictional classroom example; named research and health guidance are real. Underline the central thesis. Number one piece of evidence from each cited source, then circle words or phrases that limit what the evidence proves. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What central thesis does the writer support?	High schools should start no earlier than 8:30 a.m.
2	How does the American Academy of Pediatrics source support the thesis? Include the type of evidence it provides.	It provides medical and biological reasoning: puberty shifts many teens' natural sleep timing later, and the organization recommends starts at 8:30 a.m. or later.
3	What Seattle finding supports the thesis, and what limitation does the writer place on that finding?	Median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer and median biology grades were 4.5 percentage points higher, comparing different student groups. These associations do not establish sole causation or gains for every Seattle student.
4	Why does the writer include the CDC report with the medical recommendation and Seattle study? Explain what the CDC source can and cannot show.	The CDC report shows that early starts were common nationally, adding context to the policy claim. It cannot show that a later start caused better grades at a particular school.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Schools should test drinking water outlets for lead and promptly remove unsafe outlets from use. The CDC states that no safe blood lead level in children has been identified (CDC, 2024), so prevention matters even when a student has no visible symptoms. EPA's 3Ts guidance gives schools a practical process to train staff, test outlets, communicate results, and take action (EPA, 2018). Together, these sources support routine testing as a health safeguard. However, neither source shows how often a particular school has lead in its water, so leaders should use local test results to choose repairs.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately distinguish source type, evidence, and limits. For the open response, accept varied policy topics when the student has a defensible thesis, at least two credible cited sources, meaningful synthesis, and a valid limitation. The CDC 2015 start-time report says 17.7% of schools began at 8:30 or later; its complement is 82.3%, not 82.9%:

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6430a1.htm> . Local proposals are fictional classroom examples; named research and guidance are real. Seattle compared separate cohorts, not individual gains, and does not establish sole causation. Its Results explicitly labels the grade medians 77.5% and 82%, a 4.5-percentage-point difference. Sources: AAP (2014), <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25156998/> ; Dunster et al. (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aau6200> .