

Links Build Arguments

Trace how transitions connect claims, evidence, and counterclaims.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.1c "Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Local people, proposals, records and observations are fictional classroom examples; named research and health guidance are real. Underline every word, phrase, or clause that links a claim, reason, piece of evidence, or counterclaim to another idea. In the margin, label the connected ideas C, R, E, or CC to show how the argument holds together. Legend: C = claim, R = reason, E = evidence, CC = counterclaim.

A Later Bell for High Schools

- ① High schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m. because teenagers' body clocks shift later during puberty. As a result, many students are expected to learn before their brains are fully alert. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended start times of 8:30 a.m. or later for middle and high schools. This recommendation matters because students who get enough sleep are more likely to arrive awake and ready to concentrate. Therefore, a later schedule is not simply a convenience. It is a practical step toward giving students a fair chance to learn during the school day.
- ② Evidence from Seattle shows how a schedule change can relate to student outcomes. In 2016, two public high schools delayed their start times by nearly an hour. Researchers compared different groups of biology students before and after the change and found that median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer afterward. Moreover, median biology grades were 4.5 percentage points higher, although the study could not prove that extra sleep alone caused the difference. The findings support investigating a later start because they connect more sleep with improved school outcomes. In addition, the study gives districts a concrete example to examine rather than asking them to rely only on opinion.

- ③ Some families and employers object that later starts would complicate bus routes, sports practices, and after-school jobs. Those concerns deserve attention, especially in districts that share buses among several schools. However, logistical difficulty does not erase the health evidence. District leaders can revise transportation schedules, coordinate practice times, and ask local employers to consider student needs. For example, a district might move elementary routes earlier while shifting high school routes later. Although no schedule will satisfy every household, schools should weigh temporary planning challenges against the daily cost of widespread sleep loss. For these reasons, high schools should adopt later start times.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① What is the writer's main claim in paragraph 1? Which clause gives the main reason for that claim?

- ② How does the phrase "As a result" connect the first two sentences of paragraph 1?

- ③ What evidence does paragraph 2 provide, and how does the word "Moreover" add to that evidence?

- ④ What counterclaim appears in paragraph 3, and which word signals the writer's response to it?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a six-sentence mini-argument about one school change you support. Include a claim, two reasons, one piece of evidence, a counterclaim with a response, and at least five linking words, phrases, or clauses that make the relationships clear.

Develop your response

Write exactly six sentences. Include the required argument parts and at least five linking words, phrases or clauses.

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

Local people, proposals, records and observations are fictional classroom examples; named research and health guidance are real. Underline every word, phrase, or clause that links a claim, reason, piece of evidence, or counterclaim to another idea. In the margin, label the connected ideas C, R, E, or CC to show how the argument holds together. Legend: C = claim, R = reason, E = evidence, CC = counterclaim. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's main claim in paragraph 1? Which clause gives the main reason for that claim?	The claim is that high schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m. The reason clause is "because teenagers' body clocks shift later during puberty."
2	How does the phrase "As a result" connect the first two sentences of paragraph 1?	It shows that students being expected to learn before they are fully alert is a result of teenagers' body clocks shifting later.
3	What evidence does paragraph 2 provide, and how does the word "Moreover" add to that evidence?	Median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer afterward, and median biology grades were 4.5 percentage points higher. These findings compare separate groups. 'Moreover' adds the grade finding to the earlier sleep finding.
4	What counterclaim appears in paragraph 3, and which word signals the writer's response to it?	The counterclaim is that later starts would complicate bus routes, sports practices, and after-school jobs. "However" signals the writer's response.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Schools should install water-bottle refill stations because students need reliable access to drinking water. First, stations can reduce reliance on single-use plastic bottles. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, all plastics made up 12.2 percent of U.S. municipal solid waste generated by weight in 2018, so replacing disposable bottles with reusable ones can reduce one part of that waste. Moreover, stations can help students refill bottles between classes instead of waiting to buy drinks. Some people argue that installation costs are too high; however, schools can seek grants or phase in stations over several years. Therefore, the environmental and daily benefits support installing refill stations.

Accept accurate paraphrases and equivalent quoted linking language. For the open response, accept varied school-change topics if all required argument parts are present and the linking language clearly connects claims, reasons, evidence, and the counterclaim response. EPA's figure covers all plastics, not just bottles: <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/plastics-material-specific-data> . Local people, proposals, records and observations are fictional classroom examples; named research and health guidance are real. Seattle compared separate cohorts, not individual gains, and did not establish sole causation. The paper's Results explicitly labels the grade values as medians: 77.5% before, 82% afterward, a difference of 4.5 percentage points. Sources: AAP (2014), <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25156998/> ; Dunster et al. (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aau6200> .