

Evidence Before Opinion

Evaluate sources, evidence, and attribution in a focused inquiry.

ELA.9.C.4 "Researching"

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. Circle each source named in the passage. Underline the words that explain why Maya trusts, limits, or rejects that source.

A Later Bell?

- ① Maya's research question is, "Would moving her high school's start time later improve students' sleep and learning?" She begins with the American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement, written by pediatric sleep experts. The statement recommends that middle and high schools aim to start at 8:30 a.m. or later. Maya records the organization, date, and link. She also finds an anonymous blog post that promises "instant grade gains" but gives no author, data, or citations. Because she cannot check its evidence or expertise, she does not use it.
- ② For evidence about outcomes, Maya reads a peer-reviewed 2018 study in Science Advances. Researchers 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, and median biology grades were 4.5 percentage points higher. Maya does not treat one city as proof for every school or assume the schedule alone caused the difference. She compares the study with a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention webpage recommending 8 to 10 hours of sleep daily for ages 13 to 17. The CDC page supports why sleep matters, while the Seattle study directly addresses her question about a later schedule.

- ③ To test an alternative viewpoint, Maya reads her district school board’s meeting minutes, a primary source that records concerns about bus routes, athletics, and student jobs. The minutes show what local officials discussed, but they do not prove that a later start would fail. In her report, Maya will state that logistical costs are a possible drawback, then separate that concern from the sleep evidence. She will paraphrase the sources in her own words, place quotation marks around any exact language, and cite each source. Her conclusion will explain that stronger sleep evidence supports studying a later start locally.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① Which source is least reliable for Maya’s report? Give two details from the passage that explain why she rejects it.

- ② Why are the school board meeting minutes useful to Maya, even though they do not prove that a later start would fail?

- ③ Which source most directly answers Maya’s question about outcomes from a later start time? State the two results Maya found in that source.

- ④ How should Maya handle exact words from a source differently from information she restates in her own words?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a different school issue and write a 70-90 word research plan. Include a research question, three sources you would use, why each source would be useful or trustworthy, one possible alternative viewpoint, and how you will avoid plagiarism.

Develop your response

Write 70-90 words. Include every element in the task and review how your evidence serves your audience.

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. Circle each source named in the passage. Underline the words that explain why Maya trusts, limits, or rejects that source. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which source is least reliable for Maya's report? Give two details from the passage that explain why she rejects it.	The anonymous blog post. It has no author, data, or citations, so Maya cannot check its evidence or expertise.
2	Why are the school board meeting minutes useful to Maya, even though they do not prove that a later start would fail?	They are a primary source showing the concerns local officials discussed, including bus routes, athletics, and student jobs.
3	Which source most directly answers Maya's question about outcomes from a later start time? State the two results Maya found in that source.	The peer-reviewed Science Advances study. Median school-night sleep was 34 minutes longer after the change, and median biology grades were 4.5 percentage points higher, comparing different student groups.
4	How should Maya handle exact words from a source differently from information she restates in her own words?	She should put exact language in quotation marks and cite it. She should paraphrase restated information in her own words and cite the source.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My question is: How would more shade on our campus affect heat safety? I would use a National Weather Service heat-safety page because it is produced by weather experts, and a peer-reviewed public-health study about shade and heat exposure because it reports methods and data. I would examine official district facilities records to learn local costs. A contractor's estimate could show drawbacks, but I would check its assumptions. I would paraphrase notes, quote exact words, and cite every source.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately evaluate a source's authority, evidence, purpose, or relevance using passage details. For the open response, accept varied school topics if the student includes three plausible sources, an alternative viewpoint, and a clear plan for attribution. CDC age-specific duration guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about/index.html> . The open response is a research plan; students propose credible sources and checking methods, rather than claiming they have already collected findings. 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> .