

The Bell Debate

Analyze how an argument builds a case with evidence and rebuttal.

ELA.9.C.1.3 "Write to argue a position, supporting claims using logical reasoning and credible evidence from multiple sources, rebutting counterclaims with relevant evidence, using a logical organizational structure, elaboration..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the main claim: the first sentence of paragraph 1. Circle the sentences reporting the AAP guidance, CDC sleep recommendation and Seattle study result. In paragraph 3, mark the counterclaim C and the evidence-based rebuttal R. Box Therefore, In addition, and However.

Why High Schools Should Start Later

- ① High schools should consider a start time of 8:30 a.m. or later. In its 2014 policy School Start Times for Adolescents, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) explains that sleep timing shifts later during puberty. It recommends that most middle and high schools aim to start no earlier than 8:30, while considering commuting and local needs. Therefore, a later bell can better match adolescent sleep timing; the proposal concerns an opportunity for sleep, not a guarantee that every student will sleep enough. Source: AAP, doi.org/10.1542/peds.2014-1697.
- ② The CDC's About Sleep table (May 15, 2024) lists its teen row as "13-17 years" and "8-10 hours" of sleep recommended daily. That guidance explains the need; a study can examine a schedule change. In addition, Gideon Dunster and colleagues' 2018 Sleepmore in Seattle study compared students before and after a nearly one-hour delay in secondary-school start times. The median school-day sleep duration increased by 34 minutes. Median means the middle value when measurements are ordered. This result supports a possible benefit, but it does not establish what every school or student will experience. Sources: CDC, cdc.gov/sleep/about/index.html; Dunster et al., Science Advances, pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30547089/.

- ③ A critic might argue that a later start simply leads to later bedtimes, leaving sleep unchanged. However, the Seattle study observed a net increase in sleep after the schedule change, which rebuts the claim that a delay can never help. It does not settle every concern about buses, activities or family routines. A board could study those local constraints and measure sleep and attendance before and after a carefully planned change. These are proposed actions, not reported findings. On balance, the evidence supports serious consideration of later starts alongside local planning.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What is the claim, and how does the AAP evidence support it?

- 2 How do the CDC guidance and the Seattle study provide different kinds of support?

- 3 Which claim does the Seattle result rebut, and what does it leave uncertain?

- 4 How do the transitions Therefore, In addition and However organize the argument?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 100-140-word argument in two paragraphs for a school board considering later starts. Use evidence from at least two supplied sources, elaborate on its relevance, rebut the claim that a delay can never increase sleep, and acknowledge a limit. Use at least three purposeful transitions and an appropriate formal tone.

Paragraph 1 - claim and reasons

State a position. Explain how accurate evidence from two supplied sources supports it. Name your sources.

Paragraph 2 - rebuttal and conclusion

Use the Seattle result to answer the stated counterclaim. Explain a limit and a reasonable next step. Check two paragraphs and 100-140 words in total.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the main claim: the first sentence of paragraph 1. Circle the sentences reporting the AAP guidance, CDC sleep recommendation and Seattle study result. In paragraph 3, mark the counterclaim C and the evidence-based rebuttal R. Box Therefore, In addition, and However. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the claim, and how does the AAP evidence support it?	Schools should consider starting at 8:30 or later. AAP describes later adolescent sleep timing and recommends that most middle and high schools aim for that start time.
2	How do the CDC guidance and the Seattle study provide different kinds of support?	CDC states a recommended amount of sleep for ages 13-17. The Seattle study reports an observed increase after a schedule change. One explains a need; the other offers evidence of a possible response.
3	Which claim does the Seattle result rebut, and what does it leave uncertain?	A 34-minute median increase rebuts the claim that later starts can never add sleep. It does not guarantee an increase for every student or resolve local transport and activity questions.
4	How do the transitions Therefore, In addition and However organize the argument?	Therefore connects the AAP evidence to a reason; In addition adds a study; However introduces evidence against the critic's claim.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school board should seriously consider a later high-school start. First, the AAP explains that adolescent sleep timing shifts later and recommends starts no earlier than 8:30 for most districts. In addition, CDC guidance lists 8-10 hours of sleep for ages 13-17. Together, these sources suggest that schedules should protect a realistic opportunity for rest.

Some critics claim that students will only stay up later, so sleep cannot increase. However, Dunster and colleagues observed a 34-minute increase in median school-day sleep after Seattle delayed its start times. That finding challenges the claim, although it cannot predict every local result. Therefore, the board should examine transport and activity needs and evaluate a carefully planned change.

The supplied summaries provide evidence for this focused argument. The model has two paragraphs, names sources, elaborates and uses the Seattle result for a directly relevant rebuttal. Assess the 100-140-word total and at least three purposeful transitions. Distinguish median from a gain for every individual, before/after association from a universal guarantee, and proposed local actions from research findings. Accept other supported positions that address the stated counterclaim accurately.