

The Case, Sequenced

Trace how a model letter builds a unified argument.

12.W.2.A.ii “Plan and organize writing to address a specific audience and purpose using the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing). This includes: Organizing claims, counterclaims...”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB In this fictional letter, underline the main claim and circle the counterclaim. Mark 1 beside the AAP recommendation, 2 beside the CDC evidence and 3 beside the proposed scheduling response. Explain how those moves support the same request.

A Later Bell Time

- ① To the Cedar Valley School Board: Our high school should begin at 8:30 a.m. next year. This change would give teenagers a schedule closer to their biological sleep patterns and would support learning. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later. Because the board sets district schedules, it can weigh this health guidance alongside transportation and budget needs before approving a revised bell time for students.
- ② Later starts are linked to more sleep because adolescents' internal clocks commonly shift later during puberty. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that insufficient sleep among high school students is associated with risks such as poor mental health, injuries, and lower academic performance. A later bell would not solve every sleep problem, but it would remove one school-created barrier. Therefore, the board has a practical reason to test a schedule that better matches students' developmental needs.
- ③ Some families may worry that a later dismissal would interfere with jobs, sports, or child-care routines. That concern deserves a direct response, not dismissal. The district could consult bus providers and activity leaders, then publish revised practice times before the change begins. It could also review attendance, grades, and transportation costs after one semester. By addressing the strongest objection with a workable plan and a clear review point, the board can make a responsible decision.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Who is the audience, and what action does the writer request?

2 What health guidance supports the writer's claim?

3 What counterclaim does the writer address, and what response is offered?

4 How does paragraph 3 strengthen the letter's unity?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Plan and draft a three-paragraph letter to a school decision-maker about a policy you want changed. State a claim, develop two supports, answer a counterclaim, and end with a logical next step. Revise for unity and edit here. Put Imagined scenario above invented details.

1. Plan the sequence

Name the audience and claim. Place two supports, the counterclaim/response and the next step in a three-paragraph outline.

2. Draft and improve the letter

Write three focused paragraphs, with a blank line between them. Develop both supports and answer the objection before the final request. Revise directly on your draft and edit spelling and punctuation. A second full copy is not required.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue 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

In this fictional letter, underline the main claim and circle the counterclaim. Mark 1 beside the AAP recommendation, 2 beside the CDC evidence and 3 beside the proposed scheduling response. Explain how those moves support the same request. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who is the audience, and what action does the writer request?	The Cedar Valley School Board, and the writer asks it to move the high school start time to 8:30 a.m.
2	What health guidance supports the writer's claim?	The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later.
3	What counterclaim does the writer address, and what response is offered?	Families may worry about jobs, sports, or child care. The writer proposes consulting providers and leaders, publishing new times, and reviewing results after a semester.
4	How does paragraph 3 strengthen the letter's unity?	It answers the main objection and returns to the claim that the board can make a responsible decision.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Scenario: Imagined scenario: all local observations below are invented for this writing example.

Plan: Audience: principal. Claim: designate a covered bicycle-parking area. Paragraphs: equipment protection, clearer entrance access, cost concern and feasibility request.

Revised draft: To the principal: our school should designate a covered bicycle-parking area near the east entrance. A roof would help keep seats and bags drier during rain, making storage more useful for students who already ride to school.

One marked parking area could also reduce bicycles left beside doorways. That would leave more room for people entering the building. Staff should check the location before deciding whether it provides enough space for both riders and pedestrians.

Some may argue that construction costs too much. The school could price a small design before committing to a larger project. Please ask the facilities team to compare costs, available space and likely use, then present those findings at the next school meeting.

Review note: I connected the second paragraph to entrance access and made the conclusion request a feasibility review. I checked that each sentence supports the same proposed policy and edited punctuation.

Local school situations and sample observations are invented classroom examples. Label imagined observations; do not present them as collected research. Accept equivalent passage answers. Require three actual paragraphs, a clear claim, two developed supports, counterclaim/response and a specific next step. A focused letter can be concise; no additional minimum word count is imposed. Background: <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/134/3/642/74175/School-Start-Times-for-Adolescents> ; <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6703a1.htm> .