Make Your Case

Analyze how a speaker builds a clear, evidence-based proposal.

ELA.9.C.2.1 "Present information orally, with a logical organization and coherent focus, with credible evidence, creating a clear perspective."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the speaker's position. Number the three main stages of the speech 1, 2, and 3, then circle each source or research detail that supports the position.

A Later Start for Learning

(1) Good morning, school board members. Our high school should begin at 8:30 a.m. or later because students learn best when their schedules match their sleep needs. This change is not about making mornings easier. It is about protecting health and improving attention in class. I will first explain what sleep experts recommend, then describe evidence from districts that changed their schedules, and finally address a concern about buses and activities. My perspective is clear: a later start is a practical investment in students' learning and well-being.

(2) The American Academy of Pediatrics recommended in 2014 that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later. It said adolescents need 8.5 to 9.5 hours of sleep each night for the best health and alertness. Evidence from Seattle shows why that guidance matters. A 2018 study in Science Advances found that students at two Seattle high schools slept an average of 34 more minutes after a later start time. Their median grades also rose by 4.5 percent. These sources are credible because medical experts and peer-reviewed researchers collected and evaluated the evidence.

(3) Some families worry that a later start would disrupt bus routes, sports, and after-school jobs. Those concerns deserve planning, not dismissal. Our district could survey families, coordinate shared buses with nearby schools, and phase in a new schedule over one year. It should also publish attendance, course grades, and student sleep survey results before and after the change. If the evidence shows better attendance and learning without unacceptable transportation problems, the board should keep the later start. A careful pilot gives our community a fair way to test a research-based solution.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the speaker's central position, and how does the opening paragraph help listeners follow the speech?

2. Identify two sources or research details the speaker uses. Why does the speaker describe these sources as credible?

3. How does the Seattle study support the speaker's position? Use both results from the study in your answer.

4. How does the speaker respond to the concern about transportation, sports, and jobs while keeping a clear perspective?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 100-130 word oral proposal to your principal about one school improvement. State a clear position, organize your points logically, name one credible source or evidence detail, and address one practical concern with a response. Use a checked school observation or teacher-provided practice evidence and briefly name its source. Then actually deliver the proposal to a partner or small group acting as the principal. Your teacher can support rehearsal and observe logical organization, coherent focus, evidence and clear perspective. Ask a listener to state your position, evidence and practical concern/response and offer one clarity observation. Record the real feedback on extra paper. Count spoken words when applying the 100–130 range.

ANSWER KEY

Make Your Case

GRADE 9 · ELA.9.C.2.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the speaker's position. Number the three main stages of the speech 1, 2, and 3, then circle each source or research detail that supports the position. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the speaker's central position, and how does the opening paragraph help listeners follow the speech?	**The speaker argues that high school should start at 8:30 a.m. or later. The opening previews three stages: expert guidance, district evidence, and concerns about buses and activities.**
2	Identify two sources or research details the speaker uses. Why does the speaker describe these sources as credible?	**The speaker uses the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation and a 2018 Science Advances study of two Seattle high schools. The sources are credible because medical experts and peer-reviewed researchers collected and evaluated evidence.**
3	How does the Seattle study support the speaker's position? Use both results from the study in your answer.	**After a later start time, students slept an average of 34 more minutes and their median grades rose by 4.5 percent. These results support the claim that later starts can improve sleep and learning.**
4	How does the speaker respond to the concern about transportation, sports, and jobs while keeping a clear perspective?	**The speaker acknowledges the concern and proposes surveys, bus coordination, a phased schedule, and a pilot with published results. The speaker still supports keeping a later start if the evidence shows benefits without unacceptable transportation problems.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Good afternoon, Principal Lee. Our school should add two water-bottle filling stations near the gym and cafeteria. First, easy access to water can help students stay hydrated during long days. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that drinking water helps prevent dehydration, which can affect thinking and mood. Second, refill stations could let students reuse bottles instead of choosing disposable ones. Some people may worry about cost, so the school could request bids and begin with one station funded through a parent organization or local grant. I recommend tracking refills and bottle waste for one semester. This small pilot would show whether the stations improve access while keeping costs manageable.

This illustrative script is not verified evidence about the learner's school. Learners must check their own named source or observation, actually deliver their proposal and record real listener feedback. Refill counts alone do not measure bottle-waste reduction.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect the speaker's position, organization, evidence, and response to concerns. For the oral proposal, accept varied topics when the response has a clear perspective, logical sequence, credible evidence, and a realistic response to a concern. Arrange an accessible classroom listener and support rehearsal. Observe actual oral presentation, clear perspective/coherent focus, logical organization, named credible evidence and response to a practical concern. Check listener recall and the recorded clarity observation. A written script alone is insufficient. The illustrative model is 112 spoken words; its conditional bottle-reuse benefit is a proposal, not a measured outcome. No actual principal appointment or timed performance required.