

The Bell Time Debate

Identify a claim and trace how an author builds support for it.

8.8.E.i "identifying the claim and analyzing the argument;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the writer's central claim. Circle each reason or piece of evidence that supports the claim, then number your circles in the order they appear.

A Later First Bell

- ① High schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m. because teenagers need sleep that early schedules often cut short. During puberty, many adolescents experience a biological shift that makes it easier to fall asleep later at night. This shift is not simply a lack of responsibility or a preference for scrolling on a phone. When a bus arrives before sunrise, even students who complete homework and set alarms may struggle to get the recommended amount of sleep.
- ② Later start times can improve students' readiness to learn. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later to help adolescents get enough sleep. In districts that moved the opening bell later, researchers have reported outcomes such as longer sleep and better attendance. These results do not prove that a later bell solves every school problem, but they show that the schedule can affect whether students arrive alert and prepared.
- ③ Some people object that a later start would disrupt sports, bus routes, and family schedules. Those concerns deserve planning, rather than dismissal. Schools could coordinate bus changes with nearby districts and hold some practices before school or in the early evening. A schedule change may be inconvenient at first, yet convenience should be weighed against students' health and ability to focus. For these reasons, school boards should make an 8:30 a.m. start time their goal.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 State the writer's central claim. Include the recommended start time.

2 Identify two pieces of evidence from paragraph 2 that support the claim. Explain briefly how each piece supports it.

3 What opposing concern does the writer recognize in paragraph 3, and how does the writer respond to it?

4 Paragraph 2 says that later start times do not solve every school problem. How does this statement affect the writer's argument?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school policy other than start times. Write exactly four sentences: state a clear claim in sentence 1, give a different reason in sentences 2 and 3, and recognize a concern and respond to it in sentence 4.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the writer's central claim. Circle each reason or piece of evidence that supports the claim, then number your circles in the order they appear. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	State the writer's central claim. Include the recommended start time.	High schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m.
2	Identify two pieces of evidence from paragraph 2 that support the claim. Explain briefly how each piece supports it.	The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends an 8:30 a.m. or later start, supporting the idea that later starts help adolescents get enough sleep. Research from districts with later bells reports longer sleep and better attendance, supporting the claim that later starts can improve readiness.
3	What opposing concern does the writer recognize in paragraph 3, and how does the writer respond to it?	The writer recognizes that later starts could disrupt sports, bus routes, and family schedules. The writer responds that schools can plan bus changes and adjust practice times.
4	Paragraph 2 says that later start times do not solve every school problem. How does this statement affect the writer's argument?	It acknowledges a limit to the evidence, making the argument more balanced while still showing that later schedules can help students arrive alert and prepared.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

School cafeterias should offer a meatless lunch choice each day. Plant-based meals can provide protein through foods such as beans, lentils, and tofu. A daily choice helps students with religious, health, or environmental preferences find a meal they can eat. Some people may worry that students will reject the option, but schools can test recipes and keep familiar choices available.

Accept equivalent wording for the central claim and evidence if the response accurately connects support to the later-start position. For Part 3, accept varied policies when the response has exactly four sentences, a clear claim, two distinct supporting reasons, and a concern with a response.