

Start Time Debate

Identify how an argument addresses an opposing view.

8.8.E.ii "identifying and explaining the counter argument; and"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentences that state reasons against a later school start. Circle the words and sentences that show how the writer responds to those concerns.

Should Riverton Start Later?

- ① Riverton Middle School should move its first bell from 7:35 to 8:30 a.m. Many eighth graders arrive tired because teenagers' body clocks naturally shift later during puberty. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 or later. A later start would not make learning easier, but it could give students a better chance to be alert for discussions, labs, and tests. The school board is considering a one-year trial next fall.
- ② Some families oppose the change because a later dismissal could interfere with sports practices, after-school jobs, and younger siblings' pickup schedules. Coaches may have less daylight for outdoor teams, and parents may need new child-care plans. These concerns are reasonable because a school schedule affects more than classrooms. However, Riverton could move some practices to mornings, use lighted fields when available, and coordinate with the elementary school on bus routes. The board should study transportation costs before deciding whether these steps are practical.
- ③ Starting later is not a perfect solution, and the district should not ignore the difficulties families raise. Still, the strongest goal of a school schedule is to support students' learning and well-being. A trial would let Riverton compare attendance, tardiness, and student surveys with results from the current schedule. If the district cannot solve the transportation and activity problems at a reasonable cost, it could adjust the plan. If it can, an 8:30 start deserves support.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What is the counterargument to moving Riverton's start time later?

2 Why does the writer say the counterargument is reasonable?

3 What word signals that the writer is beginning a response to the counterargument?

4 How does the writer respond to concerns about activities and transportation?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose one school change you support. Write 4 or 5 sentences that state your claim, explain one reasonable counterargument, and respond to that counterargument.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentences that state reasons against a later school start. Circle the words and sentences that show how the writer responds to those concerns. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the counterargument to moving Riverton's start time later?	A later dismissal could disrupt sports, after-school jobs, and younger siblings' pickup schedules.
2	Why does the writer say the counterargument is reasonable?	A school schedule affects more than classrooms, including families, coaches, and child-care plans.
3	What word signals that the writer is beginning a response to the counterargument?	However.
4	How does the writer respond to concerns about activities and transportation?	The writer suggests morning practices, lighted fields, coordinated bus routes, and studying transportation costs before deciding.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should add covered bike racks near the main entrance. Some people may argue that racks would cost money and take up space that could be used for parking. This concern is reasonable because the school must use its budget and grounds carefully. However, covered racks could protect bikes from rain and make it easier for more students to ride to school.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the opposing view and the writer's response. For the open task, look for a clear claim, a realistic counterargument, an explanation of why it matters, and a response that addresses it.