

Evidence Under Pressure

Examine how claims, reasoning, and evidence work together.

10.RI.1.C "Evaluate the argument and specific claims in texts, examining whether the reasoning is valid, the evidence is relevant, and whether there are any false or unsupported statements."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the proposal's main claim, circle each piece of evidence, and number statements that make predictions without giving evidence so you can judge the argument.

The Later Bell Proposal

- ① Northside High School's student council has asked the district to move the first bell from 7:25 to 8:30 next fall. In its proposal, the council argues that a later schedule would help students arrive ready to learn and would justify changing bus routes and after-school practice times. The proposal cites the American Academy of Pediatrics, which recommends that middle and high schools aim for start times of 8:30 a.m. or later so teenagers can get enough sleep. It also includes comments from students who say they struggle to stay awake during first period.
- ② To support the expected academic benefits, the proposal describes a 2018 study in Seattle. Researchers followed students at two public high schools before and after their start times moved 55 minutes later. The study reported that students slept an average of 34 more minutes each night after the change, and grades rose by 4.5 percent. Seattle's schools serve a different city, use their own bus system, and made the schedule change during one school year. Northside's proposed schedule would affect four high schools, including students who travel from rural areas and participate in afternoon activities.
- ③ At a public meeting, Councilmember Reyes opposes the new schedule. Reyes says that later starts will cause every Northside athlete to lose college scholarship opportunities because practices will end later. Reyes also says that families will spend at least \$2 million more on transportation. The district's transportation director says that route plans have not yet been designed. A coach notes that practice times could change, but does not describe a proposed athletic schedule. The school board will vote after a hearing where students, families, coaches, and bus staff may offer evidence about the proposal.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Is the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation relevant to the council’s request? Explain what part of the argument it supports and what local decision it does not settle.

2 Are the student comments enough evidence to show that a later start will improve learning at Northside? Explain your judgment.

3 Does the Seattle study make the prediction that Northside grades will rise by 4.5 percent valid? Use two details from the passage to support your answer.

4 Choose one assertion made by Reyes. Why is it unsupported by the information in the passage, and what evidence could test it?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school-policy claim not discussed in the passage. In exactly four sentences, state the claim, describe one relevant source of evidence, identify one irrelevant or unsupported statement, and name one additional evidence item needed before deciding.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the proposal's main claim, circle each piece of evidence, and number statements that make predictions without giving evidence so you can judge the argument. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Is the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation relevant to the council's request? Explain what part of the argument it supports and what local decision it does not settle.	Yes. It supports the idea that high schools should aim for later start times to help teenagers get enough sleep. It does not settle Northside's bus routes, practice times, or local costs.
2	Are the student comments enough evidence to show that a later start will improve learning at Northside? Explain your judgment.	No. The comments are relevant firsthand reports that students feel sleepy, but they do not measure learning outcomes or show that a later start would cause improvement.
3	Does the Seattle study make the prediction that Northside grades will rise by 4.5 percent valid? Use two details from the passage to support your answer.	No. The study suggests a possible result, but it involved only two Seattle schools in a different city with a different bus system. Northside would affect four schools, including rural commuters and students with afternoon activities.
4	Choose one assertion made by Reyes. Why is it unsupported by the information in the passage, and what evidence could test it?	The claim that every athlete will lose scholarship opportunities is unsupported because Reyes gives no athletic or scholarship evidence. A proposed practice schedule and scholarship data could test it. The \$2 million claim is also unsupported without route plans or a transportation budget estimate.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Northside should install water-bottle filling stations near the gym. A maintenance report showing that existing fountains often fail would be relevant because it documents a need at the school. A survey showing that students want a new football scoreboard would not support the claim. A cost estimate and maintenance plan are also needed before the district decides.

Accept reasoned evaluations that distinguish relevant evidence from evidence that is sufficient to prove a claim. Students may select either of Reyes's assertions if they identify appropriate missing evidence.