

Start Time Case

Trace how evidence builds an argument about a school policy.

10.W.1.B.ii "Write arguments that: Support well-defined points of view effectively with relevant evidence and clear reasoning in ways that logically advance the claim(s)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the writer's central claim. Circle specific evidence details, then number the sentences that explain how the evidence supports the claim.

A Better First Bell

- ① High schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m. because teenagers learn better when their schedules match their sleep needs. The American Academy of Pediatrics says that most adolescents need eight to 10 hours of sleep each night. During puberty, many students' body clocks shift later, so falling asleep very early can be difficult even when they avoid screens. An early bell therefore does not simply reward students who are more responsible. It can require students to arrive before they have had enough rest. A later start would give more students a realistic chance to be alert during first-period classes.
- ② Evidence from a school schedule change supports that claim. In 2016, researchers studying two Seattle high schools found that students slept an average of 34 minutes longer after the district moved start times later. The study also reported a 4.5 percent increase in students' median grades. More sleep does not guarantee that every student will earn higher marks, since teaching, attendance, and effort also matter. Still, the results make sense: rested students can pay attention longer, remember new information, and participate more fully. When a schedule gives students additional sleep, it removes one barrier to using those learning skills.
- ③ Some families may worry that a later start would complicate buses, sports, jobs, or child care. Those concerns deserve planning, not dismissal. District leaders can examine bus routes, coordinate practice times, and ask families which conflicts are most serious before changing a schedule. They can also review attendance, course performance, and student sleep after the change. If a district adjusts transportation but ignores whether students benefit, it has solved only a logistical problem. Because the goal of school is learning, leaders should weigh practical costs against evidence about students' health and classroom readiness. A later start is justified when the plan addresses both.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What central claim does the writer make about high school start times?

2 What two results from the Seattle study does the writer use as evidence?

3 How does the writer connect additional sleep to improved learning?

4 How does the third paragraph answer concerns about transportation, sports, and family schedules while still advancing the claim?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 120- to 150-word recommendation to a school board about whether to pilot an 8:30 a.m. start time. State a clear claim, use at least two specific evidence details from the passage, explain how each detail supports your claim, and respond to one practical concern.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the writer's central claim. Circle specific evidence details, then number the sentences that explain how the evidence supports the claim. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What central claim does the writer make about high school start times?	High schools should begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m.
2	What two results from the Seattle study does the writer use as evidence?	Students slept an average of 34 minutes longer, and students' median grades increased by 4.5 percent.
3	How does the writer connect additional sleep to improved learning?	The writer explains that rested students can pay attention longer, remember new information, and participate more fully.
4	How does the third paragraph answer concerns about transportation, sports, and family schedules while still advancing the claim?	It says leaders should plan for logistical conflicts through route changes, practice coordination, and family input, then review student results and weigh costs against learning and health benefits.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Riverton High should pilot an 8:30 a.m. start for one year and study the results. Most adolescents need eight to 10 hours of sleep, yet puberty can make an early bedtime difficult. This evidence supports a later start because the current schedule may prevent students from arriving rested, even when they try to sleep responsibly. Seattle researchers found that students slept 34 minutes longer after later start times, and the study reported a 4.5 percent increase in median grades. These findings do not prove identical results in Riverton, but they give the school a sound reason to test the change. Bus and sports schedules may be difficult to revise. Riverton should adjust routes, gather family feedback, and compare attendance, sleep, and course performance before making the policy permanent.

Accept equivalent statements of the claim and explanations that accurately connect the passage's evidence to learning or readiness. For the open response, look for a clear position, two relevant details used as evidence, logical explanation, and a workable response to a practical concern.