Start Time Debate

Study how an argument answers opposing views.

10.W.1.B.iii "Write arguments that: Address and refute counterclaims."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's main claim and each reason that supports it. Circle each counterclaim, then number the sentences that answer or weaken that counterclaim.

A Later Bell for Riverton High

1 Riverton High should begin classes at 8:30 a.m. instead of 7:40. Teens' body clocks naturally shift later during puberty, so many students struggle to fall asleep early enough for a very early school day. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended that middle and high schools start at 8:30 or later. A later start would not make school less demanding. It would give students a better chance to arrive alert, participate in class, and learn during first period. That change could make the daily schedule better match students' sleep needs.

2 Critics say a later bell would create transportation problems, especially if elementary and high school buses share drivers. That concern deserves planning, but it does not prove the proposal is unworkable. Districts can revise bus routes, change the order of school pickups, or use separate schedules for different grade levels. Riverton could survey families and test possible routes before making a final decision. The need to organize buses is a practical challenge, not a reason to ignore evidence about teen sleep and learning. With careful planning, transportation can support rather than block a healthier schedule for students.

3 Others argue that a later start would interfere with sports, jobs, and homework because dismissal would occur later. Yet the school can adjust practice times, coordinate with local employers, and protect the same number of instructional minutes. These changes may require cooperation, but inconvenience is not the same as impossibility. When a schedule affects every student's readiness to learn, the school should weigh temporary adjustments against the continuing cost of students beginning class tired. Riverton should adopt the 8:30 start after developing a transportation and activities plan with families and staff before the next school year.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the writer's main claim? Give one reason from paragraph 1 that supports it.

2. What transportation counterclaim does the writer address in paragraph 2?

3. What two possible actions does the writer offer to answer the transportation counterclaim?

4. How does paragraph 3 refute the concern about sports, jobs, and homework?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence argument explaining whether the school library should offer e-books in addition to print books. State your claim, include one counterclaim, and refute it with a specific, logical response.

ANSWER KEY

Start Time Debate

GRADE 10 · 10.W.1.B.iii

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's main claim and each reason that supports it. Circle each counterclaim, then number the sentences that answer or weaken that counterclaim. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's main claim? Give one reason from paragraph 1 that supports it.	**Riverton High should start at 8:30 a.m. One supporting reason is that teens' body clocks shift later during puberty, making early sleep difficult.**
2	What transportation counterclaim does the writer address in paragraph 2?	**A later start could create transportation problems because elementary and high school buses may share drivers.**
3	What two possible actions does the writer offer to answer the transportation counterclaim?	**The writer suggests revising bus routes, changing pickup order, using separate schedules, surveying families, or testing routes. Any two are correct.**
4	How does paragraph 3 refute the concern about sports, jobs, and homework?	**It explains that the school can adjust practice times, coordinate with employers, and keep the same number of instructional minutes. It argues that inconvenience does not make the plan impossible.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The school library should offer e-books in addition to print books because students could read on a phone, tablet, or computer when they cannot visit the building. Some people argue that e-books would cost too much and reduce interest in printed books. However, the library can choose a limited collection of high-demand titles, and keeping print books available means digital access expands choices rather than replacing them.

Accept responses that accurately identify the claim, counterclaims, and stated refutations in the passage. For the open task, accept varied positions if the response has exactly three sentences and clearly addresses and weakens a counterclaim with logical reasoning.