

Speech Under the Lens

Analyze how a speaker builds and supports an oral argument.

11.C.2.A.vi "Report orally on a topic or text or present an opinion. This includes: Evaluating the content and effectiveness of presentations; that includes the introduction, organization, strengths/weaknesses in evidence and reasoning, and conclusion."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the speaker's main claim and conclusion, circle each source or piece of evidence, and write 1, 2, and 3 beside the introduction, body, and conclusion.

A Later Bell?

- ① Good morning. I am asking our school board to move the high school start time from 7:35 to 8:30 next year. Many teenagers arrive tired, then must learn chemistry, literature, and algebra before their bodies are fully alert. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later to help adolescents get enough sleep. Today I will explain why teen sleep matters, describe one possible schedule, and answer the concern that a later bell would disrupt activities and family routines for some families.
- ② Sleep is not a luxury. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that most high school students do not get the recommended amount of sleep on school nights. Lack of sleep can affect attention, mood, and safety, so this issue reaches beyond first-period yawns. A later start, however, will not automatically solve every problem. Students still need reasonable bedtimes and limits on late-night screen use. Our transportation office would need to coordinate bus routes with elementary schools, and teams might practice later. These costs deserve study before the board chooses a schedule.
- ③ Consider a one-year trial beginning at 8:30, followed by a public review of attendance, course grades, student sleep surveys, bus costs, and participation in after-school programs. I have heard that students in a neighboring district felt happier after a later start, so our grades will probably rise as well. That comparison is limited, but the trial would give our community stronger local evidence. In conclusion, a later start is worth testing because sleep supports learning, yet the board should publish the results before making a permanent change. The proposal is practical, cautious, and focused on students.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How effective is the introduction? Explain how it states the topic, gives a claim, and prepares the audience for the presentation.

2 Which piece of evidence is strongest for the speaker's main claim? Explain why it is relevant and credible.

3 Identify one weakness in the speaker's reasoning in paragraph 3. Why does that reasoning not fully prove the claim?

4 Evaluate the conclusion. What does it do effectively, and what specific next step does it propose?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school or community policy you support. Draft a one-minute oral opinion that opens with a claim and preview, uses two relevant pieces of evidence with sources, addresses one limit or counterargument, and ends with a specific action.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the speaker's main claim and conclusion, circle each source or piece of evidence, and write 1, 2, and 3 beside the introduction, body, and conclusion. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How effective is the introduction? Explain how it states the topic, gives a claim, and prepares the audience for the presentation.	It is effective because it clearly asks for an 8:30 start time and previews sleep, scheduling, and activity concerns.
2	Which piece of evidence is strongest for the speaker's main claim? Explain why it is relevant and credible.	The American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation is strongest because it comes from a medical organization and directly supports later school start times for adolescents.
3	Identify one weakness in the speaker's reasoning in paragraph 3. Why does that reasoning not fully prove the claim?	The speaker assumes that happier students in a neighboring district mean grades at this school will rise. One reported experience does not prove that the same result will occur here.
4	Evaluate the conclusion. What does it do effectively, and what specific next step does it propose?	The conclusion is effective because it restates a qualified claim and recognizes the need for evidence. It proposes a one-year trial and public review before a permanent decision.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should plant shade trees along the sunny edge of the athletic field. I will explain how trees can lower heat exposure and manage rainwater, then propose a realistic first step. The Environmental Protection Agency explains that trees cool surfaces through shade and evapotranspiration. The U.S. Forest Service reports that trees can intercept rainfall, which can reduce stormwater runoff. These benefits support planting, but trees cost money and need watering while young. Instead of promising an instant solution, the school could begin with ten native trees and ask a local nursery or city forestry program for guidance. The student council should present this pilot plan to the principal this fall.

Accept defensible evaluations that cite specific features of the introduction, organization, evidence, reasoning, or conclusion. For Part 3, accept varied topics if the response includes all required presentation elements and uses relevant, credible evidence.