

The Later Bell

Trace how a proposal builds a clear, evidence-based argument.

11.W.2 "Organization and Composition Plan and organize writing to address a specific audience and purpose using the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing)..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the thesis and each main claim, write CC beside the counterclaim, box each source-based evidence sentence, and circle transitions that connect ideas. These marks will help you see how the writer organizes a sustained proposal.

A Proposal for Later High School Starts

- ① At the next school board meeting, I will argue that our district should move high school start times to 8:30 a.m. or later. This change would give teenagers more opportunity to sleep, a need shaped by biology rather than laziness. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later because adolescent sleep patterns shift later. Therefore, a later bell would support students before the first class even begins. It could also make the district's stated commitment to learning more consistent with students' daily schedules.
- ② Some families may worry that a later opening would disrupt bus routes, sports, or after-school jobs. Those concerns deserve planning, not dismissal. However, scheduling difficulties do not outweigh the academic and health costs of chronic sleep loss. In a 2014 policy statement, the American Academy of Pediatrics reported that insufficient sleep is linked to poorer grades, attendance problems, and mood difficulties in adolescents. This evidence matters because a schedule that regularly limits sleep can affect both classroom focus and students' well-being. The district could phase in changes, coordinate shared buses, and adjust practice times, addressing practical concerns while preserving the central goal.
- ③ Critics might say that later starts simply teach students to stay up later. Yet that claim treats all bedtime choices as equally voluntary and ignores biological timing. A 2018 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that about 73 percent of high school students slept fewer than eight hours on school nights. Moreover, a later start is not a complete solution. It is a realistic condition that makes healthy routines more possible. For these reasons, the board should adopt an 8:30 a.m. start time and measure attendance, course performance, and transportation effects after one year.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What is the writer's thesis, and what audience is the writer asking to act?

2 How does paragraph 2 introduce source evidence, and how does the writer explain why that evidence matters?

3 What counterclaim appears in paragraph 3, and how does the writer respond to it?

4 Identify two transitions from different paragraphs and explain the relationship each one shows.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose a school policy you think should change. Make a three-part plan labeled Thesis, Evidence, and Counterclaim. Then write a two-paragraph, 150-180-word proposal to a school leader that introduces evidence from a named credible source, explains the evidence, responds to a counterclaim, uses at least three transitions, and varies sentence openings.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the thesis and each main claim, write CC beside the counterclaim, box each source-based evidence sentence, and circle transitions that connect ideas. These marks will help you see how the writer organizes a sustained proposal. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's thesis, and what audience is the writer asking to act?	The writer argues that the district should move high school start times to 8:30 a.m. or later. The intended audience is the school board.
2	How does paragraph 2 introduce source evidence, and how does the writer explain why that evidence matters?	It identifies a 2014 American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement and reports its findings about insufficient sleep. The writer explains that schedules that limit sleep can affect classroom focus and students' well-being.
3	What counterclaim appears in paragraph 3, and how does the writer respond to it?	The counterclaim is that later starts would simply teach students to stay up later. The writer responds that this ignores biological timing and that a later start makes healthy routines more possible.
4	Identify two transitions from different paragraphs and explain the relationship each one shows.	Therefore in paragraph 1 shows a conclusion based on the sleep evidence. However in paragraph 2 shows a contrast between scheduling concerns and the stronger reasons for later starts.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Thesis: The school should install bottle-filling stations in main hallways. Evidence: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explains that source reduction prevents waste before it must be managed. Counterclaim: New stations may cost too much. Our school should install bottle-filling stations in each main hallway because they would make drinking water easier to reach and cut disposable-bottle waste. First, students often move quickly between classes, so a station near classrooms would be more useful than a fountain hidden in one wing. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explains that source reduction prevents waste before it must be managed. In this case, students who refill bottles could use fewer single-use containers, reducing the material the school buys and throws away. Some people may argue that new stations cost too much. However, the school could add one station each year and track its use over the next year before expanding the project. This phased approach limits the first expense while testing whether students use the stations. Furthermore, easy access to water supports a practical daily need, not a short-lived trend. Therefore, the principal should begin with two high-traffic hallways and report the results to students and families.

Accept equivalent answers that accurately identify the thesis, evidence, counterclaim, and logical connections in the passage. For Part 3, accept varied policy topics when the draft meets the length, organization, evidence, explanation, counterclaim, transition, and sentence-variety requirements.