

Bell Time Case

Analyze how a model argument organizes evidence, a counterclaim, and a solution.

11.W “The student will write in a variety of forms for diverse audiences and purposes linked to grade eleven content and text with an emphasis on argumentative and analytical writing...”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the thesis, circle each source-based piece of evidence, and box the counterclaim and the writer’s response to it. These marks show how the argument builds and qualifies its position.

Why High Schools Should Start Later

- ① Teenagers’ alarms often ring before their bodies are ready to wake. Because adolescent sleep cycles shift later during puberty, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later. Our district should move its high school start time from 7:35 to 8:30. This change would better match students’ biology, reduce sleep-related risks, and improve readiness to learn. The proposal would require planning, especially for buses and activities, but health and learning evidence make a later schedule the stronger choice.
- ② The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies insufficient sleep among high school students as a public-health concern and notes that early school schedules can contribute to it. In a 2018 Science Advances study, researchers measured sleep in students at two Seattle high schools before and after a 55-minute later start. Students slept 34 minutes longer each night, and their median grades rose 4.5 percent. This evidence does not prove that schedule alone caused every improvement, since teachers and students also shape achievement. Still, the measured sleep gain directly supports the claim that a later bell gives adolescents more opportunity to rest.
- ③ Critics reasonably point out that later starts can complicate bus routes, athletics, and family schedules. Those costs matter, yet they are problems to solve, not reasons to ignore the evidence. The district could phase in the change over one year, publish revised bus routes before summer, and coordinate activity schedules with families. It should also track attendance, first-period tardiness, and student sleep surveys during the first year. If those results show no meaningful benefit, leaders could adjust the plan. A careful rollout answers the counterclaim while preserving the central conclusion: high schools should begin at 8:30 because students learn better when schedules respect their need for sleep.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 State the writer’s thesis. What three benefits does the introduction preview?

2 How does the writer contextualize the Seattle study before using its results as evidence?

3 What limitation does the writer acknowledge about the study’s grade results, and why does that acknowledgment strengthen the argument?

4 Identify the counterclaim and explain how the proposed rollout responds to it.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 120-150 word analytical paragraph recommending whether Riverview High should install water-refill stations. Include a clear thesis, evidence from both source notes, a counterclaim and response, and a concluding recommendation. Source notes: The CDC states that providing safe drinking water at school helps students choose water during the day. Riverview’s facilities report found that 18,000 plastic beverage bottles entered recycling or trash last year; installation would cost \$24,000, but a city water department conservation grant would provide \$10,000.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the thesis, circle each source-based piece of evidence, and box the counterclaim and the writer's response to it. These marks show how the argument builds and qualifies its position. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	State the writer's thesis. What three benefits does the introduction preview?	The district should move its high school start time from 7:35 to 8:30. The introduction previews a better match with students' biology, fewer sleep-related risks, and improved readiness to learn.
2	How does the writer contextualize the Seattle study before using its results as evidence?	The writer identifies the 2018 Science Advances study, explains that researchers studied two Seattle high schools, and notes that they measured sleep before and after a 55-minute later start.
3	What limitation does the writer acknowledge about the study's grade results, and why does that acknowledgment strengthen the argument?	The writer acknowledges that the schedule alone may not have caused every grade improvement because teachers and students also affect achievement. This qualification makes the claim more careful and credible while focusing on the directly measured sleep gain.
4	Identify the counterclaim and explain how the proposed rollout responds to it.	The counterclaim is that later starts can complicate bus routes, athletics, and family schedules. A phased change, early publication of bus routes, activity coordination, and first-year data tracking address logistical concerns and allow leaders to adjust the plan if needed.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Riverview High should install water-refill stations in its busiest hallways because students need dependable access to drinking water and the project can reduce disposable-bottle waste. The CDC explains that providing safe drinking water at school helps students choose water during the day, so stations near the cafeteria and gym would serve students where they already gather. In addition, the Riverview facilities report found that the school sent 18,000 plastic beverage bottles to recycling or trash last year. Although installation would cost \$24,000, the city water department offers a \$10,000 conservation grant, reducing the local cost to \$14,000. The school could install two stations first and count bottle use for a semester. This staged process addresses the cost concern while giving leaders local evidence about demand. Therefore, Riverview should use the grant and begin the pilot this fall.

Accept equivalent descriptions that accurately identify the thesis, evidence, qualification, counterclaim, and response. For the paragraph, look for a defensible recommendation, accurate use of both notes, logical organization, explanation of evidence, and a meaningful response to the cost concern.