

Case for Change

Read a model argument, then build an evidence-based position.

8.W.2.A.iii "Generate and organize ideas using the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing) to develop multi-paragraph texts. This includes: Stating and defending conclusions or positions with reasons and precise..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's position and final recommendation, circle each piece of evidence, and number the sentences that explain how evidence supports the position.

A Later Start for Riverview

- ① Riverview Middle School should begin classes at 8:30 a.m. instead of 7:40. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 or later because teenagers need adequate sleep. Many students must wake before 6:30 to catch buses, yet teens' body clocks naturally shift later during puberty. A later start would better match school hours to students' sleep patterns. When students arrive more rested, they are more likely to focus during lessons and participate thoughtfully.
- ② Critics may worry that a later opening would push sports, jobs, and family schedules later. Those concerns deserve planning, but they do not outweigh students' health and learning needs. Districts can adjust bus routes and move some practices to mornings or weekends. In Seattle, researchers found that students at two high schools slept longer and had better grades after the district delayed start times. This result does not prove that every schedule change will work the same way, but it gives schools relevant evidence to consider.
- ③ Riverview could test the change for one school year and compare attendance, course grades, and student sleep surveys with results from the previous year. The school board should also ask families, coaches, and bus drivers about problems they notice. Collecting several kinds of information would show whether the new schedule helps students without creating costs that cannot be managed. Because the proposal includes a trial and regular review, the board should approve an 8:30 start while remaining ready to improve the plan.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What is the writer’s position about Riverview’s school schedule?

2 Identify two pieces of evidence the writer uses to support a later start time.

3 What counterclaim does the writer address, and how does the writer respond to it?

4 Why does the writer propose a one-year trial with attendance, grade, and sleep data? Explain how this plan supports the final recommendation.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose one change that would improve your school. Plan your position, then write, revise, and edit a three-paragraph argument of 180 to 220 words that includes at least two precise, relevant pieces of evidence, explains how each supports your position, addresses one counterclaim, and ends with a clear recommendation.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's position and final recommendation, circle each piece of evidence, and number the sentences that explain how evidence supports the position. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's position about Riverview's school schedule?	Riverview should begin classes at 8:30 a.m. instead of 7:40.
2	Identify two pieces of evidence the writer uses to support a later start time.	The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends starts of 8:30 or later for middle and high schools, and Seattle students at two high schools slept longer and had better grades after later start times.
3	What counterclaim does the writer address, and how does the writer respond to it?	The writer addresses concerns that later starts could disrupt sports, jobs, and family schedules. The writer says districts can adjust bus routes and practice times, and that student health and learning needs are more important.
4	Why does the writer propose a one-year trial with attendance, grade, and sleep data? Explain how this plan supports the final recommendation.	The trial would provide several kinds of evidence about whether the new schedule helps students and creates manageable costs. Regular review makes it reasonable for the board to approve the change while adjusting the plan if needed.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Northview Middle School should create a quiet study room in the library after school. In a spring survey, 64 of 90 students who stayed for activities said they had no calm place to work before rides arrived. The library already has tables, internet access, and a staff member until 4:30 on most school days. Opening one supervised room would give students time to finish homework and ask classmates questions quietly. Some people may say that students should go home immediately or that supervision will cost too much. However, the room would be optional, and it could use the librarian's existing after-school hours rather than requiring a new program. During a two-week trial, the school could record attendance and ask users whether they completed assignments there. If few students used the room, the school could end it. If many used it well, the results would show that a small schedule change met a real need. The principal should approve the trial for next semester. The survey identifies a specific problem, and the available library space makes the plan practical. Attendance records and student responses would provide stronger evidence than guesses about whether the room helps. The principal can review those records before deciding whether to continue. This careful approach answers cost concerns while giving students who need a workspace a useful choice.

Accept other defensible school-change arguments that meet the paragraph and word-count requirements. Evidence may come from reliable research, school records, surveys, observations, or a clearly described proposed data collection plan, as long as the student explains its connection to the position.