The Bell Debate

Use research, health guidance, and concerns to build a balanced claim.

9.R.1.D "Synthesize multiple streams of information to support claims and introduce counterclaims."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline evidence from each information stream, circle the central claim, and box the counterclaim so you can see how the writer builds a balanced recommendation.

Should High Schools Start Later?

1 In 2016, Seattle Public Schools shifted high school start times from 7:50 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Researchers studied students at two high schools before and after the change. Their 2018 study, published in Science Advances, found that students slept 34 minutes longer per night after later starts. The researchers also reported a 4.5 percent increase in median grades and less daytime sleepiness. These results do not prove that every change in grades came only from sleep, but they offer evidence that schedules can affect learning.

2 Medical organizations add another stream of information. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later, explaining that adolescent sleep cycles shift later. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that insufficient sleep in high school students is linked to health problems, risky behaviors, and poorer academic performance. Taken together, the medical guidance and the Seattle results support a claim that later start times can benefit many teenagers rather than merely making mornings more convenient for students.

3 Still, a later bell schedule creates real challenges. Districts may need to redesign bus routes, and families could struggle with child-care or work schedules. Coaches and students may worry that later dismissal reduces time for practices, games, or jobs. Those concerns do not erase the sleep evidence, but they complicate the claim that every school can make the same change immediately. A reasonable proposal would support an 8:30 a.m. or later start while asking districts to plan transportation and after-school schedules with families and staff.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What two information streams does the writer combine to support later high school start times? Explain how they work together.

2. What limitation does the writer place on the Seattle study's grade results? Why does including this limitation make the claim more careful?

3. State one counterclaim about later start times. How does the final proposal respond to that counterclaim?

4. How does paragraph 3 qualify the central claim? Use one logistical concern and the writer's proposed response.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Your school is considering a daily 10-minute activity break. The CDC recommends that young people ages 6 to 17 get 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day, and research reviews have found that short classroom activity breaks can improve on-task behavior, but some teachers worry about losing instructional time. Write exactly four sentences that state a claim, synthesize both information streams, introduce the counterclaim, and respond to it.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 9 · 9.R.1.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline evidence from each information stream, circle the central claim, and box the counterclaim so you can see how the writer builds a balanced recommendation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two information streams does the writer combine to support later high school start times? Explain how they work together.	**The Seattle study provides results about more sleep, higher median grades, and less sleepiness, while medical organizations explain adolescent sleep needs and risks of insufficient sleep. Together, they support the claim that later starts can benefit teenagers.**
2	What limitation does the writer place on the Seattle study's grade results? Why does including this limitation make the claim more careful?	**The writer says the study does not prove that sleep alone caused every grade change. This shows that the evidence supports the claim without overstating what the study proves.**
3	State one counterclaim about later start times. How does the final proposal respond to that counterclaim?	**A counterclaim is that later starts can disrupt bus routes, family schedules, activities, or jobs. The proposal supports later starts while asking districts to plan transportation and after-school schedules with families and staff.**
4	How does paragraph 3 qualify the central claim? Use one logistical concern and the writer's proposed response.	**Paragraph 3 explains that later starts may benefit teenagers but may not work immediately for every school because of concerns such as bus routes. The writer responds by recommending planning with families and staff.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should add a daily 10-minute activity break. The CDC activity guideline and research on on-task behavior both suggest that movement can support students during the school day. Some teachers may argue that the break takes away instructional time. Because a short break may help students refocus, the school should try it while tracking class time and behavior.

Accept clear paraphrases that combine the Seattle findings with medical guidance, rather than listing sources separately. For the open response, require exactly four sentences with a claim, both information streams, a counterclaim, and a reasonable response.