The Later Bell

Trace how a model argument builds and supports a clear claim.

9.W "The student will write in various forms for diverse audiences and purposes linked to grade nine content and texts with an emphasis on expository and persuasive writing..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the thesis, number the three main reasons or supports that develop it, circle transition words or phrases, and box the counterargument with its rebuttal to trace how the writer builds a persuasive case.

Why High School Should Start Later

1. At 7:20 a.m., many high school students are still traveling to school or fighting sleep in first period. Our district should move high school start times to 8:30 a.m. or later. This change would better match teen biology, improve readiness to learn, and make roads safer for young drivers. The American Academy of Pediatrics explains that adolescents' sleep-wake cycles shift later during puberty, making early sleep and early waking difficult. A later bell would not solve every challenge students face, but it would give instruction a stronger foundation: alert students who can focus on the work.

2. Research supports this proposal. In 2014, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later so students can obtain enough sleep. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also reports that most middle and high school students do not get the recommended amount of sleep on school nights. These sources connect sleep to a practical school decision, not merely a preference. In addition, a later schedule could give tired students more time to prepare for class and may reduce drowsy driving. District leaders should study local bus routes and after-school schedules before selecting a new time.

3. Opponents may worry that a later start would interfere with sports, jobs, or family transportation. That concern deserves attention because a schedule change affects more than classrooms. However, the district can examine bus routes, adjust practice times, and ask families for input before adopting a plan. Those steps do not erase every conflict, yet they offer a reasonable response instead of treating inconvenience as a reason to ignore student sleep. Ultimately, the evidence from health organizations and the need for careful local planning lead to the same conclusion: the district should set a later high school start time.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the writer's thesis, and which three benefits does the introduction preview?

2. How does the American Academy of Pediatrics source strengthen the writer's argument?

3. What does the transition phrase "In addition" do in paragraph 2?

4. What counterargument does the writer address, and what rebuttal does the writer provide?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 100-130 word recommendation to the principal about whether the school should add a 20-minute weekly advisory period. State a clear thesis, support it with two specific reasons, acknowledge and rebut one concern, use at least two transitions, and end with a concluding sentence.

ANSWER KEY

The Later Bell

GRADE 9 · 9.W

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the thesis, number the three main reasons or supports that develop it, circle transition words or phrases, and box the counterargument with its rebuttal to trace how the writer builds a persuasive case. 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 which three benefits does the introduction preview?	**The district should start high school at 8:30 a.m. or later. The previewed benefits are matching teen biology, improving readiness to learn, and making roads safer for young drivers.**
2	How does the American Academy of Pediatrics source strengthen the writer's argument?	**It provides an authoritative health recommendation for 8:30 a.m. or later and connects the claim to adolescents' need for sleep.**
3	What does the transition phrase "In addition" do in paragraph 2?	**It adds practical benefits of a later schedule after the research evidence about student sleep.**
4	What counterargument does the writer address, and what rebuttal does the writer provide?	**The counterargument is that later starts could disrupt sports, jobs, or family transportation. The rebuttal is that the district can study routes, adjust practice times, and seek family input before making a plan.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Principal Chen, the school should add a 20-minute weekly advisory period because students need scheduled time to organize work and seek help before small problems grow. First, an adviser could help students check missing assignments and plan deadlines, which would reduce last-minute confusion. In addition, students could ask private questions about courses, clubs, or graduation requirements. Some people may argue that advisory would take time from classes. However, placing it once a week would protect regular instruction while helping students arrive prepared. Therefore, the school should pilot advisory for one semester and compare missing-work rates and student feedback before deciding whether to continue it.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the thesis, evidence, transitions, and rebuttal when they are supported by the passage. For the open response, look for a clear position, two relevant details, a genuine counterargument and response, logical transitions, and a conclusion that follows from the argument.