**Shall We Begin?**

You have just been elected to represent the 8th grade students on the Schedule Committee for the whole school! It will be your job to present your ideas about changes to the school day schedule. You will prepare your ideas as an argument essay that you will use to try to convince the rest of the committee to consider adopting your ideas. The committee is considering four possible schedules. Analyze the proposed schedules, select one that you believe will be the best for the students, and write an argument essay. Be certain to state your claim and acknowledge counterclaims; provide logically organized reasons and evidence from credible sources; write in a formal style using words, phrases, and clauses that make it easy for the reader to follow the argument; and provide a conclusion that clearly supports your argument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Schedule #1</th>
<th>Proposed Schedule #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School begins at 8:00 am</td>
<td>School begins at 9:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are six periods per day</td>
<td>There are six periods per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periods are 55 minutes long</td>
<td>Periods are 55 minutes long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing periods are 7 minutes long</td>
<td>Passing periods are 7 minutes long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch is between 4th and 5th period (35 minutes long)</td>
<td>Lunch is between 4th and 5th period (30 minutes long)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Schedule #3</th>
<th>Proposed Schedule #4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School begins at 8:00 am</td>
<td>School begins at 9:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are three periods per day</td>
<td>There are three periods per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Periods 1, 3, 5 on one day</td>
<td>o Periods 1, 3, 5 on one day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Periods 2, 4, 6 on the next day</td>
<td>o Periods 2, 4, 6 on the next day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Odd and even days alternate</td>
<td>o Odd and even days alternate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periods are 110 minutes long</td>
<td>Periods are 110 minutes long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing periods are 15 minutes long</td>
<td>Passing periods are 15 minutes long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch is after the second period of the day (After Period 3 or 4)</td>
<td>Lunch is after the second period of the day (After Period 3 or 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch is 35 minutes long</td>
<td>Lunch is 30 minutes long</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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### 8th Grade Writing Argument Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>W.8.1</strong> Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</td>
<td><strong>W.8.1.a</strong> Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</td>
<td><strong>W.8.1.b</strong> Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</td>
<td><strong>W.8.1.c</strong> Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Introduces the claim clearly and uses an effective hook to draw the reader’s attention. - Organizes the reasons and evidence clearly.</td>
<td>- Supports claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence; uses credible sources; demonstrates a clear understanding of the topic.</td>
<td>- Uses a variety of words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships between claim and reasons.</td>
<td>- Clearly establishes and maintains a formal style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Introduces the claim and includes a hook. - Organizes the reasons and evidence.</td>
<td>- Supports claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence; uses credible sources; demonstrates understanding of the topic.</td>
<td>- Uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships between claim and reasons.</td>
<td>- Establishes and maintains a formal style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- States a claim and may attempt to write a hook. - Organization of the reasons and evidence is unclear.</td>
<td>- Supports claim with some reasons and evidence; may use some credible sources; demonstrates limited understanding of the topic.</td>
<td>- Uses some words, phrases, and clauses to clarify how the claim and reasons connect.</td>
<td>- Attempts to establish and maintain a formal style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does not state the claim. - Organization of the reasons and evidence is lacking.</td>
<td>- Does not support claim with reasons or evidence; does not use credible sources; demonstrates little or no understanding of the topic.</td>
<td>- Does not use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify how the claim and reasons connect.</td>
<td>- Does not establish and maintain a formal style.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**L.8.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.  
**L.8.2:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.  
**L.8.3:** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
Complete the Pros and Cons chart and use it to plan your argument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List the three (most important) reasons to support your argument

1. 

2. 

3. 

List two or three reasons some might feel differently about your argument

4. 

5. 

6. 

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________
Argument Outline

Claim: ____________________________________________________________

Opposing View Might Be: ___________________________________________

Introductory Paragraph

Hook: _____________________________________________________________

Background Information: ____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Context: __________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Claim/Thesis Statement: ____________________________________________

First Body Paragraph

Main Point 1 Transition Sentence:

_________________________________________________________________

Evidence 1: ________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Evidence 2: ________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Evidence 3: ________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Concluding Sentence: ______________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Second Body Paragraph

Main Point 2 Transition Sentence:

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Evidence 1: _______________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Evidence 2: _______________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Evidence 3: _______________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Concluding Sentence:

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Third Body Paragraph

Main Point 3 Transition Sentence:

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Evidence 1: _______________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Evidence 2: _______________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Evidence 3: _______________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Concluding Sentence:

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
Restatement of Thesis:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Summary of Reason 1:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Summary of Reason 2:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Summary of Reason 3:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Final Statement:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________