

Building Language Skills with The Seattle Times

April 21, 2016

Article: “Highline district weighing later start times for high-school students”

Monday, April 18th, 2016 in the e-Edition of The Seattle Times, **NW Monday, page B1.**

Pre-Reading:

Answer the following questions, using them as a starting point to reflect on your own sleep habits.

- On average, how many hours of sleep did you get each night in the past week?
- In the past week, has your school work been affected by lack of sleep?
- Fill in the blanks: I usually go to bed at _____. I usually wake up at _____.
- How would you rate your own sleep habits?
- Do you think you are getting enough sleep? Why/why not?

Vocabulary:

As you read, look for the following vocabulary words that appear in today’s article. Write down what you think the words mean based on the “context,” or how the words are used in the sentence in which they appear. Next, look up the definitions in a dictionary and see how close your guess was for each word.

Coordinate

Feedback

Financially

Function

Hardship

Hinder

Objected

Pediatrics

Potential

Proposal

Recommended

Responsive

Substantial

Support

Unspecified

Comprehension:

1. What time do the school district's high schools start right now?
2. What is the recommended school start times by the American Academy of Pediatrics?
3. Why are schools changing their start times?
4. "We want to be _____ to parents who have come up us saying, we really think our teenagers need to sleep in." **(Fill in the blank)**
5. What are some of the school districts that have already adopted a later start time?
6. Why do some people not support the later start time?

Post-Reading:

Make a list of the pros and cons (positives and negatives) mentioned in the article about starting school later. Add some of your own ideas to your list. What are some benefits to starting school later? What are some downsides to starting school later?

Building Language Skills:

Complete the activity below:

Consider the following statement: *Schools should not change their start time.*

1. With a partner, discuss whether you agree or disagree with this statement. Explain why.
2. With the rest of the class, create a student 'barometer' by standing in a line that indicates how much you agree or disagree with the above statement. Students at either end of the line should either 'strongly agree' or 'strongly disagree' with the statement. Students in the middle of the line may be less certain or more flexible about their opinion.
3. Once you have created the 'barometer', explain your reasoning behind where you chose to stand. Listen to other's explain their positions as well. Remember: you are allowed to move if someone brings up a point that changes your mind on the issue.

Comprehension Question Answers:

1. What time do the school district's high schools start right now? **The district's high schools now start at 7:30 a.m.**
2. What is the recommended school start times by The American Academy of Pediatrics? **The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that schools start an hour later than 7:30 a.m., so 8:30 a.m.**
3. Why are schools changing their start times? **Schools are changing their start times in response to substantial research showing that teenagers naturally stay up later at night and are less able to function early in the morning.**
4. "We want to be responsive to parents who have come up us saying, we really think our teenagers need to sleep in." **(Fill in the blank)**
5. What are some of the school districts that have already adopted an earlier start time? **The Seattle School district, The Bellevue School District, Mercer Island School District.**
6. Why do some people not support the later start time? **Some of the reasons include parents not wanting their children to be waiting for the bus in the dark and that later school days might infer with job and athletic scheduling.**