



Education and School Life

Essay: starting school later

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you write.

1. What time should the school day begin?
2. Why might tired students learn less effectively?
3. What problems could a later start cause?

Exercise 6 at a glance

Write an essay, often for a teacher.
Present an argument or point of view.
Support ideas with reasons and examples.
Use a formal or neutral register.

2. Exam-style task

Your class has recently discussed whether the school day should start later in the morning. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay giving your opinion about this topic.

In your essay, you should discuss both sides of the argument and give your own view.

Here are some comments from students to help you:

'Students would be less tired in first lesson.'
'Older students often sleep too little.'

'Families need a reliable morning routine.'
'A later finish could affect clubs and transport.'

Now write an essay for your teacher.

The comments may give you some ideas, and you should also use some ideas of your own.

Write about 120 to 160 words.

3. Model essay

Many students arrive at school feeling tired, especially during busy exam periods. For this reason, some people believe that the school day should start later. Although this idea has clear benefits, it could also create practical difficulties.

One argument in favour of a later start is that students may concentrate better after more sleep. For example, teenagers often find early mornings difficult, and tired learners may struggle to listen, remember information or take part fully in lessons.

On the other hand, schools do not operate in isolation. Parents may need to get to work early, and buses or shared transport may already follow fixed times. A later start could also mean a later finish, which might affect clubs, homework and family routines.

In my view, a slightly later start could be helpful for older students, but it would need careful planning. Overall, schools should consider student wellbeing while also keeping the timetable practical for families.

4. Explore the model: structure, argument and register

Work with the model essay. Underline, label or make short notes.

Focus	What to find	Done?
Essay structure	Find the introduction, argument for, argument against and conclusion.	
Content point 1	Where does the writer explain why a later start helps?	
Content point 2	Where does the writer explain practical problems?	
Own view	Where does the writer give a clear personal view in a formal or neutral way?	
Audience and register	Find two places where the essay sounds formal or neutral rather than chatty.	
Development	Find one reason, example or effect that improves the argument.	

5. Language from the task prompts

The task prompts can guide your grammar and content choices. Notice which language each prompt naturally needs.

Prompt	Useful language	Why it fits	Example from the model
why a later start helps	cause/effect language	You are explaining how sleep may affect concentration and learning.	One argument in favour of a later start is that students may concentrate better after more sleep / For example,...
practical problems	practical objection language	You are showing why the idea may be difficult to organise.	Parents may need to get to work early, and buses or shared transport may alrea... / As a result,...
your own view	cautious opinion language	You are giving a view while recognising practical limits.	In my view, a slightly later start could be helpful for older students, but it would need careful planning / Overall,...

6. Build a clear essay

Notice how essay phrases help you organise arguments and make your viewpoint clear.

Job	Useful essay phrases
introduce the issue	This question is not simple. / Many people believe that... / It is important to consider both sides.
present one side	One argument in favour of... is that... / For example,... / This can help...
present the other side	On the other hand,... / However,... / This may cause...
show result	As a result,... / Therefore,... / This means that...
state your view	In my view,... / I believe that... / Overall,...
conclude clearly	The best solution is... / A balanced approach would... / ...without creating unnecessary problems

7. Vocabulary and useful essay phrases

Use chunks that sound natural for this task. You can also upgrade your writing with precise, formal or neutral phrases.

Purpose	Useful chunks / language	Add your own
describe school time	school day / first lesson / timetable / morning routine	
describe benefits	more sleep / concentrate better / student wellbeing / take part fully	
describe problems	transport / later finish / fixed times / family routines	
sound essay-like	For this reason... / On the other hand... / In my view...	
upgrade ideas	practical difficulties / operate in isolation / careful planning	

8. Plan your own essay

Use the same task, or change the details to another school-life issue.

Section	My idea	Useful language
introduction / issue		This question is not simple. / Many people believe...
argument for		One argument in favour of... / For example...
argument against		On the other hand... / This can lead to...
my view		In my view... / I believe that...
conclusion		Overall... / The best solution is...

9. Write your own essay

Write a formal or neutral essay for the task. Discuss both sides, develop your ideas and make your view clear.

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10. Self-check and peer-check

Success criteria	What to check	Self	Peer
Content	The essay discusses both sides of the issue and gives a clear view.		
Essay structure	The answer has an introduction, organised argument paragraphs and a conclusion.		
Audience and register	It sounds formal or neutral and suitable for a teacher.		
Prompt-led language	The writing uses opinion language, contrast linkers and cause/effect language accurately.		
Cohesion	Ideas connect naturally with formal linking phrases such as <i>One argument in favour of...</i> , <i>On the other hand...</i> , <i>As a result...</i> and <i>Overall...</i>		
Vocabulary	Topic words and precise phrases, such as practical difficulties and transport, improve the essay.		
Accuracy	Spelling, punctuation and sentence control are clear enough for the reader.		
WWW:			
EBI:			