**School Start Times**

Many studies have suggested that sleep deprivation is a widespread problem among children and teenagers. Teens in particular struggle to fully engage both mentally and physically at early hours. Moreover, later sleep time shave been shown to improve brain and physical development within that cohort. Today’s early school start times, however, are based on traditional schedules that are focused more on historical precedent than recent discoveries in human cognitive development. Basing their opinion on the studied, some feel that schools should adjust their schedules to conform to the findings of this research. Given the growing awareness of the crucial nature of sleep in not only physical but also intellectual and emotional development, it is worthwhile to explore this issue.

*Read and carefully consider these perspectives. Each suggests a particular way of thinking about adjusting school start times.*

**Perspective One -** To maximize the effectiveness of the learning process, school start times should be pushed back an hour or more across the board to improve the sleep kids get and help them do better in their studies.

**Perspective Two -** Because children have evolving sleep patterns as they age, school start times should get steadily later as kids develop, with primary school students starting earlier than high school students.

**Perspective Three -** Due to extracurricular activities such as athletics, music, and even jobs, a later school start time is not realistic. If school starts later, it will also end later, giving less time for students to pursue important activities after school.

**Essay Task**

Write a cohesive, logical essay in which you evaluate multiple perspectives on when school should start in the morning. In your essay, be sure to:

* examine and assess the perspectives given
* declare and explain your own perspective on the issue
* discuss the relationship between your perspective and those given

Your perspective may be in full or partial agreement, or in total disagreement, with any of the others. Whatever the case, support your ideas with logical reasoning and detailed, persuasive examples.

**Plan and Write Your Essay**

Consider the following as you compose your essay:

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the three perspectives provided?

* Identify the insights they present and what they fail to consider.
* Ascertain why a given perspective might persuade or fail to persuade.

How can you apply your own experience, knowledge, and values?

* Express your perspective on the issue, identifying the perspective's strengths and weaknesses.
* Formulate a plan to support your perspective in your essay.