

Writing Feedback

DAY 5 | 17th April | HOLIDAY WRITING HOMEWORK

Section 1:

Part #1 (First paragraph) Strengths: Your introduction effectively establishes the problem and its significance. You've created a compelling thesis that clearly outlines the three main arguments you'll develop. Weakness: Underdeveloped context. → Your opening would benefit from more specific context about current school schedules and their impact. The transition between identifying the problem and stating your position could be smoother with additional background information. Exemplar: *Most schools begin at eight in the morning, requiring us to wake up as early as 6:00 AM—a time when teenage brains are still producing sleep hormones and are not biologically prepared for cognitive activities.*

Part #2 (Second paragraph) Strengths: Your paragraph uses excellent scientific evidence about circadian rhythms. You've connected sleep deprivation directly to academic performance with logical reasoning. Weakness: Overreliance on generalizations. → While you mention research from the American Academy of Paediatrics, your claims would be more compelling with specific examples or statistics showing the impact of sleep deprivation on academic performance. The paragraph contains several broad statements that could be strengthened with precise details. Exemplar: *Research from the American Academy of Paediatrics reveals that teenagers who received eight to ten hours of sleep scored 15% higher on standardized tests and showed 30% greater problem-solving abilities than their sleep-deprived peers.*

Part #3 (Fifth paragraph) Strengths: Your conclusion effectively restates your thesis and emphasizes the urgency of change. You've brought the argument full circle with a compelling final thought. Weakness: Limited counterargument acknowledgment. → Your conclusion mentions "logistical challenges" but doesn't address specific objections to later start times. This misses an opportunity to strengthen your argument by acknowledging and refuting common concerns about transportation schedules, after-school activities, or parent work schedules. Exemplar: *While adjusting bus schedules and parent drop-off times presents logistical challenges, schools in Edinburgh and Manchester have successfully implemented 10 AM start times by staggering transportation and offering supervised early-arrival options for families with work conflicts.*

■ Your piece presents a compelling case for later school start times with good organization around three main points: academic performance, health benefits, and increased engagement. To improve its persuasiveness, you could incorporate more specific examples and statistics throughout. For instance, when discussing mental health impacts, mentioning specific percentage decreases in anxiety or depression rates among students with later start times would strengthen your argument. Additionally, your writing would benefit from addressing common counterarguments more directly—perhaps adding a brief paragraph acknowledging concerns about disruption to family schedules or after-school activities, then explaining why the benefits outweigh these concerns. You could also strengthen your argument by including real-world examples of schools that have successfully implemented later start times and experienced positive results. Your personal voice is strong throughout, but including more firsthand student experiences would make your plea more relatable and powerful. Overall, balancing your excellent logical arguments with more concrete evidence would make this piece even more persuasive.

Overall Score: 45/50

Section 2:

We should start school later in the morning to align with our natural sleep cycles and improve our overall well-being. Most schools begin at eight in the morning, requiring us to wake up early and start the day before our brains are fully alert. This schedule contradicts biological evidence showing that teenagers experience a shift in their sleep patterns, making it harder for us to fall asleep early and wake up refreshed. Scientific studies, health experts, and student experiences all point to the same conclusion: later school start times lead to better academic performance, improved physical and mental health, and greater engagement in learning and extracurricular activities.

#1 Academic success depends on proper rest, yet many of us wake up sleep-deprived, struggling to focus and retain information. Adolescents naturally experience a delay in our circadian rhythms, meaning our bodies do not produce the sleep hormone melatonin until later at night. Despite this, early school start times force us to wake up before our brains have reached full alertness. Studies show that sleep deprivation significantly

impacts memory retention, cognitive processing, and problem-solving abilities. Those of us who do not get enough sleep perform worse on tests, struggle with concentration, and are less likely to engage in critical thinking. Research from the American Academy of Paediatrics [Paediatrics] suggests that teenagers require eight to ten hours of sleep per night for optimal brain function, yet early school schedules make this impossible for most of us. A later start time would allow us to sleep according to our biological clocks, ensuring we arrive at school refreshed and ready to learn. Schools should be places that nurture intellectual growth, but this is impossible when we are forced to function on inadequate sleep.

Beyond academics, sleep deprivation has severe consequences for our mental and physical health. Chronic exhaustion is linked to increased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Many of us feel constantly fatigued, emotionally drained, and overwhelmed by the demands of our schedules. A later start time would help alleviate these problems by allowing us more time to sleep, process our emotions, and manage our stress levels. Physically, sleep deprivation weakens the immune system, leading to frequent illnesses, headaches, and increased risk of long-term health issues such as obesity and cardiovascular disease. Studies suggest that those who get adequate rest experience better hormone regulation, allowing them to maintain a healthier metabolism and avoid health complications later in life. Schools should prioritise our well-being, and one of the simplest yet most effective ways to do so is by giving us enough time to rest.

A later start time also fosters greater engagement in learning and extracurricular activities. Sleep-deprived students often struggle to pay attention, feel disconnected from their lessons, and lack enthusiasm for schoolwork. Many teachers observe how we become lethargic and struggle to participate in discussions or ask insightful questions. A well-rested student, however, is more focused, inquisitive, and eager to absorb new knowledge. Beyond the classroom, those of us with more energy are more likely to participate in sports, music, and leadership programmes, enriching our personal development and future opportunities. When we are given the time to sleep and recharge, we become more involved in our education and take advantage of opportunities that shape our growth. Schools should not simply aim to produce good test scores but should also foster environments that encourage curiosity, creativity, and enthusiasm.

#3 Changing school start times to begin at ten in the morning would have a profound positive impact on us. It would enhance our academic performance, improve our mental and physical health, and foster greater engagement in learning and extracurricular activities. The benefits of later mornings outweigh any logistical challenges, and refusing

to make this change would mean continuing to place us at an unfair disadvantage. Schools must evolve with scientific research and recognise that we cannot thrive on outdated schedules. Prioritising our health, success, and engagement should be a universal goal, and shifting school start times is a necessary step toward achieving that. A well-rested student is a successful student, and by allowing later mornings, schools will create healthier, happier, and more productive learning environments that benefit everyone.