

Listen and Learn

Consider ►

Should boys and girls have the opportunity to play together on the same team?

Should these mixed-gender teams be required to have minimum numbers of boys and girls?

Co-ed CONFLICT

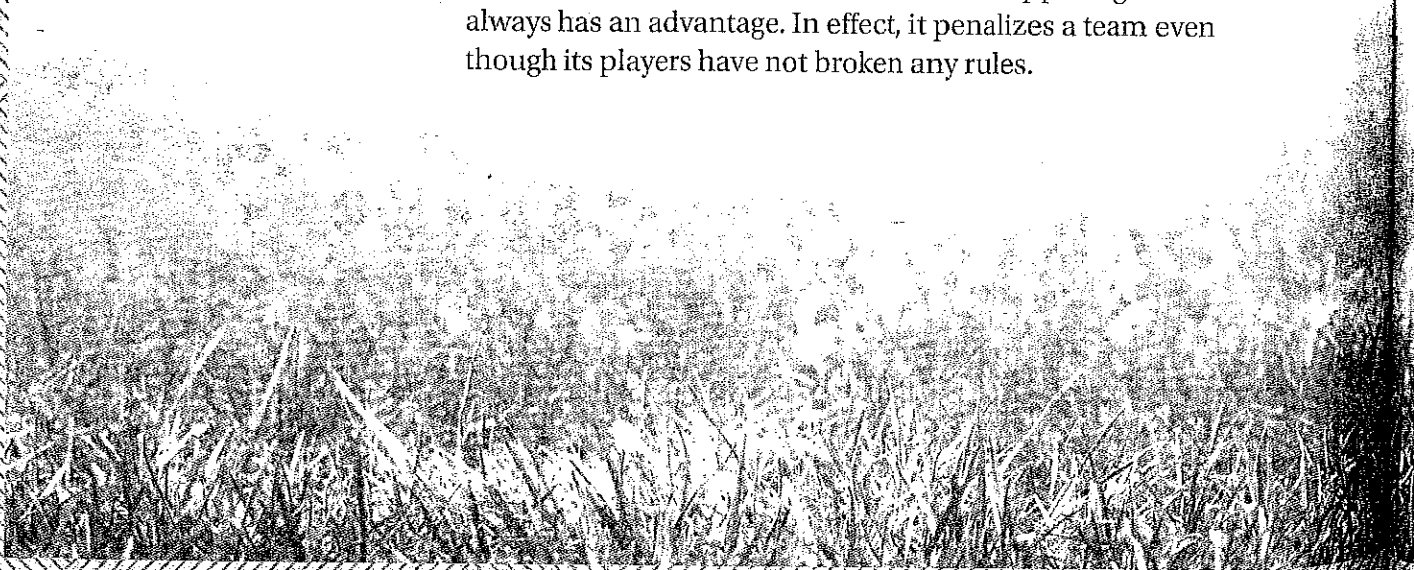
1 Sports play is an important part of teaching and learning about fitness and fairness. Many sports teams play for the schools within our district. Most of the members of these teams devote an extraordinary amount of time, effort, and dedication to their sports and schools. Should these players be penalized when circumstances beyond their control take away one of their players during each game?

A debate is raging about the fairness of the Ridgeview School District's rules and regulations for its indoor soccer league. Rules specify that each team must have at least two players of each gender. The rules also require that at least one male player and one female player be active on the field at all times during the game. Any team that fails to meet this requirement must forfeit one player during the game.

A problem arises, however, due to the fact that at some schools, no girls have chosen to join the soccer team. This means that the team must lose a player in every game. The coaches, parents, and students at these schools feel strongly that this is unfair. This rule means that the opposing team always has an advantage. In effect, it penalizes a team even though its players have not broken any rules.

PERSUASIVE NONFICTION

Persuasive nonfiction is writing that states an argument in support of a writer's point of view about an issue or topic. What is the topic for this persuasive nonfiction selection?



Many community members have written letters to state their points of view about the policy. Two of the letters appear here.

Letter 1

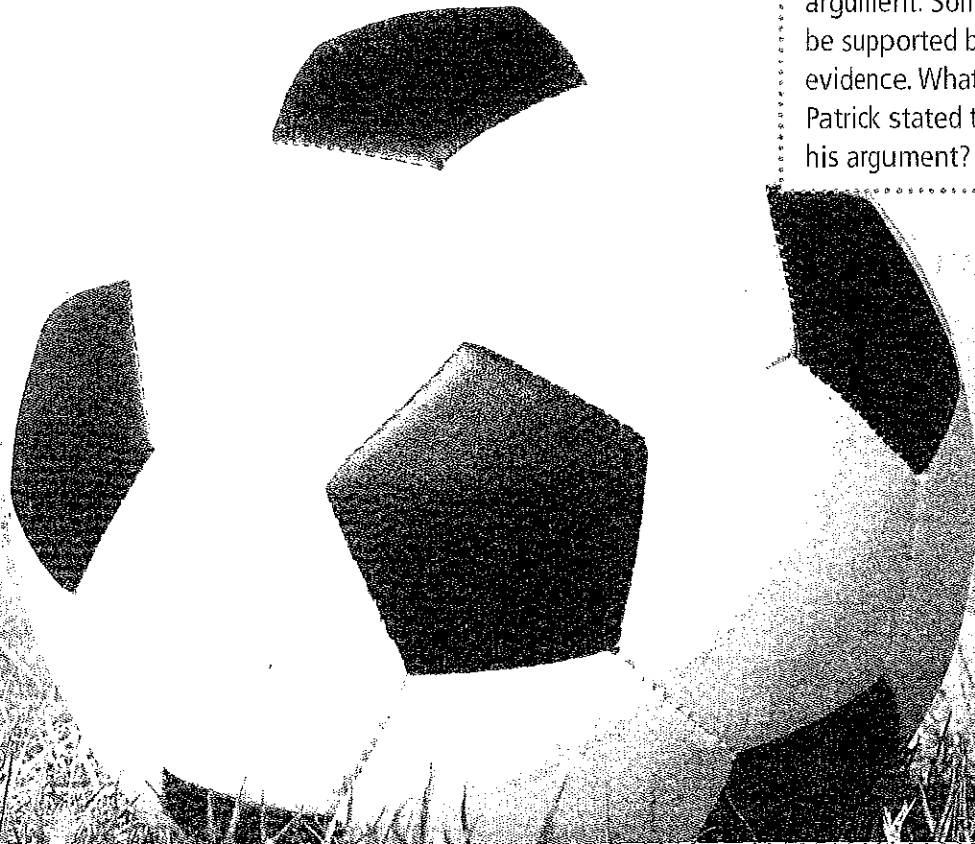
Dear Editor:

5 The Ridgeview School District's insistence on co-ed teams in the indoor soccer league has clearly resulted in a policy that is unrealistic and unfair. According to this policy, each team must be balanced. Although our team, the Lee School Leopards, has tried its utmost to encourage girls to join, we have been unsuccessful. While there are girls on many sports teams at our school, their preference must be to play sports other than soccer, as none of them have joined our school's soccer team. Our team is always penalized.

POINT OF VIEW Point of view is the writer's perspective about a topic or issue. A writer can be for or against a topic or issue. You can often tell by the words a writer uses what his or her point of view is. What is Patrick's point of view about co-ed soccer teams? Is he for them or against them? What words tell you?

ARGUMENT An argument is the main idea that expresses the author's point of view in persuasive nonfiction. What argument does Patrick make that supports his point of view?

CLAIMS A claim is a statement a writer makes to support an argument. Some claims may be supported by reasons and evidence. What claims has Patrick stated that support his argument?



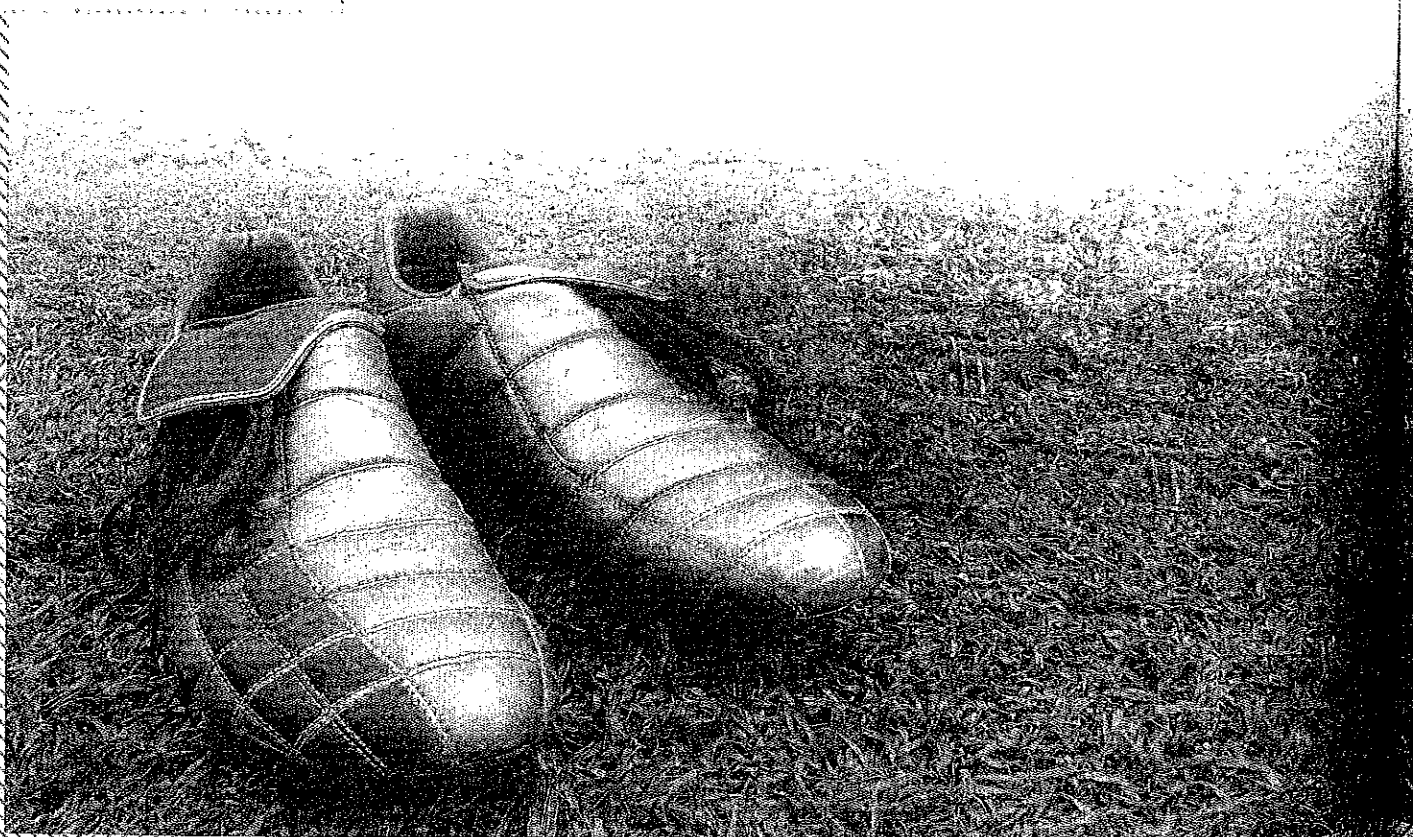
EVALUATE EVIDENCE To build a strong persuasive argument, an author must provide relevant and reliable evidence that supports his or her claims. The evidence may include facts, examples, and illustrations. Does the evidence in each underlined sentence provide strong support for Patrick's claims?

AUTHOR'S PURPOSE Every author writes for one or more purposes. Authors usually write to explain, express, inform, or persuade. What is Patrick's main purpose, and how does it relate to his point of view?

No sports teams could keep a positive outlook with this negative policy in place. This policy makes it harder for us to compete against some other teams in our district. Since we have no girls on our team, we must forfeit a player at each game. The policy also makes the game less fun. For example, our outnumbered players have to work exceedingly hard to protect their goal. In one game, so many players were around our goal that it came crashing down on them; someone could have been injured. The district should change to an all-boys and an all-girls league now. That is the only way to be impartial to all teams.

Sincerely,

Patrick Soliz



Letter 2

Dear Editor:

Calls for an all-boys and all-girls indoor soccer league in the Ridgeview School District are unwise. They run against the district's mission of providing equal opportunities for all students. My daughter has played soccer on the El Portal School team for three years, which has been an exceedingly valuable experience. The team spirit she shares with her teammates—the boys and the girls—is special. She has learned how to work as part of a team. In one game, she gave up the possibility of a goal for herself because she thought the team had a better chance at the championship if she let someone else on her team go for the goal. Some people argue that we should change to all-boys and all-girls leagues to avoid unfairly penalizing teams that have too few girls. However, if we do this, we will create a greater injustice. My daughter and the other female players would be unable to play at all, since there are just not enough interested girls.

Changing the league now would be completely unfair. It would eradicate any opportunity my daughter could ever have to understand fairness in sports. Sports teams without girls need to take new and innovative measures to encourage girls to join. When the teams succeed in such an endeavor, then players will succeed in learning about teamwork and fairness to players of both genders. The league's rules were formed for a reason. They are strong and work well. Without a doubt, they should be upheld.

Sincerely,

Lin Tran



EXPLANATION OF LETTER

Authors make arguments for their point of view by providing reasons and facts. They also elaborate on those reasons by providing examples and illustrations. What example does Lin provide in this letter to show how the current policy has made her daughter a strong team player?

PERSONALITY TECHNIQUE

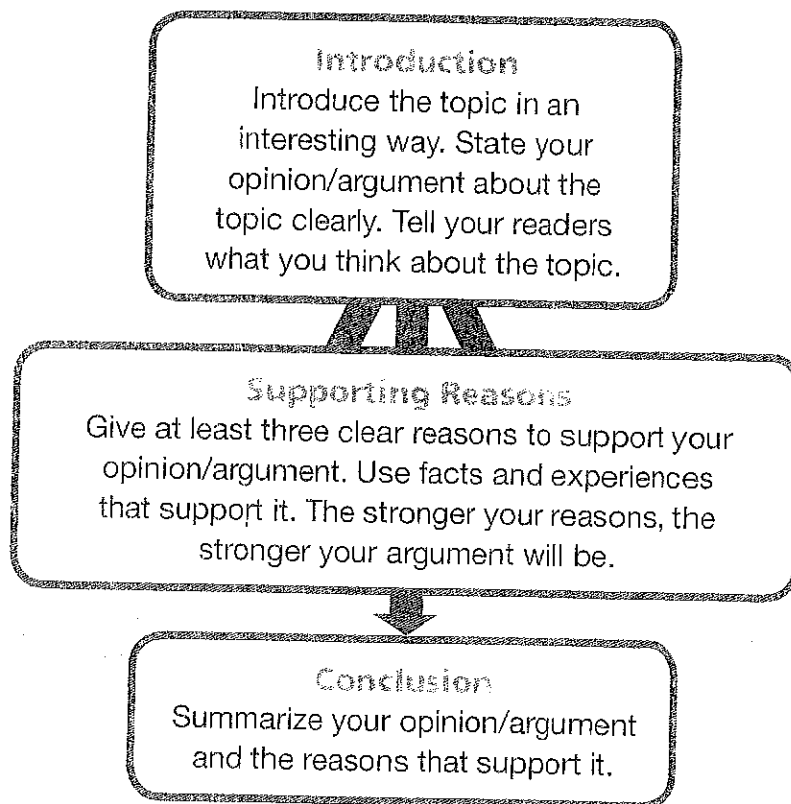
Authors strengthen their arguments by including opposing facts or opinions and refuting, or arguing against, them. In which sentence does Lin present an opposing argument and refute it?

What's an Opinion Piece?

Whether you are for or against Daylight Savings Time or another issue, you can share your opinion with others. People have different opinions and don't always agree on an issue. You can write an opinion piece to persuade readers to agree with you.

In an **opinion piece**, you explain what you think about an issue. Then you offer reasons to support your opinion (or argument) and evidence to back up your reasons.

The graphic organizer below shows how to organize an effective opinion piece.



Let's look at an opinion piece.

Analyze a Mentor Text

This is an example of an effective opinion piece by a sixth grader. Read it and then complete the activities in the boxes as a class.

Down with DST!

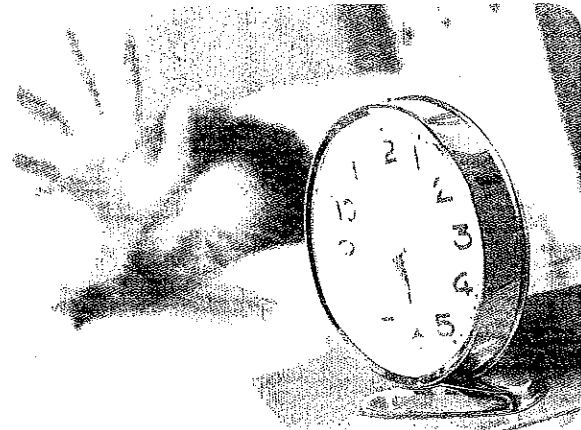
Do we really need a reason to get up earlier? That is what happens every year when Daylight Savings Time, or DST, begins. One Sunday in March, we set all of our clocks ahead one hour. If you usually get up at 6 a.m., now you are getting up at 5 a.m.! The change in time also means one more hour of daylight at the end of the day. In my opinion, we should stop having DST because we have to get up too early, we do not need another hour of daylight in the evening, and the change in time upsets everyone's schedules.

Students are not the only ones who get sleepy when DST starts. Daylight Savings Time affects everyone who lives where it is observed. When DST starts, it is still dark outside, even at 7 a.m. It takes several more weeks before the sun rises between 6 and 7 a.m. We are getting up in the dark, sleepy and irritable just because it is DST.

We do not need that extra hour of daylight in the evening either. Initially, the goal of DST was to save energy. Since we have another hour of daylight, we turn on our lights an hour later every day. That way, we use less electricity. However, we have to turn on our lights an hour earlier on those dark (and cold) mornings. In addition, it is still light at 9 p.m. in the summer, which should be enough daylight for anyone. By 9 p.m., many children head to bed, but who wants to go to bed when it is still light outside? Children are confused; they do not understand why they are going to bed when it is light out, and they often put up a fight. If it were dark out, though, they would not argue.

STATE AN OPINION ARGUMENT By asking an interesting question, the writer grabs the reader's attention in the introduction. After stating some facts, the writer clearly states an opinion. Finally, the writer lists the three reasons that will be used to support this opinion. Underline the writer's opinion.

SUPPORTING REASONS The writer expands on the reasons for her opinion in the second, third, and fourth paragraphs. Underline the reason stated in each of paragraphs 2 through 4.



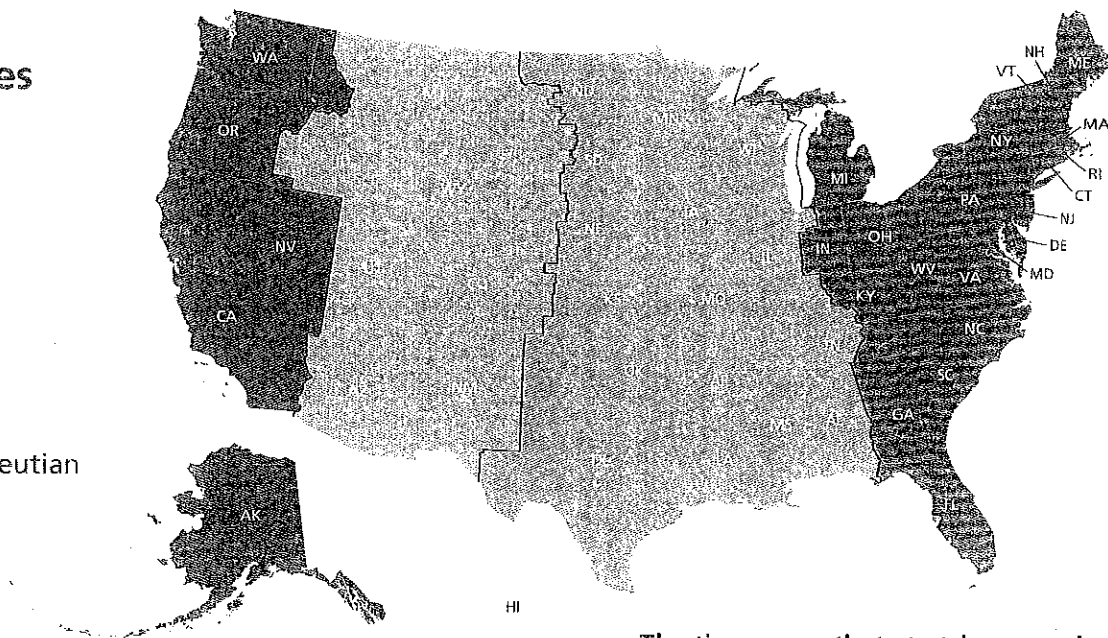
Write a paragraph. This conclusion restates the argument or opinion of the writer and then summarizes the reasons that support it. Draw a box around the opinion stated in this conclusion.

When DST begins, the time change upsets more than our sleeping schedules. How many people are late to religious services, games, practices, and other regularly scheduled events on the day when DST begins? Daylight Savings Time also complicates plane, bus, and train schedules. To make things more confusing, the United States covers six time zones, if you include Alaska and Hawaii. However, Hawaii and parts of Arizona do not follow DST. If you are flying out of an Arizona airport at 1:15 p.m. in the summer, you had better verify that time. Is it Mountain Standard Time? Is it DST?

In conclusion, the termination of DST is long overdue. Daylight Savings Time just makes life more difficult by robbing us of sleep, adding an unneeded hour of daylight in the evening, and complicating our schedules. Maybe DST helped reduce the use of electricity long ago. However, times have changed. Now it is time to terminate DST and make it history.

Time Zones

-  Pacific
-  Mountain
-  Central
-  Eastern
-  Alaskan
-  Hawaii-Aleutian



The time zones that stretch across the United States are confusing enough!

Think About It ►

Which reason in this opinion piece do you think was the strongest?

Were you convinced that DST needs to be eliminated? Why or why not?

Writing Process

Now that you have read and analyzed an opinion piece, you are going to create your own by following the steps in the writing process.

1 Get Ready: Brainstorm List topics you want to write about. Choose the one that you have the strongest opinion about. Think of reasons to support your view. Choose the strongest reasons to use in your opinion piece.

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2 Organize Use a graphic organizer to organize supporting details and plan your opinion piece.

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3 Draft Create the first draft of your opinion piece.

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4 Peer Review Work with a partner to evaluate and improve your draft.

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5 Revise Use suggestions from your peer review to revise your opinion piece.

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6 Edit Check your work carefully for errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

.....

7 Publish Create a final version of your opinion piece.

Writing Assignment

In this lesson, you will write your own opinion piece. As you create the piece, remember the elements of the mentor text that were most effective. Read the following assignment.

Should the school day be changed to start later and end later? Decide whether or not you think this would be a good idea. Then write an opinion piece of at least five paragraphs that explains and supports your opinion.

1. Get Ready: Brainstorm

The first step in writing your opinion piece is refining your assigned topic. Begin by thinking about positive and negative aspects of starting the school day later. For each one, think about how you feel about changing the time school begins.

Here's how the writer of the mentor opinion piece brainstormed opinions.

Opinion	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
DST should end.	We would not have to change the clocks or get used to a different schedule twice a year.	We would not have much daylight after school in the spring.
DST should continue.	We could keep doing what we always do. In the spring, we would have more daylight after school.	It is hard to get used to a new schedule twice a year. People end up being early or late on those days.

Try It! Use a Brainstorming Graphic Organizer

Now use the chart below to help brainstorm your own opinions about whether the school day should start and end later. Choose the argument that you feel is stronger.

Opinion	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects

Brainstorm Ideas for Your Topic

You can use a graphic organizer to help brainstorm ideas and details to support your opinion piece. Here is how the writer of the mentor text used a graphic organizer.

OPINION

OPINION Begin by stating your opinion clearly and strongly.

Opinion

We should end DST.

REASONS Give three clear reasons that support your opinion or argument. As you draft your opinion piece, you might add to or revise your reasons.

Reason

During DST, everyone has to get up too early.

Reason

We do not need another hour of daylight late in the day.

Reason

DST upsets schedules.

SUPPORT Support your reasons with facts and your own experiences. You will probably think of more details to include as you draft your opinion piece.

Detail

It is still dark outside.

Detail

DST does not save energy. We turn on lights in the morning.

Detail

People are late getting to regularly scheduled events.

Detail

Adults and kids need more sleep.

Detail

Later in the summer, there is plenty of daylight in the evening.

Detail

Plane and bus schedules get confusing.

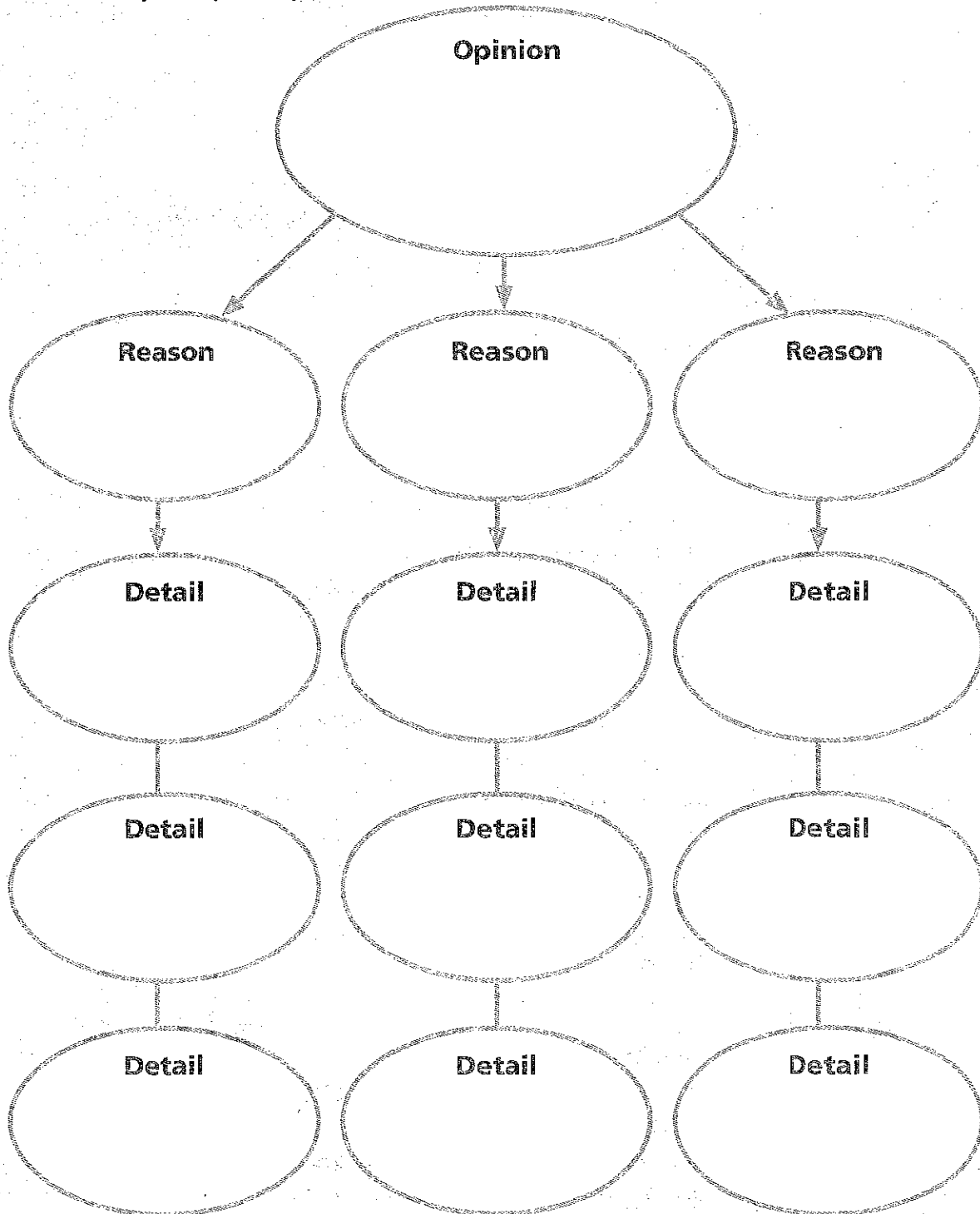
Detail

Not all states follow DST.

Try It!

Use a Graphic Organizer for Brainstorming

You can use a graphic organizer to brainstorm your opinion, reasons, and supporting details for your opinion piece.



2 Organize

You are almost ready to begin a draft of your opinion piece. You can use a graphic organizer to organize the reasons and support that you gathered during brainstorming. You can refer to the graphic organizer as you work through different parts of your draft. The writer of the mentor text completed this graphic organizer.

INTRODUCTION

In the first paragraph, you introduce the topic and state your opinion about the topic. The mentor text writer also reviewed how DST works, in case readers were unclear about it.

SUPPORTING

PARAGRAPHS: The next paragraphs give reasons to support your opinion. They also offer facts, details, and personal experiences to support your reasons.

CONCLUSION: In the final paragraph, you restate your opinion, summarize your reasons, and appeal to your reader.

Opinion

We should stop using Daylight Savings Time (DST).

Reason and Details

Everyone has to start getting up an hour earlier, and it is still dark out for a month or more after DST starts. We all need more sleep.

Reason and Details

We do not need an extra hour of daylight in the evening. Any energy we save is used up when we turn on lights an hour earlier in the morning. Besides, by the time summer starts, we have daylight until 9 p.m.—long enough. Kids do not want to go to bed when it is still light outside.

Reason and Details

People forget about the time change and are late to everything that first day. Plus, bus and plane schedules become confusing. The time zones cause enough confusion, but it gets worse during DST because not all states use it. Arizona is one example.

Conclusion

I hope you agree that we should stop using DST, as it just makes life more difficult. It robs us of sleep, adds an unneeded hour of daylight, and upsets schedules. Maybe DST was helpful long ago, but it is not helpful now.

Try It!

Organize Your Opinion Piece

Now use the graphic organizer below to organize the ideas and details you want to use in the different paragraphs of your draft.

Opinion

Reason 1 and Details

Reason 2 and Details

Reason 3 and Details

Conclusion

Try It! Write Your First Draft

On a computer or on a separate sheet of paper, create the draft of your opinion piece. Remember to use words, phrases, or clauses to show clear relationships between the ideas. Use this drafting checklist to help you as you write.

- ✓ Use the introduction to grab your reader's attention. You might begin with a question, quotation, or funny experience.
- ✓ State your opinion in the first paragraph.
- ✓ Begin each supporting paragraph with a topic sentence that states a reason that supports your opinion or argument.
- ✓ Use the reasons and support from your graphic organizer.
- ✓ In each supporting paragraph, include sentences with details, facts, and experiences.
- ✓ In the conclusion, restate your opinion and summarize the reasons that support your argument.

Tips for Writing Your First Draft

- Discuss your topic—and your opinion about it—with friends and family members. Other people might offer new reasons to support your opinion.
- Do not stop to check spelling or worry about punctuation or grammar. You will have time for that later, when you revise and edit.
- If you are having trouble getting started on your draft, pretend that you are explaining your ideas to a friend. Then write down what you say.

4 Peer Review

After you finish your draft, you can work with a partner to review each other's drafts. Here is a draft of the mentor text. Read it with your partner. Together, answer the questions in the boxes. On the next page, you will read how the mentor text writer's partner reviewed the draft.

OPINION

The writer states an opinion and gives three reasons. How could the writer grab the reader's attention? How could the writer combine sentences 2 and 3 to show how those ideas are related?

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPH

In paragraph 3, the writer states that DST doesn't save energy, but she doesn't provide evidence to support this statement. How could you combine two sentences to show how the ideas are connected?

CONCLUSION This conclusion restates the writer's opinion and sums up the reasons. How could the writer encourage readers to agree with the opinion?

Down with DST!

One Sunday in March, we set all of our clocks ahead one hour. Let's say you usually get up at 6 a.m. Now you are getting up at 5 a.m.! There is also one more hour of daylight at the end of the day. We should stop having DST because we have to get up too early, we do not need another hour of daylight in the evening, and the change in time upsets everyone's schedules.

Not just students get sleepy when DST starts, you know. Everyone has to start getting up an hour earlier. Adults and kids need more sleep than they get. When DST starts, it is still dark outside at 6 or even 7 a.m. We're still getting up in the dark, even though it's DST. What gives?

We do not need that extra hour of daylight in the evening. It was supposed to save energy. It doesn't. In addition, it's still light at 9 p.m. in the summer, which is enough daylight for anyone! By 9 p.m., it's time for most children to go to bed. No one wants to go to bed when it's still light outside. If it were dark out, though, they would not argue.

When DST begins, the time change makes people late for religious services, sports games, birthday parties, and other events. DST also complicates plane, bus, and train schedules. The United States covers six time zones, so that is confusing enough. To make it worse, Hawaii and parts of Arizona do not follow DST. If you're flying out of an Arizona airport at 1:15 p.m. in the summer, you had better verify the time. Is it Mountain Standard Time? Is it DST?

The termination of DST is overdue. It just makes life more difficult by robbing us of sleep, adding an unneeded hour of daylight in the evening, and confusing schedules. Maybe DST helped long ago, when people used lanterns for light. However, now it's time to get rid of DST!

An Example Peer Review Form

This peer review form shows how a partner evaluated the draft of the mentor text on the previous page.

The first paragraph introduces the topic in an interesting way.

You did a good job of *stating your opinion and the three reasons that support it.*

The writer clearly states an opinion about the topic.

You could improve your opinion piece by *grabbing the reader's attention more effectively. Think about how DST affects your reader.*

The writer supports the opinion with at least three strong reasons.

You did a good job of *giving three strong reasons.*

The writer uses interesting details, facts, and experiences to explain the reasons.

You could improve your opinion piece by *adding more details about your reasons.*

The writer shows the connections between ideas.

You did a good job of using *"in addition"* in your third paragraph to show that you are moving on to a new, related idea.

You could improve your opinion piece by *combining more words, phrases, and clauses to show how the ideas relate to each other.*

The conclusion restates the opinion and summarizes the reasons and supporting details.

You did a good job of *restating your opinion and summing up your reasons.*

The writer appeals to the reader.

You could improve your opinion piece by *appealing to the reader or inviting the reader to agree with you.*

Try It! Peer Review with a Partner

Now you are going to work with a partner to review each other's opinion piece drafts. You will use the peer review form below. If you need help, look back at the mentor text writer's peer review form for suggestions.

The first paragraph introduces the topic in an interesting way.

You did a good job of

The writer clearly states an opinion about the topic.

You could improve your opinion piece by

The writer supports the opinion with at least three strong reasons.

You did a good job of

The writer uses interesting details, facts, and experiences to explain the reasons.

You could improve your opinion piece by

The writer shows the connections between ideas.

You did a good job of

You could improve your opinion piece by

The conclusion restates the opinion and summarizes the reasons and supporting details.

You did a good job of

The writer appeals to the reader.

You could improve your opinion piece by

Try It!

Record Key Peer Review Comments

Now it is time for you and your partner to share your comments with each other. Listen to your partner's feedback, and write down the key comments in the left column. Then write some ideas for improving your draft in the right column.

My reviewer says that my introduction	I will
My reviewer says that my first supporting reason	I will
My reviewer says that my second supporting reason	I will
My reviewer says that my third supporting reason	I will
My reviewer says that my conclusion	I will

Write anything else you notice about your draft that you think you can improve.

5. Revise

In this step of the writing process, you will use your own ideas and your partner's feedback to strengthen your draft. Use this checklist as you revise.

Revision Checklist

- ✓ Does my introduction grab the reader's interest? Do I state my topic and opinion clearly?
- ✓ Are all of my reasons important? Do they support my opinion in a strong way?
- ✓ Do I use details, facts, and experiences to make my reasons clear and strong?
- ✓ Is my conclusion interesting? Have I summed up my opinion and reasons well? Do I appeal to the reader or invite the reader to agree with me?
- ✓ Do I use words, phrases, and clauses to connect my ideas?
- ✓ Do I use formal language in my opinion piece?

FORMAL LANGUAGE

Formal language is a style of writing used for reports and essays. It makes your opinion piece seem polished and professional. How would the paragraph sound if the writer used the word *kids* instead of *students* and the word *grouchy* instead of *irritable*?

Writer's Craft: Using Formal Language

Formal language makes you seem like an expert on the topic. Informal language includes slang and words used with friends. To use formal language:

- Do not use phrases such as *you know*, *like I said*, or *anyway*.
- Avoid starting sentences with *and*, *but*, or *so*.
- Use exclamation points sparingly.
- Avoid contractions and write out words: *you would*, not *you'd*.
- Substitute more formal words for words such as *kids*.

The writer of the mentor text used formal language below.

Students are not the only ones who get sleepy when DST starts. Daylight Savings Time affects everyone who lives where it is observed. When DST starts, it is still dark outside, even at 7 a.m. It takes several more weeks before the sun rises between 6 and 7 a.m. We are getting up in the dark, sleepy and irritable just because it is DST.

6. Edit

The next step in revising your opinion piece is to edit it. You will read it very carefully to identify and fix any mistakes. Here's a checklist of things to look for.

Editing Checklist

- ✓ Did you indent each paragraph?
- ✓ Are all of your sentences complete? Does each have a subject and a verb?
- ✓ Did you begin each sentence with a capital letter?
- ✓ Does each sentence end with the correct punctuation?
- ✓ Have you used commas and parentheses correctly?
- ✓ Are all of your words spelled correctly?

You can use these editing marks to mark any errors you find.

^ Insert	⊙ Insert period	✂ Delete
^ Insert comma	↔ Reverse order	⌄ Insert parentheses
○ Close up space	# Add space	↵ Indent

This paragraph from an earlier draft of the mentor text shows how to use editing marks.

↵ The termination of DST is over^{ue}done. It just makes life more
difficult by robbing us of sleep, adding an un^hneeded ^hhour of
day^h light in the evening, and confusing schedules. Maybe DST
helped long[#] ago, when people used lanterns for light. However,
now ^{it is} it's time to get rid of Daylight Savings Time!