



Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Grade 9

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Case for the Four-Day School Week

Across the country, a small but growing number of school districts have switched from a traditional five-day school week to a four-day schedule. Supporters argue that the change saves districts money on transportation, utilities, and staffing, while giving teachers an extra day for planning and professional development. In districts that have already made the switch, some administrators report improved staff morale and fewer teacher resignations, since a three-day weekend can make the profession more sustainable for educators balancing demanding workloads.

Critics, however, raise serious concerns. A shorter school week generally means longer school days to make up the required instructional hours, which can be exhausting for younger students with shorter attention spans. Working parents also face a real practical problem: what happens to their children on the day school is not in session? Districts that lack access to affordable childcare options risk placing an unfair burden on lower-income families, who may not have the flexibility to take an extra day off work or pay for additional care.

Research on the four-day week's effect on student achievement remains mixed. Some studies show no significant difference in test scores, while others suggest a slight decline, particularly in math performance among younger students. Supporters counter that the studies conducted so far are limited in scope and that better implementation, such as pairing the schedule change with extended learning time on remaining days, could close any gaps.

Ultimately, the decision to adopt a four-day school week involves weighing financial and staffing benefits against potential costs to families and student learning. As more districts experiment with the model, the growing body of evidence will likely shape whether the

four-day week becomes a lasting shift in American education or a short-lived experiment.

Circle the Correct Answer

1. According to the passage, what is one reason districts adopt a four-day school week?

- a) To increase the number of standardized tests
- b) To save money and improve teacher morale
- c) To eliminate the need for school buildings

2. What concern do critics raise about longer school days under a four-day schedule?

- a) They can be exhausting for younger students
- b) They increase transportation costs
- c) They are illegal in most states

3. What does the passage say about research on student achievement under a four-day week?

- a) It clearly shows large improvements in test scores
- b) It is mixed, with some studies showing a slight decline
- c) No research has ever been conducted

4. What burden do critics say a four-day week might place on lower-income families?

- a) Higher property taxes
- b) The cost or difficulty of finding childcare on the day off
- c) Longer commutes to school

True or False

5. The passage claims that all research agrees the four-day week harms student achievement. _____

6. Supporters argue that a four-day week can reduce teacher resignations. _____

7. The passage takes a firm, one-sided stance in favor of the four-day week. _____

Fill in the Blank

8. Supporters say a three-day weekend can make teaching more _____ for educators.

9. Critics worry that lower-income families may face an unfair _____.

Think and Explain

10. Identify the author's central claim in this passage. Does the author appear to take a side, or present a balanced view? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

11. How does the author use counterarguments in this passage, and why might a writer choose to include opposing viewpoints in a piece like this? Explain using evidence from the text.
