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## Focus Words

eligible | affect | maintain | prerequisite | previous



## Weekly Passage

Svenka worked hard on her soccer skills and made the school team. When she got an F on her report card, the coach told her she was not eligible to play unless her grades improved. The school that Svenka attends, like many others around the country, has a rule: If you don't pass a class, you don't get to play. Svenka thinks that this is unfair. She does not think this one bad grade should affect her place on the team.

Some people think that middle and high school students should maintain certain grade point averages to play sports. Many schools use grades as a prerequisite for participation in after-school activities. They feel that the students should work as hard in the classroom as on the field. If students

really want to play they should work extra hard in school to make sure that they can.

On the other hand, there are people who do not think grade requirements are a good idea. They think that forcing students to get a certain grade will keep too many from participating. In previous years, some students took easier classes just so they could play sports. This was unfair to the students who kept up their grades in harder classes.

What do you think about this? Does the “no pass, no play” rule seem fair to you? Should middle and high school students have to meet a grade requirement to participate in sports?

**Unit 2.22 -  
Should middle and high school students have to meet a  
grade requirement to participate in sports?  
Focus Word Chart**

Word	Meaning	Forms	Examples of Use	Notes
prerequisite	(n.) - requirement that must be met before moving on			
eligible	(adj.) - qualified for			
maintain	(v.) - to keep			
affect	(v.) - to have an effect on			
previous	(adj.) - earlier			

## Unit 2.22 - Should middle and high school students have to meet a grade requirement to participate in sports? Problem of the Week



In Georgia, students must **maintain** good grades to be **eligible** to play sports. For a student to join a sports team, he or she must have met certain **prerequisites** the **previous** semester. In 2009, the Georgia school board made a change that **affects** middle school students. Before, middle school students had to pass five classes the semester before playing a sport. Now, students have to pass at least 70% of their classes the semester before playing a sport. One reason the Georgia School Board changed their sports **eligibility** rule is because different Georgia schools follow different schedules. Some students only take four classes each semester, so even if they passed every class, they didn't meet the **eligibility** requirement of passing five classes.

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**Option 1:** If students take four classes, how many must they pass to pass at least 70% of their classes?

- A) at least 1
- B) at least 2
- C) at least 3
- D) at least 4

**Option 2:** Sierra passed five of her classes, but she did not meet Georgia's new sports **eligibility** requirement. (The new requirement says students must pass at least 70% of their classes.) How many classes must she have taken?

**Discussion Question:** Under the previous rule, passing a certain number of classes was a **prerequisite** for playing sports. The new rule asks students to pass a certain *percentage* of classes. In some schools, students can choose to take extra classes. Under the new rule, if students take more classes, they must pass more classes to **maintain** their **eligibility**. Will the new rule **affect** how many classes students take? Do you think it will discourage students from being ambitious and taking more classes? Why or why not?

# Should middle and high school students have to meet a grade requirement to participate in sports?

## Debating the Issue



## I. Get ready...

Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

**A** Students who play sports should have to maintain certain grades in school. This is the best way to ensure that they are giving as much effort to their studies as they are to sports.

**B** Students who play sports should not have to maintain certain grade requirements. Good performance on the field has nothing to do with good performance in the classroom.

**C** Grade requirements for sports are too strict. They should be lowered so that more students will be able to participate in sports.

**D** Extracurricular activities are important to a student's well being. Denying students who do not meet the grade requirements the chance to participate in a sport may negatively impact their classroom performance.

**E** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Get set...

Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Jot down a few quick notes:

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# GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

*I think it's more accurate to say...*

*That's interesting - can you tell why you think that?*

*I think the evidence is contrary to what you're saying because. . .*

*Let me share something from the reading that will help us...*

## Unit 2.22 - Should middle and high school students have to meet a grade requirement to participate in sports? Science Activity



This activity is designed to help you practice thinking like a scientist and to use this week's focus words. Sometimes the data are based on real research, but they should never be considered true or factual.

Professor Kahn finds Vickie sitting sadly in the hallway, holding a basketball.

“What’s wrong, Vickie?” Professor Kahn asks.

“I’m not **eligible** to play in the game tonight,” Vickie says. “Our coach made good grades a **prerequisite**. I try to **maintain** a strong B, but I failed a history test last week and an English test the **previous** week. I’m so frustrated! I’ll probably just quit the team.”

“Don’t do that!” says Professor Kahn. “Basketball can help you keep your grades up. Exercise **affects** your brain power.”

“Really?” asks Vickie.

“Let’s investigate!” says Professor Kahn.

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### Question:

How does exercise affect brain power?

### Hypothesis:

Students who run before a memory test will score higher than students who sit.

### Materials:

- ▶ Group A (10 students)
- ▶ Group B (10 students)
- ▶ Memory test

**Procedure:**

- 1. Ask Group A to run for ten minutes.
- 2. Ask Group B to sit for ten minutes.
- 3. Give memory test.
- 4. Calculate the average score for each group.

**Data:**

	Group A (runners)	Group B (sitters)
Average score (out of 10)	9	7

**Conclusion:**

Is the hypothesis supported or not by the data?

What evidence supports your conclusion?

How would you make this a better experiment?



## Focus Words

Support your position with clear reasons and specific examples. Try to use relevant words from the Word Generation list in your response.

[illegible]

Check off what you accomplished:

- ☐ Stated my own position
- ☐ Included 1 focus word

- ☐ Stated my own position clearly
- ☐ Included 1-2 arguments
- ☐ Included 1-2 focus words

- ☐ Stated my own position clearly
- ☐ Included 1-2 arguments
- ☐ Included 1 counterargument
- ☐ Used 2-5 focus words

[illegible]