

# Fourth Grade Opinion Text-Based Writing

## Kids and Sports

### Source #1

## Kids and After-School Sports

After-school sports are a part of life for many students around the country. In elementary school, these sports could range from soccer to baseball and softball. Some schools offer football and basketball, too. The sports programs support the physical education that students receive at school.

Students practice their skills as a team. The practices may occur one or more days after school during the week. Students may put in one to four or five hours in practice time each week. They may also have games with other teams. Usually the practices are during the week and the games are on the weekends. The schedule is different for every school, though.

Many boys and girls enjoy being in after-school sports and look forward to their practices. The sports are good for them, too. Students remain active and learn to work together as a team. In fact, many students love the experience so much that they continue playing the sport through middle school and high school.

Although sports are a lot of fun, schoolwork should always come first in a student's life. Students should not spend less time on their homework and projects after school just because they are playing a sport. Parents need to make sure that they help students balance their schoolwork and their sport. Students should always continue to work hard on getting good grades.

After-school sports can be a lot of fun and are a good way to stay active. They also teach students how to work with others as a team. But students must remember that their education should always be more important than any sport they play after school.

## Source #2

### Grades Come First!

After-school sports are available at many elementary schools. Students love to join these sports to have fun and make new friends. But the sports can easily take up too much time in a student's life. There are practices up to a few times a week, and then there are games on weekends. Students also practice at home to improve their skills. All of this takes time away from more important things like studying for tests. For this reason, students must be required to get good grades in order to play a sport after school.

Schools were not created to train athletes. Their main goal is to educate. Schools that provide an optional sport should do so only if the student is able to handle schoolwork as well. The only way to know this is by looking at the student's grades. A student who is doing well and succeeding in all subject areas should be able to take on a sport after school. That student can likely handle the responsibility and manage his or her time so that schoolwork does not become less important. But if a student needs to improve scores in one or more subject areas, it does not make sense to allow that student to take time away from schoolwork by joining a sport. It would mean having less time to study due to all the practices and games.

Allowing any student to play an after-school sport regardless of grades suggests that schoolwork is not as important as sports. This is simply not true. Obviously, schools know that education is very important. That is why schools need to require good grades to play sports. This will help parents and students understand that learning comes first.

After-school sports should be viewed as a reward for working hard and succeeding in school. Students who want to play a sport must work to get the grades needed. This will motivate them to try harder in school. The hard work and dedication will then transfer to the sport. Once students are accepted into an after-school sport, they will already know what it is like to set a goal and achieve it. They will have learned lessons that they can apply to being a team player.

It may be difficult to turn down some students because their grades are not high enough; however, schools must remember that their most important goal is to teach kids. Using after-school sports as a reward for getting good grades will help schools achieve that goal. And along the way, kids will learn a lot more than just reading and writing.

## Source #3

# Sports Are Separate from School

Some schools have decided that students cannot play sports after school if they do not get good grades. This is unfair. Students should not be stopped from playing sports based on how well they can read, write, or do math. Schoolwork is most important for a student, but sports are not related to it.

This is a “hot topic” that people are talking about all over the country. They have different opinions. They have even done research that studies the relationship between getting good grades in school and playing a sport after school. One study found that playing a sport did not have a bad effect on a student’s grades. It found that playing a sport sometimes even caused a student to get better grades. This supports the idea that students should not have to get good grades to play.

“How can playing a sport improve my grades?” you may ask. The answer has to do with the ideas behind playing a sport. It teaches you to be responsible and to practice. You learn to set goals and work hard to achieve them. This type of self-discipline is helpful in the classroom, too. It can help you study harder and finish your homework even when you feel like doing something else. The coach of the team can help you push yourself to do better on and off the field.

Playing a sport also has other benefits. Sports help to keep students active and healthy. Students learn about teamwork, and they make new friends with the same interests. Sports also teach students to be responsible in all parts of their lives. Every student should be allowed to have these benefits, not just the students who get good grades.

Many schools have created policies related to after-school sports. They have decided that students must have a certain grade point average or they must score a certain number on tests to be able to play in a sport after school. This does not make sense. Students learn in different ways. Some students learn certain subjects more easily than other students. Is it fair to punish a student because he or she did not score a few points higher on a test? What kind of message does this send to students and their parents? These policies do not help students improve their grades. They only make students feel like they are not good enough.

The main problem with connecting good grades to sports, though, is that schools are deciding which students get to play and which do not. After-school sports should be open to everyone. Parents and families should decide whether a child can play a sport, not the school. Sports are fun activities that take place outside the classroom. They have nothing to do with what happens inside the classroom.

**Directions:**

The passages are about sports programs in school. Write an essay in which you give your opinion about whether or not schools should require students to get good grades in order to play sports after school. Use information from the sources in your essay.

**Manage your time carefully so that you can:**

- Read the passages;
- Plan your responses;
- Write your response; and
- Revise and edit your response.

Be sure to include:

- an introduction
- support for your opinion using information from the passages; and
- a conclusion that is related to your opinion.

Your writing should be in the form of a well-organized, multi paragraph essay.

# Planning Sheet