Join the National Conversation!

WordGen WEEKLY

SERIES 2 Part A

Join the National Conversation!
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The original Word Generation program (WordGen Weekly) is a supplementary curricular resource that offers a series of discussable dilemmas designed to promote students’ academic language and argumentation skills. WordGen Weekly creates the opportunity for students to become familiar with current issues and persistent dilemmas, while acquiring skills prioritized in the 21st century learning standards. The program is unique in its cross-disciplinary design, giving teachers of ELA, science, social studies, and math the chance to collaborate on the shared goal of helping students use academic language to articulate their thinking. Series (or individual units) can be used school-wide in grades 6–8.

Support for Word Generation provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Noyce Foundation, the Spencer Foundation, the Leon Lowenstein Foundation, and the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education through grant numbers R305A090555 and R305F100026.
Many state laws require that high school students pass a standardized test to graduate. These laws are passed to make sure high schools challenge their students. Businesses often complain that high school graduates cannot read and do math needed on the job. Colleges worry that not all high school graduates can do college work. The tests are used to see who has the skills expected by employers and colleges. Standardized tests assess students’ ability to write, read critically, and do challenging math. The tests are geared to the skills people need in jobs and in college. Supporters say standardized testing is fair because all students are graded using the same criteria. For example, writing might be graded by how many examples the students give.

Some people think graduation tests are unfair to students who are learning English. These students might know the information but have trouble understanding the test questions. Other students might have trouble focusing their attention. Their test scores might not show what they really know.

Students in different schools learn different things. The standardized test might not correspond to what some students were taught in a particular school. Students in another school, however, might find the test matched what they learned in class, which some people argue isn’t fair. Some people also worry that standardized tests make teachers just cover what is on the test. Teachers might not formulate lessons that will be interesting to their students.

Other people think that standardized testing is valuable, but that there should be different ways for students to show that they are ready to graduate. Do standardized tests hold all students to high standards? Or do they unfairly keep some students from graduating?

Do standardized tests hold all students to high standards? Or do they unfairly keep some students from graduating?
**Use the Focus Words**  
(Usually led by ELA teacher)

4. Introduce the unit focus words by displaying each word, reading each word aloud, and having students repeat each word.  

**Teaching tip:** Establish a routine to introduce and review the focus words.

5. Build students’ understanding of the focus words using the definitions, sample sentences, and Turn and Talk prompts.  

**Teaching tip:** Throughout the week, teachers can use this page as a reference and/or for review.

**Resources for effective strategies for vocabulary instruction, including vocabulary cards, are available on the WordGen website.**

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**Instructional Considerations:**

- Make word learning fun! Recognize students who use the focus words during and outside of class time.
- Encourage students to acknowledge the focus words throughout their daily discussions.
- Creatively display the focus words on a word wall. Display the current words on an active word wall and retire the previously used words to a designated location in the room where students can reference previously taught words throughout the year.
- Encourage experimentation with the words and use mistakes as teachable moments.
DO THE MATH

We want high school graduates to meet important criteria. They should read well. They should formulate ideas logically and express them clearly. They should understand basic ideas about math, science, and social studies. What is the best way to assess whether students meet these criteria? Is a standardized graduation test too harsh? In Massachusetts in 2010, several thousand students failed to graduate because they failed one or more of the state tests.

Option 1: Of the 69,008 Massachusetts 2010 high school seniors, 2,556 failed the MCAS math exam. Which answer corresponds to the percentage of the class that failed the exam?

A. about 2.4%
B. about 3.7%
C. about 4.1%
D. about 6.7%

Option 2: Under a Massachusetts state rule, students must pass all three MCAS exams to graduate: the Science exam, the English exam, and the Math exam.

Of the 69,008 Massachusetts high school seniors in 2010:

• 1,958 failed the English MCAS
• 2,556 failed the Math MCAS
• 2,933 failed the Science MCAS

a. Based on these numbers, what is the smallest possible number of students who could not graduate because of the tests? (Hint: Remember that students who failed the Science exam also failed the English and Math exams and thus are already counted.)

b. Based on these numbers, what is the largest possible number of students who could not graduate because of the test? (Hint: Remember that each student could have failed only one exam, so the amounts could not overlap at all.)

Smallest possible number: 2,933. This assumes that the students who failed the Science exam also failed the English and Math exams and thus are already counted.

Largest possible number: 7,447. This assumes that each student failed only one exam, so the amount could not overlap at all.

**Discussion Question:** Standardized tests must change each year to prevent cheating. Each year testing companies formulate new exams. Teachers and experts review each question. A good exam question meets these criteria: it corresponds to what students should be learning in class, and it fairly assesses what students know. These carefully prepared exams are expensive. For example, the state of Massachusetts spends $35 million each year on making its standardized test. Is this a good use of state money? Why or why not?

**Discussion questions accompany each math lesson. This allows the teacher to connect the math activity to the topic, tap into students’ beliefs about the week’s topic, and provide an opportunity to explicitly use the focus words.**

**Instructional Considerations:**

✓ If the math problems are out of reach for your students, discuss and solve Option 1 as a class or in groups. Problems can also be used to demonstrate the proper use of problem solving strategies.

✓ The lesson is designed to take 15–20 minutes; however, class discussions can prolong the lessons. Some teachers use timers to streamline instructional procedures and routines in WordGen Weekly classrooms.

✓ The discussion questions at the end of the lesson provide a format for connecting the math activity to the topic, explicitly using the focus words, and tapping into students’ beliefs.

✓ Encourage students to use the focus words in the discussion and use mistakes as teachable moments.
The students in Mr. Seemy's class are going to high school next year, and some of them are concerned about taking the new high school exit exam. The class is debating whether passing a standardized test should be required for students to get a high school diploma.

Camila and Josef think an exit exam is a great idea and are happy about the new test. “We need strict criteria to figure out who should get to graduate,” says Josef. Camila agrees with Josef and adds, “How can we be sure that students deserve a high school diploma unless we assess what they know?”

Malik isn’t so sure. He says, “I don’t think a standardized test is the right way to go. What about kids who take all the right classes and get good grades but still don’t pass the test? And what about teachers who feel they should teach only the skills that correspond to the test?”

“You’re raising the issue of high-stakes testing. It sounds like you are beginning to formulate a hypothesis about the effect exit exams will have,” says Mr. Seemy.

Malik thinks for a moment. “I bet a lot of kids would drop out of school if they had to take a test. My hypothesis is that more kids will drop out of high school in states that have exit exams like ours.”

In 2006, the states in this data set began withholding diplomas from students who didn’t pass exit exams. Did dropout rates increase starting in 2006 or thereafter? Cite specific information from the data table.

**Question:** Do standardized high school exit exams affect dropout rates?

**Malik’s Hypothesis:** States that have exit exam requirements will have higher dropout rates after requiring students to pass an exit exam.

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When the rule was implemented in 2006, dropout rates increased in Arizona and California and slightly decreased in Idaho. The next year, dropout rates increased again in California, decreased again in Idaho, and remained the same in Arizona. Dropout rates fell in all three states in 2008, although the dropout rates in Arizona and California were still higher than they had been before 2006.

**Was Malik’s hypothesis supported by the data or not?**

No, the data are inconsistent.

**Teaching tip:** Ask students to think about and explain how the focus words can be used in a science classroom.

1. Review the focus words.

2. Read and discuss the Think Scientifically passage, allowing students to interpret the data and draw conclusions.

3. Facilitate a class discussion using the discussion question at the end of the lesson.

**Instructional Considerations:**

- The lesson is designed to take 15–20 minutes; however, class discussions can prolong the lessons. Some teachers use timers to streamline instructional procedures and routines in WordGen Weekly classrooms.
- Encourage students to make connections between the weekly topic and the data in the science experiment.
- Encourage students to use the focus words in the discussion and use mistakes as teachable moments.
Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

- **DEBATE THE ISSUE**
- Pick one of these positions (or create your own).
- OR
- OR
- CREATE YOUR OWN

Positions are chosen and evidence is gathered to support a claim.

Students are encouraged to use focus words to develop their argument. Academic language supports prepare students to engage in debate activities as they use evidence from multiple sources to develop arguments.

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

- Can you show me evidence in the text that...?
- I believe that...
- You make a good point, but what you considered...
- I agree with you, but...

**Instructional Considerations:**

✓ Debates in WordGen Weekly are planned classroom activities in which particular claims are discussed, and students plan together to present and defend their claim. The purpose is not winning or losing the debate; the purpose is to develop students’ abilities to think through a set of claims or arguments in order to deepen their understanding and enhance their ability to learn.

✓ Many teachers create debate organizers or provide chart paper for students to write their arguments. This can serve as a pre-writing activity for the “take a stand” essay the next day.

✓ Discussion norms should be established early on to encourage student engagement and to make the class environment a safe place to discuss freely and to debate ideas. Some teachers have students participate in setting norms. At a minimum, discussion norms should establish expectations for respectful disagreement and establish practices that allow all students to participate. Post norms in the classroom as a reminder.

✓ During the debate, encourage students to share, clarify, and expand their thoughts using academically productive talk, and to listen and respond to the ideas of others.
**Instructional Considerations:**

✓ The writing assignments can change throughout the year based on the needs of your students. Teachers have used WordGen Weekly writing assignments as quick-writes, free-writes, information pieces, letters, and argumentative writing pieces. The main goal of the writing assignment is for students to make a claim and justify that claim with evidence from the text using academic language.

A rubric for argumentative writing can be found on the WordGen website.

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**Take a Stand**

(Usually led by ELA teacher)

1. Review the displayed focus words.
2. Introduce the writing assignment.
   
   **Teaching tip:** Students should use evidence to support their written argument. Possible sources of evidence are the launch passage, math activity, science activity, and debate.

3. Students write an essay taking a stand on the issue.

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**Sources support further exploration of the topic.**


More resources available online! [wordgen.serpmmedia.org](http://wordgen.serpmmedia.org)

› Download Center for Students
   Students can access individual units for free (no registration necessary).

› Download Center for Teachers (simple registration required)
   Teachers can access student materials and teacher editions for free. Both color and grayscale PDFs available.

› Teacher Resources
  
  - Focus word vocabulary cards
  - Information about academic language and vocabulary instruction
  - Vocabulary assessments
  - Activities to develop discussion and debate in the classroom
  - Rubrics for discussion, debate, and argumentative writing
  - Professional learning opportunities
  - Interviews with the developers of the program
  - Videos of Word Generation classrooms
  - Topic lists
  - Focus word lists

  Much more!
Many state laws require that high school students pass a standardized test to graduate. These laws are passed to make sure high schools challenge their students. Businesses often complain that high school graduates cannot read and do math needed on the job. Colleges worry that not all high school graduates can do college work. The tests are used to see who has the skills expected by employers and colleges.

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Students in different schools learn different things. The standardized test might not correspond to what some students were taught in a particular school. Students in another school, however, might find the test matched what they learned in class, which some people argue isn’t fair. Some people also worry that standardized tests make teachers just cover what is on the test. Teachers might not formulate lessons that will be interesting to their students.

Other people think that standardized testing is valuable, but that there should be different ways for students to show that they are ready to graduate.

Do standardized tests hold all students to high standards? Or do they unfairly keep some students from graduating?

Questions for Classroom Discussion:
• What standardized tests have you taken?
• What criteria do your teachers use to assess writing in class?
• When you have taken standardized tests, did the questions correspond to what you had learned in class?
• What groups of students might be hurt if standardized tests are required for graduation?
USE THE FOCUS WORDS

standardized (adjective) the same for everyone

▶ Sample Sentence: In many states, high school students must pass a standardized test to graduate.

❓ Turn and Talk: Should there be a standardized curriculum for all students in the U.S.?

assess (verb) to judge the quality of; to evaluate

▶ Sample Sentence: Many tests assess students’ ability to write, read critically, and do challenging math.

❓ Turn and Talk: How do you assess whether a friend is still upset with you after you’ve had an argument?

criteria (noun) standards or rules used to make a decision

▶ Sample Sentence: Keisha met all the criteria in her math class and earned an “A” for the semester.

❓ Turn and Talk: What are your criteria for deciding that a movie or book was excellent?

correspond (verb) to match

▶ Sample Sentence: Standardized tests might not correspond to what some students were taught in a particular school.

❓ Turn and Talk: Do you think your grades correspond with the amount of effort you put into your classes?

formulate (verb) to invent by thinking about

▶ Sample Sentence: Each year testing companies formulate new exams.

❓ Turn and Talk: Do you formulate better ideas in a group or by yourself? Explain.
DO THE MATH

We want high school graduates to meet important criteria. They should read well. They should formulate ideas logically and express them clearly. They should understand basic ideas about math, science, and social studies. What is the best way to assess whether students meet these criteria? Is a standardized graduation test too harsh? In Massachusetts in 2010, several thousand students failed to graduate because they failed one or more of the state tests.

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Smallest possible number: 2,933. This assumes that the students who failed the Science exam also failed the English and Math exams and thus are already counted.

b. Based on these numbers, what is the largest possible number of students who could not graduate because of the test? (Hint: Remember that each student could have failed only one exam, so the amounts could not overlap at all.)

Largest possible number: 7,447. This assumes that each student failed only one exam, so the number of students prevented from graduating is the sum of the three categories.

Discussion Question: Standardized tests must change each year to prevent cheating. Each year testing companies formulate new exams. Teachers and experts review each question. A good exam question meets these criteria: it corresponds to what students should be learning in class, and it fairly assesses what students know. These carefully prepared exams are expensive. For example, the state of Massachusetts spends $35 million each year on making its standardized test. Is this a good use of state money? Why or why not?
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Malik isn’t so sure. He says, “I don’t think a standardized test is the right way to go. What about kids who take all the right classes and get good grades but still don’t pass the test? And what about teachers who feel they should teach only the skills that correspond to the test?”

“They are interesting questions, Malik,” says Mr. Seemy. “You’re raising the issue of high-stakes testing. It sounds like you are beginning to formulate a hypothesis about the effect exit exams will have.”

Malik thinks for a moment. “I bet a lot of kids would drop out of school if they had to take a test. My hypothesis is that more kids will drop out of high school in states that have exit exams like ours.”

Malik, Camila and Josef were very interested and found information on the internet about high school dropout rates in the U.S. They selected three states that recently started to require exit exams and studied the data.

**Question:** Do standardized high school exit exams affect dropout rates?

**Malik’s Hypothesis:** States that have exit exam requirements will have higher dropout rates after requiring students to pass an exit exam.

**Data Source:** National Center for Education Statistics - “Event dropout rates for public school students in grades 9-12, by state: School years 1993-94 through 2007-08.”

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When the rule was implemented in 2006, dropout rates increased in Arizona and California and slightly decreased in Idaho. The next year, dropout rates increased again in California, decreased again in Idaho, and remained the same in Arizona. Dropout rates fell in all three states in 2008, although the dropout rates in Arizona and California were still higher than they had been before 2006.

**Was Malik’s hypothesis supported by the data or not?** Cite specific evidence that supports your conclusion.

No, the data are inconsistent.
SHOULD A STANDARDIZED TEST BE A REQUIREMENT FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION?

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

A
☐ Students should be required to pass a standardized test to graduate from high school.

OR

B
☐ Passing a standardized test should not be a high school graduation requirement.

OR

CREATE YOUR OWN

☐ ______________________
☐ ______________________
☐ ______________________
☐ ______________________

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

“Can you show me evidence in the text that...”

“You make a good point, but have you considered...”

“I believe that...”

“I agree with you, but...”
TAKE A STAND

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

standardized | assess | criteria | correspond | formulate


This week’s issue: SHOULD COLLEGES USE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION?

College admissions can be very competitive. Elite colleges may admit fewer than a quarter of the students who apply. Because the process is tough, deciding what factors should be relevant in admissions decisions can be controversial.

Some colleges look at student race during admissions. Suppose an African American student and a white student are similar. They have about the same grades and test scores. The African American student may be more likely to be accepted. This is called "affirmative action." Colleges may use affirmative action to increase the number of minorities on campus. Colleges say that racial diversity helps students learn to work with people from different backgrounds.

Affirmative action is designed to make up for past discrimination. African Americans and Latinos were kept out of college in past generations. Even today, students from these groups are less likely than white students to have family members who went to college. Because of this, they may lack support or knowledge in navigating the college admissions process.

Justice Clarence Thomas, the second African American Supreme Court justice in history, does not endorse affirmative action. In his autobiography, he stated that it made his Yale law degree “worth 15 cents.” He wrote, “I’d graduated from one of America’s top law schools, but racial preference had robbed my achievement of its true value.” In short, he felt that people believed he had been accepted into Yale only because of his race, and not as a result of his academic achievement.

However, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the first Latina on the Supreme Court, believes affirmative action is relevant and necessary. She was upset when the Supreme Court ruled that Michigan state universities were not obligated to retain affirmative action in admissions. She stated, “This refusal to accept the stark reality that race matters is regrettable . . . As members of the judiciary tasked with intervening to carry out the guarantee of equal protection, we ought not sit back and wish away, rather than confront, the racial inequality that exists in our society.” She clearly believes in the need to retain affirmative action in order to achieve a society where all races have an equal chance of success.

Without affirmative action, minority students may be less likely to attend elite colleges. At UC Berkeley, the number of African Americans admitted dropped from 562 to 191 after the school stopped using race as one aspect of admissions decisions. Looking at this experience, people argue that race should be retained as a factor in admissions.

Others say affirmative action is not fair because it can discriminate against white students. These people believe schools should only look at grades and test scores. They think that the color of a student’s skin is not relevant. Is it important for colleges to have racial diversity? Is affirmative action an appropriate response to past discrimination?

Questions for Classroom Discussion:
- What kinds of discrimination have you seen in your life?
- Why do some colleges use affirmative action?
- Some colleges use race as one aspect of admissions. What are some other aspects colleges look at in admissions?
- Do you think skin color should be relevant to college admissions?
- Should U.S. colleges retain their affirmative action programs?
affirmative (adjective) positive

Sample Sentence: I am hoping that my teacher gives an affirmative answer to my request to postpone the due date!

Turn and Talk: What are some ways to indicate an affirmative answer to a question?

discrimination (noun) different treatment of a particular group of people based on prejudice

Sample Sentence: Last year, we learned about old laws that made discrimination legal in parts of the United States.

Turn and Talk: What can middle school students do to help end discrimination?

aspect (noun) a part of something; a characteristic

Sample Sentence: At UC Berkeley, the number of African Americans admitted dropped from 562 to 191 after the school stopped using race as one aspect of admissions decisions.

Turn and Talk: What is one aspect of being in middle school that is an improvement over elementary school?

retain (verb) to keep; to hold in place

Sample Sentence: People argue that race should be retained as a factor in admissions decisions.

Turn and Talk: What parts of your personality have you retained as you’ve gotten older?

relevant (adjective) closely connected or related to something

Sample Sentence: They think that the color of a student's skin is not relevant.

Turn and Talk: What magazine, newspaper, or website has articles that are relevant to your life?
DO THE MATH

Affirmative action is meant to give groups that have faced discrimination a better chance to succeed in American society. College attendance is relevant to success because college graduates usually make more money. Therefore, affirmative action programs in college might be a good way to help these groups. U.S. courts have decided that colleges can retain some, but not all, affirmative action programs.

In 2008, the U.S. Census Bureau found the following:

- 40% of white 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in college.
- 32% of African American 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in college.
- 26% of Hispanic 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in college.

Option 1: Which of the following shows the fraction of Hispanic 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college in 2008?

A. 1/3  
B. 8/25  
C. 13/50  
D. 16/25

Option 2: The year is 2008. Two 18- to 24-year-olds are chosen at random. One person is African American, and one is white. How much more likely is the white person to be in college than the African American person? Express as a percentage.

The white person is 25% [(40-32)/32] more likely to be in college.

Discussion Question: In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson described the need for affirmative action this way:

“You do not take a man who for years has been hobbled by chains, liberate him, bring him to the starting line of a race, saying, ‘you are free to compete with all the others,’ and still justly believe you have been completely fair . . . We seek not just freedom but opportunity—not just legal equity but human ability—not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and as a result.”

Non-whites have long faced prejudice and discrimination in America. Women have faced these issues as well. Therefore, when the question of fairness arises, race and gender are seen as relevant aspects of the people involved. Some people think that America has become less prejudiced. As a result, they say, today’s America should not retain affirmative action. But have we achieved “equality as a fact and as a result”? Or did President Johnson choose the wrong goal?
The students in Ms. Kahn’s class are discussing the pros and cons of affirmative action.

“I don’t think race should be relevant in college admissions. If I apply to college, I want to get in because of my work and grades, not because of my skin color,” says Amir.

“It’s not as simple as that, Amir,” says Kayla, “Admissions offices examine many aspects of a student’s application, including race—but not only race—to decide to admit one student over another.”

“Yeah, but aren’t we supposed to be past all that?” asks Amir, “Be ‘color-blind’ and all?”

“I think that’s just a slogan. I think there is still discrimination in the U.S. today,” Kayla responded. “Think about it. Do you really think that women and people of color get treated the same as white men?”

“My mom was laid off from work a few months ago,” Taylor shared. “She said that more men were retained at her office and that some even got raises. My mom thinks that it’s not a fair situation.”

Ms. Kahn says, “We’ll need data to support any claims we make, one way or the other. I know of a recent study of U.S. Census data that we can take a look at. I just read about it in the newspaper.”

Ms. Kahn shared a sample of the data from the National Partnership for Women and Families with her students, which used U.S. Census Bureau data to compare average salaries for women and men working full-time jobs in the top fifty metropolitan areas across America.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Average salary for men</th>
<th>Average salary for women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>$52,222</td>
<td>$41,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>$44,360</td>
<td>$40,695</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>$45,970</td>
<td>$34,862</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>$55,071</td>
<td>$46,642</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>$62,269</td>
<td>$52,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>$60,881</td>
<td>$44,535</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What are some conclusions that you can draw from this information? How does the average salary vary by city? Is the gap larger in some cities? What is the overall trend when comparing the average salary for men and women across this selection of cities?

There is a large variety in the average salary by city, but it is consistently greater for men. The gap in Seattle is >$16K, while the gap in Los Angeles is <$4K.

How would you investigate this topic further? What else would you want to know?

Answers will vary.

When John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act in 1963, women were paid 59 cents for every dollar men were paid. Fifty years later, in 2013, women are paid 77 cents for every dollar that men are paid. Would you consider that a big change, or a small change? Do you think it is fair?
SHOULD COLLEGES USE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION?

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

A

Affirmative action should be legal in college admissions.

B

Affirmative action should not be legal in college admissions.

OR

CREATE YOUR OWN

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

You make a good point, but have you considered...

I believe that...

Can you show me evidence in the text that...

I agree with you, but...

I agree with you, but...

You make a good point, but have you considered...

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:
TAKE A STAND

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

affirmative | discrimination | aspect | retain | relevant

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The United States has a high rate of teen pregnancies. Each year, about 400,000 teenage girls become pregnant. Many teens also get sexually transmitted diseases. One in four young people gets a sexually transmitted disease before turning 21.

Some people say schools have the capacity to make a difference. They think sex education can help students make better choices. For example, students can learn how to resist the peer pressure that leads to having sex too early. They can practice saying no if they are not ready. Some schools also distribute information about methods for safer sex.

Other people think sex education should be the parents’ responsibility. They believe that sex education is not a health issue, but a moral issue. Parents can do a better job of teaching morality than schools. Furthermore, different families want their children to learn very different things about sex, and schools cannot cover all viewpoints.

Teachers may also be reluctant to distribute information about different methods for safer sex. Many teachers would rather avoid the topic of sex education completely and believe the parents should be responsible for this topic. However, schools and teachers are then often held accountable for “not doing enough.”

Some people believe schools should only teach students to abstain or stay away from sex until marriage. They think teaching students about safer sex is like saying that sex at a young age is okay.

In 2008, the government spent $214 million on programs that focus on abstinence without clear evidence that such programs are effective. It seems like students need more information, but where should they get it? Should schools try to help prevent teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases? Or should sex education just be left to parents?

Questions for Classroom Discussion:
• What are some of the problems that sex education at home or at school can solve?
• Why do some people believe that schools should not distribute information about safer sex?
• What do Abstinence-Only programs teach students?
• Do you think schools have a responsibility to teach students morality?
• What type of sex education is most appropriate for middle and high schools?
USE THE FOCUS WORDS

capacity (noun) ability

eSample Sentence: Some people say schools have the capacity to make a difference.

Turn and Talk: Who has more of a capacity to change the world: children or adults? Explain your answer.

distribute (verb) to give out

eSample Sentence: Some schools also distribute information about ways to have safer sex.

Turn and Talk: What kinds of supplies should be distributed to people after a natural disaster?

method (noun) a way of doing something

eSample Sentence: One method for making new friends at school is to join a club.

Turn and Talk: Is there a game or sport that you are good at? What is your method for winning?

morality (noun) a sense of right and wrong; values

eSample Sentence: Many kids learn morality by watching the actions of their family members.

Turn and Talk: Does the music you listen to affect your morality? If so, how?

abstain (verb) to choose not to do something

Sample Sentence: Some people believe schools must only teach students to abstain from sex until marriage.

Turn and Talk: What is the best way to get young people to abstain from smoking?
DO THE MATH

The graph shows the results from a 2004 poll. In this poll, parents were asked which method of sex education they preferred. They chose from these three methods:

- **Abstinence-Only:** Students are taught that abstaining from pre-marital sex is the only safe choice that upholds their morality.
- **Abstinence-Plus:** Abstinence is presented as the safest, most moral option. However, Abstinence-Plus programs distribute information about safer sex as well.
- **Comprehensive:** The Comprehensive approach does not suggest that teen sex is immoral. It provides lots of information about safer sex in an effort to help students develop the capacity to make good choices.

**Option 1:** What percent of parents prefer Abstinence-Only?

A. 36%
B. 49%
C. 15%
D. 100%

**Option 2:** Based only on the information in the graph, is the following statement true or false, or does the graph not tell you enough information to decide?

“85% of parents prefer sex education programs that provide safer sex information.”

Not enough information. We don’t know if the “Other” programs preferred by 3% give out safer sex information or not.

**Discussion Question:** Without changing the distribution of opinion, we can make things look very different. This means pollsters and politicians have the capacity to manipulate how information will be interpreted. For example, only a small percentage of parents prefer the Abstinence-Only method. But both Abstinence-Only and Abstinence-Plus are based on the idea that abstinence is the most moral option. So both of these statements are true:

1. Only 15% of parents favor Abstinence-Only sex education.
2. Over 60% of parents favor sex education that encourages abstinence.

If you were in favor of Abstinence-Only programs, which statistic would you probably use? If you were in favor of Abstinence-Plus or Comprehensive programs, which statistic would you probably use? What does this suggest about statistics in general?
Ms. Kahn’s class is preparing for a debate about what students should learn in health education classes. Students have to defend a position about who is responsible for teaching kids about sex, so they’re doing research looking for studies with scientific data on the topic. They talk while they search.

“Sex education is really an issue of morality. It should be left up to parents to teach their kids about sex,” says Briana.

“No way!” exclaims Valerie, “What if parents are scared to talk to their kids about sex? My dad freaks out every time my sister and I even mention dating. Schools need a method for teaching kids what they don’t learn at home.”

“I know, right?” says Erick, “I think kids and teens have the capacity to learn about the topic and still uphold their personal beliefs. But people at my church think that if a school distributes information about sex, it’s like saying sex before marriage is okay. They think teaching kids to abstain from sex is the best choice.”

Ms. Kahn checks in with the group. “Try searching for studies about Abstinence-Only education programs. You’ll need to compare them with Comprehensive programs.”

“I found something! It’s a research study that compares the risk of teen pregnancy with the type of sex education teens received,” says Valerie. “I bet if kids get comprehensive information about sex, they’ll be better off.”

“Okay, Valerie, you sound like you have a position. Let’s find out if you can support it with evidence from a reliable source,” says Ms. Kahn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents who reported “No teen pregnancy” received what type of sex education?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No formal sex education</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstinence-Only sex education</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive sex education</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is Valerie’s position on sex education supported by the data table? Why or why not?

The data table supports Valerie’s position because those who had Comprehensive sex education reported less teen pregnancy.

Is there information about Erick’s church’s position on the data table? What about Briana’s position?

The data show that Abstinence-Only sex education is better than no formal sex education for reducing teen pregnancy, but far less effective than Comprehensive sex education.

Besides pregnancy, are there other behaviors or outcomes that you would like to consider when deciding what type of sex education is most effective?

Answers will vary.
SHOULD SCHOOLS OR PARENTS BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SEX EDUCATION?

capacity | distribute | method | morality | abstain

DEBATE THE ISSUE

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

A

☐ Public schools should not teach sex education.

OR

B

☐ Public schools should provide sex ed classes.

OR

CREATE YOUR OWN

☐ ____________________________

☐ ____________________________

☐ ____________________________

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

☐ ____________________________

☐ ____________________________

☐ ____________________________

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

“Can you show me evidence in the text that...”

“I believe that...”

“You make a good point, but have you considered...”

“I agree with you, but...”
TAKE A STAND

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

capacity | distribute | method | morality | abstain

Beliefnet: www.beliefnet.com/story/168/story_16872_2.html
Women’s Health Channel: www.womenshealthchannel.com/teenpregnancy
Salaries for well-known professional athletes are among the highest received in the United States. For example, in 2012, LeBron James earned a $13 million salary and over $40 million in endorsements as a professional basketball player. Peyton Manning earned a $32.4 million salary and had $10 million in endorsements. In contrast, the average U.S. firefighter’s salary ranges from $40,000 to $60,000. Even the President of the United States makes only $400,000 per year. These professions carry more responsibility or greater risk, but they pay salaries that do not parallel those of athletes.

Also, many people think that athletes throw away their money on expensive houses, cars, and other possessions. Meanwhile, organizations that need money to help people are not getting enough. The Head Start program in Massachusetts, for example, receives about $4.5 million from the federal government each year. This program gives preschoolers free schooling, food, and medical care. With this amount of money, the program can serve only about half of the eligible children in the state. Even a fraction of a single athlete’s salary could guarantee that thousands of children receive these services.

On the other hand, athletes must work very hard to get into professional leagues. They train all year, and they put a great deal of strain on their bodies. They risk serious injury every time they play. They also create entertainment value for people. Famous athletes help sports teams, television networks, and other professional sports organizations make a lot of money. Fans are willing to pay a lot to see Peyton Manning or LeBron James play. Many people believe that it is logical to give athletes a share of the money they help to bring into the sports industry.

Do athletes really deserve multi-million dollar salaries? What do you think?

Questions for Classroom Discussion:

- Why do some people think professional athletes make too much money?
- Contrast athletes’ salaries with those of other professionals (such as firefighters, the President of the United States, and teachers). Should any of these professionals make more money than athletes?
- What are some reasons why athletes might deserve high salaries?
- Contrast athletes’ salaries with government spending on Head Start. Should athletes have to pay higher taxes so that some of their money will help people who need it?
- Is it logical to pay athletes multi-million dollar salaries?
DO PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES DESERVE MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR SALARIES?

USE THE FOCUS WORDS  * and alternate parts of speech

**guarantee** *(verb)* to promise

- **Sample Sentence:** Alex Rodriguez of the New York Yankees had a contract **guaranteeing** him $252 million over ten years.
- **Turn and Talk:** Does eating right and exercising **guarantee** good health? Explain.

**guarantee** *(noun)* a promise that something will be high quality

- **Sample Sentence:** Some vacation companies offer money-back **guarantees** if it rains during the trip.
- **Turn and Talk:** Should smartphones come with a lifetime **guarantee**? Why or why not?

**contrast** *(noun)* comparison to show differences

- **Sample Sentence:** In **contrast** to famous baseball players, the average U.S. firefighter’s salary ranges from $40,000 to $60,000.
- **Turn and Talk:** In **contrast** to last year, how much homework do you have this year?

**contrast** *(verb)* to be very different from; to compare in order to show the difference

- **Sample Sentence:** The bright, blue sky **contrasted** with the dark clouds that were rolling in.
- **Turn and Talk:** What is a rule in your family that **contrasts** with your friends’ families’ rules? Which rule do you prefer?

**parallel** *(verb)* to match; to equal

- **Sample Sentence:** These professions carry more responsibility or greater risk, but they pay salaries that do not **parallel** those of athletes.
- **Turn and Talk:** Can anything **parallel** the experience of getting out of school for the summer? Give an example.

**parallel** *(noun)* similarity; shared characteristic

- **Sample Sentence:** Creation stories from native people around the world contain many **parallels**.
- **Turn and Talk:** Name some **parallels** between your English class and your math class.

**industry** *(noun)* a group of businesses that provide similar products or services

- **Sample Sentence:** Many people believe that it is right to give athletes a share of the money they help to bring in to the sports **industry**.
- **Turn and Talk:** Which **industry** does more to help the public: the sports **industry** or the music **industry**? Explain.

**logical** *(adjective)* reasonable; based on clear thinking

- **Sample Sentence:** Sharif agreed that it was **logical** to order the food only after all the guests were confirmed.
- **Turn and Talk:** Is it **logical** to assume that two people that are raised together will have a lot in common? Why or why not?
DO THE MATH

According to Sports Illustrated, the highest paid American athletes in 2009 were Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, and LeBron James. These athletes made most of their money promoting products. Companies in many different industries, from clothing to banking to oil, pay these superstars huge amounts. These companies believe it is logical to pay athletes to promote their products. Nike, for example, believes that paying LeBron James to wear Nike shoes guarantees high sales. Another example is that the unparalleled popularity of Tiger Woods guarantees that millions of people will know what phone he uses and what car he drives. Of course, when problems in his personal life became public knowledge near the end of 2009, his image suffered. We can therefore expect a big contrast between Tiger’s endorsement income in 2009 and his endorsement income in 2010.

**Option 1:** For which athlete is the contrast between salary/winnings and endorsement income the greatest?

A. Tiger Woods
B. Phil Mickelson
C. LeBron James

**Option 2:** In 2009, Tiger Woods earned $99,737,626. If we divide this number by 365, we find that he earned $273,253.77 each day. Write an algebraic expression that shows the difference between Tiger’s daily earnings and some other person's. Let s = the other person’s yearly salary.

\[273,253.77 - \left(\frac{s}{365}\right)\]

**Discussion Question:** In America, the sports industry is huge. It employs millions of people, from coaches to hot dog vendors. While many industry employees make very little, celebrity athletes make millions. And while celebrities have endorsed products for many years, today’s endorsement contracts are unparalleled. Is it fair that some people get paid so much? In sports like basketball and baseball, players have contracts. Whether they win or lose, their salaries are guaranteed. In contrast, the players in golf and tennis are paid to win. Which is the more logical system? Should LeBron James get paid per win? Why or why not?
Patrick found this topic very interesting and decided to investigate this question. He looked online to find out how much people in five different professions made per hour, how many years they needed to attend school past high school, and how many people were in each profession.

Patrick wants to find out: Does the amount of education required for a job affect how much the job pays? Does the number of people who have a profession affect how much the job pays?

Procedure:
1. Find out the hourly wages of different professions.
2. Find out how much schooling past high school is needed for each of those professions.
3. Find out the number of people that have that profession.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Average Hourly Wage</th>
<th>Average Schooling after High School (years)</th>
<th>Number (People with this profession per 1,000,000)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction Worker</td>
<td>$19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>$26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software Developer</td>
<td>$43</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>$91</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Basketball Player</td>
<td>$2,476</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For construction workers, teachers, software developers and doctors, what is the relationship between the hourly wage earned and the number of people who have that profession? What about between the hourly wage earned and the amount of schooling required?

The hourly wage for these professions is correlated positively with the amount of schooling required, and negatively with the number of people in the profession.

For professional basketball players, the hourly wage is $2,476, with an average of 4 years of schooling after high school, and 1 person per 1,000,000.

We often associate more years of schooling with jobs that get better pay, but there are exceptions, or outliers, like elite athletes.

Do you think of any other professions where the amount the job pays doesn’t necessarily match the amount of schooling required?
### DEBATE THE ISSUE

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

- **A**
  - Athletes deserve the high salaries they receive.

- **OR**
  - Athletes do not deserve salaries so much higher than teachers, firefighters, or the President of the United States.

- **OR**
  - **CREATE YOUR OWN**

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

- "Can you show me evidence in the text that..."
- "I believe that..."
- "You make a good point, but have you considered..."
- "I agree with you, but..."
TAKE A STAND

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

Richest of the rich: 50 highest-earning American athletes:


The Prometheus Institute: http://prometheus.org/
During the 2008-09 school year, Washington, D.C., public schools implemented a new program. Middle school students were paid up to $200 a month for attendance, good behavior, and other criteria like wearing uniforms and completing homework and classwork. The Schools Chancellor said that the payments were meant to motivate students at an age when many start to get bored with school. So she decided it was worth undertaking a monetary incentive program to see if it improved their motivation to do well.

Over the course of the school year, participating students received an average of approximately $530 each, for a total payout of $1.2 million. Harvard economist Roland Fryer analyzed the findings from the incentive study. He concluded that students who were paid through this incentive program scored slightly higher on some district tests than students who weren't offered a monetary incentive.

Some people criticize the idea of paying students to attend and do well in school. After all, in Africa, many students are willing to pay fees and undergo considerable hardship to attend school. Why should American students receive money for attending? Furthermore, paying students might undermine their natural motivation to learn. Even if paying students gets some quick results, wouldn’t it be better in the long run to undertake changes or reforms to make school more interesting?

Others think that monetary incentives should only be used to motivate students who are more likely to struggle in school. In France, for example, there was a movement to pay students from low-income areas to attend school. Many argued that incentives would encourage these students who were at risk of dropping out to stay in school. This would help the country as a whole.

Defenders of the incentive program say the issue is simple: We should do whatever it takes to enable students to do better in school. They won’t learn if they are not in school, so paying for attendance is worth it. Others are confident that paying students for different things like reading books would have an even greater effect. What is your opinion? Should students ever be paid to attend or do well in school?

Questions for Classroom Discussion:
- What motivates you to do well in school?
- In your experience, do your classmates take their education seriously?
- Besides money, how can students be motivated to do their best in school?
- What are the pros and cons of paying students for their performance in school?
- Is poor academic performance a reflection of American youth or the American school system?
implement (verb) to put something (a decision, plan, action, etc.) into effect

_sample sentence_: On January 1, the two countries will begin implementing the new peace plan.

*turn and talk*: Should all schools implement a “no peanut” policy?

implement (noun) a tool

_sample sentence_: A fork and a spoon are eating implements.

*turn and talk*: What implements would you need if you wanted to make a tuna sandwich?

motivate (verb) to make someone or something want to take action

_sample sentence_: Our volleyball team was motivated to beat Central Middle School because we lost to them last time.

*turn and talk*: What would you tell a friend to motivate him or her to get healthy?

undertake (verb) to accept as a challenge

_sample sentence_: Because she needed money, Susannah agreed to undertake the difficult task of babysitting her neighbor.

*turn and talk*: What task would you undertake to make a few dollars?

incentive (noun) a reward that leads someone to take action

_sample sentence_: Playing chess with his father was Tyrese’s incentive to finish his homework early.

*turn and talk*: What are some incentives a teacher could offer to convince all students to complete their homework?

enable (verb) to make something possible

_sample sentence_: Mahmoud’s three-pointers enabled his team to make a comeback in the championship game.

*turn and talk*: How could knowing a second language enable you to get a good job?
DO THE MATH

Option 1: The incentive program in Washington, D.C., was designed to motivate students. Good behavior, good attendance, and other factors like homework completion enabled students to earn up to $100 per pay period. Each pay period is 2 weeks, or 10 school days.

There are 180 days in the school year. What is the maximum amount of money that each student could earn for the year?

A. $180  
B. $900  
C. $1,800  
D. $4,500

Option 2: Many different people have undertaken efforts to create better schools. Their ideas vary widely. Some schools are based on strict discipline, while others are based on student freedom. Some use complicated textbooks, while others use no textbooks at all. But no plan can enable schools to succeed if students are unmotivated. Are cash incentives the answer? If we took a fraction of the money spent buying books, paying teachers, and implementing programs, and offered it directly to students as an incentive to focus and study, would this fix our schools?

In the U.S., schools spend about $10,000 per student per year. Some schools spend more and some spend less. What if we turned 5% of the money spent on each student into incentive money? If \( i \) = incentive money and \( e \) = expenditure per student, write a formula that would show the relationship between per-student expenditure and per-student incentive.

\( .05e = i \) OR \( 20i = e \)

Discussion Question: Pretend that your school wants to implement a cash incentive plan to encourage students to attend an extra one-hour study session after school each day. What is the minimum amount it would take to motivate you to attend for one week? How about for one year? Would it be cost-effective for your school to undertake this kind of plan?
The students in Mr. Seemy’s class are about to take a test on organizing and interpreting data. Mr. Seemy asks, “What would you say if I told you that those of you who got an A on this test would get $20?”

“I’d say that’s the best news I’ve heard all year!” exclaims Shantel. “I would be much more motivated to study if I knew I could make money for doing well.”

Mr. Seemy says, “The school is thinking about implementing a program to pay students when they get good grades. It would be a partnership between local businesses and the government to provide the money and payment plans.”

“Really?” questions Sharif. “Incentives are great, but I think that would send the wrong message to kids. There are other good reasons for doing well in school. Money isn’t everything, you know.”

“But it sure does help. I mean, anything that enables kids to learn more is good, right?” responds Shantel.

“Well, to undertake such a program, the school would need to gather evidence to support the idea that money motivates students to get better grades,” says Mr. Seemy. “Shantel, do you think you can prove you’re right?”

“I’m sure of it. I’ll survey everyone in 8th grade,” replies Shantel. “The data will show that money is the most important reason students are motivated to get good grades.”

“I’ll work with you, just to make sure you report your data accurately!” says Sharif.

### Shantel and Sharif’s survey

To me, the **most important reason** for getting good grades is...

- A. Having my friends think I’m smart
- B. Getting approval/privileges (not money) from my parents
- C. Being able to get a good job/get into a good college
- D. Getting money so I can buy stuff
- E. Feeling good about myself

![Student Survey Responses (Total = 150)](chart.png)

No. Item C was selected most often, not item D. But students could argue that the desire to get a good job or get into a good college could be related to earning money in the long run.

Are you surprised by the data that Shantel and Sharif collected? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

**How could you replicate this investigation at your school?**
Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.


Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

- Can you show me evidence in the text that...
- You make a good point, but have you considered...
- I believe that...
- I agree with you, but...
TAKE A STAND

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

implement | motivate | undertake | incentive | enable

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Mia Hamm is considered to be one of the world’s best all-around women’s soccer players. She held the record for scoring more international goals in her career than any other player, male or female, for nine years. Hamm helped the U.S. national soccer team win the gold medal in the 1996 Olympic Games.

Hamm was born in 1972, the same year the U.S. government passed a law called Title IX. The law forbids discrimination against girls or women in schools or colleges that receive money from the U.S. government.

Title IX reads in part: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

In 1971, the year before Hamm was born, fewer than 300,000 high school girls participated in school sports. That number has grown to over 3 million. Some people think that Title IX led to better, or more adequate, representation of women in colleges. For example, the year Hamm was born, only 9% of medical degrees were earned by women. That percentage has jumped to nearly 50%. Many say that these examples illustrate how important it is to have laws that give both men and women the same opportunities in athletics as well as in college admissions.

One case that highlighted the inequities of college funding for female sports was resolved in the early 1990s. A judge ordered Indiana University of Pennsylvania to restore funding for women’s gymnastics and field hockey. The university wanted to focus its resources or funding on men’s football. But the judge said that money problems and a desire for football prestige were not excuses for violating Title IX.

Is it appropriate for judges and lawyers to determine the sports programs at colleges? Some people feel that colleges know how to make the best decisions for their particular situations and that the law should be more flexible.

What do you think? At your school is there a disproportionate representation of boys or girls on your sports teams? In other programs?

Questions for Classroom Discussion:
• What kinds of inequities did female athletes face before the law was changed?
• Why do you think some colleges give more resources to sports like football or baseball?
• How did Mia Hamm illustrate that female athletes can be as successful as male athletes?
• How did the U.S. government provide adequate protection for women who wanted to go to medical school or law school?
• Why do you think there are a disproportionate number of men in sports? Is it because men are more athletic or more interested in sports, or is it because women don’t get the same opportunities?
DOES TITLE IX PROMOTE GENDER FAIRNESS IN SPORTS AND EDUCATION? inequity | resources | adequate | illustrate | disproportionate

USE THE FOCUS WORDS

inequity (noun) lack of equality; unfairness

Sample Sentence: A recent case highlights the inequities of college funding for female sports.

Turn and Talk: Why should boys care about inequities that affect girls? Explain.

resources (noun) supplies of money or helpful items

Sample Sentence: The university wanted to focus its resources on men’s football.

Turn and Talk: Would you rather see more resources go toward school sports or arts programs? Explain.

adequate (adjective) as much as necessary

Sample Sentence: Some people think that Title IX led to better, or more adequate, representation of women in colleges.

Turn and Talk: What is an adequate amount of time for you to complete your homework?

illustrate (verb) to demonstrate

Sample Sentence: These examples illustrate the importance of giving men and women the same opportunities.

Turn and Talk: Can you think of a story from your life that illustrates how hard work paid off for you?

disproportionate (adjective) too large or too small in comparison with something else

Sample Sentence: Some schools have disproportionate representation of boys or girls on their sports teams.

Turn and Talk: How many hours per week do you consider a disproportionate amount of time watching TV?
Title IX was passed to end gender inequity in universities and other places that receive public money. People disagree about what it means. What does it mean to give adequate support to both genders? What does proportionate representation mean? If more men than women play sports at a public university, is this disproportionate representation automatically a violation of Title IX? Or is it only a violation if female athletes are being denied a chance to play? At some colleges, some men’s teams were cut so that resources could be given to new women’s teams. Some people argue that men’s and women’s interest level should be considered. If fewer women than men want to play sports, they say, then it should be okay to have fewer women’s teams.

The problems below illustrate two different ways to think about proportionate representation. In Option 1, a school thinks in terms of numbers. In Option 2, a school thinks in terms of interest level.

Option 1: At University X, the student body consists of 8,000 men and 8,500 women. Three hundred men play a varsity sport. This is 3.75% of male students. If a proportional number of women participate in varsity sports at University X, how many female varsity athletes are there?

A. 300  
B. 310  
C. 319  
D. 331

Option 2: To be in compliance with Title IX, schools have to show progress towards equity. At University Y, the student body consists of 10,000 men and 10,000 women. Five hundred men play varsity sports, and 150 women. A poll of the student body showed that twice as many men as women are interested in playing sports. Therefore, the athletic department wants to increase the number of female athletes by 20% each year until there are at least 250 female athletes. How many years will it take?

3 years. With a 20% increase each year, there are 180 female athletes after 1 year, 216 after 2 years, and 259 (259.2) after 3 years.

Discussion Question: Does Title IX create new inequities in college sports? Some schools have cut men’s teams to fund women’s teams. Title IX opponents say that this helps only a few women, and inflicts disproportionate harm on male athletes in sports that don’t earn a lot of money, like wrestling or men’s gymnastics. Title IX supporters disagree. They point out that for years, far more resources have been given to men’s sports than women’s sports. If more men want to play sports, this just illustrates the consequences of past inequity. To give today’s women adequate opportunities to play sports, they must be given equal funding. What do you think? Is it okay to cut a men’s sport to fund a women’s sport? If not, where should the money come from?
Ms. Kahn’s class is discussing whether or not Title IX, a law enacted over 40 years ago, has been effective in reducing disproportionate spending in boys’ and girls’ sports.

“My sister plays college basketball, and there wouldn’t even be a team, let alone adequate funding for uniforms and games, if it weren’t for Title IX,” says Marie.

“Yeah? Well, my brother is on the wrestling team at Central High,” says Alex, “and his team has to raise money for uniforms because they have to share half their resources and budget with girls! I mean, who ever heard of a girl wrestler?”

“That’s sexist! And totally old-school,” blurts Ally. “Wrestling—and water polo, and boxing, and even race car driving—are serious sports with professional athletes, both male and female. Your brother’s attitude just illustrates why Title IX is still so important.”

“But I’ve heard on the news that Title IX just takes money away from boys’ and men’s sports,” counters Alex. “So there might be more girls playing, but that’s because there are fewer boys. That’s unfair!”

“Alex, you are making a claim that Title IX laws, in effect, reduce the amount of boys participating in sports in favor of girls’ participation,” says Ms. Kahn, “but as a scientist you must remember that claims have to be supported with evidence.”

“I have some research data here that might help us decide if what Alex heard is true,” says Ms. Kahn. “We need to look at real evidence, not just opinions, to decide if there is inequity.”

Do these data provide evidence to support Alex’s claim that fewer boys play sports now than in the past? Why or why not?

No. In 1972, less than 4 million boys played sports, whereas more than 4 million boys played sports in 2011.

What other evidence would you need to determine whether Title IX has been effective or not?

Answers will vary.

Title IX became a law in 1972. After that, girls’ participation in sports increased by 980%. Many sports are played by both males and females; however, there are certain sports that are dominated by either males or females, not both. Do you think associating sports with a certain gender will ever end?
DEBATE THE ISSUE
Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

A  □ It is appropriate for colleges and schools to focus their resources on programs that generate more money.

OR

B  □ Athletic programs for males and females should receive equal funding.

OR

CREATE YOUR OWN  □

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

“Can you show me evidence in the text that...”

“I believe that...”

“You make a good point, but have you considered...”

“I agree with you, but...”
TAKE A STAND

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

inequity | resources | adequate | illustrate | disproportionate
In summer 2003, toddler Kai Harriott of Boston was sitting on her porch, singing with her sister. A gang member shot into the air to scare Kai's neighbors. Kai was hit by a bullet. After being shot, Kai was paralyzed. She could not move from the waist down. Because of her injury, Kai must use a wheelchair. But scientists have an idea that might help. They have a theory that stem cells can someday help people like Kai.

Stem cells are found in different parts of the human body, including in our blood. Stem cells are also found in fertilized human eggs, called embryos. Stem cells from embryos can develop into cells that do many different jobs in the human body. With more research, scientists may be able to grow replacement parts for humans from stem cells.

If doctors can grow spinal cord cells, people like Kai might walk again. New brain cells could help people who have had strokes or Alzheimer's disease. Scientists might also learn to grow the cells that make insulin. This could help people with diabetes. But to obtain some stem cells, scientists must destroy a human embryo. Human embryos are usually obtained from unused fertilized eggs from In Vitro Fertilization (IVF). This is when a couple uses a reproductive specialist to help them have a child. For example, a couple has 10 eggs that have been fertilized but only uses four eggs to start their family. This couple then has six leftover embryos that can be donated to stem cell research.

Many people think that human life begins when an egg is fertilized. They think destroying a human embryo is like murder. They say scientists should only work with stem cells from adults. But most scientists find that stem cells taken from adults won't grow into the many different kinds of human cells the way that stem cells from embryos do. Stem cells from embryos may be our only hope of curing some diseases.

Yet, however promising stem cell research is, many citizens oppose it. They object to having their tax dollars spent on something they think is unethical. Investigating stem cells and their medical benefits will take years and cost millions. Should researchers obtain funding from the government to investigate embryonic stem cells?
USE THE FOCUS WORDS

**embryo** (noun) fertilized egg in a mother’s womb

- *Sample Sentence:* Stem cells are found in fertilized human eggs, called embryos.
- *Turn and Talk:* Should scientists be allowed to destroy a human embryo for research that could save lives?

**paralyzed** (adjective) unable to move

- *Sample Sentence:* After being shot, Kai was paralyzed from the waist down.
- *Turn and Talk:* How do you think school would be different for a paralyzed student?

**theory** (noun) an explanation for a set of related facts

- *Sample Sentence:* Some scientists have a theory that stem cells can someday help people like Kai.
- *Turn and Talk:* Share your theory about extraterrestrial life (aliens).

**investigate** (verb) to try to learn about

- *Sample Sentence:* Investigating stem cells will take years and cost millions of dollars.
- *Turn and Talk:* What is a topic you would like to investigate?

**obtain** (verb) to get

- *Sample Sentence:* Scientists could not obtain federal money for research on embryonic stem cells.
- *Turn and Talk:* What do you have to do to obtain permission to hang out with your friends after school?

**Paralyzed** can also be used as a verb (“paralyze”)! The injury paralyzed the soldier.
President George W. Bush restricted government funding of stem cell research. On August 9, 2001, he said that scientists could not obtain federal money for research on embryonic stem cell lines created after that date. This paralyzed certain areas of research. Some scientists investigating embryonic stem cells had to put their projects on hold.

President Bush believed he had a moral duty to stop new embryos from being destroyed. Each embryo, he stated, is a potential human being. His theory was that using embryos for research cheapens human life.

President Obama presented a different moral theory. He said human beings have a moral duty to help people who are suffering. Therefore, they should use science to fight disease. In 2009, President Obama lifted President Bush's restrictions.

Option 1: Each embryo needed to start a stem cell line is made up of about 100 cells. Its mass is about one ten-millionth of a gram. Which of the following shows one ten-millionth?

A. .0001
B. .00001
C. .000001
D. .0000001

Option 2: Each embryo needed to start a stem cell line is made up of about 100 cells. Each person is made up of about 100 trillion cells. Write both numbers in scientific notation. How many orders of magnitude separate the two numbers?

100 = 10^2 and 100 trillion = 10^14. Each power of 10 represents an order of magnitude, so 12 orders of magnitude separate the two numbers.

Discussion Question: In 2009, the FDA approved the first clinical trial using embryonic stem cells. A company called Geron Corp planned to inject embryonic stem cells into 8–10 people whose legs were paralyzed by a spinal cord injury. The Geron scientists had a theory that these cells could help repair damaged nerves. Obtaining subjects for the trial would take time, because the scientists wanted to inject the cells within a few days of the injury. They said the trial was primarily an investigation into whether injecting stem cells would be safe. But they also hoped to see whether the stem cells would help patients recover some movement in their legs.

Imagine that you are against stem cell research. What would you say to these researchers to convince them to give up this project?
Ms. Kahn’s class is discussing stem cell research. “If a human life begins when an egg is fertilized, then obtaining stem cells from embryos is wrong,” says Gabriel. “But think about all the good that can be done with stem cells,” says Toni. “People who are paralyzed or have other major medical problems could finally live full lives again!”

“How about other ways to retrieve stem cells other than from embryos?” asks Gabriel. “Actually,” says Sylvia, “there are also stem cells in adult bone marrow, and scientists have some exciting theories about how these stem cells can help improve many health problems, such as heart attacks!”

“Fascinating,” says Ms. Kahn. “Let’s take a look!”

Did the patients who received injections of stem cells instead of a placebo benefit from the treatment? If so, how?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stem cell patients</th>
<th>Placebo patients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># adverse events per patient</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irregular heart rhythm</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muscle size</td>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muscle strength</td>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: J. M. Hare et al (2009 - Journal of the American College of Cardiology)

Why is it important that scientists use placebos when they test a new therapy?
SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT FUND EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH?

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

A
☐ The government should pay for embryonic stem cell research.

OR

B
☐ The government should not fund embryonic stem cell research.

OR

CREATE YOUR OWN

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

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Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

Can you show me evidence in the text that...

I believe that...

You make a good point, but have you considered...

I agree with you, but...

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


It’s lunchtime and sixth-grader Oscar Villanova visits the vending machine. He pays for an orange juice and some cheese sticks, but he really wanted soda and chips. His school, Mildred Avenue, only sells school lunch and healthy snacks.

Seventh-grader Leticia Brown has been told by her doctor that she needs to lose weight. Her doctor says exercise will help her control her weight but at school she only gets physical education once a week.

Many children suffer from health conditions that are caused or made worse by their lifestyles. Childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years. Rates of childhood diabetes have also risen. These conditions can put children at risk for heart disease and other major killers later in life.

These health issues are multidimensional problems with many different causes. Eating meals out, watching lots of TV, and not being active after school can cause too much weight gain. But there are many things children can do to improve their health. Doctors say the primary focus for children should be eating healthy food and getting exercise every day.

Schools are getting involved in solving the problem. Some, like Mildred Avenue, restrict the snacks students can buy. Others are offering more gym classes to emphasize the importance of exercise. Some schools even send home health notices warning parents that their child may be overweight. These schools believe parents should be acting more responsibly by restricting children’s diets. Many parents get angry, arguing that schools should limit their focus to teaching. They believe that they have primary responsibility for their children’s health.

Who is responsible for children’s health? Should schools be involved? When do young people become responsible for their own health decisions?
USE THE FOCUS WORDS

**obesity** (noun) state of being extremely overweight

- *Sample Sentence:* One way to help solve the obesity problem in the U.S. is to require all restaurants to list the calories on menu items.

- *Turn and Talk:* Should companies that sell junk food be required to give money to fight obesity?

**primary** (adjective) most important; most influential

- *Sample Sentence:* Doctors say the primary focus for children should be eating healthy food and getting exercise every day.

- *Turn and Talk:* What is the primary quality you look for in a good friend?

**emphasize** (verb) to show the importance of

- *Sample Sentence:* Other schools are offering more gym classes to emphasize the importance of exercise.

- *Turn and Talk:* What could your school do to emphasize the importance of a healthy diet? Explain.

**restrict** (verb) to keep within limits

- *Sample Sentence:* Some schools, like Mildred Avenue, restrict the snacks students can buy.

- *Turn and Talk:* Do you think that schools should restrict the kind of food that is brought in for celebrations and activities?

**multidimensional** (adjective) having many different sides or characteristics

- *Sample Sentence:* These health issues are multidimensional problems with many different causes.

In February 2010, Michelle Obama announced the Let’s Move campaign against childhood obesity. Fighting childhood obesity was her primary mission as First Lady. Her approach was multidimensional: She wanted to educate parents about nutrition, help families afford healthy food, and emphasize physical activity. She also wanted to bring healthy foods to America’s schools. In the past, many school lunch menus were restricted to foods that were cheap and easy to prepare.

Option 1: To help schools afford to feed students, the USDA pays schools for each lunch served. As of the 2014–15 school year, it paid $2.98 for each free lunch. Some estimates say that low-fat, high-fiber meals with fresh fruits and vegetables would cost $5 each. How much would the per-meal payment need to increase to cover the cost of a healthier meal?

A. about 28%
B. about 50%
C. about 100%
D. about 68%

Option 2: The USDA pays schools for each lunch served. As of the 2014–15 school year, it paid $2.98 for each free lunch, $2.58 for each reduced-price lunch, and $0.28 for each full-price lunch.

If $f = \text{the number of free lunches served}$, $r = \text{the number of reduced-price lunches served}$, and $p = \text{the number of full-price lunches served}$, write an algebraic expression that shows the total amount each school receives in per-meal reimbursements.

$$2.98f + 2.58r + .28p$$

Discussion Question: Childhood obesity is a big problem. Doctors emphasize that fighting obesity requires a multidimensional approach. Kids need access to healthy food. They need to restrict their junk food intake. They need to exercise. The U.S. spends $150 million each year fighting obesity-related illnesses, so fighting childhood obesity could save money in the long term. But in the short term, fighting obesity could be expensive. Schools today have tight budgets. Their primary concern is teaching kids. What are some inexpensive things schools could do to fight obesity?
The students in Mr. Seemy’s class are getting ready for Wellness Week at Franklin Middle School. During Wellness Week, all students will participate in special activities that emphasize good health and well-being. Recently, the school decided to restrict the types of snack foods offered on the school lunch menu, and some students have complained that their favorite (unhealthy) snack foods are no longer available. Patrice, Erick, and Jacky are preparing a multidimensional presentation about how to make healthier food choices and prevent childhood diabetes and obesity.

“We’ll start with a ‘Snack Bar’ showing them a bunch of foods that are really bad for them. You know, Spicy Cheese Crunchies and Twinkle Cakes and all that stuff,” says Patrice.

“Right! But remember we have to be careful to make our point clearly,” says Erick. “An unhealthy diet is the primary cause of obesity in children, but it’s not the only reason kids get too fat. Not being active plays a part too.”

“I found a calorie calculator online,” says Jacky. “Let’s find out what kinds of physical activity are best for burning all the calories we consume when we eat Cheese Crunchies. Then we can show everyone during our presentation.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of physical activity</th>
<th>Basketball (full court)</th>
<th>Walking (4mph)</th>
<th>Cycling (leisure)</th>
<th>Jogging</th>
<th>Zumba dance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of calories burned after 30 minutes of activity</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which types of exercise would burn off the calories in the Spicy Cheese Crunchies? How do you know?

Thirty minutes of full-court basketball or zumba dance, because they each burn more than 182 calories.

If you ate one serving of Spicy Cheese Crunchies, about how long would you have to ride a bicycle to burn off the calories?

Nearly 1 hour. $(182/93)/2 = .98$

The Center for Disease Control and prevention recommends that children and teens get at least 60 minutes a day of physical activity. What types of physical activity do you do daily? Weekly?
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDHOOD OBESITY?

DEBATE THE ISSUE

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

A

Parents should take more responsibility for their children’s weight.

OR

B

Schools should take more responsibility for their students’ weight.

OR

C

Students should be responsible for their own bodies.

OR

CREATE YOUR OWN

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

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You make a good point, but have you considered...

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

Can you show me evidence in the text that...

I believe that...

You make a good point, but have you considered...

I agree with you, but...
TAKE A STAND

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


Childhood Obesity: http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/childhood-obesity/basics/definition/con-20027428


“A Sweet Tooth is Tough to Pull”: http://www.boston.com/yourlife/health/fitness/articles/2006/02/15/a_sweet_tooth_is_tough_to_pull/

Overweight and Obesity: http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/general/body/overweight_obesity.html
Pilgrim Nuclear Station sits just off the road 40 miles from Boston, Massachusetts. This power plant makes electricity by heating water with a controlled nuclear reaction. Boiling water makes steam. The steam turns a turbine to generate electricity. Power lines take electricity derived from the plant all over the state of Massachusetts.

Some politicians want to build more nuclear power plants like Pilgrim. They see nuclear power as a good alternative to expensive oil. Because we consume so much oil in America, we depend on oil from other countries. Nuclear power can be made in the United States, so nuclear energy cannot be cut off by another country. Nuclear power has another major advantage. It does not pollute the air like gas or coal does.

People who are concerned about nuclear power point to safety issues. Some nuclear power plants have leaked radioactive chemicals. The chemicals are blown by the wind and can contaminate water in nearby communities. Doctors have found higher rates of cancer in towns near the Pilgrim power plant.

The biggest worry about nuclear power is a meltdown. In a meltdown, the nuclear reaction gets out of control inside the plant. It gets so hot, the building explodes or breaks apart. Clouds of poisonous chemicals spread over a huge area. At Chernobyl, in Eastern Europe, a nuclear plant meltdown in 1986 spread contamination all over Europe. Thousands of people developed cancer after the meltdown. After the Chernobyl disaster, the U.S. stopped building new nuclear power plants.

Supporters of nuclear power believe that safer power plants can prevent these problems. They want the U.S. to start building nuclear power plants again. Is nuclear power worth the risks?
USE THE FOCUS WORDS

**generate** *(verb)* to produce

« Sample Sentence: Boiling water makes steam, and steam turns the turbine to **generate** electricity.

Turn and Talk: What **generates** stress among young people in your community?

**derive** *(verb)* to come from; to obtain from

« Sample Sentence: Her confidence is **derived** from years of playing sports.

Turn and Talk: From what do you **derive** happiness? I **derive** happiness from ________________.

**advantage** *(noun)* quality that gives someone a better chance than others

« Sample Sentence: One **advantage** of nuclear power is that it does not pollute the air like gas or coal.

Turn and Talk: What is one **advantage** of getting a good night's sleep?

**consume** *(verb)* to use up

« Sample Sentence: Because we **consume** so much oil in America, we import oil from other countries.

Turn and Talk: What are some things you can do to reduce the amount of electricity you **consume**?

**contaminate** *(verb)* to poison; to pollute

« Sample Sentence: If nuclear waste is not stored properly, it can **contaminate** soil and water.

Turn and Talk: What steps do doctors and nurses take to avoid **contaminating** patients?
DO THE MATH

Americans consume more energy each year, and we are looking for cleaner, greener ways to produce it. Nuclear power has many advantages. It doesn't pollute the air, and it can be produced in the U.S. But nuclear opponents raise several concerns. One is nuclear waste. Nuclear waste derives from the nuclear reactions that create nuclear energy, as well as from the mining and enrichment of nuclear fuel. If nuclear waste is not stored properly, it can contaminate soil and water. Some nuclear waste will remain dangerous for thousands of years.

Yucca Mountain in Nevada has been proposed as a site for long-term storage of nuclear waste. But this has generated a lot of controversy. Many Nevada residents don't want a nuclear dump in their home state. In 2001, the Environmental Protection Agency set safety standards for Yucca Mountain for the next 10,000 years.

**Option 1:** The average American lives about 80 years. How many lifetimes is 10,000 years?

A. 125 lifetimes
B. 130 lifetimes
C. 135 lifetimes
D. 210 lifetimes

**Option 2:** An appeals court ruled that the 10,000-year safety standards for Yucca Mountain were inadequate. After all, some nuclear waste may be dangerous for hundreds of thousands of years. The new EPA safety standards cover the next million years. Write 10,000 and 1 million in scientific notation. How many orders of magnitude separate the two numbers?

10,000 = 10^4 and 1 million = 10^6. Two orders of magnitude separate the two numbers.

**Discussion Question:** With violence in the Middle East and worries about global warming, traditional energy sources like oil and coal are falling out of favor. The advantages of nuclear power seem increasingly appealing. Many experts say nuclear power is safe. They say that many of the fears people have about nuclear power derive from misinformation and from the confusion of nuclear power with nuclear weapons. But nuclear waste remains a problem. A long-term, ultra-secure facility is needed. But, given the fact that leaks could contaminate the local environment, no one wants this facility to be in his or her backyard. The Obama Administration cut government funding for the Yucca Mountain facility. Meanwhile, nuclear power plants continue to generate nuclear waste. Where should it go?
Ms. Kahn’s class is discussing the connection between nuclear power plants and cancer.

“Cancer is a terrible disease,” says Erin. “Many people suffer from cancer as a result of nuclear power plants contaminating their surroundings. That’s why I don’t think we should use nuclear energy.”

“But think about all of the terrible pollution and political problems caused by other sources of energy,” says Kristopher. “If there is a way that we can both generate clean energy and gain a political advantage, then I think we should consider it.”

“Besides,” suggests Lucinda, “cancer is a very complicated disease with many different causes. How sure are we that exposure to nuclear power plants really causes cancer?”

“That’s a good question, Lucinda,” says Ms. Kahn. “Let’s take a look at the cancer rates around Chernobyl after the nuclear power plant accident there in 1986.”

Ms. Kahn searched the internet and found the following information about some of the effects of the Chernobyl meltdown.

Thyroid Cancer Study Following the Chernobyl Accident in Ukraine:
The thyroid gland uses iodine to control how quickly your body uses energy and delivers important hormones to the rest of your body. However, when nuclear power plants melt down or just leak a little bit, they release a radioactive version of iodine into the environment that can get into the water and food supplies of the local community. When people consume these contaminated foods, their thyroids collect the radioactive iodine instead of regular iodine. This collection of radioactive material in the thyroid gland can cause thyroid cancer to develop, especially in children and adolescents.

After the Chernobyl meltdown in 1986, researchers began tracking over 13,000 children and adolescents who were exposed to high doses of radioactive iodine. They monitored the health of these young people over the next 25 years and found the following relationship between how much radioactive iodine they were exposed to and how likely they were to develop thyroid cancer.

![Graph showing the relationship between radioactive iodine exposure and the likelihood of thyroid cancer.]

Within this group of 13,000 people, scientists recorded three times as many incidents of thyroid cancer in comparison to a typical group of people who were not exposed to radioactive iodine.

Data Source: http://chernobyl.cancer.gov/studies.html

From these data, can you conclude that being exposed to radioactive iodine causes thyroid cancer in children and adolescents?

Yes, it increases the likelihood of cancer in children and adolescents.

If someone were exposed to 7 Grays of radioactive iodine, how many times more likely would they be to develop thyroid cancer?

Nearly 15 times more likely to develop thyroid cancer.

Do you think this study is relevant to decisions about how we generate electricity in the United States? Explain.
DEBATE THE ISSUE
Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

A
- Nuclear power is too risky and should not be used.

OR
- The advantages of nuclear power are worth the risks.

OR
- CREATE YOUR OWN
  
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Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

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Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

“Can you show me evidence in the text that...”

“You make a good point, but have you considered...”

“I believe that...”

“I agree with you, but...”
TAKE A STAND

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

generate | derive | advantage | consume | contaminate
Students across the country recite the Pledge of Allegiance daily:

\[
\text{I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.}
\]

In 2002, a father in California sued the government. He said that he did not believe in God. His daughter should not have to say “under God” in school every day. Many people agree with him. They point out that the separation of church and state is a law. This means the government cannot teach or support religion. They say this language in the Pledge is not fair. It signifies to students who do not believe in God that their belief is wrong.

Other people think that taking “under God” out of the Pledge would destroy tradition. About three-quarters of the United States population is Christian. Others follow religions like Islam and Judaism that are also based on belief in one God.

Supporters of the Pledge say the phrase does not teach a specific religion. They say it just reflects the principles of most Americans. A belief in God is part of the U.S. tradition. People swear on the Bible when they go to court. “In God We Trust” appears on our money.

The Supreme Court reached the conclusion that teachers and students who disagree with the Pledge have the right not to say it, but they did not say the Pledge should be altered.

Do you think allowing people to remain silent is an acceptable solution? Should reciting the Pledge be a requirement in schools? Or should the phrase “under God” be taken out of the Pledge of Allegiance?
USE THE FOCUS WORDS

**recite** (verb) to speak from memory

- **Sample Sentence:** Students across the country *recite* the Pledge of Allegiance daily.
- **Turn and Talk:** If you were asked to *recite* a poem for English class, what steps would you take to memorize it?

**allegiance** (noun) loyalty

- **Sample Sentence:** Harold feels he owes *allegiance* to his friends because of the help they gave him.
- **Turn and Talk:** Describe a person, place, or idea to which you feel a strong *allegiance*. Why do you feel this way?

**signify** (verb) to mean or stand for

- **Sample Sentence:** The American flag *signifies* freedom for many people.
- **Turn and Talk:** Talk about a special (not necessarily valuable) gift you’ve received. What does this gift *signify* to you?

**principle** (noun) a rule or belief that guides actions

- **Sample Sentence:** Supporters of the Pledge argue that it reflects the *principles* of most Americans.
- **Turn and Talk:** What are three *principles* that are important in your life?

**conclusion** (noun) a final judgment or decision

- **Sample Sentence:** The Supreme Court reached the *conclusion* that teachers and students who disagree with the Pledge have the right not to say it.
- **Turn and Talk:** Think of a time when an adult decided that you had broken a rule. Did you agree with the adult’s *conclusion*?
Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance is meant to bring Americans together. The conclusion of the Pledge, “with liberty and justice for all,” refers to two important American principles: the right to personal freedom and the right to be treated fairly.

“Under God” was added in 1954, during America’s Cold War with the Soviet Union. This addition was meant to signify that, unlike the Soviet Union, America was a religious nation. To many people, this addition makes sense. Historically, America has primarily been a religious nation. Most Americans are religious believers. But what about atheists? Does the “liberty” promised at the end of the Pledge mean that all Americans, including atheists, should be free to say the Pledge without saying something they don’t believe?

This circle graph shows the results of an AP-Ipsos Public Affairs poll taken in March of 2004.

Option 1: Which of the following statements is true?

A. Most Americans want “under God” removed from the Pledge.
B. Most Americans have no opinion.
C. There are 7 Americans who want to keep “under God” for every one American who wants it removed.
D. There are 9 Americans who want to keep “under God” for every one American who wants it removed.

Option 2: Three Americans have been selected at random. What is the probability that all three are in favor of keeping “under God” in the Pledge?

\[
.87 \times .87 \times .87 = \text{about 66\% (about 2/3)}
\]

Discussion Question: The separation of church and state is an important American principle. Some say that asking students to recite a daily Pledge of Allegiance that includes God is wrong. They say it signifies an attack on religious freedom. Is this the right conclusion? Or is the Pledge more about history and tradition than about religious belief? Eighty-seven percent of Americans want to keep “under God” in the Pledge. Do you think these Americans are motivated mostly by feelings about religion, or mostly by feelings about history and tradition? Why?
Ms. Kahn’s class is discussing whether the phrase “under God” should be included in the Pledge of Allegiance. “The Pledge was created over 100 years ago, so we should just keep it as it is because it’s a tradition,” said Rafael. “Well, my grandmother told me that the Pledge of Allegiance she recited when she was young was a little bit different,” says Cory. “Since it has changed at least once, that means it can be changed again!” “There must have been a reason for it to change. I wonder what it is?” Tyler questioned. “There have actually been several different versions since it was first created in 1892,” explained Ms. Kahn. “Let’s look to see if we can figure out what has changed.”

Ms. Kahn projected the different versions on the board for her students to analyze. Complete the activity as if you were one of her students. Examine these four versions and mark the text when you discover how it has changed over the years.

1892
I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one Nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

1923
I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States and to the Republic for which it stands; one Nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

1924
I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands; one Nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

1954
I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Francis Bellamy originally worded the Pledge so that anyone in the world could recite it. The additions made in 1923 and 1924 were meant to signify to immigrants the importance of staying loyal to their new country. If you were going to research the reason for the change in 1954, what information would help you to come to a conclusion?

Answers will vary: Note: There is some debate in the history here. Some records show it was because of Communist threat, while others say it was a tribute to former President Lincoln who used “under God” often.
**DEBATE THE ISSUE**

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

A  The phrase “under God” should stay in the Pledge of Allegiance.

B  The phrase “under God” should not stay in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CREATE YOUR OWN

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

- "Can you show me evidence in the text that..."
- "I believe that..."
- "You make a good point, but have you considered..."
- "I agree with you, but..."
TAKE A STAND

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

recite | allegiance | signify | principle | conclusion

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If you ride the bus through an American city, you will hear many languages spoken. Many new immigrants have come to the U.S., speaking languages like Vietnamese, Russian, and Spanish.

Immigrants want to be able to use public services. Interpreters and information written in different languages help them use hospitals, libraries, and schools. If immigrants go to court, they want to understand what is being said. When new citizens vote, they want to be able to read the voting ballot.

Right now, the U.S. does not specify what languages can be used by the government. In many states, people can take the driver’s test in their home language. But some people want to establish English as the official language of the U.S. If English is the only official language, they say the country will be more unified, or cohesive. Using other languages in schools, courts, and city hospitals would be constrained by law. Immigrants would need to learn English or miss out on services.

Other people say this is just xenophobia, a fear of foreign people. Immigrants are learning English as fast as they can. They deserve services and information in the language they know.

What do you think? Should immigrants be provided government services in their home language? Or do you think making English the official language of the United States will make us more cohesive as a nation?
USE THE FOCUS WORDS

**specify** (verb) to clearly define

- **Sample Sentence**: Right now, the U.S. does not **specify** which languages can be used by the government.
- **Turn and Talk**: How many days in advance should teachers **specify** the date of an upcoming test?

**establish** (verb) to cause to be recognized and accepted

- **Sample Sentence**: Some people want to **establish** English as our official language.
- **Turn and Talk**: Think of your favorite actor or actress. What film **established** him or her as your favorite?

**cohesive** (adjective) unified

- **Sample Sentence**: If English is the only official language, some argue that the country will be more **cohesive**.
- **Turn and Talk**: Why are some classrooms more **cohesive** than others?

**constrain** (verb) to hold back or limit

- **Sample Sentence**: Many people think that making English the official language of the U.S. would **constrain** the everyday use of other languages.
- **Turn and Talk**: Why do you think some middle school students feel **constrained** by their parents?

**xenophobia** (noun) a fear of foreign people

- **Sample Sentence**: During times of war, **xenophobia** is extremely common.
- **Turn and Talk**: What are some examples of **xenophobia** that you have seen on TV?
DO THE MATH

Immigrant families around the world face many difficulties. They face xenophobia as well as day-to-day struggles with things from buying food to making friends. Using their first language at home helps families be cohesive. It helps them stay connected to their roots. Establishing English as the official language of the U.S. would not legally constrain the everyday use of other languages. However, some people think that having an official language would decrease the use of other languages, even in people's homes. The 2000 United States Census asked people to specify which language they speak at home.

**Option 1:** The most common non-English language spoken at home in the U.S. is Spanish. The 2000 U.S. Census counted 262,375,152 U.S. residents. Of these, 28,101,052 spoke Spanish at home. What percent of Americans spoke Spanish at home?

A. about 10.7%
B. about 28.2%
C. about 32.6%
D. about 45.1%

**Option 2:** The second and third most popular non-English languages spoken at home in the U.S. are Chinese and French. Of the 262,375,152 people counted on the 2000 Census, 2,022,143 spoke Chinese, and 1,643,838 spoke French. In 2000, what was the probability that a randomly selected American spoke Chinese or French at home?

About 1.4%

**Discussion Question:** Most people who want English established as the official language say that they are not xenophobic; they just want to preserve America's national culture. Specifying a national language will give Americans more incentive to speak fluent English. How can we be a cohesive nation, they ask, if we can't talk to our neighbors? However, learning a new language is difficult, and takes time. Have you ever been in a place where people used a language you couldn't understand? Did it constrain your behavior? Did it prevent you from doing things? Why or why not?
Ms. Kahn and her students are discussing the fact that the United States does not specify an official language.

“The official language of a country should be the language that most people speak,” says Ricky. “And most people in the United States speak English, so it should be the official language.”

“That's true,” says Sasha, “but I have many friends that speak another language at home with their parents because their parents speak little to no English. It feels like xenophobia to exclude them.”

“But that is another reason to establish English as the official language. Anyone living in this country should be able to talk to others in the language that everyone else speaks. That would make us a more cohesive nation,” Ricky argued.

“Those are both good points,” says Ms. Kahn. “The U.S. Census is a great resource that collects data on the languages that people speak, and how well they speak them.”

Ms. Kahn located information from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2007 American Community Survey and projected it on the screen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total people</th>
<th>English-speaking ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (5 years and older)</td>
<td>280,950,438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Spoke only English at home</td>
<td>223,505,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Spoke a language other than English at home</td>
<td>55,444,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Spanish or Spanish Creole</td>
<td>34,547,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Other Indo-European languages</td>
<td>10,320,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Asian and Pacific Island languages</td>
<td>8,316,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Other languages</td>
<td>2,260,252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What percentage of the population spoke a language other than English at home?

19.7%

Of the people that spoke a language other than English at home, what was the percentage of people that spoke English “Very well” or “Well”?

75.6%

If English were made the official language of the United States, should Spanish be considered as a second official language? Decide whether the data above would support your opinion.
DEBATE THE ISSUE

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

A

☐ English should be the official language of the United States.

OR

☐ The United States should not have an official language.

OR

CREATE YOUR OWN

☐ ______________________

☐ ______________________

☐ ______________________

☐ ______________________

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

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Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:

“Can you show me evidence in the text that...”

“I believe that...”

“You make a good point, but have you considered...”

“I agree with you, but...”
TAKE A STAND

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

specify | establish | cohesive | constrain | xenophobia

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Kendra started at a new school in the seventh grade. During her first week, a group of girls started teasing her. Then more kids joined in. Now she gets called names every day. People push her in the hallways. They steal her backpack and throw it in the trash. Kendra wants help, but she is embarrassed to tell her parents or her teachers. She feels like everything is her fault.

Bullying is a big problem in schools today. Both boys and girls can be bullies or victims. Punching, teasing, and spreading rumors all constitute bullying. About half of all kids say they have been bullied at some point during their time in school. Many kids who are bullied have low self-esteem. Some try to avoid school. Some even think about killing themselves.

It is important for schools to promote equity among all students. No one should be treated like they are less than anyone else. Therefore, many people believe that schools should pass rules to legislate an end to bullying.

However, all schools have rules against bullying and these generally do not resolve the problem. Perhaps peer intervention constitutes the only resolution to bullying. Should kids step up when they see bullying incidents? Some researchers state that the bystanders who look on and do nothing are as guilty as the bullies.

Many bystanders are afraid to intervene, fearing they themselves will be targeted by the bullies. Furthermore, many kids just don’t know what to do. They say it is easier to walk away. So rather than amending the rules about bullying, maybe schools should teach kids what to do when they see a bullying incident.

Is it fair to blame bystanders for not intervening to resolve the bullying incident? Should kids put themselves in danger to protect their classmates?

Questions for Classroom Discussion:
- Do you think your school promotes equity between students?
- What kind of behavior constitutes bullying?
- How could your school amend its rules to keep bullying from happening?
- How can parents and teachers help victims of bullying resolve the problem?
- Can a school legislate equity between students? Or do students themselves need to resolve the problem?
USE THE FOCUS WORDS  * and alternate parts of speech

**amend** *(verb)* to change; to add to

- **Sample Sentence:** Many schools have chosen to amend their rules to make it clear that bullying will not be tolerated.
- **Turn and Talk:** What rules would you amend at your school to make it safer for all students?

**equity** *(noun)* equality; equal status

- **Sample Sentence:** Anna wants to promote equity among all her friends.
- **Turn and Talk:** Is there more equity among students in elementary or middle school? Explain.

**constitute** *(verb)* to form; to create

- **Sample Sentence:** Punching, teasing, and spreading rumors all constitute bullying.
- **Turn and Talk:** What constitutes cyberbullying?

**resolve** *(verb)* to solve a problem

- **Sample Sentence:** Sammy’s mother always let him and his brothers resolve their problems themselves.
- **Turn and Talk:** At what point should adults become involved in resolving conflicts between young people?

* **resolve** *(noun)* determination to do something; commitment

- **Sample Sentence:** Nothing could get in the way of Xin’s resolve to run for class president.
- **Turn and Talk:** What are some obstacles that might weaken a person’s resolve to do well in school?

**legislate** *(verb)* to create or control by making laws or rules

- **Sample Sentence:** Many people believe that schools should pass rules to legislate an end to bullying.
- **Turn and Talk:** Do you think it’s possible for a school to legislate good behavior? Explain.
Amend | equity | constitute | resolve | legislate

DO THE MATH

Some bullying experts say that to stop bullies, we must amend the way we think about bullying. Bullying affects everyone. School communities should be based on equity and respect. How can this be true if some students torment others? Legislating anti-bullying rules is only a start. One expert named Dan Olweus says that to stop bullies, entire school communities must resolve to end bullying. He says that onlookers who watch victims get bullied constitute part of the problem.

Option 1: Last week at Victory Middle School, there were 11 bullying incidents in 11 different classrooms. Say that for each incident, there are at least 5 onlookers. Which of the following is true?

A. There were a minimum of 55 onlookers.
B. There were at least 35 onlookers.
C. There were a minimum of 20 onlookers.
D. There were a maximum of 50 onlookers.

Option 2: The National Center for Education Statistics reported that in 2011, 28% of students aged 12–18 reported being bullied in the past year. If this is still true today, and three students are chosen at random, what are the chances that at least one of them has been bullied in the past year?

63%. The chance that none of the three students were bullied is \(0.72 \times 0.72 \times 0.72 = 37\%\). Therefore, the chances of at least one being bullied is \(100\% - 37\% = 63\%\).

Discussion Question: When bullying makes the news, people react angrily. Principals resolve to establish equity among students. Teachers amend classroom rules. Government bodies debate anti-bullying legislation. But bullying is not a problem that flares up occasionally. Statistics show that bullying is widespread. In 2011, 28% of students in the U.S. aged 12–18 reported being bullied at school in the past year. For 18%, the bullying consisted of teasing. For other students, the bullying involved tripping, shoving, spitting, or other cruel behavior.

Do these statistics sound right to you? If 28% of students are bullied, then what percent of a school community is likely to be involved in bullying, either as bullies, victims, or onlookers? Fifty percent? Seventy percent? One hundred percent? Explain your estimate.
In 2010, President Obama made a speech about bullying to support the “It Gets Better” project, which was founded to bring attention to bullying, and to young people who had committed suicide because they were gay or were thought to be gay. In his speech, the President said:

“We’ve got to dispel the myth that bullying is just a normal rite of passage – that it’s some inevitable part of growing up. It’s not. We have an obligation to ensure that our schools are safe for all of our kids.”

Although parents, teachers, and especially young people agree with the President, bullying is still a difficult issue to resolve. Most teens know what constitutes bullying, but they still engage in it or feel powerless to stop it. Some people believe laws should be amended to make bullying a crime. Others are concerned that harsh legislation just creates more rules instead of teaching teens how to treat each other respectfully. They worry about equitable treatment for children who have been bullied as well as appropriate consequences for children who have bullied.

The students in Mr. Seemy’s class want to find out how common bullying is at Franklin Middle School. They have identified four types of bullying: verbal, physical, social, and cyberbullying. Mark how often you notice the different types of bullying in your school: 1 = Never; 2 = Rarely; 3 = About once per week; 4 = A few times per week; 5 = Once or more per day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of bullying</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Approximately how often do you see this type of bullying in your school?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Insulting, name calling, making derogatory remarks, or teasing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Pushing, shoving, tripping, spitting, or hitting. May also include stealing or hiding belongings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Excluding or isolating from play, activities, or events.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber</td>
<td>Sending hurtful texts or emails, posting embarrassing pictures online, or starting rumors on social networking sites. May also include creating fake websites or profiles.</td>
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</table>

Average your class’ answers to find out what they think.

According to the data you collected, what type of bullying is most common at your school? Least common?

What other types of questions could you ask to find out about bullying at your school? What else would you like to know?

Answers will vary.
ARE KIDS RESPONSIBLE FOR STEPPING IN TO PREVENT BULLYING?

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

A  The best way to stop bullying is for onlookers to get involved.

OR

B  Onlookers have no responsibility to stop bullying.

OR

CREATE YOUR OWN

Jot down a few notes on how to support your position during a discussion or debate.

Can you show me evidence in the text that...

You make a good point, but have you considered...

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these:
TAKE A STAND

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

amend | equity | constitute | resolve | legislate
## Word Generation | Series 2 | Part A

### FOCUS WORDS

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