

# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

**GRADE:** Eighth

**TOPIC:** Are High School Sports Beneficial or Harmful to Students?

**NAME OF ASSESSMENT:** Fall Informational Reading and Argument Writing Performance Task  
*Growth Model (Same prompt will be used for Spring Writing Performance Task)*

**STANDARDS ASSESSED:**

- Students will cite several pieces of textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RI.8.1)
- By the end of the year, students will read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently. (RI.8.10)
- Students will write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.8.1)

**Explanation of Standards Alignment:**

**RI.8.1.** Students will cite several pieces of textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Students will respond to text-dependent questions that prompt them to analyze explicit and implicit evidence from grade-level text.
- In their argument essays, students will call on their research, analyzing the claims from source articles, and citing the textual evidence from those sources that most strongly support the claim of the sources author as well as their own arguments.

**RI.8.10:** By the end of the year, students will read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently.

- Students will read and respond to grade-level text, demonstrating comprehension.

**W.8.1:** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence

- Students will write a research-based argument essay.

**Depth of Knowledge Level of task:** Levels 2-3

**Duration of administration:** Two to three class periods

**Materials needed:**

- Video- “What Are Two Advantages and Two Disadvantages of Children’s Participation in Sports?”  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kkhmn7n0Zzg>)
- Text: “Advantages and Disadvantages of Sports at Schools”
- Text: “How to make your kid hate sports without really trying”
- Student booklet for responses



## Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

### Overview of Assessment-

**\*\*Note: Suggested teacher prompts follow-please alter and make note of alterations based on your own conversational style and the ways in which you've talked about reading nonfiction and argument writing in your own classroom. The tasks below could be administered in many different ways (scaffolding and differentiating as needed.) \*\***

### ***TEACHER SCRIPT:***

#### **Possible Introduction to Assessment:**

Take a few minutes to introduce the whole of the assessment to the students. It might sound something like:

“You’re going to have a chance to show off what you know about doing quick, on-the-run, intensive research, and composing an argument essay. Over the next couple of periods, you’ll encounter a few texts that will provide you with information and claims about high school sports-are they harmful or beneficial to students? It will be up to you to really analyze the information and ideas, so that you can state your own claim and justify it, using researched evidence.

For each text, you’ll respond to questions that ask you to identify and explain key details in the text that support the central ideas. Then you’ll have some time to look over your research. Next, you will imagine that our Warren Consolidated Schools is going to make a final decision about continuing to fund sports programs in schools. You have a chance to write a letter that will be presented to the head of the school board. Your letter should state a claim or thesis by taking a clear side, backing it up with research and refuting the other side. Your job is to argue whether high school sports are harmful or beneficial to kids. Letters are really just a form of essay, so use what you know about essay writing to structure your letter. Be sure to back up your claim with reasons and evidence, supporting facts and details from multiple sources you studied.

Part of what makes a convincing argument is the ability to acknowledge the opposing claim and reasons, and refute those. So no matter which side you end up taking, be alert during your research for evidence that could be used for either side of the argument.

This period is part one of this research project. You’ll have a chance to watch a video and read two texts. You will have the opportunity write to explain key details that help support the different points of view on this topic. At a later time, you’ll write your letter, or essay. You’ll have a chance then to look over your notes and any of the texts again.

### **Introduction and Tasks 1-2:**

**Introduction:** Video text: watching and listening to gather information for essays

“What Are Two Advantages and Two Disadvantages of Children’s Participation in Sports?”  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kkhmn7n0Zzg>)

“You’re about to watch a news video about athletes and the parent pressure they face. As you watch, think about the important ideas and information in the video. After I show the video a second time, write a central idea that this video teaches us, and fill in the outline with specific examples or evidence that the video gives to support that idea.”



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### **Task 1–Response to “Advantages and Disadvantages of Sports at Schools” By Craig Berman**

“Now you’ll have a chance to study an article about the advantages and disadvantages of school sports. After reading this, you will need to complete the chart, making sure to add evidence from the text.

### **Task 2– Response to “How to make your kid hate sports without really trying”**

“Now you’ll have a chance to read another article regarding high school sports. Read to find the strongest evidence to support that sports have disadvantages, as well as advantages. Write to explain this using specific details and examples.

### **Task 3-Analyzing Authors’ Claims**

“Use your knowledge gained from the articles and video to complete this chart. Check the appropriate boxes to identify which sources support which claim.

### **Task 4: Argument Essay: “Are high school sports harmful or beneficial to students?”**

“Students, imagine that the school board is having a meeting to decide whether or not to keep funding school sports. You have an opportunity to present an essay, in the form of a letter, to the decision makers. What would you say? What claim would you make about school sports being beneficial or harmful to kids? What research will you call on to back up your claim?

You can address your letter to the president of the Warren Consolidated Schools School Board. Letters are, after all, really essays. So remember everything you’ve learned about writing essays for this task. Your letter should state a claim, or thesis, by taking a clear side, back up this claim with research, and refute the other side. Be sure to cite important references. You will want to acknowledge the other side of the argument.

You’ll want to take a few minutes to plan how your draft will go, and remember what you know about writing convincing arguments, including...”

Are High School Sports Harmful or Beneficial to Students?	
	<b>Checklist for Writing an 8<sup>th</sup> grade Argument Essay</b>
	Write an introduction
	Clearly state claim(s)
	Provide reasons and evidence from sources
	Organize your writing
	Acknowledge counterclaim
	Write rebuttal for counterclaim
	Use transition words
	Write a conclusion and call to action

**\*\*\*This prompt should be used to guide instruction. The same prompt will be used in the spring.**



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## **Student Packet-Introduction**

**Response to video text** “What Are Two Advantages and Two Disadvantages of Children’s Participation in Sports?”

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kkhmn7n0Zzg>)

**What are the central ideas in this video about young athletes?**

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**What examples, quotes, or other specific evidence** does the video give to support this?

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# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## **Student Copy-Task 1**

### Advantages and Disadvantages of Sports at Schools

By Craig Berman

[http://www.ck12.org/info\\_8587468\\_advantages-disadvantages-sports-schools.html](http://www.ck12.org/info_8587468_advantages-disadvantages-sports-schools.html)

Participation in sports offers students a number of benefits. Sports helps students stay in shape, learn to work as a team, and enhance their attractiveness as college applicants. But when athletes take them so seriously that they neglect their academics, or focus solely on winning, school sports can have negatives as well.

### **College Prep**

Higher-education institutions want more from prospective students than academics -- they look for well-rounded students to fill up their classes. Having sports in schools gives students an opportunity to enhance their college applications. They also can serve as a motivation for talented athletes to work hard in the classroom. Because players need to meet established standards to be admitted to college, and to be eligible to participate in sports when there, getting acceptable grades takes on more importance than it might otherwise.

### **Health and Opportunity**

As the issue of childhood obesity takes on more prominence, sports provide a way for kids to get the exercise needed to stay in shape. It offers students the opportunity to build confidence and leadership skills, and can encourage students to spend time with other students they don't otherwise associate with. School sports can also be more affordable than those run by outside organizations, giving more students an opportunity to participate.

### **Inappropriate Focus**

School sports can become a negative when they detract from the academic experience that schools are charged with providing. Extracurriculars, including sports, take time that otherwise might be devoted to studies. Schools need to be careful to monitor the amount of practice time, both official and "voluntary," that participants are expected to devote to their sport. They also need to be sure that athletic success isn't emphasized more than academic achievement.

### **Competition and Risk**

Along with the benefits of participating on a sports team can come pressure to win. Because word of a poor performance for a school team can spread around the classrooms quickly, the stakes may seem higher for athletes, and the possibility of failure more troubling. This pressure can have negative impacts both on and off the field. In addition, youth sports carry an injury risk, so schools can find themselves contributing to the ill health of their students. Schools with coaches that aren't trained in the proper techniques or who espouse unsafe practices can increase that risk -- for example, a soccer coach who urges his players to head the ball without properly showing his team how to do so increases the risk of concussions for his players.



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## Student Copy

### Task 1: Response to “Advantages and Disadvantages of Sports at Schools”

This article presents and explains many reasons why sports can be helpful and harmful for students. Complete the outline below with reasons that the article gives, using at least one quote from the article to explain or support that reason.

What do they experts say about students' participation in sports?	
Advantages for Youth	Disadvantages for Youth
Reason-	Reason-
Evidence-	Evidence-
Reason-	Reason-
Evidence-	Evidence-



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## Student Copy-Task 2

### How to make your kid hate sports without really trying

Adapted from an article by [Kelly Wallace](#), CNN  
Updated 9:42 AM ET, Thu January 21, 2016

(CNN) Christine Carugati, 18, of Langhorne, Pennsylvania started getting recruited to play college lacrosse the summer after the ninth grade. You heard that right -- when she just finished her freshman year in high school.

"What ninth grader knows what they want and what ninth grader, never mind an adult, isn't easily swayed, thinking somebody wants me. It's very intoxicating for any age but for a child especially, so my counsel was to keep all your options open," said her mom, Mary Carugati, during an interview.

The early recruiting by colleges combined with parents' unwillingness to stand up and say no to such practices is just one example of how youth sports has changed and for the worse, coaches, players, authors and parents I interviewed for this story say. And, there are plenty of stats to back up how concerning the problem should be for parents who want the best for their kids.



#### **Kids are leaving sports**

Seventy percent of children leave organized sports by the age 13, according to research by the National Alliance for Sports. Let's put it this way: If your daughter or son plays on a soccer team, seven out of 10 of the members of that team won't be playing soccer or any organized sport whatsoever by the time they enter their teenage years.

"Kids are telling us this is not for me. It might be for you, but it's really not meeting our needs," said Mark Hyman, author of three highly-regarded books on kids and sports, including "Until It Hurts: America's Obsession with Youth Sports and How It Harms Our Kids."

We shouldn't be satisfied and should be very worried about how many kids are dropping out, said John O'Sullivan, a former college and professional soccer player, who has coached on every level from children to college, and who now devotes his energy to the Changing the Game Project. His organization's goal is to return youth sports to the children and to "put the 'play' back in 'play ball.' "

"As I say to all the parents at my parents talks, 'This isn't a sports issue. This is a wellness issue,'" said O'Sullivan, citing how this generation is the first generation to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents and it's due to inactivity. "We know all the benefits of activity from better grades to less drugs, less pregnancy, more likely to go to college and on and on and on and yet at the same age when most kids are walking away from sports is that critical age where if they're active then, they're likely to be active for life."



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### **Why kids are walking away**

One of the main reasons kids are walking away is because of injuries due to overuse, many of the people I interviewed for this story say. Every year, more than 3.5 million children under the age 14 need treatment for sports injuries, with nearly half of all sports injuries for middle and high school students caused by overuse, according to research.

This is something Hyman knows all too well, he says. His son was a star pitcher at age 10 (he was the coach), and Hyman often thinks about the "pretty profound mistake" he made getting swept up in his son's success.

By the time his son was 16, he had a ruptured ligament in his elbow, which spelled the beginning of the end for him, said Hyman. "Was I too invested in his youth baseball career? Yes. Should he have pitched less? Yes. Should I have said no to some opportunities he had to play on teams during times of the year when he should have been resting? Yes," he said.

"So, I guess I'm an example of a parent who I think made some mistakes and probably could help parents understand that they shouldn't be in a hurry, that if their kids really have talent and passion that they are going to be OK whether they're playing on six travel teams or just the rec league."

### **Coaches and parents need to 'redefine' success**

More coaches, who are more focused on keeping the game fun and watching players develop skills that help them for life as opposed to winning at all costs, would no doubt help.

But, it isn't easy to ignore those pressures to win, says Hyman. He remembers how all the parents were pleased when the team was winning and how those victories reflected positively on him as coach. "Looking back, none of those things really matter when your kid is 8- or 9- or 10 years old. They should be the least important things," he said.

Coaches should be guided by long-term, not short-term, success, said O'Sullivan.



Parents are too often "looking at the only kind of success that ends with a scholarship and there are other ways to have success."

Not to mention that the chances of your child playing college sports is very small. For example, only about 3% of women and men athletes who play high school basketball go on to play in college, according to an analysis by College Sports Scholarships.

Letting our kids take the lead in conversation -- and when it comes to what sports they play and how often -- is a crucial way to keep sports fun and interesting for our children, these experts say.

Parents should keep their eye on the bigger picture, said Carugati. "The goal is a happy, healthy, well-adjusted, self-supporting adult with a career they are passionate about," she wrote in an email. "When it's no longer fun, it's time to find something else."



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## Student Copy-Task 2

### Response to “How to make your kid hate sports without really trying”

This article presents and explains many reasons why kids should or should not play sports. Complete the outline below with reasons that the article gives, using at least one quote from the article to explain or support that reason.

What do they experts say about students’ participation in sports?	
 Positive Effects on Youth	 Problems that May Occur
Reason-	Reason-
Evidence-	Evidence-
Reason-	Reason-
Evidence-	Evidence-
Reason-	Reason-
Evidence-	Evidence-



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## **Task 3-Argument Essay**

Your task is to take a position on whether high school sports are beneficial or harmful for students. Write an argument essay in which you clearly state your position, and then support that claim with evidence from the texts you've read and watched.

<b>Are High School Sports Beneficial or Harmful to Students?</b>	
	<b>Checklist for Writing an 8<sup>th</sup> grade Argument Essay</b>
	Write an introduction
	Clearly state claim(s)
	Provide reasons and evidence from sources
	Organize your writing
	Acknowledge counterclaim
	Write rebuttal for counterclaim
	Use transition words
	Write a conclusion and call to action



# Argument Writing Graphic Organizer-8<sup>th</sup>

## Topic: Are High School Sports Beneficial or Harmful to Students?

Introduce your claim(s), hooking your reader and establishing a formal style.

**Claim**

Support your claim(s) with more than one reason, introducing them in a logical order. Then, give more than one piece of evidence to support each reason. Remember, relevant, accurate data and evidence should demonstrate an understanding of the topic and come from credible sources.

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Counter-claim(s)</b>	<b>Rebuttal</b>	

Provide a **concluding** statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.







**SBAC 4 point Argument Writing Rubric Grades 6-12**

Score	Statement of Purpose/Focus and organization		Development: Language and Elaboration of Evidence		Conventions
	Statement of Purpose/ focus	Organization	Elaboration of Evidence	Language and Vocabulary	
<b>4</b>	<p>The response is fully sustained and consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-claim is clearly stated, focused and strongly maintained</li> <li>-alternate or opposing claims are clearly addressed*</li> <li>-claim is introduced and communicated clearly within the context</li> </ul>	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-effective, consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies</li> <li>-logical progression of ideas from beginning to end</li> <li>-effective introduction and conclusion for audience and purpose</li> <li>-strong connections among ideas, with some syntactic variety</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the writer's claim that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details. The response achieves substantial depth that is specific and relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-use of evidence from source is smoothly integrated, comprehensive, relevant and concrete</li> <li>-effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques</li> </ul>	<p>The response clearly and effectively expresses ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-use of academic and domain-specific vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates a strong command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-few, if any, errors are present in usage and sentence formation</li> <li>-effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p>The response is adequately sustained and generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-claim is clear and for the most part maintained, though some loosely related material may be present</li> <li>-context provided for the claim is adequate</li> </ul>	<p>The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety</li> <li>-adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end</li> <li>-adequate introduction and conclusion</li> <li>-adequate, if slightly inconsistent, connection among ideas</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides adequate support/evidence for writer's claim that includes the use of sources, facts, and details. The response achieves some depth and specificity but is predominately general:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-some evidence from sources is integrated, though citations may be general or imprecise</li> <li>-adequate use of some elaborative techniques</li> </ul>	<p>The response adequately expresses ideas employing a mix of precise with more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-use of domain-specific vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-some errors in usage and sentence formation may be present, but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed</li> <li>-adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p>The response is somewhat sustained and may have a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-may be clearly focused on the claim but is insufficiently sustained</li> <li>-claim on the issue may be somewhat unclear and unfocused</li> </ul>	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-inconsistent use of basic transitional strategies with little variety</li> <li>-uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end</li> <li>-introduction and conclusion, if present, are weak</li> <li>-weak connection among ideas</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the writer's claim that includes partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and details, and achieves little depth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-evidence from sources is weakly integrated, and citations, if present, are uneven</li> <li>-weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques</li> </ul>	<p>The response expresses ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-use of domain-specific vocabulary may at times be inappropriate for the audience and purpose</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-frequent errors in usage may obscure meaning</li> <li>-inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p>The response may be related to the purpose but may offer little relevant detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-may be very brief</li> <li>-may have a major drift</li> <li>-claim may be confusing or ambiguous</li> </ul>	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-few or no transitional strategies are evident</li> <li>-frequent extraneous ideas may intrude</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides minimal support/evidence for writer's claim that includes little or no use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-use of evidence from sources is minimal, absent, in error, or irrelevant</li> </ul>	<p>The response expression of ideas is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-uses limited language or domain-specific vocabulary</li> <li>-may have little sense of audience and purpose</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-errors are frequent and severe and meaning is often obscure</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	A response gets no credit if it provides no evidence of the ability to(fill in with key language from the intended target).				

# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## Student A

Scaled Score—Level 4 (Above Proficient) Writing, Level 4 (Above Proficient) Reading

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Sample

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

For many young people in America, sports are their dreams and hopes. And this is not without reason. Research has shown that children who participate in athletics are happier and more goal-driven than their non-athletic peers. High school athletics are still a highly beneficial activity for young people everywhere, and this is why it is important for sports programs across the country to stay right where they are. Sports programs should be kept in high schools because they have a positive effect on academics, they improve determination, and they bring people together.

According to the article *Are High School Sports Good for Kids?*, over 5 million young people in America play high school sports each year. In Michigan alone almost 300,000 play every year. And the potential education benefits skyrocket with more adolescents participating. In Jesuit High School, a coach states that when kids play sports, it has a positive effect on grades. In fact, when the season ends, grades actually tend to drop as kids are less excited and motivated for their life in and out of school. Not to mention the many sports scholarships colleges offer. Usually, altogether, doing sports has a positive effect on teenagers across the nation.

While many claim that sports are negative for young people, with many injuries and wrong lessons, I find that sports are actually very rewarding for young people. Jeffrey Perkel in his article, "High School, College Football Comes With Risk," describes how football can be particularly dangerous. But he doesn't describe the many sports that are much less dangerous, or the dangers of obesity, inactivity, and loneliness. Some say that children are being taught that winning is the only thing that matters, and it is true that in recent society there has been an emphasis on winning. It is also said kids who are enveloped in pressure stemming from sports are more likely to "burn out sooner," but a study in Michigan reveals that kids who play sports actually have more aspirations and are more likely to set and achieve goals. This highlights how though impressionable kids may be being taught questionable lessons, the journey they take to winning is much more rewarding.

The National Federation of State High School Activity Associations promotes "participation and sportsmanship" which helps to "develop good citizens through interscholastic activities which provide equitable opportunities, positive recognition, and learning experiences to students while maximizing the achievement of educational goals." This quote illustrates how sports and teamwork in young people are a national effort, a successful one too.

As can be seen, I have revealed the positive benefits of athletics to young people across the country. Confidence, hard work, and close friendships are only a

**Comment [KF1]: Structure—Introduction, Level 4:** Orients the reader with a compelling introduction to the topic and establishes the claim (W.8.1a).

**Makes a Claim, Level 4:** Clearly states a nuanced claim that takes a position on the topic (W.8.1a).

**Comment [KF2]: Structure—Organizes Information, Level 4:** Organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by significant facts and details. Reasons are presented in a logical order that supports the claim (W.8.1a).

**Informational Reading—Citation, Level 4:** The reader accurately cites textual evidence to clearly support his/her analysis of the text (RI.8.1).

**Comment [KF3]: Addresses an Alternate View, Level 4:** Shows some attempt to give respectful attention to, or wrestle with, an opposing view, acknowledging the other view's validity while still arguing that the writer's own view is stronger (W.8.1a).

**Focuses on the Claim, Level 4:** Maintains a focus that both supports the claims and establishes a clear relational focus between the claim, counterclaims, reasons and evidence (W.8.1a).

**Elaboration—Provide Evidence, Level 4:** Includes accurate and significant information from relevant sources to support all claims. Analyzes some of these sources for validity and bias (W.8.1b).

**Craft—Transition, Level 4:** Consistently and effectively uses transitional phrases to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence. In this part, uses "While many claim... I find..." "Some say... It is also said that... but..." and "This highlights..." (W.8.1c).

**Comment [KF4]: Elaboration—Use of Quotations, Level 4:** Includes direct quotations that enhance and support the author's claim (W.8.1b).



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few lessons sports teaches to young people. So keep the sports programs, and keep the wonderful cycle going.

Thank you.

curva

## Summary:

This student is a level 4 (Above Proficient) writer, who is able to write a clearly organized letter in support of a nuanced claim. He/she orients the reader with a compelling introduction and establishes his/her claim, and then supports the claim with clear reasons, each of which is supported by clearly cited quotes and facts pulled from his/her research. The writer raises and addresses counterclaims, and uses transitional phrases to navigate smoothly between claims, counterclaims, and supporting evidence. The tone is consistent and formal throughout the letter, and he/she concludes with a paragraph that circles back to her original claim, though it does not extend it.

## Comment [KF5]:

**Craft—Tone/Style, Level 4:** Establishes and maintains a style appropriate to the genre of essays and letters, while adhering to a tone that is calibrated to the intended audience (W.8.1d).

**Structure—Conclusion, Level 3:** Provides a concluding statement or section that circles back to, extends, or reflects on the original claim (W.8.1e).



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## Student B

Scaled Score—Level 3 (Proficient) Writing, 1

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Sample

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

Every Spring, kids line up around my school gym, anxious, excited looks across their faces. Everyone knows from their expressions what this day is—Track and Field tryouts. As Spring turns into summer, the magic and excitement of the kids and team never dies. The mood at Clinton is always brighter during sports seasons.

Although school sports can cause injuries and anxiety, they are extremely desirable for young people across America. I strongly believe in keeping school sports at my school, because it benefits moods, grades, and health in every way.

Reporter Katie Couric states that school sports help children gain confidence, and make new friends. Studies have shown that by simply hitting a golfball, tossing a ball in a hoop, and running bases can help you connect more with people. Couric says, "‘Get in the game’ Which is, after all, an important lesson for people at all ages."

Playing school sports also has a positive effect on grades. While many people wonder 'how much is too much?' balancing sports and grades helps kids focus. A high school basketball coach says, "When the season ends, grades drop." He feels like kids have no motivation when they are not playing sports.

So Mayor Bloomberg, please understand that without school sports, many children would feel lost, because they are not just losing and activity they love, but also the many benefits that come with it.

**Comment [LM1]:**  
**Structure—Introduction, Level 4:** The writer orients the reader with a compelling introduction to the topic (W.8.1a).

**Comment [LM2]:**  
**Craft—Transitions, Level 3:** The writer uses transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence (W.8.1c).

**Comment [LM3]:**  
**Makes a Claim, Level 4:** The writer clearly states a nuanced claim that takes a position on her topic (W.8.1a).

**Comment [LM4]:**  
**Structure—Organizes Information, Level 3:** The writer organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by facts and details (W.8.1a).

**Comment [LM5]:**  
**Elaboration, Level 3:** The writer includes direct quotations that support his/her claim (W.8.1b).

**Comment [LM6]:**  
**Addresses an Alternate View, Level 3:** The writer acknowledges that there's an alternate view and provides some backing for that view, but doesn't look at it analytically (W.8.1a).

**Craft—Tone/Style, Level 3:** The writer establishes and maintains an essayist's tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters (W.8.1d).

**Focuses on the Claim, Level 4:** Maintains a focus that both supports the claims(s) and skillfully balances between claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence. (W.8.1a).

**Comment [LM7]:**  
**Elaboration—Provides Evidence, Level 3:** The writer includes accurate information from relevant sources to support most or all claim(s) (W.8.1b).

**Comment [LM8]:**  
**Informational Reading—Citation, Level 4:** The reader accurately cites textual evidence to clearly support his/her analysis of the text (RI.8.1).

**Comment [LM9]:**  
**Structure—Conclusion, Level 3:** Provides a concluding statement or section that circles back to the original claim (W.8.1e).



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## Summary:

This student is a level 3 (Proficient) writer, who is able to write a clearly organized letter in support of a nuanced claim. He/she orients the reader with a compelling introduction and establishes his/her claim, and then supports the claim with clear reasons, each of which is supported by clearly cited quotes and facts pulled from his/her research. The tone is consistent throughout the letter, and he/she concludes with a paragraph that circles back to her original claim, though it does not extend it.

### Student C

Scaled Score—Level 2 (Intermediate) Writing,

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Sample

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

I believe sports are sports, you will get stressed and possibly injured. Young adults have the power to say their so stressed that they can't play. Young adults have the power to persuew their dreams, if its sports; then they should know the harms that come with it.

We have stressed the idea of doing sports will get an amazing schollership. Stressing the fact of our economy today, a lot of parents will stress their teens of doing what-ever it takes to get that schollership.

Why not make other good schollerships for other extra curricular activities? So we don't stress sports so much, till another injury?

For example it says in the text "3% of basketball players get scollerships." While in another text says "basketball is one of the most injuries." Why are they so determined to a point of hurting themselves?

Parents, popularity, even how it makes them feel. As it says in a video that "10% of young adults are embaresd how their parents act at games." That has a huge effect. Furthermore it also is stated it makes young adults to get out and just play.

Including the new study stated from one video in particular states, "New study shows students gain confidence and friendships, and the young adults that don't partispate normally aren't as social and constantly alone."

Taking away sports is to drasic, some students use it to unwind. While some say its stressful, I get the feeling those young adults who say that are oviously being pressured.

Sports arn't to be blamed for stress, its the parent that forced them to do it, the self esteem of the young adult, and not enough hours to balence school, sports, and just time to relax.

As Hank Hill stated, "Good teachers benefit all students. Varsity sports only benefit some."

To me that says, having good coaches and teachers to support and care for the team will let their students thrive. While others who were forced to do sports activities are not benefited as much.

**Comment [LM1]:**  
Makes a Claim, Level 2: The writer's claim appears to be jumbled and meandering. (W.8.1a).

**Comment [LM2]:**  
Structure—Introduction, Level 2: The writer gestures toward constructing an introduction that both orients the reader with the topic and makes a claim(s). (W.8.1a).

**Comment [KF3]: Craft—Transitions:** The writer lacks transitional phrases or includes only lowest-level transitional phrases, such as for example or also. (W.8.1c).

**Comment [LM4]:**  
Addresses an Alternate View, Level 2: The writer mentions an alternate view but then immediately reject it without explaining why. (W.8.1a).

**Comment [LM5]:**  
Elaboration—Use of Quotations, Level 2: The writer included at least one direct quotation, although the quotations included did not clearly enhance or support the author's claim(s). (W.8.1b).

**Informational Reading—Citation, Level 2:** The reader cites evidence that is somewhat connected to his/her analysis and paraphrases from the text to support a theory about the text. (RI.8.1).

**Comment [LM6]:**  
Structure—Organizes Information, Level 2: The writer organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, some of which are supported by facts and details. (W.8.1a).

**Comment [KF7]: Craft—Tone/Style, Level 2:** The writer attempts to establish and maintain an essayist's tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, but is inconsistent between informal and formal style. (W.8.1d).

**Comment [LM8]:**  
Elaboration—Provides Evidence, Level 2: The writer includes accurate information from relevant sources to support some claims. (W.8.1b).

**Comment [LM9]:**  
Focuses on the Claim, Level 2: The writer becomes unfocused in a couple parts of the piece. (W.8.1a).



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## Student C

Why not just make more scollerships and make it less stressful than forcing their children to do some thing they do not want to do? Like arts programs, they are disapering day by day. While some love the arts, they are getting shoved into sports. I belive there are people called born athleats, they will eat up sports because it is fun. There are such things as born artists, writers, mathematishions, even explorers! Why make young adullts be put into a categorie that they oviously don't want to be in?

All in all, if you don't stress scollerships on only sports and make schollerships for other acedemic and extra curricular activities, we would have... less stressed young adults, less injuries, less stress in homes, and more thriving students in schools.

I believe if we just do this one thing, it would make a huge difference in grades and emotional stress decline in schools across the U.S.

### Summary:

This student is a level 2 (Intermediate) writer. He or she is unable to write a clearly organized piece in order to prove a claim. Instead the writer attempts to draw from resources to raise many points about a particular topic. The piece is not focused, but there is an attempt to organize it in an essay fashion with reasons/evidence to support various claims.

**Comment [LM10]:**  
**Structure—Conclusion, Level 2:** The writer provides a concluding statement or section that attempts to circle back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim (W.8.1e).



# Eighth Grade Fall ELA Performance Task

## Student D

Scaled Score—Level 1 (Novice) Writing

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Sample

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

Imagine a boy waking up from a dream he just had about being a PRO basketball player and he follows it with the help of scholarships and his dream later comes true. my cousin named Juan Dominguez who is currently 18 years old is working towards making that dream come true. Of course, along with that keeping his grades up, which is great because his mind is always entertained and according to the news report, the more you play the better you hit the books!

Have you ever heard that saying "You look great, you feel great"? Well, it's true, and can equal to a happy child! Games and sports help build up confidence, however as do other activities such as acting so where are the scholarships for that and other art programs? Yes, one of the pros to sports is that you get rewarding friendships, but same with any other art program because really, it's all about teamwork!

As can be seen, there are a few legit and solid reasons to why following your dream is so important, and we sometimes need your help with the use of scholarships including athletics and artist.

#### Comment [LM1]:

**Structure—Introduction, Level 1:** Although an anecdote can be an effective way to start an essay, this introductory statement lacks a claim and therefore does not orient the reader to the piece (W.8.1a).

**Craft—Tone/Style, Level 1:** The writer creates an informal tone and style inappropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters (W.8.1d).

#### Comment [LM2]:

**Elaboration—Provides Evidence, Level 1:** The writer includes information that may provide support of the claim(s), but is not drawn from relevant sources (W.8.1b).

#### Comment [LM3]:

**Addresses an Alternate View, Level 2:** The writer seems to mention the alternate view but then immediately reject it without explaining why (W.8.1a).

**Elaboration—Use of Quotations, Level 1:** The writer includes general references to the texts as a whole, with no specific quotations (W.8.1b).

**Informational Reading-Citation, Level 1:** The reader refers to the text but not to any specific section; may discuss the topic with no reference to the text (RI.8.1).

#### Comment [LM4]:

**Focuses on the Claim, Level 1:** The writer attempts a focus that supports the claim(s), but drifts away from the primary focus multiple times throughout the piece (W.8.1a).

**Structure—Organizes Information, Level 1:** The writer organizes the essay roughly into reasons/evidence, few of which are supported by facts and details, and are presented in an order that does not feel particularly logical or cohesive (W.8.1a).

#### Comment [LM5]:

**Makes a Claim, Level 2:** The writer attempts to make a claim related to the topic, although it is jumbled and unclear (W.8.1a).

**Structure—Conclusion, Level 2:** The writer provides a concluding statement or section that attempts to circle back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim (W.8.1e).

**Craft—Transitions, Level 2:** includes the transitional phrases "As can be seen." This phrase is used to connect between paragraphs (W.8.1c).

### Summary:

This student is a level 1 (Novice) writer. He/she is unable to write a clearly organized piece in order to prove a claim. Instead the writer attempts to draw from personal resources as well as general statements from outside sources to raise key points about a particular topic. The piece is not focused, but there is an attempt to organize it in an essay fashion with reasons/evidence to support various claims.

