

YOUNG VOICES

Ideas That Matter

Ten young writers. Five big ideas.



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EDITOR'S NOTE

These pages preserve each student's ideas and voice while using light copy-editing for clear publication. Statistics and named sources in student writing should be independently checked before public use.

FEATURED WRITER / ASHLEY

Should Girls and Boys Play on the Same Team?



A balanced discussion of difference, fairness and gender equality in sport.

THE BIG IDEA

“Different experiences and ideas can help a team build better collaboration.”

OPENING

Do you play a sport? If you do, are there both girls and boys on your team? Today, I will be discussing whether girls and boys should be allowed to play on the same team. In my opinion, this question falls into two different groups: how everyone is unique or different, and the physical differences or capabilities everyone has. Fun fact: Did you know that about 40% of the world's population plays sports? 30% of 40 is mainly football, cricket, basketball and tennis.

[CONTINUE READING →](#)

Should Girls and Boys Play on the Same Team?

BY ASHLEY

First of all, let's talk about differences, also known as being unique. Since everyone is unique, having mixed genders can be an advantage in most scenarios. You might be wondering why and how mixed genders can be an advantage. The answer is that, according to sports leader Jackson Peares, some players might be faster at running, while others are better at strategy. Different experiences and ideas can also help the team build towards better collaboration. Mixed genders can also allow players to learn from each other. Imagine that you get kicked out of the team for being a girl. How would that feel? Feeling like the odd one out can lead to depression, which is bad for your mental health. That would not be gender equality.

However, on the other side, people believe that physical differences separate girls and boys. In some sports, players might have different levels of strength, speed and size, which prevents them from playing fairly. For example, in basketball, to shoot, you need to be able to jump high. Some players may not be able to do that, which makes gender very important. When a player is not able to do a certain skill, that can lead the team to losing or being disqualified. That is why some sports are described as girls or females only, or boys or males only.

- In conclusion, both sides are really strong. Physical differences can make a big difference, but in my opinion, I would say that girls and boys should be allowed to play sports together because of the fairness it gives to everyone. Think of it as one of those old-fashioned scales: if you put too much on one side, it leans towards the side that is heavier. That is not equal. It is called gender equality. When one gender is treated differently from another, it is a big problem around the world.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Excellent discussion structure with both viewpoints clearly presented. Continue refining sentence completeness and links between ideas.

FEATURED WRITER / BONNIE

Should Girls Be on the Same Sports Team as Boys?



A lively argument about teamwork, friendship and the strengths players bring to a team.

THE BIG IDEA

“Both genders can use different ways to win the game.”

OPENING

Have you ever thought that girls might do better in sports when there aren't any boys on their team? Or have you thought the opposite, that girls do better with boys?

CONTINUE READING →

Should Girls Be on the Same Sports Team as Boys?

BY BONNIE

Both are completely reasonable, but I believe that girls will do better with boys on their team. Girls usually have more flexibility than boys, but boys have more brute strength. Combined, I know that there will be a better result.

- My first point is that they will teach each other friendship and gender equality. Have you ever noticed that girls will most likely badmouth boys whenever they can? More time with both genders will force them to get along in team sports, such as netball. In netball, players rely on passing because, well, you can't run with the ball. Players will eventually get closer, which is a win-win situation. This is why I believe that teams will do better with both genders.

Another argument is that when your team is shooting, the shooter or scorer will need all the support they can get. Some feedback from each other will improve gameplay, so everyone gets some criticism. Also, boys are usually more competitive than girls, so having some girls on the team might make the game fairer for everyone. As girls tend to be more emotional, strategies to win the game relating to emotion may be of use.

- In conclusion, teams with both genders will have better results than teams that consist of only one gender. In between strength and emotion, there is logic. Both genders can use different ways to win the game, and so that is why I believe that girls should be on the same sports team as boys.

WRITER'S LINE

“Both genders can use different ways to win the game.”

TEACHER'S NOTE

Strong central ideas and an engaging voice. A discussion text will become more convincing when it presents evidence and develops both sides.

FEATURED WRITER / SEAN

Two Sides of Mixed-Gender Sport



Cooperation can create a strong team, but respect is essential when differences lead to discrimination.

THE BIG IDEA

“The boys will help the girls and the girls will help the boys to win the game.”

OPENING

Have you ever wondered if girls and boys should be on the same sports teams? In my opinion, I think that in some sports girls and boys should be allowed on the same team, while in other sports they shouldn't. Do you know why? The main ideas that support this view will be explained shortly, so pay extra attention to what will be said and imagine each situation.

[CONTINUE READING →](#)

Two Sides of Mixed-Gender Sport

BY SEAN

The first reason is the excellent outcome: boys and girls can work cooperatively and it can teach them how to get along properly with each other. For example, when girls and boys get along, the girls can help the boys and the boys can help the girls. The team can then win. Every team wants to win with a wide variety of points and movements. Don't you think this shows boys and girls cooperating in a competition, with both genders helping each other win? Therefore, boys and girls working together can cause an excellent outcome.

The second reason is a terrible outcome: boys and girls could experience discrimination that others don't like. For example, girls may be more gentle than boys and boys may be stronger than girls. The boys might say, 'Hurry up, girls,' which could cause discrimination. We need to make sure everyone gets along nicely with each gender, so everyone has a good time at school and in sports and fitness class. Can you imagine if discrimination against girls by boys happened? Everyone has to respect rules, show politeness and be empathetic to others. Therefore, this is a possible negative outcome of boys and girls being in the same sports group.

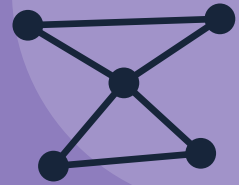
- In conclusion, boys and girls being in the same sports group might cause an excellent outcome and might also cause a terrible outcome. The good outcome is that the boys will help the girls and the girls will help the boys to win the game. The bad outcome is that differences might lead boys to say, 'Hurry up, girls,' and girls to say, 'Be more gentle, boys.' This is discrimination that no one likes. It might turn into a quarrel or become a messy event if it happens during sports games at school or in sports and fitness classes.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Both arguments are analysed and structured well, with effective rhetorical questions. Evidence in each body paragraph would make the discussion stronger.

FEATURED WRITER / CHUNYU

Should Students Use AI at School?



A persuasive warning about cheating, distraction and the risk of relying on technology instead of thinking.

THE BIG IDEA

“Letting students use AI during school hours is a terrible idea. Prevent this from happening now.”

OPENING

Many children use AI at school to cheat if AI is allowed at school. Students should not be allowed to use AI technology during school hours for educational purposes. Students can cheat on tests and schoolwork; they also become less willing to think for themselves. Students can also neglect their work and start asking AI inappropriate things. Because of these things, I believe that students should not use AI at school.

[CONTINUE READING →](#)

Should Students Use AI at School?

BY CHUNYU

Students can cheat, and instead of thinking for themselves, they ask AI. Expert Michael Smith says, 'In schools where children are allowed to use AI, half of the students use it to answer questions in schoolwork and tests, instead of using their own brilliant intelligence. It is so sad to watch these kids use AI to help them with even the easiest questions.' I know a child at a school where they were allowed to use AI. He used it on every single question and on every single test. He got everything correct and got 100% on every test, but nobody saw him study. Then the teacher found out that he was using AI, and he got into lots of trouble. Pupils can use AI to cheat, which can lead to lots of trouble if the teacher finds out.

- Students also become less willing to think for themselves and become lazier. When students just use AI to search up everything, they become less willing to think for themselves and therefore become lazy. Statistics show that 75-90% of children gradually become less willing to think for themselves when they use AI for everything. I once had a friend, and she was a very good student until she started to use AI. She then became lazy and unwilling to think for herself. Her grades started dropping until she was one of the worst students. This shows us that using AI can make your grades slide down and make you lazy and unwilling to think for yourself.

Students can also neglect their work and ask inappropriate things or things that have nothing to do with their work on AI.

Horizon-Oracle Lab did an experiment on 100 kids where they were given work to do and could use AI. Thirty of these children abandoned their work and started asking AI inappropriate things or things that had nothing to do with their work. This shows us that 30% of kids will ask AI inappropriate things or things that have nothing to do with their work. Students should not be allowed to use AI technology during school hours because they may ask AI things that have nothing to do with their work.

- Students should not be allowed to use AI technology during school hours unless they are sick during school hours and are at home. Students can cheat using AI, and therefore they will become lazier and less willing to think for themselves. They can also get sidetracked and start asking AI inappropriate things or things that have nothing to do with their work. Letting students use AI during school hours is a terrible idea. Prevent this from happening now.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Excellent persuasive structure and strong language. An attention-grabbing opening hook would make the introduction even more effective.

FEATURED WRITER / JOSEPH

Think First: AI in the Classroom



A persuasive case for independent thinking, fairness and checking the accuracy of AI-generated answers.

THE BIG IDEA

“Instead of using an AI tool, you could think and research by yourself, or ask a teacher or student for help.”

OPENING

Imagine if you were the smartest kid in school because you always used AI tools. But once you were playing with your friends and they asked you a maths question that you didn't know how to do without AI tools. Would you feel ashamed? This is why students shouldn't use AI tools during school hours. AI tools will stop students from learning by themselves. It is unfair to others who don't use AI tools and it doesn't always give the correct answers.

[CONTINUE READING →](#)

Think First: AI in the Classroom

BY JOSEPH

Firstly, students shouldn't use AI tools during school hours because AI tools can stop them from learning by themselves. How can you remember the knowledge that you learn if you always use AI tools? Research shows that the more students think, the smarter they will become when they grow up. The reason my times tables skills are really good is that I don't use AI tools for maths. Instead, I do lots of practice by myself every day. Therefore, students shouldn't use AI tools in school if they want to get smarter and be successful in the future.

- In addition, students shouldn't use AI tools during school hours because it is unfair to students who don't use AI tools. Would you be upset if you studied for four hours the night before an examination, but another student got better results because they used AI tools in the test? In New Zealand, 95% of primary and intermediate schools don't allow students to use AI tools for learning. My school encourages students to ask teachers or discuss with others when they have questions and problems during learning. Teachers need to know students' progress so they can do their best to help students study. Therefore, to be fair, students shouldn't use AI tools in school for study and tests.

Lastly, students shouldn't be allowed to use AI tools because AI can give the wrong answers. Scientists say that AI cannot replace human brains and cannot give a 100% accurate answer if you don't give it enough information. So we shouldn't always use AI tools to look for answers. Instead, we should use books and practice books as resources and ask teachers and other students for support. Therefore, AI tools cannot be 100% trusted, so students shouldn't use them during school hours.

- In conclusion, AI tools shouldn't be used during school hours for learning purposes because they don't help students improve learning skills, they don't treat students fairly when others spend time thinking and learning, and they don't always give the correct answers without enough information. So remember: every day you go to school, instead of using an AI tool to solve your questions, you could think and research by yourself, or ask a teacher or student for help.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Excellent persuasive structure with detailed anecdotal examples. A more objective voice would strengthen the formal tone.

FEATURED WRITER / WINSON

Money or Momentousness? The Olympic Finance Debate



Can host cities celebrate global achievement without being overwhelmed by the financial cost?

THE BIG IDEA

“The Olympic movement must balance its grand ideals with responsible economic planning.”

OPENING

The Olympic Games are often hailed as the pinnacle of human achievement and international harmony. From water polo to snowboarding, there are many sporting opportunities for athletes to go above and beyond while representing their country. However, as the scale of the event grows, many question whether the immense financial cost is justified. Olympic events require special renovation and building for parks and stadiums, as well as funding for the whole event. Over countless debates, people have argued that the cost may be quite expensive, though when they look at the long-term benefits, this might be worth it for athletes to become famous.

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Money or Momentousness? The Olympic Finance Debate

BY WINSON

On one hand, the Olympics serve as a powerful metaphor for world cooperation. As John Williams' iconic themes suggest, the Games celebrate the 'best in all of us', bringing together athletes from every corner of the globe for wholesome competition. This interplay between countries fosters a sense of global community that few other events can replicate. Although this event is competitive, it also represents the unity of athletes from many countries. They are trying to do their best and become Better Every Single Time. The money that committees spend on this massive event may be worth it. It is one big opportunity for athletes to show the crowd what they can do. Therefore, people argue that the money and the debt taxpayers have to pay are worth it for athletes in their country to win the event.

- On the other hand, the economic reality is staggering. For instance, the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Summer Olympics cost an estimated \$20 billion. For many host nations, this leads to significant debt and the creation of expensive facilities that often fall into disrepair. Critics argue that these billions could be better spent on healthcare, education or infrastructure that serves the local population long-term. Imagine having to pay \$20 billion in debt or your country losing the chance to be a host city. It is difficult for countries to pay this, and it could be spent on many things, such as metro expansion or subsidies. Hence, some argue that the money might not be worth it to host one large Olympics.

After numerous arguments between cost and commitment, one thing is clear: modern host countries are finding clever middle grounds. Instead of building massive new structures from scratch, they now reuse old stadiums and convert temporary athlete housing into public apartments later. This strategy allows them to capture the huge global tourism boom and long-term city upgrades without drowning in debt. By planning smarter, cities can still celebrate the true spirit of the Games while keeping their budgets safe. Another way is to show their high technology. Countries such as the United States and China use lower-cost, sustainable technology, such as environmentally friendly refrigerants, to keep stadiums cold for the Winter Olympics. This can combine solutions to financial, environmental and climate issues. Thus, countries sometimes compromise on the money needed for this opportunity and find neutral ground, making it easier to run an Olympic event while attracting visitors and improving tourism.

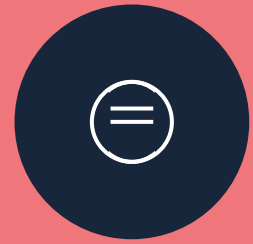
- In conclusion, while the Olympics provide an invaluable platform for fairness and inspiration, the financial burden on host countries cannot be ignored. It is a fact that the Olympic Games bring countries together and allow the best athletes to compete, though major financial drawbacks must be considered. For countries to remain sustainable, the Olympic movement must find a way to balance its grand ideals with more responsible economic planning than carelessly pouring the effort of thousands of accountants and many years of hard work into one event that doesn't even last a month.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Arguments are well structured and the formal tone is appropriate. Reliable evidence in every paragraph and a stronger opening hook would enhance the discussion.

FEATURED WRITER / GILL

Playing Together: The Case for Mixed Teams



A balanced discussion of equal opportunity, safety and the power of sport to challenge stereotypes.

THE BIG IDEA

“By focusing on skill, teamwork and respect instead of gender, we can create a sporting environment where every child has the chance to succeed.”

OPENING

Sport is an important part of many children's lives. It helps people stay healthy, make friends and learn teamwork. However, some people disagree about whether girls and boys should be allowed to play on the same sports team. While some believe mixed teams provide equal opportunities and encourage respect, others think separate teams are safer and fairer. I believe girls and boys should be allowed to play on the same team in most situations.

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Playing Together: The Case for Mixed Teams

BY GILL

One reason girls and boys should play together is that it gives everyone equal opportunities. Research from the Australian Sports Commission shows that mixed-gender sports can increase respect between participants, help develop friendships and build confidence, especially among girls. This evidence suggests that playing together helps children focus on teamwork and ability rather than gender. Mixed teams also allow more children to participate when there are not enough players to form separate teams. Therefore, mixed teams create a fair and welcoming environment where everyone has the chance to be involved.

- Some people, however, believe girls and boys should play on separate teams because of safety concerns. The Australian Sports Commission notes that after around age 12, differences in strength, stamina and physique can become more important in some competitive sports. This means that in contact sports such as rugby or football, separate teams may reduce the risk of injury and make competitions more balanced. As a result, many people believe separate teams can be the safer option in certain sports and age groups.

Another advantage of mixed teams is that they help break down gender stereotypes. According to the Australian Sports Commission, mixed-gender sports can challenge assumptions about gender and increase respect for the sporting abilities of both boys and girls. When children see teammates succeeding because of their skill and effort, they learn that talent is not determined by gender. This encourages confidence, respect and positive relationships between players. As a result, mixed teams promote equality both in sport and in society.

- In conclusion, there are strong arguments on both sides of this debate. Some people believe girls and boys should play together because it provides equal opportunities and challenges stereotypes, while others think separate teams are safer and fairer. Although safety should always be considered, I believe girls and boys should generally be allowed to play on the same team because it promotes inclusion, respect and equality. Schools, sports clubs and communities should give more children the opportunity to join mixed teams whenever it is safe to do so. By focusing on skill, teamwork and respect instead of gender, we can create a sporting environment where every child has the chance to succeed.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Excellent discussion structure, evidence and appropriate tone. Continue experimenting with shorter sentences for greater impact.

FEATURED WRITER / CINDY

Is Honesty Always the Most Important Quality?



A balanced discussion of truth, trust and the moments when kindness may call for a gentle white lie.

THE BIG IDEA

“Being honest can build trust and stronger relationships between friends.”

OPENING

Many people believe that honesty is the most important quality in a person. They believe that honesty builds trust and protects relationships. However, others argue that honesty is not always the most important quality, and that making others feel comfortable and being kind can sometimes matter more.

[CONTINUE READING ->](#)

Is Honesty Always the Most Important Quality?

BY CINDY

Honesty is not always the most important thing, especially when people need comfort and are not feeling okay. At times, a little white lie may help someone feel better. However, you need to be careful when you lie on purpose to keep yourself out of trouble. This can lead to trust issues and probably more trouble than you would have faced without lying. A white lie might be used when someone is not feeling proud of themselves or feels that they are not good enough.

Honesty is very important when it comes to friendships and learning. In friendships, honesty builds trust and strengthens relationships. Who is afraid of teachers? Sometimes I am. The reason teachers can seem strict is that they care about us and want us to make the best of our time at school. Teachers are honest about what we are doing well and what we need to improve. Did you know that 75% of people say they do not tell any lies each day?

- Although a little white lie can sometimes make another person feel comfortable, honesty can build trust and stronger relationships between friends. Here comes the ultimate question: do you think honesty is the most important quality?

WRITER'S LINE

“Being honest can build trust and stronger relationships between friends.”

TEACHER'S NOTE

Great arguments and a clear discussion structure. Add reliable evidence to both body paragraphs and begin with a stronger hook, such as a rhetorical question.

FEATURED WRITER / MIA

Honesty, Trust and Friendship



Two sides of honesty: telling the truth can build trust, but kindness may sometimes protect a friendship.

THE BIG IDEA

“Some people may value friendship more than honesty, so they may choose kindness to maintain a close relationship.”

OPENING

Have you ever wondered whether honesty is always the best quality to have? I know I have. I will be discussing whether honesty is important or not. Honesty is very important to some people, while others do not see it as more important than every other quality.

[CONTINUE READING ->](#)

Honesty, Trust and Friendship

BY MIA

Honesty is important because people can trust and rely on you. Research indicates that around 96% of people consider themselves honest, yet 81% admit to occasionally lying and only 19% claim that they never lie. Joshua Plotkin and Taylor Kessinger say that long-term evolutionary and social models support honesty as a way to create cooperation and resilient networks. When people trust you, they will listen to what you say. This is why many people believe that honesty is important.

Honesty may not always be the most important thing. You may want to be kind to a friend when they give you something, even if you do not like the gift. You might tell a small lie to make them feel better. Research from the University of East Anglia has found that people's honesty varies significantly between countries. It also suggests that honesty may be less important to a country's current economic growth than it was during earlier periods in history. Some people may value friendship more than honesty, so they may lie to maintain a close relationship.

- In this discussion, I have explored two sides of honesty. One side says that honesty is important because it creates trust. The other says that honesty may be less important when we want to protect a good and healthy friendship. I believe that honesty is not always the most important quality because kindness and friendship can sometimes matter more.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Great arguments and a clear structure. Expand the introduction by explaining the topic further, and develop the conclusion with more detail about your own opinion.

FEATURED WRITER / KALEY

My Mum in Ten Similes



Ten imaginative comparisons create a playful and affectionate portrait of Mum.

THE BIG IDEA

“My mum is as beautiful as the big galaxy in space.”

OPENING

My mum is as strong as an elephant.

[CONTINUE READING ->](#)

My Mum in Ten Similes

BY KALEY

2

My mum is as funny as a monkey dancing in a tree.

7

My mum is as happy as a tree swinging around with people nearby.

3

My mum is as lovely as a cute rabbit sitting quietly.

8

My mum is as nice as a friend helping you every day.

4

My mum is as beautiful as the big galaxy in space.

9

My mum is as sleepy as a sloth sleeping on the bed.

5

My mum is as healthy as a horse eating every type of food.

10

My mum is as lazy as a toy that never moves around.

6

My mum is as angry as a gorilla stomping on the floor.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Great descriptive similes. These ideas will become even stronger when they are connected into one flowing paragraph rather than repeated as separate sentences.