

Join the national conversation!



Word Generation - Unit 2.13

Focus Words

prevention | critical | pursue | alter | approach

WEEKLY PASSAGE



When Ryan Ben's uncle was in the hospital in severe pain the doctor said he had only about a month to live. Ryan's uncle asked the doctor to give him pills so he could end his life. The doctor, however, refused to provide pills to assist with suicide. She said her **approach** was to help save lives, not end them.

But people like Ryan's uncle say they don't want a long, painful death. They also worry about how much money useless treatment will cost their families. Since 1990, the idea of assisted suicide has been supported by Dr. Jack Kervorkian. According to Dr. Kervorkian, people have the right to **pursue** happiness. For people who are dying, he says, that includes the right to die when they choose.

Others are **critical** of that view. They say patients are not capable of making that choice. For one thing, patients who are in pain can't think clearly. They may just want to end the pain, not their lives. The right treatment could be all that is needed for **prevention** of the pain. Those who are against assisted suicide also worry that family members might urge a sick relative to die in order to reduce medical bills. Besides, some say, suicide is wrong. Human beings didn't create life, so they don't have the right to take it, even their own.

People who support assisted suicide say it is cruel to make suffering people live. They say healthy people have no idea how bad pain can be. They want to **alter** the

laws to make assisted suicide legal. A law legalizing assisted suicide passed in Oregon in 1997 and in Washington in 2008. In all other states a doctor who assists a suicide is considered to be guilty of murder. Where do you stand? Should doctors be allowed to assist seriously ill patients with suicide?

Should doctors be allowed to assist seriously ill patients with suicide?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

prevention : (noun) avoidance

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

critical : (adjective) against, not supporting

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

pursue : (verb) to follow; to engage in

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

alter : (verb) to change

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

approach : (noun) method

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

Should doctors be allowed to assist seriously ill patients with suicide?



PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

In 1997, Oregon passed the Death with Dignity Act (DWDA). This act allowed doctors to prescribe lethal drugs to certain seriously ill patients. Some people are glad that the law was **altered**, but others are **critical** of the change. Why do some patients decide to **pursue** the right to die?

Option 1: Each year in Oregon, some seriously ill people make a decision to die by assisted suicide. In 2006, approximately forty-eight percent of these people said they chose this **approach** because they were in pain. Medical care could not **prevent** their suffering. Which decimal is equivalent to 48%?

- A) .48
- B) 48
- C) .048
- D) .0048

Option 2: In 2006, 22 of the people who decided to die by assisted suicide in Oregon said they chose this **approach** because they were in pain. Medical care could not **prevent** their suffering. If this was approximately 48% of the total number of people who died by assisted suicide, how many people died through assisted suicide in all?

Discussion Question: Patients give different reasons for **pursuing** assisted suicide. Understanding why people want to die is **critical** to making laws about this issue. What if a high percentage of many people began using assisted suicide as a way to **prevent** high medical costs for their families? Would this **alter** your view of assisted suicide?

Should doctors be allowed to help terminally ill patients with suicide?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

“I can understand that if someone is really sick and knows that they won’t get better then they might prefer to end their life painlessly and peacefully instead of suffering more treatment,” says Jorge. “But it would certainly be better if **critically** ill patients didn’t find themselves in this position in the first place.”

“I wonder if there are new advancements in medicine being **pursued** that could help to **prevent** such terrible illnesses that take peoples’ lives?” asks Lisa.

Jorge says, “Do we know anything about the specific reasons why people might choose to request physician-assisted suicide?”

“Thanks, Jorge! That’s a great question,” says Ms. Kahn. “Let’s look at this data set. This information is from Oregon, which was the first state in the U.S. to **alter** its laws to make physician-assisted suicide legal. Does this table help answer your question, Jorge?”

→ Jorge asks Lisa to look over the chart with him.

Reason for Requesting Assisted Suicide (Total number of respondents = 669)	Percent (%)
<i>Losing Autonomy</i>	91.2
<i>Less Able to Engage in Enjoyable Activities</i>	88.8
<i>Loss of Dignity</i>	82
<i>Losing Control of Bodily Functions</i>	51.6
<i>Burden on Family/Friends/Caregivers</i>	38.6
<i>Inadequate Pain Control</i>	23.5
<i>Financial Implications of Treatment</i>	2.7

Jorge and Lisa noticed that the percentages added up to way more than 100 percent in the chart. How could that be?

There have been cases in which people have been told they will not recover from a disease when, in fact, they do. Would those cases affect your thoughts about this policy?

Lisa assumed pain would be the main reason why people who are really sick request assisted suicide. Was her assumption correct? How do you know?

Should doctors be allowed to assist seriously ill patients with suicide?



DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

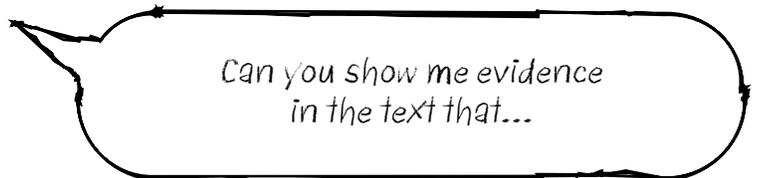
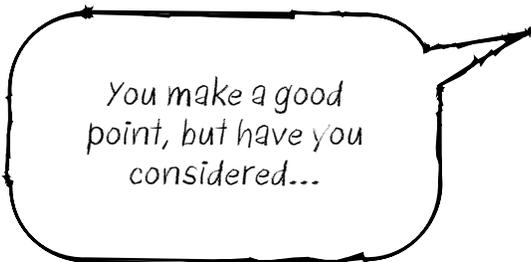
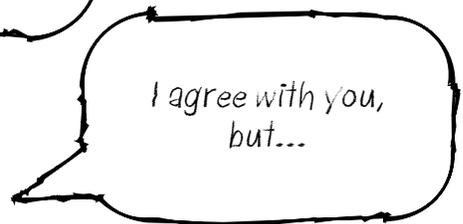
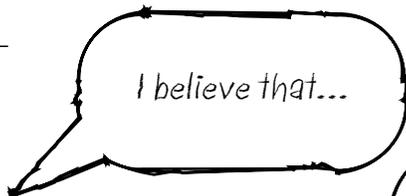
- A** Doctors should assist patients who are terminally ill to commit suicide.
- B** Doctors should never end a patient's life. Their job is to help their patients live, not die.
- C** Some patients may think they want to die but can't make this decision because they lack judgment. A doctor could make a terrible mistake by helping a patient who is not sure of his/her decision.
- D** A person's family should make or, at the very least, be included in the final decision. A group of caring people along with a doctor should make the final decision based on the patient's best interests.
- E** _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.



Join the national conversation!



SHOULD AMERICAN STUDENTS BE REQUIRED TO LEARN A SECOND LANGUAGE?

Word Generation - Unit 2.14

Focus Words

economic | multicultural | attribute | facilitate | distinct



WEEKLY PASSAGE

What are the benefits of knowing two languages? Many scientific studies show that growing up bilingual is great for kids' brain development. Being bilingual may also be good for getting a job. Many businesses want to hire people who speak more than one language because they consider this skill a valuable **attribute**.

But most Americans do not know a second language, and those who do typically do not know the second language very well. Children who come from homes where English is not the family's native language often forget the language their parents speak.

How did we become so monolingual? Some say it is because we are a **multicultural** nation and it would be too confusing if every group were to use its own language. Unlike educated Americans, most educated Europeans, Asians, and Africans speak several languages, often including English. In Europe, students are required to take two **distinct** foreign languages in school. Most people around the world think that knowing several languages is critical; multilinguals can participate in the political and **economic** activities taking place globally.

Even the U.S. government and the U.S. Armed Forces are constantly looking for speakers of other languages. Today they are seeking Arabic speakers, but very few Americans (unless they come from Arabic-speaking families) study Arabic in school or university. In 2004 the State Department reported that of the 1000 staff members at the US Embassy in Baghdad, only 10 were competent speakers of Arabic.

Knowing more than one language seems to be good for learning, employment, and maybe even national security. So how can parents, schools, and society **facilitate** opportunities for learning languages? Should American students all be required to learn a language in addition to English?

Should American students be required to learn a second language?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

economic : (adjective) financial, related to money

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

multicultural : (adjective) related to more than one culture

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

attribute : (noun) skill, feature

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

facilitate : (verb) to make easy or possible

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

distinct : (adjective) different

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:



Should American students be required to learn a second language?

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

In the United States, being bilingual is an **attribute** that can **facilitate** getting a good job. Today, the U.S. has many political, **economic**, and military connections with other countries. The U.S. is also full of immigrants from around the world who speak different languages. In a **multicultural** country like the U.S., speaking more than one language is a **distinct** advantage.

Option 1: In 2006, only 33 of the 1,000 U.S. employees at the U.S. embassy in Iraq spoke Arabic. Of these 33, only six were fluent. What percentage of embassy employees spoke fluent Arabic?

- A) .006%
- B) .06%
- C) .6%
- D) 6%

Option 2: The main languages spoken in Afghanistan are Dari and Pashto. The U.S. military's Defense Language Institute is now training 200 soldiers each year to speak basic Dari and Pashto. In 2009, there were about 100,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan. At the rate of 200 per year, how many years would it take to train 100,000 soldiers in basic Dari and Pashto?

Discussions Question: In our **multicultural** world, there are many languages that schools could teach. If more American soldiers knew Arabic, they would have an easier time talking to the people of Iraq. Now that China is an **economic** power, knowing Chinese is an **attribute** that might **facilitate** getting a job. Are these good reasons for teaching Arabic and Chinese in school? Or, should our political and **economic** goals be **distinct** from the reasons we teach languages? Should we choose to teach languages that will help keep our country strong? If not, how should we decide? Explain your answer.

Should American students be required to learn a second language?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Mr. Seemy's students return from their foreign language class full of new words and ideas, but Erik is doubtful about the **distinct** benefits of studying a second language.

"I know learning a new language helps me to appreciate our **multicultural** community, but does it do anything else?"

"Actually," says Chelsea, "learning a second language is **economically** beneficial because it can help you find a job."

"That's true!" chimes in Mr. Seemy. "But did you know that it also helps **facilitate** brain development?"

"Wow, really? Does that mean that speaking two languages can actually physically change your brain?" asks Erik.

→ Erik is interested in this topic and finds an information sheet on "neuroplasticity" of the brain to share with his classmates.

Neuroplasticity

Neuroplasticity can be described as "the ability to adapt to ongoing changes and to process information efficiently and adaptively."¹ Think of it as mental flexibility. Just as you can exercise your muscles to make them strong, you can exercise your brain to make it work quickly, efficiently, and accurately.

People who are bilingual challenge their brains to function in two distinct languages at the same time, which exercises the frontal lobes of their brain. The frontal lobes are where the brain makes quick decisions, plans, solves problems, and processes language.

Scans of bilingual people's brains show that, on average, their frontal lobes are stronger and more active than those of monolingual people's.¹

	Monolingual	Bilingual
Memory (score out of 10) ²	6.2	7.8
Onset of Alzheimer's (age in years) ¹	75.4	78.6
Response Time (milliseconds) ³	1,437	911
Language Ability (score out of 100) ³	85.8	91.9

Data Sources:

- 1) Bialystock, E., Craik, F., & Luk, G. (2012). Bilingualism: consequences for brain and mind. *Trends in Cognitive Science*.
- 2) Kormi-Nouri, R., Moniri, S., & Nilsson, L. (2003). Episodic and semantic memory in bilingual and monolingual children.
- 3) Bialystock, E., Craik, F., Klein, R., & Viswanathan, M. (2004). Bilingualism, Aging & Cognitive Control – evidence from the Simon Test.

 What other everyday activities might a bilingual person potentially be better at because of their efficient frontal lobes?

 What other experiments would you like to see conducted with both monolingual and bilingual people to see if there are additional benefits?

 *As of 2008, only 58 percent of all middle schools in the U.S. offered foreign language instruction. While over 90 percent of high schools offered a foreign language, studies have shown that students are able to adopt a new language more easily at a young age. Are foreign languages offered at your school and in your district? Discuss with your classmates how you might be able to use this data to convince the administrators in your district to strengthen your foreign language program.*

Should American students be required to learn a second language?



DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A Americans should speak English and only English. All immigrants and/or newcomers to the U.S. should learn English and forget their home language.

B Americans should learn at least one language other than English. If a child speaks another language at home, he or she should be encouraged to continue using the home language.

C English should be spoken in school and governmental agencies. Other languages can be used for more informal settings.

D In addition to English, Americans should learn languages that seem important for their economic progress (like Spanish and Chinese) and national security (like Arabic, Urdu, and Farsi).

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!



ARE GREEN TECHNOLOGIES WORTH THE INVESTMENT?

Word Generation - Unit 2.15

Focus Words

conserve | renewable | invest | proceed | maximize



WEEKLY PASSAGE

The BigBelly is a solar powered trash can. About 50 of them have been installed in different locations around the city of Boston. The BigBelly compacts its contents automatically and only needs to be emptied once or twice a day. Normal public trash cans usually need to be emptied more than fifteen times a day into garbage trucks. The BigBelly reduces the miles garbage trucks drive, and thus is a “green” technology.

Green technology, also known as CleanTech, can help to **conserve** the natural environment and **maximize** resources. A lot of money is **invested** into programs for recycling, water purification, and **renewable** energy. Renewable energy uses natural resources that are quickly replenished by nature, such as sunlight, wind, and ocean tides. Supporters say that CleanTech programs minimize the damage done to the world by humans. They claim that renewable sources of energy are better for the environment.

Other groups argue that green technologies have costs as well as benefits. For example, the BigBelly trash cans in Boston cost up to 6,000 dollars each. Do they save enough money by keeping garbage trucks off the streets to be worth it? The electricity that powers CleanTech electric cars is sometimes made in power plants that use oil. Do electric cars reduce pollution or increase it?

What do you think about this debate? How high a price should we pay for green technology? Do you wonder whether all the programs called “green” are better than what is already out there? If so, how would you **proceed** to inform yourself?

Are green technologies worth the investment?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

conserve : (verb) to protect from loss

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

renewable : (adjective) can be replaced

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

invest : (verb) to spend, expecting future benefit

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

proceed : (verb) to move on

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

maximize : (verb) to increase to the greatest possible amount

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

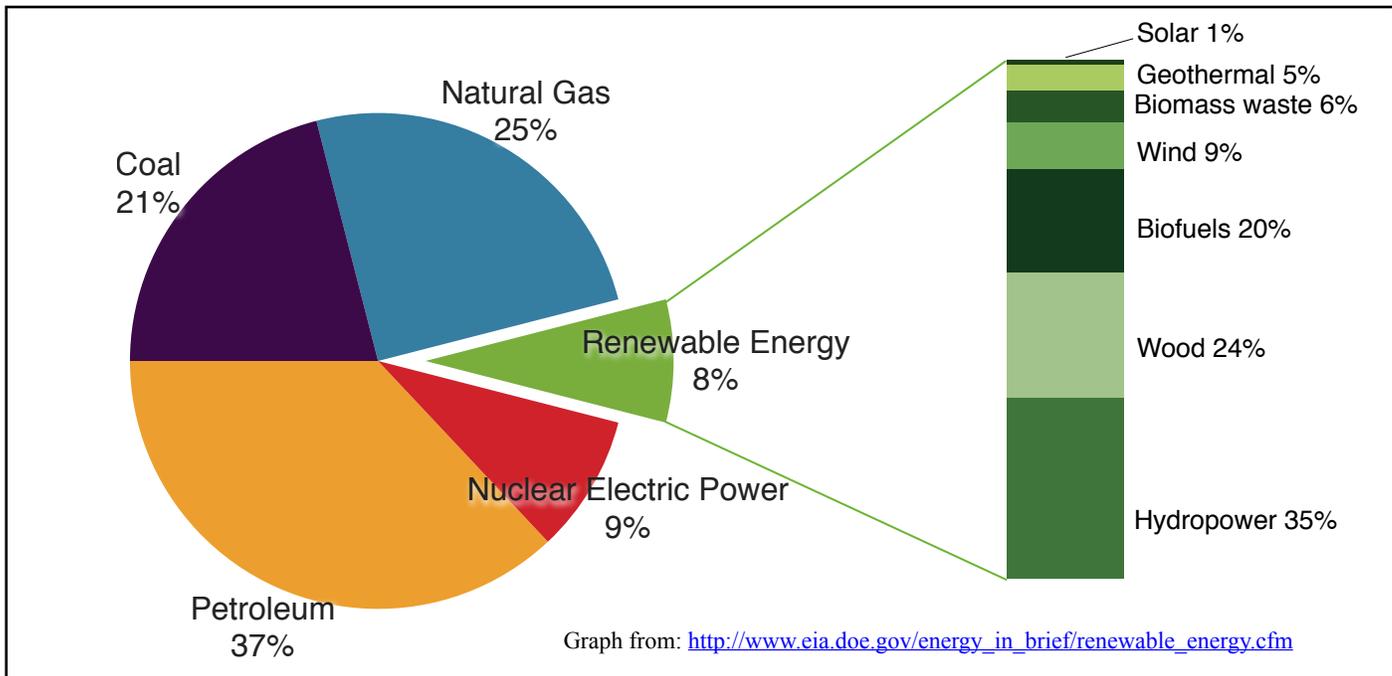
NOTES:



Are green technologies worth the investment?

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

As Americans worry about **conserving** resources, more people are thinking about **renewable** energy. The Obama administration promised to **proceed** toward **maximizing** production of cleaner energy, and has **invested** in wind and other renewable energy sources. However, most of America's energy still comes from non-**renewable** sources like oil and gas.



Option 1: Which of the following is true?

- A) Americans get more of their energy from coal than from petroleum (oil).
- B) Americans get more of their energy from coal than from all **renewable** sources combined.
- C) Americans get more of their energy from natural gas than from petroleum.
- D) Americans get more of their energy from hydropower than from nuclear electric power.

Option 2: Eight percent of the energy Americans consume comes from **renewable** energy sources. Of this, 9% comes from wind. What percent of America's total energy consumption comes from wind?

Discussion Question: Nations around the world are **investing** in **renewable** energy. In 2005, 8% of the energy produced by the European Union came from **renewable** sources. To **maximize** renewable energy production, the EU set a goal of producing 20% of its energy from renewable energy sources by 2020. In 2010, this change is **proceeding** on schedule: the EU is on track to meet its goal. Should the US set a similar goal? Why or why not?

Are green technologies worth the investment?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Sekou is giving a report on **renewable** energy.

“Scientists say **conserving** energy is not enough. We need to switch to **renewable** sources of energy like wind, water, and sun. To **maximize** our efforts, people around the world must work together.”

Sekou **proceeds**. “Two scientists named Mark Jacobson and Mark Delucchi have a plan to meet all the world’s energy needs with renewable energy by 2030. Their plan would require governments to **invest** a total of 100 trillion dollars.”

“What about using renewable energy here at school?” asks Nadia.

“Good question!” says Sekou. “I wonder if there is a renewable energy source that would both decrease our school’s emissions and save us money...”

→ Sekou did some more research on renewable energy to learn about cheap ways to decrease emissions from the school and took notes to share with the class. She calculated how much each energy source would cost her school.

Sekou’s Notes:

Energy Source	Statistics by unit		Statistics for our school (using 20 megawatt hours per year)	
	Cost (\$ / MWh)	CO ₂ Emission (tons / GWh)	Cost (\$ / year)	CO ₂ Emission (tons / year)
Coal	100.1	1145	2002	22.9
Natural Gas	67.1	338	1342	6.76
Wind	86.6	20	1732	0.4
Solar	144.3	31	2886	0.56

Data Source: <http://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.cfm?id=427&t=3>

Which energy source is the least expensive?

Discuss what other information should be collected before proposing using any of these renewable sources in your district. What might school leaders want to know?

Which energy source emits the least carbon dioxide?

Are any of the energy sources both inexpensive and healthy for the environment?

Are Green Technologies worth the investment?



DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A "Green technology" is good. It saves the environment.

B Not all "green" technologies are worth the investment.

C "Green technologies" are only worth the investment to the people who can afford them.

D "Green technology" is sometimes no better than the programs already in place.

E _____

Get set...

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

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I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!



Word Generation - Unit 2.16

Focus Words

rating | ban | interact | occur | complex

WEEKLY PASSAGE



Movies were not rated in the U.S. for many decades. Then in 1968, the Motion Picture Association of America began **rating** films for children and adults. Ratings are usually given instead of **banning** or restricting a film. Rating movies is **complex** because people disagree about the specific factors that should be included in deciding a rating, such as sex, violence, and profanity. In the United States, movies in which sexual activity **occurs** are often restricted to older viewers, while in countries such as Germany or France sexual content is not such a big deal. However, violent movies receive restrictive ratings or are censored in those countries while in the United States they are not.

Today, video games, books, TV shows, and music also get rated. Those who like the rating system say it helps people decide if a movie is right for them or their children. Parents can tell quickly if a movie might offend them and whether or not it is okay for their children. Parents who are more worried about the moral content of a movie or game, rather than how many times a swear word is used, can use an alternative rating system.

While the names and meanings of the ratings have changed over the years, today there are five possible ratings for movies. G stands for General Audiences. It means that there is no sex, violence, or profanity, and the movie is fine for all ages. PG stands for Parental Guidance Suggested. It means that some of the movie content might not be okay for kids. PG-13 gives parents a stronger caution. It indicates that some of the movie might not be okay for kids under 13. R is for Restricted. R means you

must be with an adult to even get in the theater. Finally there is NC-17 for No One 17 and Under Admitted.

Some people don't like rating systems because they may be used for maximizing profits rather than protecting the public. Movies rated PG and PG-13 make more money than those rated R and some Hollywood executives lower standards for major movie studios to make sure that the film gets a certain rating. Parents who do not **interact** with their children or pay attention to their interests may not even know what a certain rating on a video game or book mean. Furthermore, a young gamer who is stopped from buying a title because it is "too mature" might try to have someone older buy it. Making rating systems work is complex.

What do you think about this? Do you think people should be restricted in what they can buy or see? Are rating systems necessary?

Violence and media: are ratings systems necessary?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

rating : (noun) a classification, an ordering

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

ban : (verb) to forbid

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

interact : (verb) to communicate, to have social contact with

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

occur : (verb) to happen

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

complex : (adjective) complicated; of many parts

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:



Violence and media: are ratings systems necessary?

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Instead of **banning** adult content in movies, the Motion Picture Association of America gives **ratings** to let viewers know what **occurs** in a movie. The **interactions** between a movie's creators and the MPAA can be **complex**. For example, if a movie's creators are unhappy with a rating, they can edit and re-submit their movie to the MPAA until they get the rating they want.

Rating	Average Earnings Per Film 1995 – 2010
PG-13	\$41,237,141
G	\$37,692,288
PG	\$36,591,876
R	\$14,934,641
Not Rated	\$740,664

Option 1: According to the table, which of the following is true?

- A) If a movie is rated PG-13, it will definitely earn more money than a movie rated R.
- B) On average, movies rated PG-13 earned more money than movies rated PG.
- C) On average, movies rated R earned more money than PG-rated movies.
- D) Movies that were not rated did not earn any money.

Option 2: If these average earnings stay true, how much is it worth to a movie's creators to have a rating changed from R to PG-13?

Math Discussion Question: From 1995 – 2010, the average movie with a G, PG, or PG-13 **rating** earned much more than the average movie with an R rating. Why? Here is one possible explanation: for some parents, watching movies is a way to **interact** with their kids. They see a movie together, and then talk about it afterwards. This kind of **occurrence** helps parents and kids build strong relationships. Is this a good explanation? Do R-rated movies earn less money because parents don't take their kids to see them? Or is the situation more **complex**?

Violence and the media: Are ratings systems necessary?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Mr. Seemy's class is learning about the brain, and today's lesson is about mirror neurons.

"When I touch my ear, neurons fire," Mr. Seemy says. "When I watch *you* touch *your* ear, something interesting **occurs**. Some of those same neurons fire again. We call these neurons *mirror neurons*."

Mr. Seemy continues, "Mirror neurons help us **interact** with other people. When we see someone smile, mirror neurons remind us what it feels like to smile. They also help us imitate **complex** behavior, like dance steps."

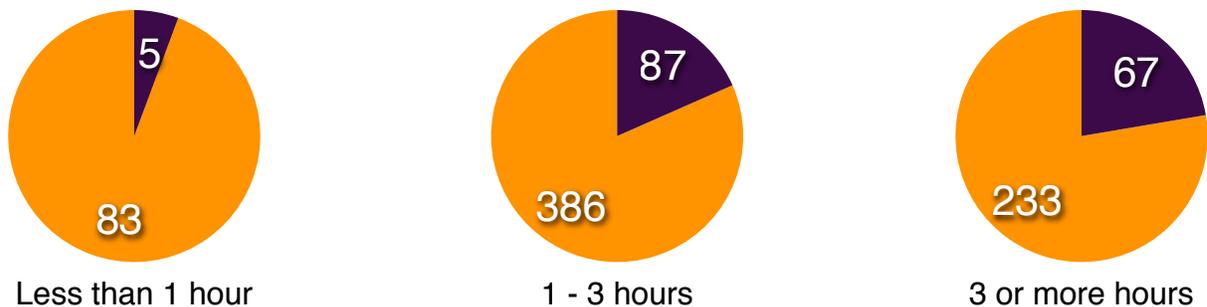
Jamal has been studying media violence, and he has an idea. "Hey, mirror neurons could explain why watching violence in the media makes people violent in real life," he says. "When a kid watches someone punch, mirror neurons help her understand punching, and also help her imitate it."

"My mom told me she read an article once that said watching violent TV makes kids more violent," Jennifer explains. "That's why my brother and I are not allowed to watch anything with any violence in it! It's not fair!"

"Let's see if we can find the article your mom read online," suggests Mr. Seemy.

→ Jennifer helps Mr. Seemy to locate the online article her mom described. Jennifer shares the information she finds with her classmates. The study compares the amount of TV children around age 14 watched with the number of aggressive acts they committed later (around the ages of 16 and 22).

Daily TV Watching
Total = 707



- At least one aggressive act reported
- No aggressive acts reported

One of Jennifer's classmates concludes that kids watching 1-3 hours of television led to the highest rate of violence because there were 87 aggressive acts committed by that population. Is she correct? Why or why not?

Discuss what other variables you would like to see included in a study like this in order to ensure that TV-watching was the **ONLY** factor leading to aggressive behavior. Examples might include incidence of childhood abuse, or hours spent playing violent computer games, etc.

Do you think Jennifer's mom is being fair by not allowing her children to watch television shows with violence?



Violence and media: are ratings systems necessary?

DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A The rating systems in place now provide useful guidance for families.

B The rating systems we use should be improved and expanded.

C Rating systems are unnecessary. People should watch or play what they want.

D The rating systems we have are fine but parents and vendors need to pay more attention.

E _____

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I agree with you, but...

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Join the national conversation!



SHOULD INTELLIGENT DESIGN BE TAUGHT IN SCHOOL?

Word Generation - Unit 2.17

Focus Words

design | creationism | concept | evolve | perspective



WEEKLY PASSAGE

Bethany Collchay’s parents want Bethany to believe exactly what it says in the Christian Bible. The Bible says that God created human beings and all the plants and animals. At Bethany’s school, however, the science teacher says that living things **evolve**. This idea was first written about in a book by Charles Darwin that came out in 1859. Darwin’s theory of evolution says that humans and other animals developed from common ancestors over millions of years. This theory explains similarities and differences among species. It also explains why some species survived while others became extinct. When scientists study fossils from millions of years ago, they find evidence that supports what Darwin said. Changes in flu viruses and in color patterns on birds and fishes show that evolution is going on right now.

While scientists argue that evolution is undeniable, people like Bethany’s parents have the right to their religious beliefs. Bethany’s parents don’t want anything to threaten their child’s religious beliefs. When schools teach about evolution, some people fear a child’s belief in **creationism** could be threatened. So such people are asking schools to teach intelligent **design** along with evolution. The central **concept** behind intelligent design is that living things must have been designed by an intelligent being. Supporters ask us to think about the eye. An eye has to be created all at once with all its parts, they say, or it won’t work. Even though the law in America does not allow public schools to teach religion, intelligent design doesn’t name the designer or use the word “God,” so many argue that teaching about it would not break the law.

Scientists, however, are against teaching intelligent design. They say intelligent design is not science. It doesn’t explain how living things came about or why some are like each other. It doesn’t fit with evidence, and doesn’t predict anything. Therefore, intelligent design is not a scientific **perspective**, but a religious one.

What do you think? Should schools teach intelligent design along with evolution?

Should intelligent design be taught in school?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

design : (noun) a plan

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

creationism : (noun) the belief that the world was made by an intelligent force

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

concept : (noun) an idea

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

evolve : (verb) to change over time

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

perspective : (noun) a point of view

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

Should intelligent design be taught in school?

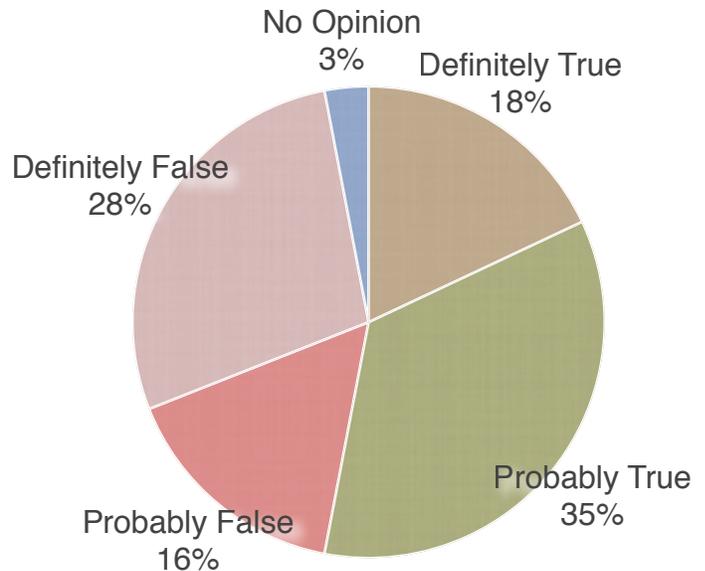


PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Scientists believe that humans and chimpanzees both **evolved** from an ancestor that lived 5-7 million years ago. Supporters of intelligent **design**, or **creationism**, disagree. In the poll below, people give their **perspectives** on the debate.

In June 2007, people were asked this question:

*What do you think about **evolution**, or the **concept** that humans and apes have a common ancestor?*



USA Today/Gallup

Option 1: Which of the following is true?

- A) Half of the people polled thought **evolution** was probably or definitely true.
- B) More than half of the people polled thought **evolution** was probably or definitely true.
- C) Less than half of the people polled thought **evolution** was probably or definitely true.
- D) None of the above.

Option 2: According to this poll, what is the probability that any two people chosen at random *both* think that **evolution** is probably or definitely true?

Discussion Question: Forty-four percent of the people polled think that **evolution** is probably or definitely false. Many of these people believe that **creationism** and/or intelligent **design** are better explanations for where human beings came from. However, 53% of people think that evolution is probably or definitely true. Why do people disagree so strongly about the **concept** of **evolution**? From your **perspective**, does this disagreement make sense? Do you have strong feelings about **evolution**?

Should intelligent design be taught in school?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Ms. Kahn's science class is studying the **concept** of natural selection, which Charles Darwin used to explain how living things **evolve** over time. Some students, however, don't believe in Darwin's explanation.

"I think that learning about evolution in science class conflicts with my religious **perspective**," says Victor. "I've learned about intelligent **design**, and my dad says it should be considered a scientific theory just like Darwin's."

"What?!" exclaims Kareema. "Intelligent design isn't scientific at all! My mom says it's **creationism** disguised as science. If some intelligent being created and designed all life on Earth, then who or what created that intelligent being? Can you and your dad explain that, Victor?"

"Hold on, Kareema," says Ms. Kahn. "We can address your disagreement with Victor by investigating how we decide if something is indeed 'science.' Let's consider some criteria for what makes a theory scientific, and then you and Victor can decide for yourselves."

→ Kareema and Victor looked online and found the following list of criteria for judging whether or not a theory is scientific.

For a theory to qualify as "scientific" it should have most or all of the following characteristics. It should be...

- consistent** (not contradicting itself)
- as **simple** as possible (not proposing elaborate explanations that go beyond available evidence)
- useful** (explaining past observations and making predictions about future observations)
- testable** (able to be confirmed or disproved by experiments or observations)
- replicable** (supported by repeated observations or experiments producing the same results)
- progressive** (improving on previously theories)
- revisable** (open to change based on new evidence)

 *With a partner, discuss whether or not intelligent design is a scientific theory based on the above criteria. Try to use the target words (design, creationism, concept, evolve, and perspective).*

Should intelligent design be taught in school?



DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A Because of the separation between church and state, schools shouldn't have to teach intelligent design or creationism.

B Intelligent design is not a religious view and should be taught alongside evolution in schools.

C Schools should teach all viewpoints to round out their students' education.

D Parents should decide what they want their children to be taught. If a parent objects to a class, that parent's child should be excused from the class.

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

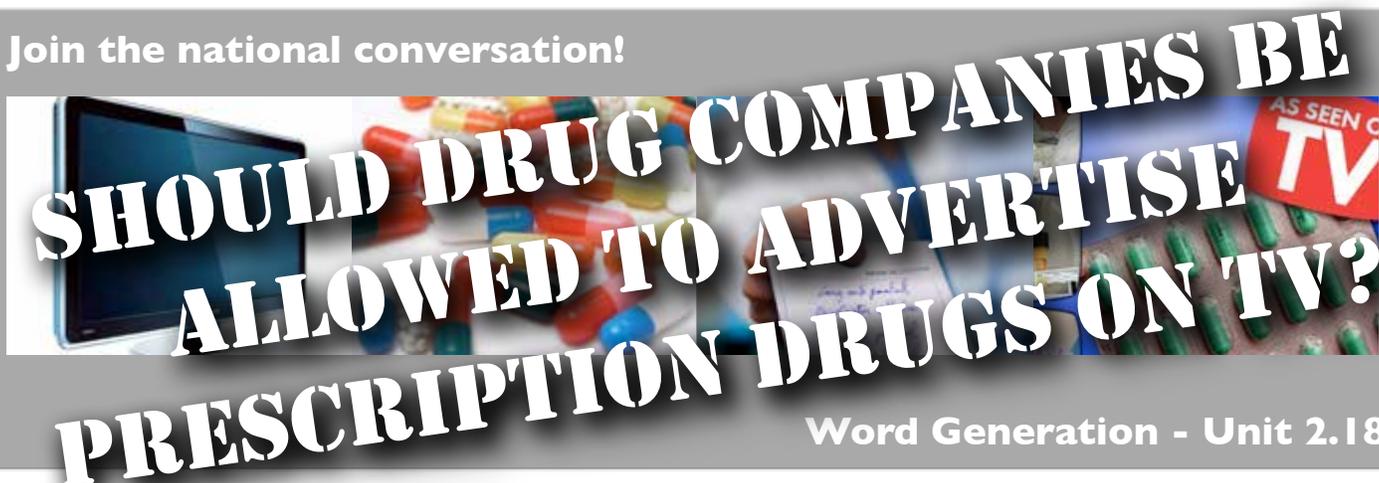
I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!



Word Generation - Unit 2.18

Focus Words

disclaimer | prescribe | potential | assume | rely

WEEKLY PASSAGE



In 1997, the law was changed to allow drug companies to advertise prescription drugs on television. Each year since there have been more of these ads. Television ads are required to provide **disclaimers** about the risks of each drug. Typically, such disclaimers are stated very quickly while good-looking actors distract the viewers. In 1991, drug companies spent \$55 million on advertising. By 2003, they were spending \$3 billion. The average number of prescriptions per person in the United States has also increased. In 1992, that average was 7.3. By 2000, it was 10.4.

Prescription drug advertisements have the **potential** to be helpful. They often provide useful information. They can lead people to talk to their doctors instead of ignoring a health problem. Yet this advertising also causes some problems. Many people who go to the doctor **assume** they need a certain drug that might not be right for them. Doctors can feel pressured to **prescribe** the medication that the patients ask for. This might mean that the patient takes an expensive drug when there are less costly alternatives available. Advertisements might also lead people to think that there is a pill that will solve any problem. This could make them **rely** on drugs instead of preventing health risks with good diets and regular exercise. Also, they might not know about the risks of taking the medication they see on television. There is not enough time in a typical disclaimer to tell consumers about all of the possible side effects of a drug. The United

States is one of only two countries in the world that allow drug companies to advertise directly to consumers

Do prescription drug advertisements help people more than they hurt? Or should drug companies be restricted from advertising on television?

Should drug companies be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on television?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

disclaimer : (noun) denial of responsibility

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

prescribe : (verb) to order a medicine or treatment

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

rely : (verb) to depend on

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

assume : (verb) to decide without much evidence

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

potential : (noun) possibility

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:



Should drug companies be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on television?

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Are **prescription** drug advertisements dangerous? Consumers who **rely** on commercials for information about drugs may not get the whole story. These people may not understand the **disclaimers** that talk about side effects. They may ask their doctor to **prescribe** a **potentially** dangerous drug. Drug companies, however, **assume** that they have a right to market their products.

Option 1: In 2006, Americans spent \$216 billion on **prescription** drugs. This amount is about 10% of the country's total health care costs. Given this information, what are the country's total health care costs?

- A) \$2,160 million
- B) \$21.6 billion
- C) \$216 trillion
- D) \$2.16 trillion

Option 2: One study said that for every \$1 a company spends on consumer advertising, it will have an increase of \$2.20 in sales. In 2006, drug companies spent \$4.8 billion on advertising. If the study is correct, the \$4.8 billion spent on advertising should have caused an increase of how many dollars in sales?

- A) \$7 billion
- B) \$8.4 billion
- C) \$10.56 billion
- D) \$10.8 billion

Discussion Question: In 2006, drug companies spent \$4.8 billion on consumer **prescription** drug ads. In that same year, drug companies spent \$7.2 billion marketing drugs to doctors. If companies spend billions of dollars trying to convince doctors to use their products, can we **rely** on a doctor's advice? Or does advertising have the **potential** to affect a doctor's judgment? Can we **assume** that doctors' decisions are not changed by advertising? Why or why not? Should we demand a new kind of **disclaimer** in the doctor's office telling us which products have been advertised to our doctor?

Should drug companies be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on television?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Mr. Seemy's students are studying familiar diseases in science class. "Some diseases are caused by bacteria, such as strep throat, tuberculosis, and food poisoning," says Mr. Seemy. "However, diseases such as the common cold, the flu, and chickenpox are caused by viruses, which are even smaller than bacteria."

"I had a cold for two weeks and my doctor wouldn't **prescribe** me any antibiotics," says Arjun. "She told me the cold was caused by a virus, and antibiotics wouldn't work on it, and that I just needed to rest and drink a lot of fluids. It was so annoying!"

"Many people **assume** that antibiotics can kill viruses, but they can't," says Mr. Seemy. "Antibiotics are only effective on bacterial infections. Your doctor was right, even if you didn't like it."

"I know what Arjun means though," says Tanisha. "When I'm sick all I want is to get better. But my uncle's a doctor and he says **relying** too much on antibiotics can create even stronger types of bacteria."

"Well, I know that bacteria and viruses aren't the same thing," says Arjun, "but really, how are they different?"

"Let's look at some information and see if you can sort different germs into the right categories for yourself," says Mr. Seemy.

→ The class goes over the following information on bacteria and viruses:

BACTERIA	VIRUSES
single-celled organisms	non-cellular
about 1000 nanometers in size (visible with light microscope)	20-400 nanometers in size (not visible with light microscope)
reproduce by dividing (binary fission)	reproduce by hijacking a host cell and turning it into a virus factory
need to eat and produce waste	neither eat nor produce waste
classified as living by all scientists	scientists debate whether viruses should be classified as living
antibiotics can interfere with life processes and kill bacteria	viruses do not have life processes that are affected by antibiotics

Now imagine you are a doctor. First, determine if each germ below is a bacteria or a virus. Then decide if you will prescribe antibiotics to fight each germ.

Salmonella

- single-celled
- reproduces using binary fission
- can be viewed under a light microscope

Rhinovirus

- must use a host cell to reproduce
- cannot be seen using a light microscope
- not made of cells

Influenza

- does not consume food or produce waste
- about 100 nanometers in size

Which of the three germs above are treatable with antibiotics? How do you know?

Suppose a patient who had influenza (the flu) asked you to prescribe an antibiotic he had seen advertised. Explain to your patient whether or not antibiotics could help him, and why.



Should drug companies be allowed to advertise prescription drugs on television?

DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A Drug companies should be able to advertise on television. Advertisements let the public know what kind of medications are available.

B Drug companies should not be able to advertise on television. People might not fully understand appropriate uses and possible side effects.

C Drug companies could advertise as long as they give a complete description of what the medication can and cannot do.

D Drug companies should not be allowed to advertise because advertising increases the costs of medication.

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!

**SHOULD VOTING BE COMPULSORY
IN LOCAL AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS
IN THE UNITED STATES?**

Word Generation - Unit 2.19

Focus Words

civic | apathy | enforce | decline | evidently



WEEKLY PASSAGE

Crispin Morales is a poor Bolivian factory worker who works 12-hour days. He works every day but Sunday. The last presidential election fell on a Saturday and, although he was given the day off as the law required, Crispin was unable to get to a polling station to vote (later he was glad to hear that his candidate, Evo Morales, won the 2006 election with over 50 percent of the popular vote). Because voting is mandatory in Bolivia, those who do not vote are punished for not complying with their **civic** duty. Crispin was not allowed to draw his salary from his bank for over two months.

Not all countries with compulsory voting **enforce** this law. If a citizen of Australia or Brazil provides a good reason for not voting (e.g., being in a hospital) it is accepted. Many nations have dropped mandatory voting altogether. For example, Venezuela dropped mandatory voting in 1993 and saw a **decline** or drop in attendance at the polls of 30%.

Low voter turnout is a common problem in countries without compulsory voting. Low voter turnout might be explained by voter **apathy**. In 2005, American Idol viewers cast over 500 million votes, but only 122 million votes were cast in the 2004 U.S. presidential election.

Evidently some citizens feel their vote counts more in television contests than in political contests. Perhaps they have decided that politicians have their own agenda and won't listen to the will of the people.

Mandatory voting seems attractive but it can be misused. In dictatorships, citizens are often forced to vote for the

same person every election because the government does not allow other candidates to run for the same position. In Paraguay, General Stroessner was "elected" by a wide majority every four years for almost 40 years.

But how can democracies have representative governments unless all or most of their citizens vote? Some say the reason to force people to vote is to make sure that the government elected represents the majority of the population. But those against compulsory voting say that being required to vote is a violation of personal liberties. Others say that voting should be seen as a civic right and not a civic duty.

What do you think? Should all Americans be required to vote? Or should voting be voluntary?

Should voting be compulsory in local and national elections in the United States?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

civic : (adjective) related to citizenship

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

apathy : (noun) lack of interest

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

enforce : (verb) to put into effect

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

decline : (noun) a drop, lessening

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

evidently : (adverb) apparently

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

Should voting be compulsory in local and national elections in the United States?



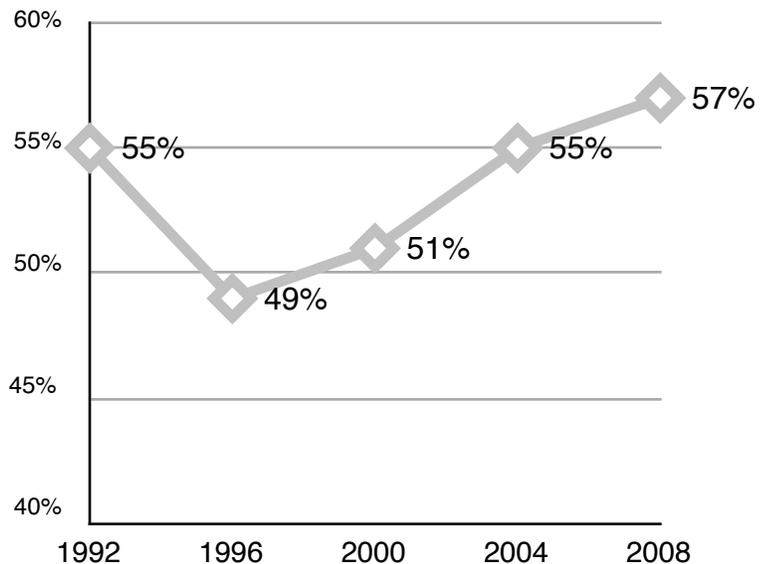
PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Voting is a **civic** responsibility. Some people are worried about **declining** voter turnout and rising **apathy** about who gets elected. Millions of Americans vote for their favorite *American Idol* singer, but many Americans never vote for president. Some people say that Americans **evidently** don't care very much about politics. One idea to increase voter turnout is to make and **enforce** compulsory voting laws. However, is voter turnout really **declining**? What do the numbers tell us?

Option 1: According to the graph, which year had the greatest **decline** in voter turnout compared to the election before?

- A) 1996
- B) 2000
- C) 2004
- D) 2008

Voter Turnout in Presidential Elections



Option 2: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the United States in 2000 was 281,421,906 residents. The voter turnout that same year was 51% of eligible voters. Does this mean that, in 2000, 51% of 281,421,906 residents voted? Why or why not?

Discussion Question: If voter turnout has stopped **declining**, should we be satisfied? Or is it **evident** to you that more people should vote? Does voter turnout of 50% or 60% indicate **civic apathy**? Is good citizenship something that we should **enforce**?



Should voting be compulsory in local and national elections in the United States?

THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Ms. Kahn’s science class is practicing working with information and presenting it in different ways. “Scientists need to be able to organize and interpret data that they collect,” says Ms. Kahn, “as well as explain it to others. Majesta has brought in a data table about compulsory voting that she found on the Internet to share with us.”

“I’m not sure if this information backs up the idea that compulsory voting really works,” says Majesta. “I mean, Mexico has compulsory voting and it has one of the lowest voter participation rates in the data table.”

“But in Mexico they don’t really **enforce** the voting rules,” says Sergio. “My uncle always votes—he says it’s his ‘**civic** duty,’ but none of my cousins ever bother.”

“Well, **evidently** Australia takes its voting law seriously,” suggests Majesta, “because they’ve got a really high voter turnout rate.”

“There are a lot of variables that could affect a **decline** in voter turnout,” says Ms. Kahn. “Access and ease of voting, level of education, **apathy**, as well as enforcement affect whether people vote or not.”

“Hold on!” says Sammy. “Ms. Kahn, this table is confusing. The percentages are all over the place. Can we find a way to make the information more clear?”

→ Here is Majesta’s table.

Country	Voter participation	Is voting compulsory?
Australia	93%	Yes
Canada	61%	No
Chile	88%	Yes
Greece	62%	Yes
Israel	80%	No
Italy	75%	Yes
Mexico	63%	Yes
Russia	64%	No
Spain	69%	No
United States	71%	No

How is the current table organized? What are the benefits and drawbacks of this organization?

How could the information from Majesta’s data table be presented in a way that might make it more clear or easier to understand?

Discuss whether or not you think voting should be compulsory. Use the data from the table to help make your argument.

These voter participation percentages are based on the following source: Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD) Report, “How’s Life? 2013” http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/economics/how-s-life-2013_9789264201392-en#page1, page 59. The percentages are taken from “2011 or latest available year.”



Should voting be compulsory in local and national elections in the United States?

DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A Because democracies are based on a citizen's right to choose, citizens should not be required to vote. Voting should be a matter of choice.

B To ensure that we have a government that represents us, US citizens should be required to vote.

C We should educate all US citizens about the importance of participating in voting. We need citizens who know who their leaders are and what they are doing.

D Voting doesn't really matter in the end. Politicians do what they want and we have no control over what they do or what they spend.

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!

SHOULD THERE BE AMNESTY FOR UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS?

Word Generation - Unit 2.20

Focus Words

amnesty | undocumented | orient | exclude | compound



WEEKLY PASSAGE

From the time he came to the United States as a child, Marcos studied hard while his parents worked long hours. Now he is a top student in his high school class. But he may not be able to go to college because the government won't give him the same help it gives to other students. There are jobs that he will not be allowed to take, even though he could do the work. And he won't be allowed to get his driver's license. Marcos is an **undocumented** immigrant, someone who doesn't have papers that prove he has the right to live in America. The laws and programs that help many people in America **exclude** Marcos and his family.

Some people say Marcos' family broke the law when they entered the country. Therefore they should not have the rights of legal immigrants. Others say it's unfair that our laws exclude hardworking people. They think America is a place where everyone should have equal rights. Some want the government to give undocumented immigrants **amnesty**, so that they can become legal. The U.S. passed a law like this once before. It let immigrants who had been in America from 1982 to 1986 get legal documents. Many argue that the U.S. should pass a new amnesty law to help people like Marcos and his family.

Other people say there should not be amnesty for undocumented immigrants. They say we should **orient** our immigration laws toward protecting those who went through the proper channels, not those who "jumped the line." As it is, they say, we don't have enough jobs to go

around, or enough money to pay for everyone's education. Giving amnesty to undocumented immigrants will only **compound** the problem.

What do you say? Should there be amnesty for undocumented immigrants?

Should there be amnesty for undocumented immigrants?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

amnesty : (noun) forgiveness

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

undocumented : (adjective) without legal papers

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

orient : (verb) to adjust, to align

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

exclude : (verb) to leave out

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

compound : (verb) to add to

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:



Should there be amnesty for undocumented immigrants?

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Immigrants must adapt to a strange new culture. **Undocumented** immigrants face a **compound** problem: they must adapt without revealing that they entered the country illegally. This means that undocumented immigrants are **excluded** from opportunities that help other immigrants **orient** themselves in the United States. An **amnesty** could give back these opportunities. But how many undocumented immigrants are there?

Option 1: According to the Department of Homeland Security, the **undocumented** immigrant population was 11.6 million in 2008. It dropped to 10.8 million in 2009. What happened to the population of **undocumented** immigrants between 2008 and 2009?

- A) it decreased by about 4.3%
- B) it decreased by about 5.1%
- C) it decreased by about 6.8%
- D) it increased by about 7.9%

Option 2: In 2008, the number of **undocumented** Mexican immigrants in the U.S. was 6.65 million. The year before, in 2007, the number of **undocumented** Mexican immigrants had been 380,000 higher. Describe the decrease from 2007 to 2008 as a percentage.

Math Discussion Question: When asked to explain the decrease in **undocumented** immigrants in 2009, officials gave a **compound** answer. They said it was partly due to increased border security, and partly due to the slow U.S. economy. The slow economy caused many people, including immigrants, to lose their jobs. Some people want to keep lowering the number of **undocumented** immigrants by **excluding** them from the workforce. People who support this idea say that instead of considering **amnesty**, we should punish employers who hire **undocumented** workers. Is this a good solution? Why or why not?

Should there be amnesty for undocumented immigrants?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Mr. Seemy's class is debating immigration **amnesty**. Cesar and his family are **undocumented** immigrants. Cesar has the highest GPA in the class.

"I can't afford college," says Cesar. "College grants and loans are **oriented** toward American citizens. People like me get **excluded**. What kind of career can I have? I don't have papers. Having no college education will **compound** my problems. I'll probably get stuck in a low-paying job. With amnesty, I can get a better education and a better job."

"You're assuming an amnesty would lead to a better job," says Takemi. "You can't predict the future."

"We can't predict the future with certainty, but we *can* look at what happened in the past," says Mr. Seemy. "Let's investigate!"

→ Cesar and Takemi find the following study and share it with the class.

Question:

Do immigration amnesties lead to better jobs for undocumented immigrants?

Hypothesis:

The immigration amnesty of 1986 resulted in better jobs for at least 30% of undocumented immigrants.

Subjects:

- ▶ 10 immigrants who became legal during the 1986 amnesty

Procedure:

1. Interview subjects.
 - Ask about jobs held before the amnesty.
 - Ask about jobs held after the amnesty.
2. Analyze the subjects' answers to find out how many got better jobs after the amnesty, and how many maintained similar jobs despite the amnesty.

Data:

	Got Better Jobs	Got Similar Jobs
After 1986 Amnesty	5	5

Is the hypothesis supported or not by the data?

Most people would say the sample size of this study is too small. Why?

How would you make this a better experiment?

Should there be amnesty for undocumented immigrants?



DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A Undocumented immigrants should not receive amnesty. They are here illegally and should be forced to leave.

B Immigrants should receive amnesty. They work hard for what they have and contribute to the U.S.

C Undocumented adults should be denied amnesty but those who were brought here before the age of 8 are not to blame and should receive amnesty.

D Undocumented immigrants do not deserve amnesty but they are crucial to the economy and should not be sent away.

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!

SHOULD CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
BE COMPLETELY BANNED AT
HOME AS WELL AS IN SCHOOL?

Word Generation - Unit 2.21

Focus Words

privacy | invasion | consists | secure | corporal

WEEKLY PASSAGE



Around the world, children are disciplined by their families. Sometimes this discipline may **consist** of spanking or hitting children when they are behaving badly. In 1997, the United States Court of Appeals ruled that parents do not have a **secure** right under the U.S. Constitution to physically punish their children. In the same year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that schools may use corporal punishment despite parental objections.

In some places, teachers physically punish students who misbehave. In fact, the U.S. and Australia are the only two industrialized countries that have not banned **corporal** punishment in schools, although 19 of the 50 states have explicitly prohibited corporal punishment. In the United States, some school districts allow “paddling,” i.e. using a wooden paddle to spank a child. There have been lawsuits against school districts by parents who have documented the pain and suffering inflicted on their children inflicted by school staff.

But many school officials have banned physical punishment at school even if the state allows it. For example, paddling used to be allowed in Memphis, Tennessee, until Superintendent Carol Johnson asked the school board to consider alternatives such as counseling and in-school suspension.

Some parents claim that corporal punishment by teachers violates children’s rights. Some parents argue that using corporal punishment to discipline their own children at

home is their business. They believe that having the courts decide what they may do in their own homes is an **invasion** of their **privacy**.

What do you think about this? Should corporal punishment be banned in schools as well as at home?

Should corporal punishment be completely banned at home as well as in school?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

privacy : (noun) freedom from the attention of others

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

invasion : (noun) unwanted interference

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

consists : (verb) to be made up of

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

secure : (adjective) safe

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

corporal : (adjective) related to the body

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:



Should corporal punishment be completely banned at home as well as in school?

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

According to a 2004 poll, most Americans think that good family discipline **consists** of occasional spankings. But while most Americans feel **secure** in the right to spank in the **privacy** of their own homes, they also tend to disagree with **corporal** punishment in school. Is spanking in school an **invasion** of family rights?

<i>Spanking Approval Poll</i>	Yes	No
Approve of spanking children at home	65%	31%
Think spanking should be permitted in school	26%	72%

Option 1: Which of the following is true?

- A) More people disapprove of spanking at home than agree with spanking in school.
- B) Most people disagree with spanking at home.
- C) Most people agree with school spanking.
- D) Seven out of ten people agree with spanking in school.

Option 2: What is the *maximum* percentage of people polled who could both approve of spanking at home and disapprove of spanking in school? Would you expect the actual percentage to be higher, lower, or exactly equal to the maximum?

Discussion Question: Why do people change their opinions about **corporal** punishment depending on where it happens? If people disapprove of **corporal** punishment in school, does that mean it shouldn't happen anywhere? Or, should families have a **secure** right to **privacy**?

Should corporal punishment be completely banned at home as well as in school?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Ms. Kahn’s students are discussing **corporal** punishment in schools and at home.

“Spanking and all that should be against the law for everyone,” exclaims Viet Ly. “If I have kids when I’m older, I won’t ever spank them. And I definitely don’t think teachers should be able to hit kids.”

“I understand Viet Ly’s point,” says Jonah, “but Americans really value their **privacy** and independence. Parents won’t like being told they can’t raise their own children the way they want to in their own homes. It’s an **invasion** of their rights.”

“Maybe they won’t like it, but laws already **consist** of rules telling people what to do, at home and at school,” argues Rashad. “Hitting kids to make them behave better doesn’t even work, does it Ms. Kahn?”

“Well Rashad, there is a lot of research suggesting that corporal punishment may do more harm than good,” said Ms. Kahn. “But doing scientific research on something like corporal punishment is difficult. Can you, Jonah, and Viet Ly get together and brainstorm reasons why?”

→ Here are some of the ideas Ms. Kahn’s students had about the challenges of doing research on corporal punishment.



I don’t think people would tell the truth to researchers on this topic. So interviews and surveys might be misleading.

Jonah

 Do you agree with Jonah? Why or why not?



I think that doing experiments involving hitting children would be wrong and dangerous. So it would be hard to come up with experimental evidence to prove anything.

Rashad

 Do you agree with Rashad? Why or why not?



I think corporal punishment might seem to work in the short term—it might stop children from doing something bad at the moment. But I think it would do harm in the long term. That would be hard to measure.

Viet Ly

 Do you agree with Viet Ly? Why or why not?

Should corporal punishment be completely banned at home as well as in school?



DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A Corporal punishment should be banned from homes. There is no reason for violence against children.

B Discipline at home should be a decision left to parents. The government should not interfere with individuals' privacy.

C Corporal punishment should be banned from schools. There are other more effective and humane methods of disciplining children.

D Corporal punishment should not be banned from schools. Some cases require more vigorous discipline.

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!



Word Generation - Unit 2.22

Focus Words

eligible | affect | maintain | prerequisite | previous

WEEKLY PASSAGE



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

was unfair to the students who kept up their grades in harder classes.

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

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

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

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

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

prerequisite : (noun) requirement that must be met before moving on

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

eligible : (adjective) qualified for

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

maintain : (verb) to keep

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

affect : (verb) to have an effect on

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

previous : (adjective) earlier

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:



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

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

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

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

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

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

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

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



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Mr. Seemy finds Vickie sitting sadly in the hallway, holding a basketball. “What’s wrong, Vickie?” Mr. Seemy asks.

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

“Don’t do that!” says Mr. Seemy. “Basketball can help you keep your grades up. Exercise **affects** your brainpower.”

“Really?” asks Vickie.

“Let’s investigate!” says Mr. Seemy.

→ Some of the students in Mr. Seemy’s class volunteer to participate in a study Vickie does on physical activity and memory.

Question:

How does exercise affect brain power?

Hypothesis:

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

Materials:

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

Procedure:

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

Data:

	Group A (runners)	Group B (sitters)
Average score	89%	66%

Is the hypothesis supported or not by the data?

What evidence supports your conclusion?

How would you make this a better experiment?



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

DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

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

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

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

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

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!



ARE AFTER-SCHOOL JOBS HELPFUL OR HARMFUL FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS?

Word Generation - Unit 2.23

Focus Words

resumé | responsibility | acquire | perceive | sustain



WEEKLY PASSAGE

Jason's day is full of teachers, classes, and assignments. He also has an after school job. Jason works hard to earn money and keep up with his studies. But in the past few weeks he has been working too many hours and not doing his homework or passing his tests.

When Jason first started looking for a job he was very excited. He put together a **resumé** to help him **acquire** his position. He thought having a job would teach him about **responsibility** as well as help him earn some extra cash.

Many students, like Jason, think that having a part-time job is a good thing. They get a chance to make new friends with their co-workers. Their bosses and co-workers **perceive** them as responsible adults. They start to learn the value of money and to save up for the things they want, like clothes, video games, or even a car. Some even help out with their family's needs. These are all benefits of having an after school job.

Then there are those who think students should not be working while they are in school. Jason could not **sustain** his good grades because of work. Some people claim that students who work do not do as well in school

because they don't have as much time to study or do assignments. These students are also tired more often and do not pay as much attention in class.

What do you think about this? Are after school jobs helpful or harmful to middle and high school students?

Are after-school jobs helpful or harmful for middle and high school students?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

resumé : (noun) a document summarizing experience and qualifications

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

responsibility : (noun) duty

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

perceive : (verb) to see, to understand

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

sustain : (verb) to keep up

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

acquire : (verb) to gain

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:



Are after-school jobs helpful or harmful for middle and high school students?

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Many students **perceive** an after school job as a **responsibility** that will help them build their **resumé**, **acquire** new skills, and earn money. But new responsibilities affect the amount of time students have for other things. Can students **sustain** their dedication to schoolwork and take on a job after school at the same time?

Option 1: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, students who have an after-school job spend an average of 42 fewer minutes per day on schoolwork than students who don't work. If the school year is 180 days, how many more hours per year would the average non-working student spend on schoolwork than the average student with an after school job?

- A) 7,560 hours
- B) 300 hours
- C) 244 hours
- D) 126 hours

Option 2: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, students who have an after-school job spend an average of 42 fewer minutes per day on schoolwork than students who don't work. If we let m = the number of minutes the average non-working student spends on schoolwork each day, write an algebraic expression that shows the number of minutes the average student with an after-school job spends on schoolwork in a 5-day week.

Discussion Question: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, working students spend 42 fewer minutes on schoolwork, 42 fewer minutes on fun activities, and 36 fewer minutes on sleep each day. Do you **perceive** any of these facts as a problem? Whose **responsibility** is it to make sure that kids **sustain** focus on their schoolwork and **acquire** healthy habits like getting enough sleep?



Are after-school jobs helpful or harmful for middle and high school students?

THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

The students in Ms. Kahn's class are talking about after-school jobs.

"I do some babysitting occasionally during the week, and almost every weekend," says Kareema, "but I don't know how I would cope with a regular job every weekday. By the time I finish soccer practice, it's almost dinner time, and then I've got to get my homework done before maybe watching a little TV and going to bed. Where is there time to work a regular job?"

"I enjoy my job," says Sergio. "I get my homework done right after school, then after dinner I go work for three hours at my aunt's video rental store. It feels good to help her out, and it's fun to talk with the customers about movies, even though I end up not having as much time as I used to for watching movies myself. Anyway, it's great to earn some spending money for the weekends."

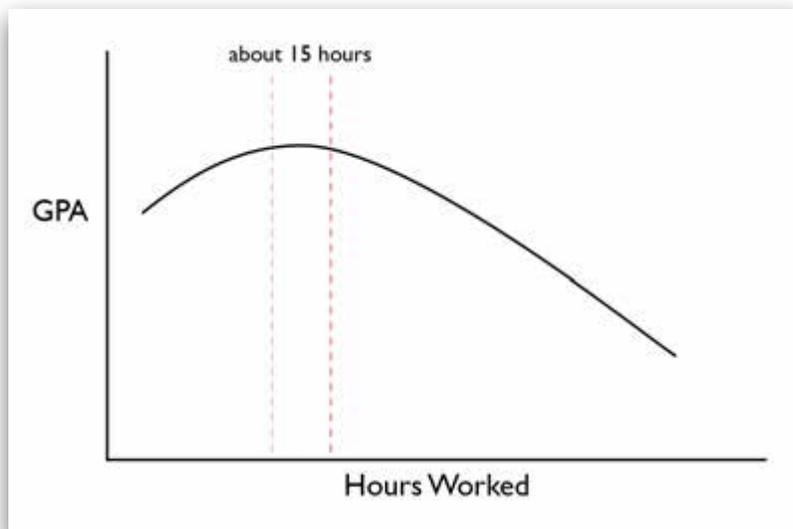
"Money is important," says Viet Ly. "But I worry about how my older brother's job affects him. He's 17, and he works an eight-hour shift after school three days a week, plus another eight hours on Saturday. He's saving most of his wages for college, but ever since he turned 16 and started his job, he's had a hard time keeping his grades up. He just seems rushed and tired all the time."

Sergio nods. "Yeah, I think I'd have a hard time keeping up with school if I spent that much time on the job," he says. "I guess it's like Goldilocks and the Three Bears: I don't want too much work or too little work. I like it just right."

"But how much is just right?" says Viet Ly.

"Good question," says Ms. Kahn. "Let's see if we can find any research data on after-school jobs and academic performance."

➔ After doing an online search, Ms. Kahn's students find the following graph summarizing the results of some research on the relationship between after-school employment and grade point averages for middle-school and high-school students.



This graph is generalized, not exact, since it is not marked off in numerical units for grade point average or hours worked. It shows an "inverted U" relationship between average GPA and hours worked, peaking at around 15 hours of work.

What general idea is the graph trying to communicate?

Assuming this graph is a fair representation for the studies it summarizes, what do you think might cause this "inverted U" relationship between hours worked and average GPA for students?

Inverted U graph adapted from David Stern and Derek Briggs, "Does Paid Employment Help or Hinder in Secondary School? Insights from US High School Students." *Journal of Education and Work*. Vol. 14, No. 3, 2001. 355-372.



Are after-school jobs helpful or harmful for middle and high school students?

DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A Students should not have after school jobs. School is their job.

B Students should have jobs. It teaches them responsibility.

C Students should be able to work as long as their grades do not go down.

D All students should have to work so that none of them are disadvantaged.

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

Join the national conversation!



Word Generation - Unit 2.24

Focus Words

tracking | aptitude | policy | components | involve

WEEKLY PASSAGE



Academic **tracking** means students are placed into certain classes based on their abilities. Let's say Jasmine shows an **aptitude** for mathematics in sixth grade. She would then be put in advanced math courses starting in seventh grade and continuing all the way through high school. But Oscar, who is in her class, starts off slowly in math so he takes a completely different and easier set of math classes. In her senior year, when Jasmine knows more math than Oscar, is this because of aptitude or experience?

The arguments for and against the tracking **policy** have many **components**. Some people think tracking is a good idea. Students can learn at their own speed. Higher track students do not have to wait for others to catch up with them. Lower track students do not have to deal with students who are faster and get impatient with them for slowing the class down.

People who oppose academic tracking point out that the tracks are decided by testing. Tests can misrepresent students' skills. The people who think tracking is unfair argue that students who do not test well end up in low-level classes where they have fewer chances to learn. Maybe the students who score low on the test just need tutoring or a little more time to learn the same material as the high-tracked students. Tracking opponents complain that schools do not **involve** themselves in helping

lower-tracked students learn because they are busy getting higher-tracked students ready for college.

What do you think about this? Is this practice fair? Do kids like Oscar miss out on a better education because they are put into a low track?

Should middle and high schools use academic tracking?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

track : (verb) to group by ability

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

aptitude : (noun) ability, ease of learning

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

policy : (noun) course of action

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

components : (noun) parts

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

involve : (verb) to engage

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

Should middle and high schools use academic tracking?



PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Hughes Middle School follows a **policy** of academic **tracking**. The school has advanced math classes for students who have an **aptitude** for math. Choosing students for this program **involves** giving all students a math test with two **components**: calculating and critical thinking. Students must earn a total score of 80% to qualify for the advanced class.

Option 1: Julie received 95 out of 120 points on her math **aptitude** test. Will she qualify for the advanced math class?

- A) Yes
- B) No

Option 2: On the math **aptitude** test, the calculating **component** is worth 70% of the final grade, and the critical thinking **component** is worth 30%. If Bethany gets half of the calculating problems right and all of the critical thinking problems right, will she qualify for the advanced class? (You can assume that all problems within each of the two sections are worth the same number of points.)

Discussion Question: Tracking involves measuring each student's **aptitude**, and this usually means giving a test. A **policy** of tracking students using a test score means that some students will miss qualifying for a higher track by just a few points. Is it fair for a student to be put into a lower track based on a few points? Is there a way to make **tracking** decisions more fair? What **components** should a fair **tracking** system have? Or is **tracking** just wrong?

Should middle and high schools use academic tracking?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

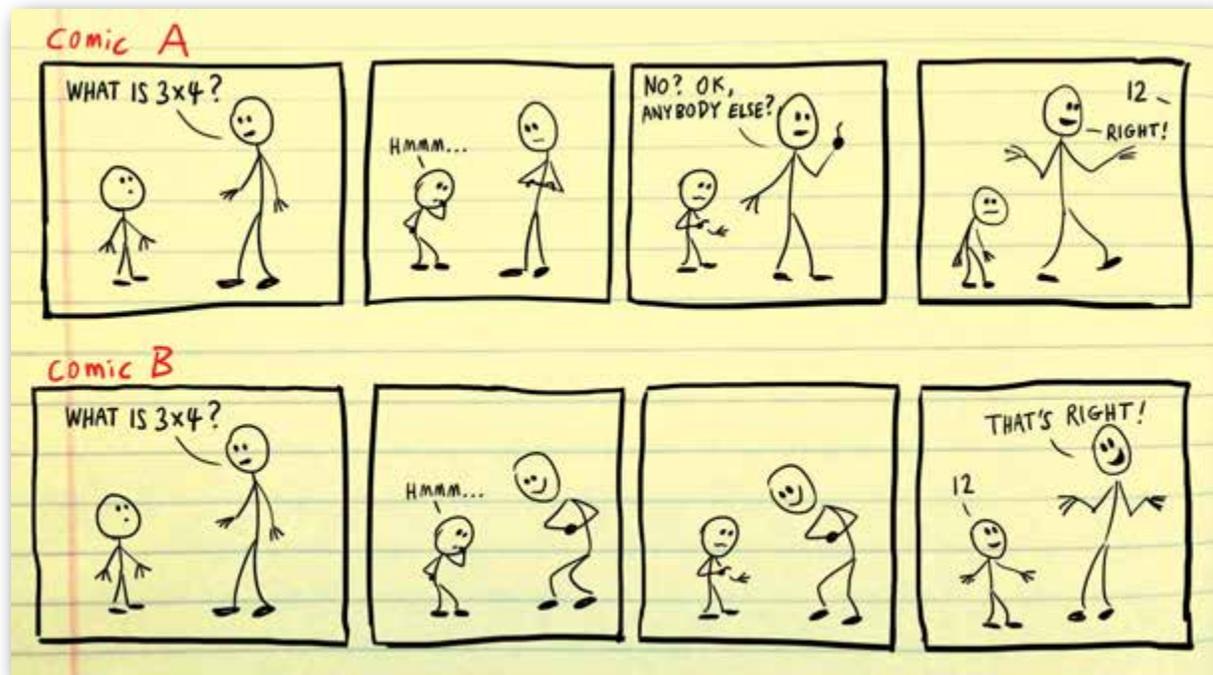
Mr. Seemy has just returned from a teacher conference during which teachers discussed the pros and cons of academic **tracking**. He's interested to hear what his students think about the idea.

"I wish our school used academic **tracking**," sighs Candice. "Different students are good at different things. Separate tracks would make things easier for everyone!"

"Maybe," says Rohan, "but **tracking policies** can **involve** some unintended negative results. I read online about a famous study done in 1964 by a professor named Robert Rosenthal. He told some elementary school teachers that a special new test had shown that certain students were probably about to make huge academic advances. In reality, Rosenthal had chosen the students at random. But at the end of the school year, those students really had done better than their classmates, because of the high expectations of their teachers. And other studies have shown that negative expectations can have negative effects on students."

"I doubt that," says Candice. "I can't see how a teacher's expectations would affect a student's performance."

"I can," says Warren. "Here, let's do a little informal experiment. I'm going to draw two short comic strips. Both show a student and a teacher on the first day of school. I am going to ask people which cartoon shows a teacher with high expectations and see which one they pick."



In which comic do you think the teacher expects the student to do poorly?

Why did you make the choice you did about which comic shows which scenario? Do your classmates see these comics the same way?

How do you think scenarios like these, repeated many times over the course of a school year, might affect the student?

Should middle and high schools use academic tracking?



DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

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

A Students should be tracked in school. This is the best way to make sure that students are getting the kind of instruction they need for their level.

B Students should not be tracked in school. All students regardless of their level should receive the same instruction, curriculum, and materials.

C Students should be tracked in school in different ways; tests should be used together with other ways of assessing a student's actual knowledge in math, science, social studies and English.

D Students should not be tracked at all. Students should be given opportunities to display their academic aptitudes through the school year. There should be ongoing checks to see where kids are in their learning.

E _____

Get set...

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

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe that...

I agree with you, but...

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

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

