



Should everyone get a trophy?

GETTING ORIENTED

Here is some information that might be helpful to students less familiar with this concept.



Parenting Styles

Parents have different methods for raising their children. These parenting “styles” are based on different cultures, beliefs, and experiences. For example, some parents try to minimize the time that their children spend unsupervised. These parents may follow their children around at the playground to guide them and to protect them from getting hurt. They may also do more things for their children in an effort to be sure they are safe and happy. These parents may feel that their extra help will make their children more successful and confident. Other parents focus more on encouraging their children to be independent and make their own mistakes. They may allow their children to explore the world alone by doing things like riding a public bus or going to the playground without adult

supervision. This is sometimes referred to as “free range parenting.” These parents believe that stepping back will help their children become self-reliant and better able to solve their own problems. Some people worry that free range parents take too many risks with their children’s safety.



American Parents Value vs. Parents in Other Countries

In the United States, parents often praise their children for being ‘smart’ or ‘a quick learner,’ indicating these parents value intelligence over personality traits. According to studies, the U.S. seems to be the only country focusing so much on intelligence. This may be because U.S. culture highly values individual achievement. Parents in other countries, when asked to describe their toddlers, focus on emotional characteristics that reflect what those cultures value. For example, parents in Australia and Europe most often refer to their toddlers as happy or well balanced. These countries focus more on being kind and part of a community than on individual success.





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EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

	<i>Some may have this view:</i>	<i>But others may think:</i>
Teachers	Many teachers and coaches may think that young children should always be rewarded for trying, since they are new to school and are just developing social and academic skills. They want children to learn to love the sport or activity and worry they will get discouraged. They might also want the children to focus on teamwork and skill building, rather than winning.	Other teachers and coaches may feel that, if all students are rewarded equally, then they may not work as hard and develop the skills needed to be resilient after failure. For example, if young children are constantly rewarded for just showing up, they may not feel that it is necessary to challenge and push themselves to achieve a goal. They view part of their role as preparing kids for the competitive nature of the world.
Young Children	Young children may feel that everyone should get a trophy because the sports and activities they do should be about fun, rather than winning. These children think everyone should get a chance to participate and enjoy the activity without worrying that they are not good enough.	Other children may feel that only those who are the best should get a trophy. They may feel that they should be rewarded if they worked harder and did better than the other children. They might not feel it is as fun or exciting if they can't really "win". Also, some children may be okay not getting a trophy if they did not do as well and may feel like they had fun anyway.
Parents	All parents want to protect their children and want them to experience success. They may believe that all children should be encouraged through rewards and that their children, even if they are not the best at something, deserve recognition for trying. They think that, if they are rewarded for trying, then they will be more likely to try harder in the future. Some parents also believe that more children will get to participate and will learn to work together if the focus is not on winning.	Other parents believe that it is harmful not to teach children how the real world works, since adults win and lose all the time. They may feel that, when you don't get something you want, you need to try harder. These parents believe their children need to develop non-academic skills of persistence and being a good loser. By allowing children to explore, succeed, and fail, these parents hope to develop independent children. Also, they would say it is unfair for children who did not succeed at something to receive the same reward as other children who did.

Additional Information

- Overall, 57% of Americans say only kids who win should get a trophy.
- People who vote Republican are more likely to say only kids who win should get a trophy.
- The more money a person makes, the less they believe that everyone should get a trophy.
- A "fixed mindset" says that character, intelligence, and ability are fixed things we can't really change, and success confirms these inherent traits.
- A "growth mindset" says that failure does not prove a lack of ability but is an opportunity to grow and improve things like character and intelligence.

Synopsis of the Growth Mindset

<http://www.brainpickings.org/2014/01/29/carol-dweck-mindset/>

Free Range Kids

<http://www.freerangekids.com>

Helicopter Parenting

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/julie-m-green/in-defence-of-helicopter-_b_5610337.html

NPR Blog on Both Sides of the Issue

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/ed/2014/07/29/336301660/should-kids-get-a-trophy-for-showing-up>



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ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Features of Academic Writing: Seeking Clues to Word Meanings

Often embedded in Word Generation units are clues to help students identify the meanings of specific vocabulary. Highlighted in the text are several clues that help students understand the meanings of words. Have the students identify how these clues help them comprehend the given vocabulary, (e.g., two different words having similar meanings).

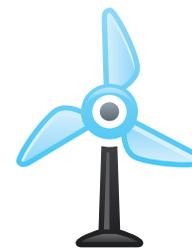
Parents cheered from the sidelines as Daniela scored her third goal. Her team was up 5–0 in the final game of the kindergarten soccer tournament. But at the closing ceremonies, there were no winners or losers. Every child who **participated** in the tournament was awarded a trophy.

While some people believe we should teach children that participating in the game is more important than winning, others worry that too many children today are being protected from life's challenges. They think children will not learn to recover from **disappointment or failure**. There is little **consensus** about whether competition at a young age helps or hurts the development of **resilience—the ability to bounce back from disappointment, failure, or hardship**.

Those who oppose competition argue that childhood should be a time for building self-esteem. Early in their development, children learn to categorize and compare. They separate big from small, heavy from light, tall from short, and sweet from sour. Competition **yields** another set of categories to compare: winners and losers. Identifying as a loser from a young age could damage a child's confidence and make him or her less likely to take part in competitions later in life. In fact, some kids report feeling so much pressure to win from their parents that they can't enjoy participating in games. Giving every participant a trophy reduces the focus on winning and can free children to work together, pass the ball, and support each other. Furthermore, when coaches are not worried about losing, they are more likely to encourage less talented players to participate and take risks. More children can feel good about themselves.

On the other hand, learning to lose at an early age could make children more **resilient**. Competition is part of adult life. People compete when they apply to college, interview for jobs, audition for parts in a play, and seek promotions. Some are chosen because they are considered **superior** candidates, and the rest are rejected. Everyone is likely to fail at something. By failing at a young age, kindergartners can learn to try their best and work around their limitations. Furthermore, giving everyone a trophy could harm children's motivation. If a child who works tirelessly to memorize words for the spelling bee receives the same prize as a classmate who did the bare minimum, why would anyone work hard? Losing might motivate children by teaching them that hard work is required to succeed.

What do you think? Should kindergartners get trophies just for participating?



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GENERATING WORDS

Words with Multiple Meanings

In English, we have words that mean many different things. One of the focus words this week is the word **superior**. In the text, **superior** means something of higher quality. For example, "Some are chosen because they are considered **superior** candidates..." This means some people are chosen because they are considered better than the other people who are applying.

We also commonly use the word **superior** to say something or someone has a higher degree of importance. For example, in the military, the most common use of **superior** is when you are talking about someone who has a higher rank than you. For example, a general is **superior** to a captain.

Superior, though, comes from the Latin root *super*, which means above. So its original use was to show location. Lake Superior was given its name because it is above Lake Huron.

As with so many words, the use of **superior** has changed over time. It changed from referring to an actual physical place to representing a quality or a status, like a military rank. A general in the Army is **superior** to a captain, but she is not physically located 'above' him. She is simply his boss.

Super- is often used as a prefix that goes with another root word. A prefix is a group of letters that can be added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning. For example, if you add the prefix *un-* to the word *kind*, you get *unkind*. You changed the meaning from someone who is kind to someone who is mean.

Fill in the chart with the likely meanings of these words. Remember, the prefix *super-* means above or beyond.

superbug	an infection or "bug" that will not respond to antibiotics
supernatural	
superhuman	
superhero	
supercomputer	

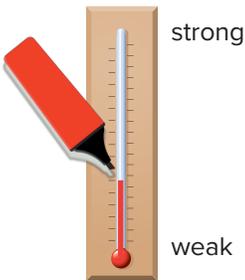


With a partner, try creating new words by adding *super-* as prefix.



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DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS



All kindergartners should get an award for participating in a competition.

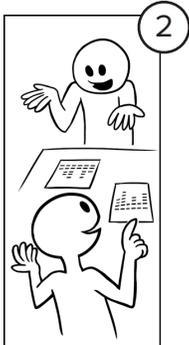
<i>If everyone participated, then everyone should be recognized.</i>	<i>Awards are important for kids to help develop their self-esteem.</i>	<i>Write your own:</i>

Only the winners should get an award in kindergarten competitions.

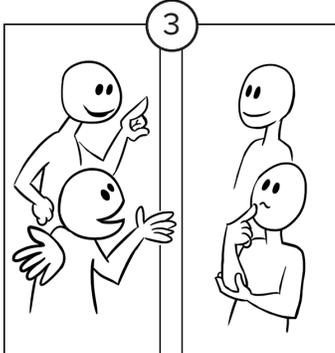
<i>Children need to learn that it takes hard work to be successful.</i>	<i>It is important for children to learn that in competitions and life, not everyone wins.</i>	<i>Write your own:</i>



1



2



3

Step One: Look at the reasons for both sides of the issue. Think about which reasons you believe are strong and which are weak. Color in the meter above each reason. Think about why you chose the strongest and weakest reasons. Be ready to explain to your partner. Think about how you can use the focus words: *yield, participate, superior, resilient, and consensus.*

Step Two: Explain your meter to your partner and have them explain theirs, using the phrases in the box to the right. Why did you choose a strong or weak rating? Ask your partner questions if you need more explanation. Challenge your partner if your ratings are different. As a pair, be prepared to argue that one of the issues has stronger reasons.

Step Three: As a pair, explain to another pair of students in the class which side you think has the stronger reasons.

Words and phrases:

- The strongest reason for not giving every child an award is _____.
- The strongest reason for giving every child an award is _____.
- This is the strongest reason because _____.
- The article provides evidence for this when it says _____.
- This is the weakest reason due to _____.
- That sounds like a good reason, but what is the evidence for _____?
- Is there data to support _____?
- I agree that it's the strongest. Can you think of any more evidence?
- That's important, but do you think it outweighs _____.
- I didn't think of that. Can you say more?
- We decided that _____ has stronger reasons. For example, _____.
- Which side do you think has the best reasons?
- Can you think of any reasons that are not included here?