



CUNYASSESSMENT TEST IN WRITING (CATW) Practice 10

Read the passage below and write an essay responding to the ideas it presents. In your essay, be sure to summarize the passage in your own words, stating the author's most important ideas. Develop your essay by identifying one idea in the passage that you feel is especially significant, and explain its significance. Support your claims with evidence or examples drawn from what you have read, learned in school, and/or personally experienced.

Teenage Bullies

Teens who are already popular but are trying to become even more so are the most likely to bully other kids, new research suggests.

These kids seem to think that attacking others will raise their own status in the eyes of their peers, according to the study. Researchers asked about 3,700 high school students about how often they were the target of physical aggression, verbal aggression (such as teasing or threats), or rumors. Teens were also asked how often they did these things to a classmate.

Kids who were popular, but not the most popular, were the most likely to bully others.

In fact, bullying was most common in this group of more popular kids, but it dropped for the *most* popular kids—the top 2 percent—perhaps because they no longer feel the need to put others down to improve their own status.

The least popular kids did little bullying, possibly because they did not have the power to even attempt it.

The good news is that most kids—about 67 percent—did not bully anyone.

This gives us an idea of what to do about it. Rather than focus only on the bullies or their victims, programs should also include the majority who aren't involved, but whose silence may encourage bullying. "The bystanders give people their status, and they can decide to reward aggression or scorn it," a researcher said.

Bullying causes about 160,000 U.S. students to skip school each day, according to the study. Kids who are being bullied should be taught to be assertive, but also to notify their parents and school authorities if the bullying gets out of hand, experts say. And kids who stand by and watch should be taught to speak up, as well.

Adapted from "Bullying May Accompany Drive to be Popular" by Jenifer Goodwin, *US News*, February 8, 2011.