



CUNYASSESSMENT TEST IN WRITING (CATW) Practice 11

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.

New Rules on the Playground

Some traditional childhood games are disappearing from school playgrounds because educators say they're dangerous. Elementary schools in Wyoming and Washington banned tag at recess this year. Other schools across the country have forbidden contact sports, such as soccer and touch football, except when played as part of official school teams.

Donna Thompson of the National Program for Playground Safety, verifies that this is the new trend. Educators worry about "kids running into one another" and getting hurt, she says. For example, Freedom Elementary School in Wyoming prohibited tag at recess because it "progresses easily into slapping and hitting and pushing instead of just touching," Principal Cindy Farwell says.

Contact sports were banned from recess at Charles Pinckney Elementary early this year, says Charleston County schools spokeswoman Mary Girault, because children suffered broken arms and dislocated fingers playing touch football and soccer.

While we all want to keep kids safe on the playground, these restrictions have gone too far. Children have been inventing and playing games in their free time throughout history. The bans were passed in the name of safety, but some children's health advocates say limiting exercise and free play can inhibit a child's development.

Playing freely, without adult supervision, helps kids learn to negotiate rules and resolve disputes. "They learn to change and to problem-solve," says Rhonda Clements, a professor of education. Joe Frost, another professor of early childhood education, also sees playground restrictions as harmful. "You're taking away the physical development of the children," he says. "Having time for play is essential for children."

Adapted from "‘Not It’: More Schools ban Games at Recess" by Emily Bazar, *USA Today*, June 27, 2006.