



The Participation Trophy: Should They be Given in Youth Sports?

By: Jessica Shaffer

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Sports
Grades 3–5



Introduction

In many youth sports, participation trophies are given out. This has been a topic of great debate over recent years. Students can voice their opinions on whether or not they feel children should receive a participation trophy for simply participating in a sport.

Learning Objectives

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.1](#). Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a view with reasons and information.

Materials Needed

- [Pre-writing graphic organizer](#)
- [Writer's checklist](#)
- Additional activities
- Chromebook/tablet/computer

Procedure

1. Discuss youth sports and recreational leagues versus competitive travel teams. Talk about reasons why trophies are earned and talk about receiving participation trophies.
2. Watch videos and read articles about youth sports and participation trophies. Make sure to preview all before assigning, as websites and contents change frequently. Make sure the information is appropriate for the grade level you are teaching.
 - [Should Youth Sports Hand Out Participation Trophies?](#)
 - [In Youth Sports , Participation Trophies Send a Powerful Message?](#)
 - [How Do Participation Trophies Affect Children in Youth Sports?](#)
 - [Participation Trophy Debate](#)
 - [Participation Awards in Youth Sports](#)
 - [Trophy Kids: Youth Sports](#)
 - [Real Sports: HBO Discussion](#)
 - [NFL Player & Participation Trophies](#)

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3. Have students fill in a graphic organizer to organize ideas for writing. Students will use the ideas in this organizer to create their opinion piece.
4. Have students begin to create their opinion piece. The first part will be the introduction. In the introduction, students should include:
 - The introduction should “hook” or grab the attention of the reader.
 - Students should state their argument in the opening paragraph.
5. Have students create the body of their essays. There should be at least three paragraphs of supporting details.
 - These should all be statements that support the student's opinion.
 - Include a topic sentence in each paragraph.
 - Each supporting detail should be backed with facts to support the argument. Students can use any of the links provided, as well as any additional facts they find.
 - Opinions and personal views should be included throughout, but must be supported with factual evidence.
6. Have students create the conclusion for their opinion piece.
 - Have a topic sentence that restates the argument and facts that support it.
 - Have a strong last sentence, or “clincher”, in the essay. This is what will leave a lasting impression on the readers.
7. Teachers will conference with students as they create their writing piece. If teachers do not wish to conference with the students, they can monitor the work being completed and help on an as-needed basis.
8. When the rough draft of the essay is completed, students should have one to two peers edit the persuasive essay and make the appropriate changes.
9. Students will make the final edits and create the final draft of their essay.

Extension Activity: Students can participate in a class debate about whether or not they feel participation trophies should be given out in youth sports. When the students are finished with their writing, they can get into small groups with those others sharing a like opinion to prepare.

Evaluation

You should use the writing rubric that your district requires to grade the writing. You can use the rough draft, the checklist, and the debate as classwork grades. **Note:** This activity can be modified for each grade level. This activity is geared more for grade 5 students, but can still work for grade 3 or 4.

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