

Directions: Read the sample argumentative essay below.

Until two weeks ago, seventh graders could be found tossing footballs, running for touchdowns, and working through sports related conflicts. Recess was a time to play, learn, and exercise. Then, football was banned for being “too dangerous.” Now you’ll find us lounging on the grass and wishing for something to fill our time with. What the adults at M.S. 293 need to understand is that football is not dangerous. In fact, it is great for kids. Football is a good source of exercise, is a game that everyone can participate in, and helps you learn important life lessons.

The first reason football should not be banned from recess is because it is great exercise. The TIME for Kids article, “First Lady Fights Fat in Kids,” talks about the different ways that Mrs. Obama is fighting obesity in America. One of the reasons kids get obese is because they don’t get enough exercise. This shows how important sports like football are. Also, Sam Rapoport, a senior manager for USA Football says “Football is great exercise.” Teachers and kids could play together and everyone would be more active. We need football so we don’t grow up to be unhealthy and get diseases like diabetes or heart disease.

Another reason we should be able to play football during recess is because everyone can play. You don’t need to spend money on fancy equipment or uniforms. Football will not cost the school any money. Football has big teams so it doesn’t leave anyone out like other games. Just picture it: Every child in sixth grade invited to play together! Whether you are a great player or a beginner, there is always a place for you on the team! Some people think football is only for boys, but that’s not true. Out of 25 kids, all 25 said they wanted football. Even my mom and sister love to play. This proves that football is a valuable part of recess and should not be banned.

The final and most important reason why we should have football is because it will help us learn important things. For example, we can learn to solve problems. For instance, sometimes a play is made and both teams argue because they think they should get the point. This gives kids a chance to work out their problems on their own and make a solution. In “Flag Football: It’s the Girls’ Turn to Play,” Christine McAndrews, a parent, argues that football is good for kids. She says that “It’s great for their social skills and they resolve things on their own. It’s good for them.” As a parent, she should know. This proves that football can teach us a lot.

Please allow football again at recess. We will be healthier, stronger kids if you do. We will get more exercise, we will build community, and we will learn important skills. These are lessons we need, and as long as we are careful, we can be safe. Please take the football ban away and let us play again.

Sources:

“First Lady Fights Fat in Kids.” TIME for Kids (2010)

“Flag Football: It’s the Girls’ Turn to Play.” Washington Post (2011)

Assess the essay:

1. Underline the essay’s thesis statement.
2. Does the thesis follow the thesis formula? Why or why not?
3. Circle the reason in each body paragraph.
4. Does each reason match what the writer stated in his/her thesis?
5. Put a star above each piece of evidence used in the body paragraphs.
6. How well does the author explain each piece of evidence?
7. Is the essay missing any parts of the argumentative structure? If so, what?
8. Overall, what does the author do well? What does the author need to improve?

