

The Prompt:

There are both good things and bad things about playing on a team, such as the school soccer team or the school volleyball team. Write a composition for your teacher in which you explain both what is good and what is bad about playing on a school team. Be sure to explain each point fully.

The Model Essay:

Consider the Challenges

It is the last game of the volleyball season. Fans are tightly packed in the bleachers. Cheerleaders are screaming and encouraging the fans to do so, too. The home team needs this last point to win the game. It's your turn to serve; the pressure is overwhelming. You get the ball, serve, and . . . it's perfect! Your team wins the game. The fans are shouting your name. You are the hero of the team. Being on an organized team sport for your school can be a great experience, but there's a downside, too, that all of us should be aware of.

Team sports can provide a wonderful road to fitness, but they can also lead to injuries. With a team sport, you don't have to plan for exercise because the sport makes it an automatic part of your daily schedule. With the regular practice and games, you maintain an active, healthy lifestyle. The best part is that you're having fun being fit. Playing volleyball on a team with your friends certainly beats jogging alone. Of course, with the constant running, lunging, and practicing, you greatly increase the chances of getting hurt. If you jog one lap too many, or if you aren't looking when someone bumps you the ball, you could sprain an ankle or get a concussion and be forced to sit out the rest of the season.

Aside from the physical rewards and challenges of a team sport, think about the value of team spirit. Remember, however, that when successful team members bond with one another, less successful players can feel excluded. The winning point here is that you and all the people on your

Introduction

Attention-getting opener

Main idea statement

Body

Pro-and-con contrast 1

Advantage 1

Support: explanation

Disadvantage 1

Support: example

Pro-and-con contrast 2

Advantage 2

team share a common interest. You can become very close. Whether it's talking about the ref at yesterday's game or arguing over whose turn it is to bring a snack to practice, you and your team members enjoy being together. You feel like friends for life. It's a huge relief when someone on the other team makes fun of you, and your teammates band together to confront the harasser. Think about the flip side, though. Someone is bound to be left out. Maybe it's Patty, who can't serve well, or Laurie, who is kind of quiet. They won't share in the good times with the rest of the team. They're the ones who get whispered about in the locker room, the ones who get left out of parties that include more successful team members. It really hurts to be excluded from an experience that's supposed to be fun.

Support: examples

Disadvantage 2

Support: example

Part of the fun, of course, is the exhilaration of winning, but don't forget that for every team victory, another team has lost. Playing on a team can be especially exciting at games, when there's a whole gym full of fans shouting to support you, ready to idolize you if you win. There's nothing better than winning. But you can't win all the time. Let's say that you miss a serve or hit the ball out of bounds, causing your team to lose a game. No one in the entire school will hesitate to tell you that you missed the easiest play in the world and that your whole team played a sloppy game. The least that will happen after a loss is the unavoidable letdown of losing.

Pro-and-con contrast 3

Advantage 3

Support: example

Disadvantage 3

Support: example

I think team sports are definitely worth the challenge. Yes, you can be injured in the pursuit of fitness. You also risk the terrible feeling of being excluded if you don't play as well as others, and without fail you will experience what it feels like to lose. On the other hand, as a fit team member, you can work toward team spirit for all. After all, when teams reach out to include one another, they've won the most important game of all.

Conclusion

Weighing the advantages and disadvantages