

Read the passages and answer the questions that follow.

Passage 1

Excerpt from "Overuse Injuries Among Young Athletes on the Rise"

by Hollie Deese

Too much of a good thing

- 1 The rise in single-sport specialization is looked at as one of the factors [explaining why] kids today are seeing the kinds of injuries normally associated with adult players.
- 2 "Overuse occurs over time," Anderson says. "And instead of playing multiple positions, multiple sports, they are now specializing at a very young age and they are playing all year round. The same motion, the same joints, all the time, and they are going from one season right into the next. They are doing these showcases, and instead of playing one game a weekend, they are playing five to six games Saturday and Sunday. It is complete overuse.
- 3 And the kids who are experiencing overuse injuries are just getting younger and younger because of it.
- 4 "I have seen kids as young as 7 and 8 who suffer injuries," Geier says.
- 5 "The numbers go up as they get older, partly because kids are playing more competitively as they get older. But you can see it very early. Parents really push for kids to pick one sport and play, and there is not a lot of good scientific evidence that that actually leads to long-term success in that sport.
- 6 "But what we do know is it definitely increases your injury rate. And that is an important message that we have to do a better job of getting out there."

Communicate often

- 7 Geier says the biggest thing parents can do is to talk to their kids in a way that fosters open communication on their part. Children really want to please their parents, teammates and coaches, and may hide injuries if they feel it will let everyone down.
- 8 "Build a rapport and trust, because if you can catch some of these things early, where it is just soreness, you can shut them down for a few days or tweak

the training and avoid a major injury and major surgery it might be tough to come back from," he says. "Kids will open up if they can learn to trust you and know [you] are looking out for them."

9 And if the coach wants to win at all costs, it is up to the parent to be the advocate for their child.

10 "Ideally, you want a team approach with everybody looking out for the child," Geier says.

Hollie Deese, "Overuse Injuries Among Young Athletes on the Rise," *tennessean.com*, The Tennessean, April 11, 2015. <<http://www.tennessean.com/story/life/2015/04/12/overuseinjuriesamongyoungathletesrise/70686852/>> In the public domain.

Passage 2

Excerpt from "When Safety Is the Name of the Game"

by David Noonan

11 "We want kids to get up off the couch, we're big cheerleaders for that," says Dr. Julie Gilchrist, a sports-injury expert at the CDC's Center for Injury Prevention and Control. "But be realistic in how you're doing it. Make conscious choices about injury prevention. Don't just take it for granted."

12 Most kids get their first lumps riding their bikes and cavorting on the playground. The CDC estimates that more than 330,000 children from 5 to 14 are injured while bicycling each year. An additional 219,000 in that age group are hurt on monkey bars and other climbing equipment, swings and slides. Wearing a helmet that fits properly is the surest way to avoid serious injury on a bike. (Helmets are also the key to safer skateboarding, which accounts for about 50,000 injuries among people under 20 each year, including many head injuries.) At the playground, where 60 percent of injuries are due to falls, a soft surface to land on is a top priority. Wood chips, shredded tires and sand are good; packed-down soil is bad.

13 Organized sports, including football, are generally less risky for the 10-and-under crowd because the kids usually aren't big enough or fast enough to make collisions a serious problem. But that all changes when the hormones kick in. "At puberty, children gain muscle mass, speed and weight," says pediatric orthopedic surgeon J. Andy Sullivan, coeditor of the book *Care of the Young*

Athlete. "And the combination of those things allows them to run together hard enough to hurt each other."

- 14 There is no reliable way to compare the relative risks of various sports because the CDC doesn't track the level of participation. It knows how many people are injured playing basketball, for example (an estimated 977,000 each year, all ages), but it doesn't know how many people are playing the game, or for how long or how many days a week. "Basketball is one of the most common sports in all ages and areas of the U.S.," says Gilchrist, "and so just because it has the highest number of injuries doesn't mean that it's riskier."
- 15 Whatever the sport, injury prevention begins with the athletes and their parents. And the first thing they need to focus on, experts say, is conditioning. Being out of shape, a real problem for lots of kids, increases risk. Those who play only one sport have to be careful not to wait for their season to arrive before they begin working out; going from naps in the hammock to two-a-day football practices pretty much guarantees trouble. Appropriate gear in good condition is a must. And, simple as it sounds, knowing and learning basic skills also helps young athletes avoid injury. Baseball players should know how to slide correctly, football players how to tackle, soccer players how to head the ball.
- 16 Besides making sure their kids are fit and understand the fundamentals, parents can make any sport safer by attending games and practices, watching the coaches and encouraging them to emphasize injury prevention. (Which is hardly inconsistent with winning, since superior skill and safety go hand in hand.) Parents can also promote safety by urging officials to call stringent games. When a ref won't tolerate flagrant fouls, players usually get the message and rein themselves in (or they get ejected). The cleaner the game, the safer.

Excerpt from "When Safety Is the Name of the Game," by David Noonan, from *Newsweek*, September 22, 2003, Vol. 142. Copyright © 2003 by Newsweek LLC. Used by permission of Newsweek LLC via Copyright Clearance Center.

1 What does the word flagrant mean as it is used in paragraph 16?

- A. easily avoidable
- B. outcome altering
- C. previously ignored
- D. deliberately harsh

- 2** Which statement is a central idea of passage 1?
- M.** Players should be encouraged to report injuries and get treatment to avoid more serious damage.
 - P.** Many young athletes compete in tournaments where they can play several games in a weekend.
 - R.** Some parents believe that by pushing their children to specialize in a sport it will increase their success.
 - S.** More athletes get injured as they grow older because they are starting to play more competitively.

- 3** The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

Which statement **best** expresses the central idea of passage 2?

- A.** Wearing a helmet properly can help prevent many childhood bicycling and skateboarding injuries.
- B.** Parents can help prevent children's sports injuries by attending games and helping to enforce the rules.
- C.** Childhood injuries resulting from play and sports are common but measures can be taken to help prevent them.
- D.** Many types of play and sports involve risk of injury for children, but proper preparation and conditioning can help prevent injuries.

Part B

How does the author develop the central idea in the passage?

- M.** The author describes the strategies children and young athletes should use to remain healthy and avoid injury.
- P.** The author presents data about children's play and sports injuries along with strategies for addressing risk and reducing the rate of injury.
- R.** The author argues that parents can help reduce the risk of children's sports injuries by being involved in the process.
- S.** The author compares injury rates of different types of play and sports and advises against activities such as skateboarding and basketball.

Writing Prompt

You have just read two passages about sports injuries in young people. Write an informational essay explaining the strategies parents and children can use to prevent sports injuries among young athletes.

Manage your time carefully so that you can

- plan your essay and do some prewriting using your scratch paper.
- write your essay on the lined pages in your test booklet.

Be sure to

- use evidence from **both** passages.
- avoid over-relying on one passage.

Your written response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph informational essay.

Write your essay on the lined pages of your test booklet. **Anything you write that is not on the lined pages in your test booklet will NOT be scored.**