

Do You Need Recess?

In busy school schedules, recess takes a back seat.
Should this change?

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 1070L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to read and analyze a text that presents arguments on both sides of a debate, then take a stand

Featured Skill: argument writing

Additional skills covered in this lesson plan: identifying central ideas and details, evaluating an argument, using text evidence

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core Anchor Standards: R.1, R.2, R.4, R.5, R.6, R.8, W.1, SL.1, L.4, L.5, L.6

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.

Do You Need Recess?

In busy school schedules, recess takes a back seat. Should this be changed?
By Mackenzie Carr

What Do You Think?

Does recess belong on the school schedule?
Go back to the article to find arguments that support each side of the debate. Write the information on the lines below.

Yes	No
1. Recess offers a chance to be active.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Take this activity further!
Write an essay using our Scope template.

Your Teaching Package

Find your full suite of support materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- Article read-aloud
- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary

Connected readings

from the Scope archives:

- "Should the School Week Be Shorter?"
- "Should School Start Later?"
- "Should Lunch Be Longer?"
- "Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria?"
- "Should School Be Canceled for Bad Weather?"

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice
- Persuasive Appeals: Ethos, Pathos, Logos
- Featured Skill Activity: Essay Kit
- Anchor Chart: Great Transitions
- Anchor Chart: Argument Essay Checklist
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (15 minutes)

Do Now: Take a Poll (5 minutes)

- Project the following question on your whiteboard for students to respond to in their journals as they enter the classroom:

Does recess belong on the school schedule? Why or why not?

- Take a poll and invite students to justify their responses. Then tell them that today, they will read and analyze arguments on both sides of the debate.

Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *extracurriculars, facilitate, mandate, monitor, retain*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link directly to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

2. Read and Discuss (45 minutes)

- Optionally, for students' first read, have them follow along as they listen to the **audio read-aloud**, located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View. Then have students silently reread the article to themselves.
- Project the article. Complete the following steps as a class, modeling text marking on your whiteboard while students mark their magazines:
 1. **Using a RED pencil write a sentence that expresses the main argument (central claim) on one side of the debate.** (e.g., *Students need recess.*)
 2. **Circle the paragraphs that contain reasons that support that main argument.** (paragraphs 2, 3, 4 in the section "Brain Breaks" and paragraphs 1 and 2 in the section "Get Moving")

3. Have students repeat steps 1 and 2 independently, but for the other side of the debate, this time using a **BLUE** colored pencil. (*Central Claim: Recess should not be mandated; Circle: paragraph 5 in the section “Brain Breaks” and paragraph 3 in the section “Get Moving”*)
- Have students fill in the “Yes/No” chart in their magazines based on the details they identified in the text. Then discuss: Do you think the writer shows bias—that is, a preference for one side of the debate or the other? Explain and support your answer with text evidence. Which supporting detail do you think is the strongest? The weakest?

3. Write About It: What Do You Think? (45 minutes)

- Have students work individually to complete the **Essay Kit**, a guided writing activity and outline that will help them write their own argument essay in response to this question:

Does recess belong on the school schedule?

- Students can use the **Great Transitions** and **Argument Essay Checklist** anchor charts to help them edit and evaluate their essays.

Dig deeper with these texts:

Guiding Question: How could this information be used to strengthen the argument that middle schoolers **SHOULD** have recess?

- [“Turns Out Monkey Bars And Kickball Might Be Good For The Brain”](#)
- [“How Finland Keeps Kids Focused Through Free Play”](#)

Guiding Question: How could this information be used to strengthen the argument that middle schoolers **SHOULD NOT** have recess?

- [“Playground Safety Guide”](#)

Connected readings from the Scope archives—other debates related to the school day:

- Essay Kit: [“Should the School Week Be Shorter?”](#)
- Essay Kit: [“Should School Start Later?”](#)
- Scavenger Hunt: [“Should Lunch Be Longer?”](#)
- Scavenger Hunt: [“Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria?”](#)
- Scavenger Hunt: [“Should School Be Canceled for Bad Weather?”](#)