

Answer Key: Clean Hits & Ego Trips: 10th Grade Ethics of Competition

Can a victory be a loss if won without honor? Analyze complex ethical dilemmas and real-world sporting conflicts through an evaluative lens.

1. During a high-stakes championship, an athlete notices the officiating crew has consistently favored their team due to a subconscious implicit bias. According to the principle of 'Integrity of the Game,' what is the most ethically sound course of action?

Answer: B) The athlete or coach should privately acknowledge the discrepancy to the official to restore competitive balance.

True sportsmanship involves upholding the integrity of the contest; acknowledging systemic errors to officials maintains the validity of the competition outcome.

2. In the context of 'Gamesmanship' vs. 'Sportsmanship,' using legal but psychologically manipulative tactics (e.g., 'icing' a kicker) is considered a promotion of long-term athletic respect.

Answer: B) False

Gamesmanship focuses on winning by any legal means, including psychological manipulation, whereas sportsmanship focuses on the 'spirit' of the rules and mutual respect.

3. In 10th-grade competitive theory, the concept of _____ occurs when an athlete views their opponent not as a fellow competitor, but as an obstacle to be eliminated, often leading to ethical breaches.

Answer: A) Dehumanization

Dehumanization in sports leads to a lack of empathy for the opponent, which is often the root cause of violent or unethical behavior on the field.

4. Consider the 'Unwritten Rules' of baseball or cricket. When a player breaks an unwritten rule that results in an advantage, but does not break a literal rule, they are primarily violating:

Answer: B) The Social Contract of the Sport

Sportsmanship relies on a social contract—an unspoken agreement among participants to play with a specific level of honor that goes beyond the written rulebook.

5. Evaluating the ethical implications of 'Technological Doping' (e.g., high-tech swimsuits or advanced footwear): This creates an unfair advantage primarily because it violates the _____ of the sport.

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Answer: C) Level playing field

The 'level playing field' is a core tenet of fair play, ensuring that outcome is determined by skill and effort rather than access to superior technology.

6. If a rower stops their race to help a competitor whose boat has capsized, sacrificing their own podium finish, they are demonstrating 'Virtue Ethics' in a sports context.

Answer: A) True

Virtue ethics focuses on the character of the individual; prioritizing the safety and well-being of a peer over personal gain is a prime example of virtuous sportsmanship.

7. When a professional athlete uses their platform to critique a referee's systemic bias in a post-game press conference, this is best analyzed as:

Answer: B) An exercise in accountability and advocacy for justice.

In advanced sportsmanship analysis, respect for officials does not mean silence in the face of systemic unfairness; constructive critique aims to improve the game's integrity.

8. The 'Mercy Rule' in youth sports is often debated. High school athletes must evaluate if continuing to score at maximum effort against a clearly outmatched opponent is a sign of _____ or a lack of compassion.

Answer: D) Statistical padding

Continuing to run up a score solely for individual statistics when the game is decided is generally viewed by ethicists as 'statistical padding' and poor sportsmanship.

9. Which scenario requires the most complex ethical evaluation of 'Fair Play'?

Answer: C) A defender in soccer intentionally committing a 'tactical foul' to stop a breakaway goal, knowing they will receive a red card.

Tactical fouls are complex because they are legal within the punishment structure of the game (trading a card for a goal) but challenge the 'spirit' of clean play.

10. True sportsmanship requires that an athlete must always put the needs of the opponent above their own desire to win.

Answer: B) False

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Sportsmanship requires respect and fairness, but it does not require an athlete to forfeit their own competitive goals; the two should exist in a balanced tension.