

Test Prep Overview

Simplify Writing® provides writing test prep materials for 3rd-8th grade. These resources are designed to prepare students for district or state writing assessments by modeling the testing process.

Each grade level includes 8 full writing tasks:

4 Writing Genres: narrative, informational/explanatory, opinion/argumentative, and text-dependent analysis (TDA)

Two Tasks per Genre: teachers may choose to guide students through the first task by completing it together, and then allowing students to complete the second task independently to mimic the testing environment

Text-Based Prompts: each writing task requires students to analyze 1-4 passages that will be used to respond to a prompt

Checklists, Organizers, and Rubrics: everything you need to guide students in fully responding to every part of a writing task

Exemplars: each writing task includes 4 exemplars, aligned to the four levels of the rubric

Print + Digital Resources: both versions are provided to allow for practice with digital tools as needed

Have questions? We'd love to answer them!
Just send an email to help@simplifywriting.com

The background of the entire page is a light-colored, top-down photograph of a wooden desk. On the desk, there are several spiral-bound notebooks, some with papers tucked into them. There are also several pencil holders, some containing pencils and pens. The overall scene is a typical school desk setup, presented in a soft, slightly faded style. A teal horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text.

4th grade Informational Sample

Checklist

Text-Based Informational/ Explanatory Writing

- Read the prompt carefully and brainstorm your ideas on the topic.
- Read the texts carefully, taking notes about the topic.
- Form a main idea statement about the topic.
- Group your information into several categories related to your main idea.
- Organize your response with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Use relevant and specific information from the text to elaborate on your topic (details, examples, quotes, etc.).
- Use transition words and precise vocabulary.
- Revise and edit your work carefully, checking for correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar.

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Checklist

Text-Based Informational/ Explanatory Writing

- Read the prompt carefully and brainstorm your ideas on the topic.
- Read the texts carefully, taking notes about both sides of the topic.
- Form an opinion about the prompt.
- Develop several reasons that support your opinion.
- Organize your response with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Use relevant and specific information from the text to elaborate on your reasons (details, examples, quotes, etc.).
- Use transition words and precise vocabulary.
- Revise and edit your work carefully, checking for correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar.

Annotation Marks



Underline key ideas

circle important words

? Mark questions or confusions

Jot notes in the margins

Left margin: What is the author SAYING? (summarize)

Right margin: What is the author DOING? (power verb)

Annotation Marks



Underline key ideas

circle important words

? Mark questions or confusions

Jot notes in the margins

Left margin: What is the author SAYING? (summarize)

Right margin: What is the author DOING? (power verb)

Text Evidence

Sentence Starters

- ❖ According to the text...
- ❖ The text stated that...
- ❖ In the text, _____, it says...
- ❖ For instance, in the text...
- ❖ The author of _____ explained that...
- ❖ In paragraph ___ of _____, says...
- ❖ This shows/illustrates/reveals/demonstrates/proves...

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Text Evidence

Sentence Starters

- ❖ According to the text...
- ❖ The text stated that...
- ❖ In the text _____ it says...
- ❖ For instance, in the text...
- ❖ The author of _____ explained that...
- ❖ In paragraph ___ of _____ it says...
- ❖ This shows/illustrates/reveals/demonstrates/proves...

Text-Based Informational/Explanatory Writing Rubric

	4 - Advanced	3 - Proficient	2 - Basic	1 – Below Basic
Focus and Organization	I stated my main idea clearly and stayed focused the entire time. My ideas are clearly organized using effective transitions with a strong introduction, body, and conclusion.	I stated my main idea and stayed focused most of the time. My ideas are mostly organized using transitions with an introduction, body, and conclusion.	My main idea is somewhat unclear, but my reader can figure it out. I got off topic a few times. I tried to organize my ideas with a few transitions, but they were not clear.	My main idea is unclear or not stated. I got off topic a lot. I did not organize my ideas or use transitions.
Evidence and Elaboration	I clearly supported my ideas with many details, including relevant facts, examples, and quotes from the text. I chose precise, specific words to enhance my ideas.	I supported my ideas with details, including relevant facts, examples, and/or quotes from the text. I chose some precise, specific words to develop my ideas.	I supported my ideas, somewhat. I used some details from the text, but they may not fully support my ideas. I used only a few precise words to develop my ideas.	I did not support my ideas very well. I used little or no evidence from the text, or it does not support my reasons at all. I did not use any precise words to develop my ideas.
Conventions	I edited my work so that there are few or no errors left.	I edited my work so that there are few errors left.	I edited my work but left errors that may interfere with the meaning.	I did not attempt to edit my work and left many errors that interfere with the meaning.

Analyze the Prompt

There are many types of natural hazards in our world. Imagine you live in an area where earthquakes are common. Write an expository report for someone new to your community explaining some of the causes and effects of earthquakes. Be sure to develop a main idea about earthquakes and use specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

Underline the specific topic you'll be writing about.	Circle the type of writing you'll be doing.	Draw a box around anything the prompt says to include.
---	---	--

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Analyze the Prompt

There are many types of natural hazards in our world. Imagine you live in an area where earthquakes are common. Write an expository report for someone new to your community explaining some of the causes and effects of earthquakes. Be sure to develop a main idea about earthquakes and use specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

Underline the specific topic you'll be writing about.	Circle the type of writing you'll be doing.	Draw a box around anything the prompt says to include.
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Brainstorm

There are many types of natural hazards in our world. Imagine you live in an area where earthquakes are common. Write an expository report for someone new to your community explaining some of the causes and effects of earthquakes. Be sure to develop a main idea about earthquakes and use specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

My topic:	
Source	Facts, definitions, details, quotations, examples, or other information:
My Ideas	
From the Text (Summarize & Quote Information)	

What Are Earthquakes?

By Rodrigo Montenegro

Suddenly, the earth shakes and vibrates, causing glasses to clink in the cabinet and windows to rattle. A small earthquake has just taken place, unnerving residents in the area. Luckily, this earthquake was just a small tremor. Larger earthquakes can cause real damage! However, why do earthquakes occur in the first place?

Earthquakes happen when two tectonic plates slip, scrape, or bump against one another. The ground you stand on is part of the earth's crust. However, the earth's crust is not all one giant piece. Instead, it's broken into about 20 pieces that usually fit together well. These pieces, or plates, move slowly because they sit on top of the earth's mantle. The mantle is nearly-solid rock that can flow very slowly, like toothpaste. As tectonic plates move past each other, at fault lines they can get stuck from the friction. When they finally slip, or move quickly, there's an earthquake.

In an earthquake, seismic waves shake the surface of the Earth. This is because energy builds up in the tectonic plates when they are rubbing each other. When the plates slip, the energy is released as seismic waves. You can imagine the waves of an earthquake like ripples on a pond when you throw a stone into it.

The epicenter is the center of an earthquake. From here, seismic waves and vibrations spread out. At the epicenter, the vibrations are the strongest. The focus of the earthquake is the spot underground where the earthquake took place. Sometimes, the focus of an earthquake is so deep underground that it can hardly be felt at the surface. Some earthquakes' focuses and epicenters are in the ocean.

Scientists use seismographs to measure the strength of earthquakes. They also use these tools to find the epicenter. Earthquakes are rated by severity on a scale called the Richter scale. Using information from seismographs, scientists assign earthquakes a magnitude scale number. The higher the number, the more severe the earthquake. So far, the strongest earthquake recorded was magnitude 9.5. It's important to remember that the most severe earthquakes are rare. Often, after a bigger earthquake, smaller earthquakes follow. These are called aftershocks.

Believe it or not, you might be experiencing an earthquake right now! Thousands of earthquakes take place every day. However, most of them are so small that you wouldn't even notice them. These tremors are typically not very dangerous.

The Valdivia Earthquake

by Elsa Chang

May 22, 1960 started out as a normal day for people in Chile. However, this day marked the worst earthquake ever recorded in history! Today, it is known as the 1960 Valdivia Earthquake or the Great Chilean Earthquake. Measuring 9.5 in magnitude, the epicenter was just off the coast of Southern Chile. The earthquake lasted for a full ten minutes, resulting in devastating destruction.

At the Epicenter

One eyewitness, Sergio Barrientos, described chimneys crumbling and electrical wires from opposite sides of the street smacking into each other. The quake was so bad that Barrientos couldn't get up or move for the entire ten minutes.

Valdivia was the town most affected by the quake. In fact, 90% of houses were destroyed. As a result, 20,000 people were left homeless. Some houses and buildings were built to withstand earthquakes, but the average person's house was not. Whole city blocks were destroyed by the earthquake. To this day, some of the empty spaces left by the earthquake are used as parks and lots.

The earthquake stretched out the whole country 2500 miles westward, making the country bigger! In total, the country gained about 1,500 football fields in size! One town reportedly moved 30 feet west in only seconds. This had large impacts on the geography in the area, changing it forever.

Landslides also closed off a mountain that drains a lake, so water built up in the lake. Officials had to make a plan to move the dirt to let the water out through the river again. However, they had to make sure the river didn't flood towns downstream.

Tsunamis

This enormous earthquake took place underwater, causing tsunamis around the world. Tsunamis are enormous ocean waves that can wipe out entire towns. Within Chile, the tsunami waves were up to 82 feet tall! Many people died. Docks, boats, and other coastal structures were also damaged or destroyed by the tsunamis.

Over 15 hours after the earthquake, another tsunami had traveled across the ocean to Hawaii. There, the tsunami was 35 feet high and took the lives of 61 people. A tsunami in Japan killed 138 people and demolished over 1,600 houses. Yet other tsunamis affected people in the Philippines, Los Angeles, and San Diego.

Overall, the Valdivia Earthquake was a serious seismic event. Not only did many people die, but it destroyed property and changed the geography of a whole country! It took many years for the areas affected to recover.

Minimizing The Effects

by Ava Woods

Earthquakes can cause a lot of destruction in just a few minutes. Unlike most natural disasters, earthquakes can't be predicted. That means it's difficult to prepare for an earthquake. However, knowing how earthquakes work and where they're most likely to happen can help us minimize the damage.

Effects of Earthquakes

Falling buildings are one of the biggest causes of death in earthquakes. The most damaging motion for buildings is the movement from side to side. In some cases, buildings simply fall because of the shaking. When the earth settles at a lower point than before, the building may not have the support it needs. In some extreme cases, earthquakes can make the ground liquefy. It's as though the ground becomes quicksand. Usually, this happens only in places where ground water is high. Liquefaction can make buildings lean or tip over completely.

Another common effect of earthquakes is fires. If a gas line breaks during an earthquake and sparks fly, the gas catches on fire. It can be harder to fight fires after earthquakes because water pipes may break. As a result, water can't get to fire hydrants. After the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, fires lasted for 3 days.

Large earthquakes can also cause tsunamis. Tsunami waves that ripple across the ocean. Tsunamis can flood coastal areas, destroy homes, and kill people.

Minimizing Earthquake Damage

Today, earthquakes cause less damage than in the past because we understand why they happen. Although we can't predict them, we know where they're most likely to happen along fault lines. In high-risk areas, governments have strict building codes. These codes require builders to make buildings that can resist the shaking and swaying of earthquakes.

Earthquakes today still cause fires, however it's not as common. In the past, many people used wood or coal stoves. During earthquakes, these stoves could fall over, spreading fire everywhere. Today, people know to turn off their gas and electricity after an earthquake. Plus, builders install gas pipes differently, making sure the pipes move with the building and are flexible enough to resist breaking.

To reduce the effects of tsunamis, we now have the technology to predict these waves. Many coastal towns use an alarm or warning system to alert residents. This way, they can evacuate before a tsunami hits. Although tsunami warning systems can't save houses, they can save lives.

Earthquakes can be scary events that can cause a lot of damage. However, with preparation and safety systems, they don't have to be deadly.

Plan

There are many types of natural hazards in our world. Imagine you live in an area where earthquakes are common. Write an expository report for someone new to your community explaining some of the causes and effects of earthquakes. Be sure to develop a main idea about earthquakes and use specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

Main Idea Statement:	
Category	Elaborations: facts, definitions, examples, and quotes

Sample



Exemplars

Sample

There are many types of natural hazards in our world. Imagine you live in an area where earthquakes are common. Write an expository report for someone new to your community explaining some of the causes and effects of earthquakes. Be sure to develop a main idea about earthquakes and use specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

No matter where you live, you will likely experience some kind of natural hazard. Some places have hurricanes or tornadoes. However, our community experiences earthquakes. This is when the ground vibrates uncontrollably. Knowing the causes and effects of earthquakes can help you stay safe.

The Earth's crust is made up of separate pieces called tectonic plates. They sit on top of the Earth's mantle, which is "solid rock that can flow very slowly, like toothpaste." When the tectonic plates bump into each other quickly, it can cause an earthquake. Seismic waves make the vibrations of the earthquakes spread out like ripples. So everywhere in town, you can feel the earth shaking.

When an earthquake occurs, there are some dangers. For example, during an earthquake in Valdivia, Chile many people lost their houses. The text stated that "40% of houses were destroyed." Earthquakes can also cause fires or tsunamis. (Tsunamis are giant waves from the ocean.) Sometimes, people even die during an earthquake.

Yet, there are many things you can do to stay safe during an earthquake. First, make sure your house is built to withstand shaking. This will help protect you and your home. Also, be sure to turn off your gas and electricity during an earthquake. That will help prevent fires. The article "Minimizing the Effects" explained that "Many coastal towns have an alarm or warning system to alert residents." So, pay attention in case you need to evacuate.

Since our town is built on a fault line, earthquakes happen a lot. Usually they are small, but sometimes they are more serious. Although we can't really prevent earthquakes from happening, it helps to know their causes and possible effects so you can minimize damages like fires and flooding. If you are prepared, you can stay safe!

There are many types of natural hazards in our world. Imagine you live in an area where earthquakes are common. Write an expository report for someone new to your community explaining some of the causes and effects of earthquakes. Be sure to develop a main idea about earthquakes and use specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

No matter where you live, you will likely have some kind of natural hazard. Our community has earthquakes this is when the ground vibrates uncontrollably. Knowing the causes and effects of earthquakes can help you stay safe.

The Earth's crust is made up of tectonic plates. They sit on top of the Earth's mantle, which is "solid rock that can flow very slowly like to [unclear]." When they bump into each other it is an earthquake. Seismic waves [unclear] vibrations of the earthquakes spread out so everywhere in town people [unclear] feel the earth shaking.

When an earthquake occurs, there are some dangers. For example, during an earthquake in Chile many people lost their homes. The text stated that "40% of houses were destroyed." Earthquakes [unclear] fires or tsunamis. Sometimes, people even die during an earthquake.

Yet, there are many things you can do to stay safe during an earthquake. First, make sure your house is built so it doesn't shake too much. Also, be sure to turn off your gas and electricity during it. This will help prevent a fire. The article explained that "Many coastal towns [unclear] alarm or warning system to alert residents." So, pay attention in case you need to evacuate.

Since our town is built on a fault line, earthquakes happen a lot. It helps to know their causes and possible effects so you can minimize damages like fires and flooding. If you are prepared, you can stay safe!

There are many types of natural hazards in our world. Imagine you live in an area where earthquakes are common. Write an expository report for someone new to your community explaining some of the causes and effects of earthquakes. Be sure to develop a main idea about earthquakes and use specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

What causes an earthquake. The earth's crust is made up of tectonic plates. They sit on top of the earth's mantle. Earthquakes are when the ground vibrates uncontrollably. When they bump into each other it is an earthquake. It's important to stay safe during an earthquake.

Here are some of the effects. during an earthquake in Chile many people lost their houses. Earthquakes can also cause fires or tsunamis. Sometimes people even die during an earthquake. An earthquake in Chile lasted 10 minutes.

There are many things you can do to stay safe. make sure your house is built so it doesn't shake too much. Also, be sure to turn off your gas and electricity during it. "many towns use an alarm or warning system to alert residents." So, pay attention to evacuate.

Since our town is built on a fault line earthquakes happen a lot. If you are prepared, you can stay safe!

Sample

There are many types of natural hazards in our world. Imagine you live in an area where earthquakes are common. Write an expository report for someone new to your community explaining some of the causes and effects of earthquakes. Be sure to develop a main idea about earthquakes and use specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

What causes an earthquake. When the plates bump into each other it is an earthquake. the ground shakes its really scary. Here are some of the effects. You can loose your house so make sure your house is built so it doesnt shake too much. Or it can cause fires or sunamis.

It's important to stay safe during an earthquake. sometimes, people even die. An earthquake in Chili lasted 10 minutes. Our town is built on a fault line, earthquakes happen a lot. Turn off your gas and electricity if you are prepared, you can stay safe!

Sample



7th grade Argumentative
Sample

Checklist

Text-Based Argumentative Writing

- Read the prompt carefully and brainstorm your ideas on the topic.
- Read the texts carefully, taking notes about both sides of the topic.
- Form a claim addressing the prompt.
- Develop several reasons that support your claim.
- Organize your response with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Use relevant and specific information from the text to elaborate on your reasons (details, examples, quotes, etc.).
- Use transition words and precise vocabulary.
- Revise and edit your work carefully, checking for correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar.

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Checklist

Text-Based Argumentative Writing

- Read the prompt carefully and brainstorm your ideas on the topic.
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Argumentative Transitions

Transitions are used to show a change from one similar category of information to the next.

Consequently,

Specifically,

Because

Also,

Therefore,

For example,

Since

In addition,

In order to

Another reason

Additionally,

Clearly,

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Text Evidence

Sentence Starters

- ❖ According to the text...
- ❖ The text stated that...
- ❖ In the text, _____, it says...
- ❖ For instance, in the text...
- ❖ The author of _____ explained that...
- ❖ In paragraph ___ of _____, says...
- ❖ This shows/illustrates/reveals/demonstrates/proves...

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Text Evidence

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- ❖ In paragraph ___ of _____ it says...
- ❖ This shows/illustrates/reveals/demonstrates/proves...

Text-Based Argumentative Writing Rubric

	4 - Advanced	3 - Proficient	2 - Basic	1 – Below Basic
Focus and Organization	I stated my claim clearly and stayed focused the entire time. My ideas are clearly organized using effective transitions with a strong introduction, body, and conclusion.	I stated my claim and stayed focused most of the time. My ideas are mostly organized using transitions with an introduction, body, and conclusion.	My claim is somewhat unclear, but my reader can figure it out. I got off topic a few times. I tried to organize my ideas with a few transitions but they may not be clear.	My claim is unclear or not stated. I got off topic a lot. I did not organize my ideas or use transitions.
Evidence and Elaboration	I have clear reasons that are supported by many details, including relevant facts, examples, and quotes from the text. I chose precise, specific words to enhance my ideas.	I supported my reasons with many details, including relevant facts, examples, and/or quotes from the text. I chose some precise, specific words to develop my ideas.	I supported my reasons, but I did not use most support from my own ideas. I used some details from the text, but they may not fully support my reasons. I used only a few precise words to develop my ideas.	I did not support my reasons very well. I used little or no evidence from the text, or it does not support my reasons at all. I did not use any precise words to develop my ideas.
Conventions	I edited my work so that there are few or no errors left.	I edited my work but there are some errors left.	I edited my work but left errors that may interfere with the meaning.	I did not attempt to edit my work and left many errors that interfere with the meaning.

Analyze the Prompt

Celebrity endorsements can make a huge difference in the sale of a product. Should pro-athletes promote unhealthy food items such as soda and fast food? Write an argumentative essay for the newspaper arguing your position on this issue. Be sure to include your reasons and specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

Underline the specific topic you'll be writing about.	Circle the type of writing you'll be doing.	Draw a box around anything the prompt says to include.
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Analyze the Prompt

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Brainstorm

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	Option 1: _____	Option 2: _____
My Ideas		
From the Text (Summarize & Quote Information)		
My Claim:		

Sample

Celebrity Endorsements

By Jim Poppy, *Business Magazine*

Have you ever seen a commercial featuring a celebrity? Sporting a big smile, a celebrity holds up a product and explains how wonderful it is to the camera. The commercial might make you think, "Well if *they* like that soft drink, it must be good!"

The First Celebrity Endorsements

The first major celebrity to obtain endorsement deals was Babe Ruth. During the 1930s, he was the face of many brands, including chocolates, Red Rock Cola, and even underwear! He was one of the first prominent celebrities in the United States. As a baseball player, he broke many records and became the highest-paid player at the time. As such, his endorsements were very successful, leading to more worthwhile deals, which were made by his publicist.

What are Celebrity Endorsements?

So, what is a celebrity endorsement? In most cases, a company pays a celebrity, such as an actor or athlete, to appear in a commercial on their packaging, or in print or online ads. Some brands go as far as to make a lifetime deal with celebrities, as is the case with LeBron James and Nike. Celebrities may also be spokespeople and brand representatives. In other cases, they agree to use the brand's products and talk about its positive features.

Celebrity endorsements are often very lucrative, for both the celebrity and the company. A celebrity may be paid millions of dollars just to appear in an advertisement. Celebrities are usually already well-paid in their career. So, brands must entice them with big checks. However, many celebrities earn more with endorsements than they do as actors or athletes.

Companies also benefit big-time from celebrity endorsements. A brand can get a boost of about 4% in sales with a celebrity endorsement. That doesn't sound like much, but for a billion-dollar company, it's enough. By establishing credibility with the spokesperson and generating higher degrees of recall, these companies are better-recognized than brands that don't hire celebrities.

Still, these types of sponsorships often send mixed messages. For example, tennis champion Serena Williams worked with Nabisco to promote Oreos, a cookie known for its high sugar content and processed ingredients. Yet Williams' career has highlighted her healthy, active lifestyle. Her partnership with Oreo seems to contradict this image.

Notable Celebrity Endorsements

Over the years, there have been many famous celebrity endorsements. Throughout the 1900s, the Wheaties cereal box made a spot for famous athletes. Today, the gymnast Simone Biles graces the Wheaties box. However, in the past, athletes like Muhammad Ali, Kristi Yamaguchi, and Michael Jordan have appeared on the cereal box. Some other famous endorsements include Beyonce and Britney Spears for Pepsi and George Foreman for the George Foreman Grill. You can probably also quickly recall some celebrity endorsements if you think about it.

Why Celebrity Endorsements Work

Celebrity endorsements are a safe bet for most businesses. Why? Celebrities create memorable advertisements. Because the average consumer is so familiar with celebrities, it can make brands stand out when a recognizable face is next to their products. In addition, people often want to copy celebrities. If celebrities use a product, people will likely emulate that person.

However, not all celebrity endorsements go smoothly. The most famous soccer player David Beckham signed a deal to promote a hair product. At the time of the signing, he had long hair. Yet, halfway through the contract, he shaved his head, leading to a huge drop in sales. Similar problems have even occurred when celebrities say something controversial, or don't even use the product they're promoting. For example, singer Alicia Keys was contracted with the phone company, Blackberry. However, she was then exposed while tweeting from an iPhone.

Despite some drawbacks, celebrity endorsements are an effective way for companies to grow their brand. For this reason, celebrity endorsements are a popular marketing strategy for many types of brands.

Fueling the Obesity Epidemic

by William Bender, Registered Dietician

Young people look up to celebrities as their heroes. From famous singers to Hollywood actors and athletes, celebrities are role models for people in general, but especially for children. For this reason, celebrities should be more careful about the types of endorsements they make.

The majority of today's popular celebrities endorse unhealthy products such as soft drinks, fast food, cookies, and chips. For example, Lebron James and Justin Timberlake have both represented McDonald's. Tennis players Venus and Serena Williams have worked with Nabisco to promote Oreos. Soft drink mega-companies Pepsi and Coke have been endorsed by Beyonce and Taylor. These products are filled with harmful chemicals, elevated calorie counts, and higher levels of saturated fat.

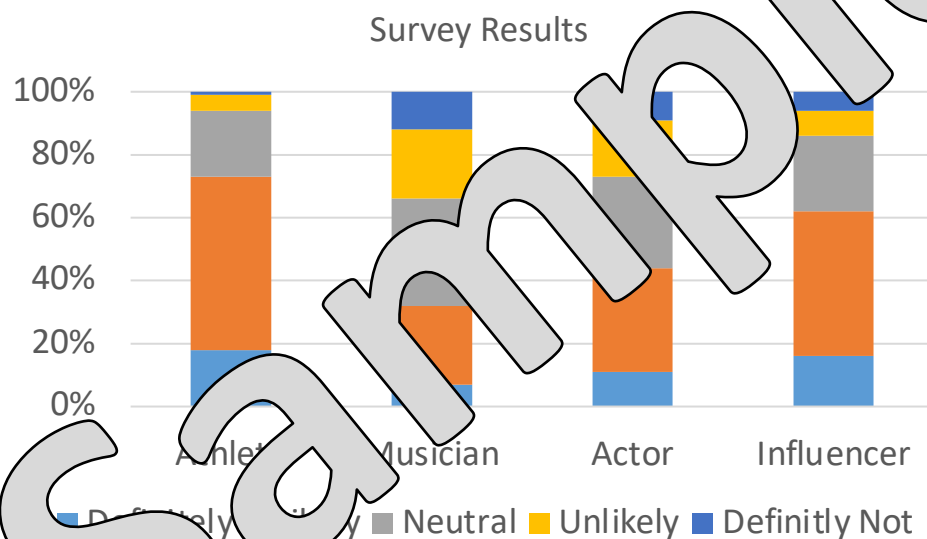
Unfortunately, these brand endorsement choices encourage both children and adults to make unhealthy eating choices. In a country where 42% of adults and nearly 20% of children and adolescents are obese, the last thing our people need is encouragement to eat poorly. Obesity can lead to most of health problems including diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma, and more. However, studies show that products with celebrity sponsorships have a higher perceived value than products without such backers. This factor is directly proportional to a spike in consumer sales for unhealthy products.

As a nutritionist, I see people fall into food addictions and poor eating habits daily. Over time, as people become accustomed to unhealthy foods, it's hard for them to change their habits. For example, people who drink lots of soft drinks then have a hard time cutting back. Similarly, when people become used to the taste of salty, calorie-rich fast food, healthy food tastes bland.

How do people fall into these bad habits? Much research points to TV advertisements and marketing that promote unhealthy products. The more TV advertisements people see for unhealthy food, the more likely they are to be obese. But when brands strategically leverage the marketing power of a celebrity to promote unhealthy food, it's hard for young people in particular to resist. Young people want to fit in and be popular. One way they can do this is by doing what celebrities are doing. When unhealthy foods and drinks are viewed as "cool", children and adolescents are more inclined to make these foods a part of their lifestyle.

Furthermore, many athletes endorse unhealthy products, leading to unrealistic expectations about how healthy people eat. These pro players are often viewed as the standard for being fit and active, and young people look up to these athletes. Professional athletes are unlikely to eat fast food or drink sugary beverages on a regular basis. Yet, as representatives of brands, they make it seem like you can be an amazing athlete while frequently indulging in unhealthy foods.

In one study, consumers were asked if they would be more likely to purchase a so-called "health bar" if it were promoted by their favorite athlete, musician, actor, or influencer. Although labeled as a health product, the snack bar in question contained 25 grams of sugar and over 325 calories for one small serving. Yet consumers overwhelmingly reported that they'd be more inclined to purchase such a product if it were backed by a pro athlete. Likely, shoppers are persuaded by the perceived expertise of athletes when looking for health products.



What's the solution? Either celebrities should evaluate the negative effects of these promotions, or the government should regulate their ability to endorse unhealthy foods. Athletes in particular should be held to higher standards when it comes to representing brands that don't align with their healthy image. The future health of our youth depends on it.

A Better World For All

by Jessica Diamond
Celebrity News

Most people see celebrity endorsements as lucrative money-making opportunities for stars. However, they're missing a big part of the equation. Especially when it comes to athletic endorsements, these partnerships do more than benefit companies and the athletes themselves. These brand deals make it possible for all of us to live in a better world.

Many athletes have very big hearts. When they make endorsement deals, they're not only thinking of their own gain, but of how they can put the money to work. When choosing a brand to work with, the celebrities I represent consider whether or not the brand aligns with their values and charitable goals. Just one example is Dwayne Johnson, better known as "The Rock". He partnered with Under Armour to give away new sports equipment to high schoolers in need. Similarly, Cristiano Ronaldo partnered with Nike to auction off signed pairs of sneakers to raise money for Parkinson's research.

Athletes are only able to make these arrangements thanks to the relationships they already have with the brands. Without celebrity endorsements, athletes wouldn't be able to make such an impact on communities. On their own, many brands might not be able to draw as much attention to their charitable contributions and projects. However, with a celebrity endorsement, they can make the news and draw more attention from the public. Ultimately, this can improve people's impression of the brand, and the celebrity. Most importantly, an athlete's involvement brings help and attention to worthy causes.

In addition, even though celebrity endorsements frees athletes up to do unpaid work. Many athletes donate their time to promote and support non-profit organizations and charities. They are able to do so because they earn good money elsewhere, such as through brand endorsements. When celebrities endorse charities, many other individuals are willing to donate. A pro-athlete endorsement of a charity makes the organization credible and raises awareness about the cause. Another strategy celebrities use is to match the public's donations over a period of time. This generates interest in the charity and helps raise funds quickly for important causes such as disaster relief, cancer research, or supporting the homeless.

Ultimately, pro-athletes are autonomous citizens who can decide to earn money however they'd like. More often than not, the earnings and partnership can result in something positive for society.

A Consumer's View

by Dana Sharp

Celebrities appear on TV and online in advertisements and commercials, promoting brands such as foods, drinks, snacks, beauty products, clothes, technology, and even services. Yet, how much do we let celebrity endorsements affect us? We talked to Mrs. Jenkins and her son, David, to learn how much their buying decisions are swayed by stardom:

Dana: What's your favorite snack, David?

David: Chips. I love Lay's chips.

Mrs. Jenkins: Oh yes, he's obsessed. It all started with Leo Messi, the soccer star, and when the Messi ads came out on TV, David wanted to try the same chips that Messi ate.

David: I always ask for them. Plus, I buy them with my allowance whenever I go along shopping. If a great athlete like Messi eats them, I should too!

Dana: Would you have asked for them if it weren't for Messi, David?

David: Probably not. Before those ads came out, I didn't buy many chips and if she did, she bought the generic brand.

Dana: Are you swayed by brands endorsed by celebrities, Mrs. Jenkins?

Mrs. Jenkins: I try not to be. I always look for discounts and focus on my list at the grocery store. But we bought the chips on David's soccer team snack on a whim, and now I almost feel stuck buying them every time.

Dana: What about drinks? Are there any drinks endorsed by celebrities you enjoy?

David: I know! That coffee! The Mocharesso one with George Clooney.

Mrs. Jenkins: Guilty as charged! I do like a good cup of coffee, and after seeing so many ads, we decided to try it. We also do buy Pepsi fairly frequently.

David: Messi likes Pepsi! And so does David Beckham. They're great soccer stars. I also like Justin Bieber's juice and he's been in Pepsi commercials too.

Mrs. Jenkins: Yes, but before David was old enough to watch TV, we'd buy soda maybe once a month. Now it's a part of my weekly grocery list.

Dana: Interesting. What about beauty products like makeup?

David: Oh, she loves the wrinkle cream. Who's the singer who uses that? Carrie Underwood?

Mrs. Jenkins: You got me there. I do like the wrinkle cream, but it's because it works. I might have tried it because of Underwood, but I kept using it because I like it.

Dana: That makes sense. What about clothes? Have you ever bought clothes or shoes based on what celebrities are endorsing?

David: I would, but mom doesn't let me. She says it's silly to spend a lot of money on celebrity items when I'll grow out of it in a few months anyway. She's probably right. I get holes in my pants and shoes really fast, too.

Mrs. Jenkins: I guess if I'm being honest, celebrities have impacted our buying choices to an extent. But we try to keep it in balance.

Plan

Celebrity endorsements can make a huge difference in the sale of a product. Should pro-athletes promote unhealthy food items such as soda and fast food? Write an argumentative essay for the newspaper arguing your position on this issue. Be sure to include your reasons and specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

My Claim:	
Main Reasons	Elaborations: facts, definitions, examples, and quotes

Sample



Exemplars

Sample

Celebrity endorsements can make a huge difference in the sale of a product. Should pro-athletes promote unhealthy food items such as soda and fast food? Write an argumentative essay for the newspaper arguing your position on this issue. Be sure to include your reasons and specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

Since the 1930s, athletes have been partnering with major brands to sell products. Today, more than ever, it is common to see celebrity advertising food such as hamburgers or soda, which in turn leads to an increase in sales. These celebrity endorsements profit both the celebrity and the company selling the product. However, this practice has many other unintended consequences. When pro athletes promote unhealthy food, it sets a bad example for consumers and leads to increased obesity. Famous athletes should not endorse unhealthy food.

Many young people consider professional athletes to be their role models and heroes. From a young age, kids want to emulate these stars because they have a positive public image. However, celebrities such as LeBron James and Serena Williams are known not only for their amazing athletic ability but have also become well-known figures for the brands they promote. For example, Williams is a regular consumer of Oreo cookies. Jim Poppy, a writer for *Business Magazine*, explains, "The type of sponsorships often send mixed messages." While Williams is known as a healthy and active athlete, she endorses an unhealthy cookie that is full of sugar and fat. Kids who look up to Williams might be more inclined to buy and eat Oreos. Realizing that the cookies don't really align with William's healthy image. As readers of *Athletic*, William Bender argues, "they make it seem like you can be an amazing athlete while frequently indulging in unhealthy foods."

In addition, when athletes endorse junk food, they are contributing to the obesity epidemic. Bender reports that 7% of adults and 20% of kids are considered overweight. Yet TV and social media are filled with advertising for unhealthy food. Pro athletes shouldn't be encouraging people to eat sugary products. This only leads to more problems with diet and body weight. As Bender describes, "as people become accustomed to eating unhealthy foods, it's hard for them to change their diets." Rather, athletes should consider promoting nutritious products that will help consumers develop healthy eating habits.

Jessica Diamond, a celebrity representative, points out that "pro-athletes are autonomous citizens who can decide to earn money however they'd like." This may be true; however, as a celebrity who is part of the public eye, these athletes should be held to higher standards than the average citizen. They must be made aware of how much impact they have on the average consumer's buying choices. Kids look up to these athletes, and even think "if a great athlete...eats them, I should too!" Consequently, athletic endorsements should be regulated more closely.

Ultimately, when it comes to marketing, consumers are easily swayed by celebrity backers. So pro athletes should consider their responsibility when it comes to representing unhealthy food. Because they set an example for the public, athletes should not endorse junk food; instead, they should consider how they can minimize the effects of obesity by promoting nutritious and quality products.

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Since the 1930s, athletes have been working with major brands to sell products. It is common to see celebrities advertising hamburgers or soda, which makes sales go up. This is a good deal for both the celebrity and the company selling the product. However, it has many negative consequences. When pro athletes promote unhealthy food, it sets a bad example for people and leads to increased obesity. Famous athletes should not promote unhealthy food.

Many young people consider professional athletes to be their heroes. Kids want to be like them because they have such a positive public image. LeBron James and Serena Williams are great athletes. They are also well known for the brands they promote like Oreos. Jim Poppy explains "these type of sponsorships often send mixed messages." Even though she is known as a healthy person, she endorses an unhealthy cookie. So kids that admire her are going to buy Oreos. A registered dietician William Bender argues that they make people think you can be an amazing athlete while frequently indulging in unhealthy foods."

In addition, when athletes promote junk food, they are increasing obesity. He reports that 42% of adults and 20% of kids are overweight. Yet TV and social media is filled with advertising for unhealthy food. They shouldn't be encouraging people to eat it leads to more problems with maintaining a healthy weight. As Bender says, "as people become accustomed to eating unhealthy foods, it's hard for them to change their diets." And athletes should promote nutritious products that will help people be healthy.

Jessica Diaz says that "pro-athletes are autonomous citizens who can decide to earn money however they'd like." This may be true but, a celebrity who is famous, athlete should be held to a higher standard. They really effect consumers buying choices. Kids think "if a great athlete...eats them, I should too!" So, athletic endorsements should be regulated.

Ultimately, when it comes to marketing, consumers are influenced by celebrity endorsements. So pro athletes should set an example for the public. Athletes should not endorse junk food. Instead, they should decrease obesity by promoting nutritious products.

Celebrity endorsements can make a huge difference in the sale of a product. Should pro-athletes promote unhealthy food items such as soda and fast food? Write an argumentative essay for the newspaper arguing your position on this issue. Be sure to include your reasons and specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

It is common to see celebrities advertising hamburgers or soda, which makes sales go up. This is a good deal for the celebrity and the company. But should athletes promote unhealthy foods? Many young people consider professional athletes to be their heroes. But they can earn money however they want. It sets a bad example for people and leads to increased obesity.

Kids want to be like pro athletes because they are famous. Like LeBron James and Serena Williams are great athletes they promote Oreos. "The types of sponsorships often send mixed messages." Because junk food is unhealthy. So kids that admire her are going to buy Oreos.

In addition when athletes promote junk food that is increasing obesity. 42% of adults and 20% of kids are overweight. They should not be encouraging people to eat it leads to more problems with being overweight. Instead they should promote healthy products that will help people be healthy. "Without celebrity endorsements athletes wouldn't be able to make an impact on communities." They give a lot of the money they make to charity which is generous. They really effect people and what they buy. When I saw a commercial for Nike shoes with LeBron James I asked my mom to buy them.

Additionally, when it comes to marketing people are influenced by celebrity endorsements so pro athletes should set an example don't promote unhealthy food. Instead decrease obesity by promoting healthy food. Famous athletes should not promote unhealthy food.

Celebrity endorsements can make a huge difference in the sale of a product. Should pro-athletes promote unhealthy food items such as soda and fast food? Write an argumentative essay for the newspaper arguing your position on this issue. Be sure to include your reasons and specific evidence from the text(s) to support your ideas.

No they shouldn't. Celebrities advertizing hamburgers or soda makes sales go up. It could be a good deal for them. Kids consider profesional athletes to be their heroes. But they can earn money however they want. It sets a bad example for people and leads to increased obesity. Kids want to be like pro athletes they are famous. When I saw a commercial for Nike shoes with Lebron James I asked my mom to buy them. All my friends were Nike shoes too we love Lebron James. LeBron James and Serena Williams are great athletes they promote Oreos which is unhealthy. So kids that like her are going to buy Oreos it's a very popular cookie everyone brings them for lunch and they sell them in the store. The celebrities they give a lot of the money they make to charity which is generous. So if they get a lot of money for selling oreoes it could help other people too. They really effect people and what they buy. Their are good things and bad things about it celebrity endorsements. People are influenced by it so some people don't promote unhealthy food.

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