"The best way for a society to prepare its young people for leadership in government, industry, or other fields is by instilling in them a sense of cooperation, not competition."  
Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim. In developing and supporting your position, be sure to address the most compelling reasons and/or examples that could be used to challenge your position.

Leadership demands many qualities, including a sense of cooperation, and that of competition. The prompt argues in favour of encouraging cooperation, distancing itself from using competition as a way to teach young people how to become good leaders. In my opinion, I mostly agree with this sentiment, albeit only to a certain extent. This issue is a complex one, since leaders would inevitably have to be involved in both cooperation and competition. However, to establish why cooperation is more important, there are three main points to discuss.

First, while leaders may have to compete to get to the top, cooperation is a widely applicable quality to have in many different fields. Consider the coalitions formed in many democracies of the world - If the political groups that came together to form the coalitions did not do so, the government would be in a state of disrepair. No matter how competitive someone is in this kind of scenario, negotiating and conversing with other parties would be the only way to move forward, to ensure that the government can carry out its mandate of servicing the people. Industry giants also have to cooperate in some situations: When the research departments of Microsoft and IBM kept filing patents over new techniques and devices, they even made a pact to not sue each other, with common understanding that further competition would be deleterious to both companies. Thus, learning how to find middle ground would be an important trait to cultivate in children, to ensure the success of future leaders.

Second, motivating children to learn through competition may not be effective in training them for real life circumstances. At most workplaces, people work in teams with each member contributing to the project at hand. This is true of a large variety of fields like Construction, Information Technology, Law, Medicine, and Research, to name a few. In the event of a rift within a group, a good leader would be able to help the members understand each other's perspectives, fostering a cooperative atmosphere that keeps the department productive. Take the example of US President Joe Biden: He is well-known for his ability to 'reach across the aisle' and talk out possible negotiations in bills that reach stalemate in the legislature. In fact, many people attribute his 2020 election win to this very characteristic, allowing him to gather support from people of various political backgrounds. Hence, it would be in the next generation's best interests for them to be taught to be cooperative.

Finally, what do the opponents to this stance often claim? Some argue that competition is the only way to climb up the corporate ladder, and that no one just becomes the leader of a political party or CEO of a company purely through negotiating and teamwork. These concerns are valid, and could perhaps be compared to Darwin's theories of evolution, such as the 'Survival of the Fittest.' Even in multiple computer simulations, there have been suggestions that altruism is not always an effective way to live or lead. In the films created by a YouTube channel called 'Primer,' the videomaker has illustrated how some amounts of competition may be necessary for a society to be stable. He does make some simplifications when modeling society, but the assumptions made were not unfounded. Therefore, it may be possible, in some situations, for competition to be an important leadership quality.

In conclusion, this issue is not a black-and-white one with a clear answer, and the examples of Microsoft and IBM, or political figures like Joe Biden, do indicate that cooperation is essential for integrity and support. It can be conceded that a few circumstances require leaders to compete to get work done, or to rise in the ranks, the situations that demand this are few, and even those kinds of leaders need enough support to get to the top. Ultimately, on average, nurturing cooperation in young people would prove to be more favourable than to motivate them to compete. The future is in their hands, and only if they are taught to collectively work smart and hard, can progress be made.