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In Walter R. Tschoinkel's "Just Comparing Sports," he uses a great metaphor comparing education with sports. He explains how very similar people practice before a sports game to win to how most students in our current education system study solely for the grade. He continues by saying how while this approach to learning may get you the grade and the degree, it lacks in obtaining actual knowledge.

I agree with Tschoinkel's observation on student motivations in school. I am sometimes one of those students he describes. There are a few classes I have taken in high school that I cannot recollect much information about. So now, is it the students or the education that is to blame? I would argue both.

Oftentimes, when we describe the student/teacher relationship, we never see each of them on equal footing. You hear, "it's the teacher's job to educate their students. If they are not learning, they are not doing their job." And on the other hand, you hear, "this student doesn't put any effort into learning. There is nothing I can do." In the end, both sides need to see some change if we want to see better learning. We need an education system that enforces repetition and constant revision. As Tschoinkel said in his writing, many courses expect students to remember everything from their prerequisite classes. Tschoinkel's idea of courses reinforcing the foundation of what students have learned in earlier classes is wonderful. Consider spending a quarter of

the semester mastering the knowledge from earlier courses. Of course, just changing the education system will not fix how students learn because, in the end, it's up to them.

Another brought-up question in the reading was why students behaved like this. Why are students focused so much on obtaining good grades rather than actually learning? One of these reasons would be how we automatically correlate good grades with good understanding. I'm sure every student has had the experience of giving their report card to their parents. Depending on your letter grades, you are either getting scolded or praised. Students are so focused on grades because the system punishes them if they get low marks. Bad grades = bad student, which isn't the case. There are better ways to describe a person's understanding of a topic than using a single letter; it's too stiff. There needs to be a better grading system that provides better feedback on a student's knowledge of topics.

Lastly, I wanted to talk about Tschoinkel's sports metaphor. He saw the comparison of education and sports in more of a negative light. But if you see it another way, the sports metaphor can be seen as a great way of learning. Sports take discipline. If you want to succeed and flourish in your respective sport, you must put in the work. And it's not like you can work hard for a week and be done with it. You must constantly train and exercise your body to stay in shape. This will then reflect how you perform in your games.

Now take this perspective into education. Ultimately, you aren't going to be an expert at a topic just by studying for a week. Similar to constantly training your body, you must continuously train your brain. There is no shortcut to learning. You have to put the time and effort into it through repetition. Then your work will reflect in your exams/tests.

In sports, winning games is an important part of it, but a huge reason why people love sports is personal growth—getting better, stronger, and faster. So yes, grades play a pretty big part in school, but don't let them distract you from the knowledge and growth you can obtain.