C1. Reading - Parts 5 & 6

"Knowing the Score"

YOU ARE GOING TO READ A REVIEW OF A BOOK ABOUT SPORT AND PHILOSOPHY. FOR QUESTIONS 1–10, CHOOSE THE ANSWER (A, B, C OR D) WHICH YOU THINK FITS BEST ACCORDING TO THE TEXT.

William Skidelsky reviews David Papineau's new book, in which sport meets philosophy.

David Papineau is an eminent philosopher and a passionate lover of sport. For much of his life, he has kept the two spheres separate, fearing that to mix them would produce a double negative in his readers' appreciation of his work: philosophy robbed of its seriousness and sport of its excitement. Then, in 2012, a colleague invited him to contribute to a lecture series titled 'Philosophy and Sport', organised to coincide with that year's Olympics. 'I couldn't really refuse', Papineau recalls. 'I had an extensive knowledge of both philosophy and sport. If I wasn't going to say yes, who would?'

For his topic, he chose the role of conscious thought in fast-reaction sports, such as tennis, cricket and baseball. How, he wondered, do top tennis players like Rafael Nadal and Serena Williams use anything other than 'automatic reflexes' in the half-second (or less) they have to return their opponent's serve? How do they choose to hit the ball this way or that, to apply topspin or slice? Thinking about this not only proved 'great fun', but allowed Papineau to come away with a series of 'substantial philosophical conclusions' about the relationship between intentions and action.

After this, the floodgates were open. Having breached his self-imposed division, Papineau set about applying his philosopher's brain to a range of other sporting topics. Five years on, those inquiries have resulted in a book, Knowing the Score. This is essentially a collection of essays on whatever sporting questions happen to interest its author. It isn't comprehensive, nor does it advance an overarching argument. The tone – informal, anecdotal, contrarian – is more popular philosophy than academic. What unifies the book is the consistency of its approach rather than of its content: he isn't interested only in applying philosophical ideas and principles to sport. More importantly – and more originally – he wants to use arguments about sport as a launching pad into philosophy.

A good example comes in a chapter dealing with rule-breaking, in which Papineau sets off with a sporting example in order to draw parallels with broader contexts. He points out that what is acceptable in sport isn't defined by the rules alone. Sometimes it's usual to ignore them – as footballers do when they pull on opponents' shirts as the ball flies towards them. Other actions stem from a sense of fair play – such as halting the game when an opponent is lying injured – rather than arising directly from rules. Rules are just one constraint on behaviour; all sports also have codes of fair play, which operate alongside the rules, and which, in some cases, override them. Complicating matters further is the fact that official authority ultimately has a force that is greater than both. Whatever a sport's rules or codes specify, the referee or ruling body's decision is final.

Papineau argues that there's a 'remarkably close' analogy between sport's multi-level structure and the factors that constrain us in ordinary life. In sport, you can ignore the rules and still play fairly, or obey the law while being thought a cheat; similarly, in a society, citizens can break the law and still do the right thing, or comply with the law yet still indulge in objectionable behaviour. A sport's codes aren't the same as its rules; likewise, in life, we draw a distinction between virtue and legal compliance. Papineau argues that we have no general obligation to obey the law; only to do what we think is right. Yet, saying that we're not obliged to obey the law isn't the same as saying that we don't have a duty to respect the state's authority. If people didn't accept that police officers are generally entitled to tell them what to do, society might descend into chaos. Likewise, if footballers stopped listening when referees blow their whistles, the game would become a free-for-all.

Knowing the Score covers an impressive amount of ground. At a time when data analysis dominates 'serious' discussion of sport, Papineau's faith in the power of anecdote and reasoning is refreshing. The author at times gives the impression of being the sort of person who knows he's the cleverest in the room. For the most part, however, he barely puts a foot wrong in what is a blinder of a performance.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Vocabulary Practice

1. Match the words (1–10) with their correct definitions (A–J).

1. eminent	A. A comparison made to explain or clarify something.
2. double negative	B. A respected or distinguished person in a particular field.
3. automatic reflexes	C. Evidence or information based on personal stories rather than data.
4. substantial	D. Something that limits or restricts actions.
5. floodgates	E. Instinctive, unconscious physical reactions.
6. anecdotal	F. An argument or attitude that goes against the general opinion.
7. contrarian	G. Important, considerable, or meaningful.
8. constraint	H. When something once started cannot be stopped.
9. override	I. To take priority over or be more important than something else.
10. analogy	J. A situation where two negatives cancel each other out or weaken both sides.

2. Complete the sentences using the words below.

refreshing – authority – rule-breaking – launching pad – blinder – codes of fair play – compliance – descend into chaos – virtue – objectionable behaviour

1. The referee tolerated minor instances of _____ during the match.
2. Players are often praised for following unwritten _____ that go beyond the official rules.
3. Even if an action is legal, it may still be considered _____ by society.
4. Honesty is often regarded as a fundamental _____ in most cultures.
5. The company was fined for failing to ensure full _____ with safety regulations.
6. Teachers in the school must maintain their _____ in order to ensure discipline.
7. Without shared rules, the classroom could easily _____.
8. The young athlete gave a real _____ of a performance that impressed the crowd.
9. After years of predictable commentary, her bold new style was truly _____.
10. His first article was a _____ into a successful career as a political journalist.

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Reading. Part 5

1. In the first paragraph, the reviewer suggests that Papineau
A. was in two minds whether to take on the lectures on sport and philosophy.
B. thought no one was better qualified than him to combine sport and philosophy.
C. was disappointed with previous attempts to unite sport and philosophy.
D. thought that philosophy was of greater value to people's lives than sport.

2. What does the reviewer imply about Papineau's decision to merge philosophy and sport?
A. It was motivated by a desire to make philosophy more popular.
B. It arose from external circumstances rather than his own initiative.
C. It marked the beginning of his decline as a serious philosopher.
D. It was prompted by criticism from other academics.

3. What does the reviewer say Papineau gained through delivering his lecture series?
A. knowledge of how 'automatic reflexes' suppress conscious thought in many situations
B. insight into the steps involved when sports stars have to make choices under pressure
C. understanding of the connections between people's aims and what they subsequently do
D. awareness of why sports stars' reactions are superior to those of ordinary people

4. What point is made about Papineau's book in the third paragraph?
A. It examines previously overlooked aspects of sport.
B. Its style is inappropriate for the subject matter.
C. It doesn't convincingly link sport and philosophy.
D. The areas of sport that it covers are very diverse.

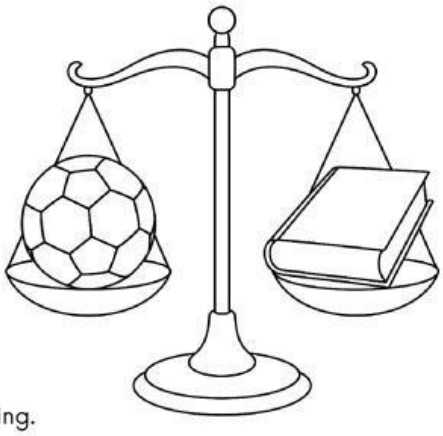
5. In describing Papineau's style, the reviewer suggests that the book
A. is deliberately written in a light, accessible manner.
B. relies too heavily on technical philosophical jargon.
C. often fails to connect with readers who know little about sport.
D. lacks any attempt at humour or anecdote.

6. What does the reviewer suggest in the fourth paragraph?
A. Breaking rules should be punished more consistently by those in power.
B. Rules play only a partial role in defining what is appropriate or inappropriate.
C. Many sportsmen and women abuse situations which lack a clear set of rules.
D. Codes of fair play carry more weight with sports stars than official rules.

7. In the fifth paragraph, the reviewer draws a comparison between behaviour in sport and
A. a broad system of morality in society.
B. a deep respect for authority in society.
C. people's tolerance of unreasonable laws.
D. society's attitudes towards rule-breakers.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

8. The reviewer's attitude towards Papineau's arguments can best be described as
A. unreservedly admiring of their originality.
B. critical of their lack of structure.
C. generally approving but not uncritical.
D. dismissive of their philosophical depth.



9. In the final paragraph, the reviewer says that Papineau
A. uses too lightweight an approach to deal with philosophical issues.
B. relies overly on insignificant detail to support his opinions.
C. comes across as somewhat arrogant in various parts of the book.
D. chooses some poor examples to illustrate points he's making.

10. The main purpose of the text is to
A. encourage readers to apply philosophy to their everyday lives.
B. evaluate how successfully Papineau combines two different fields.
C. convince readers that sports analysis requires philosophical reasoning.
D. highlight flaws in Papineau's understanding of sporting practices.

Reading. Part 6

"Behaviour in Schools"

YOU ARE GOING TO READ FOUR EXTRACTS FROM ARTICLES IN WHICH ACADEMICS GIVE THEIR VIEWS ON BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS. FOR QUESTIONS 1–4, CHOOSE FROM THE ACADEMICS A–D.
THE ACADEMICS MAY BE CHOSEN MORE THAN ONCE.

A – Dorota Ignatieff

Student behaviour in schools is a topic that many people are anxious about these days, and rightly so. Recent surveys amongst teachers have given me most cause for concern, especially the reflections of those who have been teaching ten years or more who report a deterioration in standards of behaviour. Although there's no evidence as yet of a concurrent increase in antisocial activities outside of school among the age group, I suspect we may see this emerge in years to come. Despite this, concern about pupils' results seems to be largely unfounded, as there has been a gradual improvement in academic results over the last 20 years or so. This is quite some attainment given that, over the same period, funding for schools has fallen in real terms. This shortfall is the underlying cause of poor conduct, as support for more disruptive students has been eroded, and therefore is what those in power need to rectify.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B – Sunil Kumble

Student behaviour has been an issue for as long as schools have been in existence. Teachers have more influence over their students than anyone, so clearly filling the apparent gap in their training would achieve more than any government minister could. The usual hysterical media coverage has made it more or less impossible to ascertain the actual extent of any fluctuation in standards of student conduct, and indeed even to know which direction it has taken over time. What we can be sure of is that, in schools where behaviour is an issue, levels of attainment for learners from better-off families have fared well, while their poorer counterparts have once again lost out. It remains to be seen whether this will lead to problems in the wider world. Indicators such as petty crime levels are currently stable, but I'd anticipate a sharp rise if this is as big an issue as many suggest.

C – Ruth Iveson

Some of the means by which it used to be achieved in the past may not be particularly palatable today, but there's little doubt that over two generations, respect for authority in schools and associated standards of behaviour has suffered a steep decline. The root of the problem sits squarely on the shoulders of those who deal with students on a day-to-day basis. Qualifications for educators clearly haven't kept pace with the speed at which life in schools is changing, so this needs addressing. Although official figures show a steady fall in problems such as graffiti and vandalism, I believe the reverse to be true. They've become such commonplace occurrences now that they're seldom reported, and I can't help but feel that this is not unconnected to people becoming increasingly tolerant of disrespect in schools. Clearly this would also explain the decline in success rates that's starting to emerge. Students appear to have lost their focus on learning.

D – Joao Rodrigues

When one analyses school results these days, it's always a good idea to dig a little deeper than perhaps schools or the government would want. On the surface, all appears to be well, as overall pass rates continue to rise. Nevertheless, the breakdown for how different social classes perform shows the opposite to be true for less affluent students. Behavioural difficulties in schools are evident in students from every strata of society, but clearly they affect this group more than others. Therefore, financial assistance needs to be made available for schools to better support these vulnerable learners and to help them eradicate the underlying problem. Schools simply don't have the resources to do this these days. I think it's no coincidence that, as government provision has declined, levels of misconduct have done the contrary. Teachers are generally devoted to their students yet unfairly receive much of the blame when their charges misbehave.

QUESTIONS



Which academic:

1. has a different view to the others about the historical trends in student behaviour?
2. expresses a similar view to B about what should be done to improve student behaviour?
3. expresses a different view to A on the broader social consequences of poor student behaviour?
4. has a similar view to B about the effect of behavioural issues on student achievement?

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