**Competition for high grades seriously limits the quality of learning at all levels of education.**

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

The writer of the issue states that the atmosphere of competition among students causes them to put achieving high grades ahead of high-quality learning. Although acquiring high grades might be one good incentive for learning, I generally believe that prioritizing it weakens the quality to which knowledge should be obtained significantly.

To begin with, grades put excess pressure on students. Many of them – including I, myself – have experienced situations in which even though they are fully competent in terms of the knowledge of a certain topic, when it comes to taking tests, this pressure overwhelms them, and thus blockades the achievement of good results. In other words, sometimes, the competition acts as a counter agent to the quality of learning, meaning that grades could discourage a person from learning deeply when he/she is not good at taking tests because they would probably question their capability of obtaining the same grades as their same-level peers, despite having learned the material more than sufficiently.

Additionally, grades are not necessarily the indicator of a person’s knowledge or how well they have dug into learning. Although there is a blurred line between these two, I think that the latter is more important than the former. One could know enough to take an exam well but that how well they could put that knowledge into practice is the measuring stone to their competence. Therefore, students can – and many times they do – just prepare themselves in a way so that they can get a good score but nothing more than that: the ability to apply their knowledge properly. Even in some cases, students cheat for the sole purpose of getting high scores.

However, sometimes, there are situations in which the opposite applies. When exams are better designed to evaluate students’ knowledge and understanding more effectively, grades could be good motivation to them in their course of education. In fact, they could boost students’ self-confidence when receiving scores better than their fellows, making them want to see themselves good at learning and eventually become better at it. Also, this benefit is not a one-way road; their peers also become encouraged to get high scores as well, therefore, enhancing their quality of learning in order to achieve such a goal. As a result, not only the competition could negatively affect the quality of learning, but it also could strengthen it.

To conclude, even though there are circumstances due to which competition for higher scores acts as a catalyst to learning quality, I suppose there are more disadvantages than merits to this notion since usually grading is not a perfect way to assess students – sometimes even an inconvenient one, and also a high tendency to achieve good scores rather than focusing on the learning itself distracts students from the quality of learning.