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It's All About the Teamwork

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TYPE
NARRATIVE

It was a chilly Friday in March. The sun was shining and strong winds were blowing. The tension was rising as it was the day of the huge volleyball tournament at my school, Haines. The volleyball tournament was a tradition at our school. Every year the middle school classes compete and the winning team gets to play against a team of teachers. It was a great fundraiser idea that Student Council came up with, because the money raised made a profit. There were no expenses because all the equipment was found at the school.

It was my first time playing and I got to represent my eighth grade class, Room 309, with my fellow team members: Jonathan N., Jonathan M., Daphne, Lina, and Jiai. We had been practicing together to improve our communication and teamwork during recess and P.E. on the playground and in the classroom. We looked forward to this tournament as we got to compete against the other eighth grade class, Room 304, and we had grown up with those students since

kindergarten. It was going to be the highlight of the tournament. Both classes had been playing volleyball for years, and we all had the skills, from being able to serve to the ability to spike. I was afraid of competing against them since their team was strong, and they had Michael and Christian, who were incredible spikers. We knew that we had to beat them in order to get a chance to play against the teachers.

The first match of the tournament was between the sixth graders. My sister's class was going up against Room 308. She had told me in the morning that her class was going to win, so I decided to pay close attention to how her team played. It turns out that the game was a total letdown! It was dull because most points were scored from serves. It showed how the sixth graders were still developing their skills. They couldn't bump, set, or hit the volleyball back to the opposite side of the court yet. I guess my sister was cocky. She and her team should have practiced their communication and bumping if they wanted to win.

The next game got better because it was between the seventh graders. It had some action because they were able to set and bump the volleyball back and forth. The team got most of their points from the opposing team's misfortunes, such as bumping too soft or setting too short. It was great to see the communication between the team members as they were able to help one another when they couldn't bump the ball over the net. However, I think both teams would have played better if they had a better control over

the ball and if they had called out to indicate who would hit the ball next.

It finally came down to the match that most of the crowd of spectators was waiting for. It was the game between the eighth graders. My team and I had butterflies in our stomachs because we were nervous to play against the opposing team. I think they also felt the same stress that our team did since it would all come down to one winner: the team that would proceed in the tournament.

The first half of the match was in favor of Room 304. We were making the wrong moves, like setting the volleyball backward instead of forward and hitting the volleyball when it was going to land out of bounds. However, no matter how far behind we were on the scoreboard, we didn't give up. We could hear our classmates cheering for us through the crowd, and we started to get motivated. Our communication got better and we were able to help each other hit the ball over the net. The biggest moment of the game was when my teammates, Jia and Lina, crouched down, and I jumped over them and tipped the ball over the net. It was even more interesting when it was my friend Jonathan N.'s turn to serve. He was hitting jump serves the way professional players would serve. The crazy part was that all those serves went over the net!

As the timer counted down, we had beaten Room 304 and gained redemption from when they had conquered us the previous year. Our team was amazingly energetic as that victory gave us confidence. We gave each other high fives and praised each other

for our roles in the match. That win was a huge weight off our shoulders. We now were one step closer to winning the tournament! We also had great sportsmanship as we shook the hands of Room 304's team after the game. However, in my head, I was thinking of saying, "In Your Face, 304!" since they had been annoying us all week by saying that they were going to beat us.

As the tournament progressed, our class was crowned the winners after three back-to-back victories. We then were given the opportunity to engage in a game against the teachers. The teachers were full of energy, as they hadn't competed in any games in the tournament so far. Our team was tired and worn out. The team of teachers came onto the court with style, running through a beautifully decorated banner.

Meanwhile, our team took the time to pose for pictures and huddle up. We discussed our strategy to beat the teachers. Jonathan M. suggested targeting Ms. Lictor, Ms. Sicora, and Ms. Cheung, and we all agreed on it since they weren't the best players on the teachers' team. As the game started, Ms. Moy, our new principal, served the volleyball. It was hilarious because she failed at first, but the whole crowd gave her encouragement and she hit the next one. Her serves didn't count as part of the game though. They were just for entertainment.

As the game began, our class took the lead because the teachers failed to bump the volleyball to our side. However, their fuel eventually started running and they started

catching up on the scoreboard. When there was less than a minute left, our class was still in the lead. I was telling myself that we might actually be the first class to beat the teachers. However, I spoke too soon. With six seconds left on the clock, Mr. Hennessey made the final serve which came straight over to Jia. She couldn't set Mr. Hennessey's serve and the rest of team members failed to save it as well. The final score was teachers nineteen and students eighteen.

That day we became the class that got the closest to ever beating the teachers' team. I was able to bond with my team members so I had a great time. That day showed the unbelievably strong connections that we have in our class. Even our classmates in the crowd were cheering and supporting us throughout the tournament. I also learned that in order to have a successful team, you must be able to communicate with each member. Everyone plays an equal and important role in the team's achievements, because a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.