Rich in Thought: Not Every Olympian Gets a Medal
English 79 Practice Mastery Exam

Answer **one of these prompts. Format your paper as follows:**

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Prompt #1

Richard Paloma does not believe that youngsters should get trophies and medals just for participation on a team. He also says that he has seen employees who “seemed to expect to be rewarded or acknowledged for just being present...” Paloma clearly believes that both competitive drive and performance suffer when people get rewarded for things they have not earned.

Do you agree with Paloma that participation awards can be harmful? Or do you believe these awards can be beneficial?

In a complete essay, using reasons and examples for support, take a stand on this issue.

Prompt #2

How individuals perceive themselves is called self-image, sometimes called self-esteem. A child’s self-image is partly formed by outside input—primarily from parents, teachers, and peers. Richard Paloma writes, “Some ‘experts’ believe that it is the parents’ (and teachers’) job to build a “positive self-image” and saying something negative like ‘no’ and ‘can’t’ is to be shunned... A much better goal is an accurate self-image.” An accurate self-image would presumably include both criticism and praise, depending on the child’s achievement. Paloma believes that false praise should not be used to boost a child’s self-image. He believes a child would be better off with an honest evaluation rather than one that does not provide an accurate assessment of a child’s accomplishment.

Do you think parents and teachers should avoid negative comments in order to boost a child’s self-esteem? Or do you think accurate assessments (including both positive and negative comments) of a child’s achievements should be offered by parents and teachers?

In a complete essay, using reasons and examples for support, take a stand on this issue.