

# Vale Middle School Reading Article

*Former Star High School QB Sues Over Concussion 'Epidemic' (1400L)*

**Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND MARGIN NOTES using the CLOSE reading strategies practiced in class. This requires reading of the article three times.**

**Step 1: Skim** the article using these symbols as you read:

(+) agree, (-) disagree, (\*) important, (!) surprising, (?) wondering

**Step 2: Number** the paragraphs. **Read** the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. (A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.)
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read.
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer's strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.

**Step 3: A final quick read** noting anything you may have missed during the first two reads.

Your **margin notes** are part of your score for this assessment. Answer the questions carefully in **complete sentences** unless otherwise instructed.

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Class Period \_\_\_\_\_

## Former Star High School QB Sues Over Concussion 'Epidemic'

A former high school quarterback followed in the steps of one-time pro and college players Saturday by suing a sports governing body, in this case the Illinois High School Association, saying it didn't do enough to protect him from concussions when he played and still doesn't do enough to protect current players.

The lawsuit, filed in Cook County Circuit Court on the same day Illinois wrapped up its last high school football championship games, is the first instance in which legal action has been taken for former high school players as a whole against a group responsible for prep sports in a state. Such litigation could snowball, as similar suits targeting associations in other states are planned.

The lead plaintiff is Daniel Bukal, a star quarterback at Notre Dame College Prep in Niles until 2003. He received multiple concussions at the suburban Chicago school and, a decade on, still suffers frequent migraines and some memory loss, according to the 51-page suit. Bukal didn't play beyond high school.

The IHSA did not have concussion protocols in place, putting Bukal and other high school players at risk, and those protocols remain deficient, the lawsuit alleges. It calls on the Bloomington-based IHSA to tighten its rules regarding head injuries at the 800 high schools it oversees. It doesn't seek specific monetary damages.

"In Illinois high school football, responsibility, and, ultimately, fault, for the historically poor management of concussions begins with the IHSA," the lawsuit states. It calls high school concussions "an epidemic" and says the "most important

*Notes on my thoughts, reactions and questions as I read:*

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battle being waged on high school football fields ... is the battle for the health and lives of young players.”

In a brief emailed statement, IHSA Executive Director Marty Hickman said he wanted to keep the spotlight Saturday on the playoff finals. But he said concussion management is "a top priority" and that the IHSA "will continue to be a leader" in reducing head-injury risks.

Bukal's Chicago-based attorney Joseph Siprut, who filed a similar lawsuit against the NCAA in 2011, provided an advance copy of the new lawsuit to The Associated Press. The college sports governing body agreed this year to settle the NCAA lawsuit, including by committing \$70 million for a medical monitoring program to test athletes for brain trauma. The deal is awaiting a judge's approval.

The IHSA lawsuit seeks similar medical monitoring of Illinois high school football players, though it doesn't spell out how such a program would operate. It contends new regulations should include mandatory baseline testing of all players before each season to help determine the severity of any concussion during the season.

The lawsuit only targets the Illinois association. High school football isn't overseen by a single national body equivalent to the NCAA, but rather by school boards, state law and 50 separate associations. Siprut says he intends to file suits against other state governing bodies.

Washington was the first state to pass laws addressing sports concussions in children in 2009, including by barring concussed players from returning to the same game. All 50 states have now adopted such laws. But the new lawsuit alleges governing bodies, like the IHSA, have had patchy implementation of state mandates.

Around 140,000 out of nearly 8 million high school athletes have concussions every year, most of them football players, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations. Some estimates put the number of concussions much higher.

Eight high school students died directly from playing football in 2013, six from head and two from neck injuries, while there were none last year in college or professional football, a 2014 report by National Center for Catastrophic Sport Injury Research says.

Speaking Saturday, Siprut said the legal action wasn't intended to undermine America's most popular sport. "This is not a threat or attack on football," he said. "Football is in danger in Illinois and other states, especially at the high school level, because of how dangerous it is. If football does not change internally, it will die. The talent well will dry up as parents keep kids out of the sport, and that's how a sport dies."

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**Comprehension questions – answers may be in phrases.**

1. *What does the author mean when he states that the “sport may die”?*
2. *What are the two main resolutions the lawsuit is asking of the Illinois association?*
3. *Define **litigation** as used in the article.*
4. *List the two main reasons for the lawsuit.*
5. *Define **patchy** as used in the text.*

7/8.RI.4,5,6

**2. Answer each question in one or more complete sentences.**

*What does the author mean when stating something could “snowball”?*

*What is the purpose of mandatory baseline testing?*

*List two of the long-term concussion symptoms continue to plague the player mentioned.*

7/8.RI.5,6

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3. Consider the author's tone. Is the author supportive of the lawsuit? Or, does the author believe the lawsuit is unfounded? Defend your answer in a well-developed paragraph citing directly from the text.

7/8 RI.6

4. Put yourself in the following position. This lawsuit has reached its way to the Illinois court system, and you are a member of the jury. Using the chart provided, cite four pieces of evidence to support the lawsuit and four pieces of evidence against the lawsuit.

*Supportive evidence*

*Evidence against the lawsuit*

7/8.RI.8