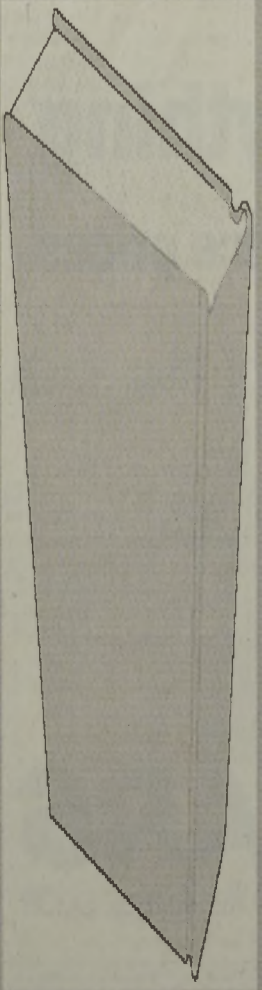


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What can test scores tell us about a student?

By Jade Bush
 MYERS PARK HIGH SCHOOL

It can sometimes be hard to distinguish the best and brightest students from the exceptional, and those that may need help in certain areas. Educational institutions have become too dependent on test results to make such distinctions in students.



Jade

Tests are inefficient in showing the level of knowledge that a student has, showing what skills a student has, or predicting the future success of students.

All of the factors that can skew the results of a test no matter how smart a student is such as nervousness, time spent studying, getting enough sleep, having a good breakfast, etc. can make a student perform poorly on a test. When such problems are present to some students and not others those students are already at a disadvantage before they even take the test which automatically makes the test results invalid, which means that the future success of students can not be predicted by such methods.

I have been recognized with several national

awards such as National Society of High School Scholars, Who's Who Among American High School Students, and Outstanding Students of America. Along with these awards I have maintained over a 4.0 grade point average during my junior and senior year and plan to go to college in the fall of 2004.

If I had to be picked as one of the smartest students in my graduating class based on some of my test scores I would be passed over because I do not do well tests sometimes.

The Advance Placement (AP) exams are used in predicting how well students will do in college, but if you saw my AP scores you would think I planned on working at a fast food restaurant for the rest of my life instead of going to college and majoring in nursing. Even though I did well in my AP classes, I did not pass my exams even though I knew the material fairly well. I am not the only student with such a wonderful high school resume that has done poorly on a test.

You can not efficiently predict the success of students by looking at tests because there is so much more to students than a few tests scores. Furthermore there is a bigger problem with testing than being invalid.

So many students feel that they will be judged by their test scores that they are going to the extreme of cheating to be able to do well

on tests.

These students are smart because they know that someone is going to look at the results of their test and try to label them and these students know that they have a good chance of not being well represented by a test score.

If students are going to go to this extreme to do well then it is defeating the purpose of the test because students realize that they are smart and have a high potential to do well in school but that their test scores are representing all of their hard work and they want it to be a valid representation.

I know that there has to be some amount of testing to see how students are doing in classes but these extra tests that define students by test scores such as the SAT need to be ended. Too much emphasis is put on testing to the point that students have gone to cheating because they know that test results do not let people know anything about how smart and successful the student is.

Beyond that I feel that it is unhealthy to label students by a number because all that does is make them feel that they are not good enough if they are "less than perfect" or do not have a 100.

There has to be another way to get to know these students that would help more students to be successful all throughout life.

Alter testing's goal

By Brandon Kearns
 NORTH MECKLENBURG HIGH

The state uses tests to determine how well we as students have been taught based on the curriculum.

There are usually cumulative tests at the end of each school year some of which promotion to the next grade level is contingent upon. These tests contain various facets of the material that we are to be taught. The amount of testing throughout any given year is sufficient, but not effective. Whether a student continues in his educational career should not be determined by a standardized test.

When the results come back the state determines the student's level of success based on his score, not his performance throughout the year. This is unfair to the student that has an understanding of the material but performs poorly on tests. Test anxiety is a major factor

in determining how well one performs. There is so much pressure from teachers and the school district to do well on the test that when test day comes, the students become nervous. Students feel like they have to do well on this test so some students go to such extremes as to cheat in an effort not to let their school down. The tests should not be the determining factor of our success throughout school but rather a complement to the work that we have done. However, getting used to taking tests now will help us in the future. The tests are good preparation for college where tests do determine one's success.

The state should alter its evaluation of a pupil's mastery of the knowledge. Implementing a program where the test is a certain percentage of the student's promotion along with his performance during the year would be a great idea.

Compare bright to gifted students

Bright Child	Gifted Child
Knows the answers.	Is interested.
Is attentive.	Has good ideas.
Works hard.	Answers the questions.
Top group	Listens with interest.
Learns with ease.	6-8 repetitions for mastery.
Understands ideas.	Enjoys peers.
Grasps the meaning.	Completes assignments.
Is receptive.	Copies accurately.
Enjoys school.	Absorbs information
Technician.	Good memorizer
Enjoys straight forward, sequential presentation	Is alert.
Is pleased with own learning	Asks the questions
Is highly curious	Is mentally and physically involved.
Has wild, silly ideas	Plays around, yet tests well.
Discusses in detail, elaborates	Beyond the group.
Already knows.	Already knows.
Shows strong feelings and opinions	Constructs abstractions.
1-2 repetitions for mastery	Draws inferences.
Constructs abstractions.	Is intense.
Is intense.	Enjoys learning.
Initiates projects	Inventor.
Enjoys learning.	Thrives on complexity.
Creates a new design	Is highly self-critical.
Manipulates information	
Good guesser	
Is keenly observant.	

Why is academic integrity important?

By Daisha Harris
 PIEDMONT OPEN MIDDLE

First, what is academic integrity? It is when you're honest about your work. It is important because if you aren't honest, you have victims while you're doing it. You're probably wondering who.

You have yourself, faculty, other students and society. How? You don't give yourself the opportunity to develop your own ideas within a learning structure. The faculty is responsible for your academic understanding and they are defrauded.

Other students' honest work is compared to plagiarized work. The bad things

are the penalties. Some of them are...formal warnings, a reduced grade on an assignment, a reduced grade on the whole course.

Now here's where it gets bad; suspension from the university maybe for years, expelled from the university, or graduate assistants can lose their jobs. How does that happen? You are brought before a Integrity Board made up of the department chair, a student representative, and a professor.

They decide what will happen to you. You can appeal their decision, but do you really want to go through all that stuff just because you were being dishonest?

Does the stress of tests cause students to cheat?

By Kisha Oliphant
 JT WILLIAMS MIDDLE SCHOOL

I think that stress has nothing to do with kids cheating on tests. The reason is that they have the choice to study or not to study. If they choose not to study

for that particular test, then my opinion is that they have made up their minds to flunk or cheat. Also, the teacher lets you know about a test before you have it.

Some students begin to panic when they find out that they are going to have a test. They just don't know what to do. My advice to you is not to panic. The best thing for you to do is to take all the notes that you can so you can study. When you go home you should study for at least an hour.

When you study make sure you are in a nice and quiet place. If not you can and will be distracted by anything. If you are trying to study while the radio or TV is on you need to cut it off. You will be tempted to sing or watch TV otherwise.

In school, sitting at your desk, your teacher will usually let you study for at least ten minutes. During that time you should not be talking or playing around you should be studying. Don't assume that since you studied last night that you know everything. You could freeze up at the last minute!

All of these hints could cause stress. However, I think that you should just study and hope for the best. If you are prepared to do well you will do well.

Testing, Testing and more testing

Just as sure as paying taxes; Students in schools are going to take standardized tests. Students have been involved in testing since their primary years through high school in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Now it is time to find out how students feel about the amount of testing they participate in and what effect it has on them.

Honesty: It's still best policy

By Ankur Sarma
 RANDOLPH MIDDLE SCHOOL

You must be wondering what is honesty? Why is important in our everyday life?

To maintain honesty is very important to a person because your reputation in society depends on your honest character. Most people appreciate people who are honest and dependable. You must have heard the famous saying "honesty is the best policy." On this very saying many people has achieved success.

Honesty is one of the guidelines that lead a person to a good and prosperous life.

Honesty is like a glitter in the diamond that shows out even in the darkest place. A person that is honest to people is respected and is placed at a high status, that one who is a liar and cheats people is looked upon and also is not invited to social activities, people don't like to mix around a person with such qualities.

These qualities of a honest person tells us that these kind of people

Are not found easily today but are very much needed in this world.

Money can be earned through cheating and deceiving people but one's reputations can be earned through honest deeds only.