

# Paper and pencil tests

[Education](#), [Curriculum](#)



“ We cannot do other that accommodate the needs of each individual learner” (Marsh 2008). This statement from Marsh outlines that children are all different and absorb content differently and at their own pace. A paper and pencil test does not fully assess their knowledge of a particular unit or subject but alternatively as Tomlinson states it “ catalogues their mistakes”, which to my understanding will have a negative influence on self-esteem and demotivate the student to be proactive in the classroom.

A Paper and pencil test is a “ Traditional” way of assessing students and this type of structure limits the awareness for individualized learning and the level of knowledge with students being taught only what they need to know to pass the test therefor “ Dumbing the Curriculum”.

A student is not more intelligent because they are able to transfer their learning’s onto paper. Some students may not be able to express themselves in this manner as it only reflects one type of learning style, it does not mean they did not understand or GET what was taught. On the other hand a minority of students will shine through this type of assessment.

Tomlinson argues the commitment to cater for individual differences, In A differentiated classroom multiple ongoing assessments are used, yet in a traditional classroom assessment is used to see “ who got it” (Marsh 2004). A differentiated classroom gives the teacher an individual understanding of each student taking into account factors including their ability, culture, learning preferences and their level of readiness to allow the teacher to modify and/or improve the next lesson.

After reading Tomlinson and Marsh's views on a differentiated classroom I would have to disagree with the statement 'Unless you test all students with 'paper and pencil tests' to check their learning you are 'dumbing down the curriculum'. I found as the teaching world is evolving so must the method in which we teach and assess students, a paper and pencil test does not fully capture the knowledge of a student or the capacity they have learnt.