

# Do grades make the grade?

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Grades. Isn't it amazing how one word can stir up such intense emotions? Loathing, frustration, dread, and anxiety are what is felt by many high school students at the mere utterance of the word "grades." Recently, the topic of grades in high school has become one of great concern. Students fret about whether the excessive amount of time they spend pouring over textbooks, notes, and outlines in order to attain good grades will really pay off in the long run. I wonder, is all that extra work for a point or two on a GPA actually going to make a difference in achieving success in life? More importantly, how should success be measured? It seems as if the testing and homework has become so excessive that students often miss the essence of the material learned, and instead concentrate on one thing: the grades they earn.

The physical and emotional strain that has come from an obsession with grades is readily apparent. Hours upon hours of study has led to high school students getting minimal sleep, relaxation, and exercise, and an overabundance of stress. Fortunately, educators, parents, and even the media have begun to take notice of the undue focus on student performance. Public discussion is bringing this issue to the forefront in lecture halls, newspaper articles, films, and PTA meetings around the country. So, as I tear myself away from this essay to study for a chemistry test, I feel a glimmer of hope that meaningful change may be in store for future high school students.