

Tracking in schools: good or bad? essay sample

[Education](#), [School](#)



There are many positive effects of tracking in schools. Teachers are better able to target individual needs and students will learn more. Advanced students will have the opportunities to become leaders in their career fields. Homogeneous groups are easier to teach, and it improves the instructional setting for selected students. Unless everyone is going to be taught the same thing at the same time, grouping is necessary, and tracking is not difficult since the students will need to be grouped anyway. Schools don't create differences between students; they must accommodate the natural differences between students, to help each student reach their maximum potential. Schools that treat naturally unique students all the same make learning unequal for everything. Also, the effects of tracking on below average students is not negative. Students like to study more when they are working with other students of similar ability.

Tracking is only harmful when it limits the educational opportunities of certain students on the premise that they are not capable of any more. As long as this is not the case, lower tracked students should be able to get an education that will lead to high status knowledge. Many people feel that quality instruction can not be given at a lower track. However, this is not the case. Students attitudes and behaviors make lower track classes more difficult to teach. By blending all students together, these problems do not go away, they simply become easier to ignore. In this case, schools without tracking are the ones where lower ability students fall through the cracks.

However, there are many negative effects to tracking as well. Many children are stereotyped as less able if they are in lower tracks. This label is carried with them throughout highschool, making it very difficult for them to catch

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up, let alone get ahead. Tracking leads to substantial differences in day to day learning between students. High ability groups have opportunities that lower tracks do not. Lower track students are not given the information that they would need if they wanted to move into a higher track. They have less quality time learning, and are given more disciplinary action for their faults. They also are not given the best teachers in the school system. Also, lower track students are more likely to fail, and therefore, are more likely not to risk working hard. Teachers of average students expect less from their students. A student's track is a more prominent symbol of their success than their actual capabilities. In these situations, "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer."

I believe that tracking can be a positive thing, as long as students on all tracks are given the same possibilities and resources. This is definitely a negative affect of tracking. Tracking has helped me to excel in highschool in general, however, only because I have forced it to do so. It can be good for students who are tenacious learners, and not for those who aren't.

If a student is hard working, they can do well with tracking, even if they do not score well on standardized or aptitude tests. Therefore, to say that students who would otherwise achieve a higher level of learning cannot because of tracking is unrealistic. Students who want to work more always will have the ability to do so. Also, students with high ability but low motivation will inevitably fall into lower level classes. In reality, tracking simply groups students by how hard they work, not what their aptitudes are. Most often, tracking is not determined by standardized tests, as much as it is

by students previous grades. If a student is a hard worker, they will always achieve a high level of knowledge, regardless of any tracking system that is imposed on them.

The differences that I have noticed between the non-honors and the honors classes that I have been in have been similar to the situations described in general. Non-honors classes have less depth. There is more redundant and pointless work, that is given simply for the sake of assigning something. My honors and AP classes are much different. Students are treated with more respect. The teachers are often more enthusiastic about teaching, and they treat learning with a more positive attitude. However, these are generalizations. I have had excellent teachers in non-honors classes, as well as awful teachers in honors classes. Its pretty much the luck of the draw.

Students are tracked based on how much they want to challenge themselves, not by any external, imposed, aptitude or value. I think that this is the best way your treat students. If schools could improve, it would need a broader array of classes, with many more tracks, so that it would not be as big of a jump to go from one track to another. This would be more beneficial for all students, as everyone could get what they want. You can bring a horse to water, but you cant make it drink. Any situation that is imposed on students will be a situation they will not like. The more options that are available to students for classes, the better their education will be. I like our process of course selection. I think that schools have a broad array of courses, and as students get into higher grades, they have more freedom to choose the classes they like.