

Comparing educational systems china vs. us

[Art & Culture](#), [Comedy](#)



China is not providing a better education for their children than America, but we're helping them close the gap by moving away from our strengths. During the last two years in Shanghai, I compared education delivered at local schools versus that received by our two boys. Chinese children are often enrolled in school as early as 18 months. By first grade, they've got homework.

By third grade, they are getting assigned 3 hours of homework per night. That's also about the time they start adding after school and weekend classes, since most regular coursework is focused on preparing them for the rigorous tests that dictate the school they attend at the next level. How could our kids compete with those who had invested so much more time in their studies? What didn't match up, though, was my direct experience in hiring new Chinese graduates. They were timid in expressing themselves and their work in group settings was awkward. They came to our company smart and hard working, but were not the highly productive employees I had expected.

Their educational system simply does not encourage them to mature as human beings. With so much homework, Chinese children get little time for open play. Morning calisthenics take the place of after school sports teams, as that time is taken up by extra classes in non-test subjects like music. Unfortunately, American education seems to be moving in that same direction. Now that American public school funding is linked to standardized tests, our kids' curriculums have largely eliminated non-test subjects. American parents wanting well rounded children are now following their Chinese counterparts in stealing their children's free time by enrolling

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them supplementary classes.? Even the structure of American youth sports today is moving towards maximizing the physical skills required to play rather than the life lessons sports can offer.

Young boys and girls here are regularly invited to play for special ??? select??? clubs that monopolize their time and force specialization at an early age. They are grouped with similarly skilled teammates and coached by professionals whose mission it is to develop their club by winning games and advancing players to the next level. These programs provide kids with few opportunities to compromise when there is disagreement on a close play at first base, to select captains to pick teams, and to learn to treat less-skilled players with respect knowing that relative skill levels can change with each new season??™s sport. These experiences are valuable to all of us long after we finish playing in uniforms.? Yes, we should recognize the challenge presented by the Chinese and their quarter million engineering graduates each year, but that doesn??™t mean copying them. An educational system is best measured by the type of citizens it produces.

The fact is Americas lone superpower status was built by people its educational system produced both directly and let occur indirectly by permitting children to learn how to work together on their own.