

Grading orientation assignment

[Education](#)



Grades tend to diminish students' Interest In whatever they're learning. A "grading orientation" and a "learning orientation" have been shown to be inversely related and, as far as I can tell, every study that has ever investigated the impact on intrinsic motivation of receiving grades (or instructions that emphasize the importance of getting good grades) has found a negative effect. * Grades create a preference for the easiest possible task. Impress upon students that what they're doing will count toward their grade, and their response will likely be to avoid taking any unnecessary intellectual risks.

They'll choose a shorter book, or a project on a familiar topic, in order to minimize the chance of doing poorly not because they're "unmotivated" but because they're rational. They're responding to adults who, by telling them the goal is to get a good mark, have sent the message that success matters more than learning. * Grades tend to reduce the quality of students' thinking. They may skim books for what they'll "need to know." They're less likely to wonder, say, "How can we be sure that's true?" than to ask "Is this going to be on the test?" In one experiment, students told they'd be graded on how well they learned a social studies lesson had more trouble understanding the main point of the text than did students who were told that no grades would be involved. Even on a measure of rote recall, the graded group remembered fewer facts a week later.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
November 2011 The Case Against Grades By Life Cohn [This is a slightly expanded version of the published article.] "I remember the first time that a grading rubric was attached to a piece of my writing.... Suddenly all the joy was taken away.

I was writing for a grade I was no longer exploring for me. I want to get that back. Will I ever get that back? ” Claire, a student (In Olson, 2006) By now enough has been written about academic assessment to fill a library, but when you stop to think about it, the whole enterprise really amounts to a straightforward two-step dance. We need to collect information about how students are doing, and then we need to share that information (along with our judgments, perhaps) with the students and their parents. Gather and report that’s pretty much it. You say the devil is in the details?

Maybe so, but old argue that too much attention to the particulars of implementation may be distracting us from the bigger structure or at least from a pair of remarkable conclusions that emerge from the best theory, practice, and research on the subject: Collecting information doesn’t require tests, and sharing that information doesn’t require grades. In fact, students would be a lot better off without either of these relics from a less enlightened age. Why tests are not a particularly useful way to assess student learning (at least the kind that matters), and what thoughtful educators do instead, are questions that must wait for another day.

Here, our task is to take a hard look at the second practice, the use of letters or numbers as evaluative summaries of how well students have done, regardless of the moment used to earlier at tense judgments. The Effects of Grading Most of the criticisms of grading you’ll hear today were laid out forcefully and eloquently anywhere from four to eight decades ago (Crooks, 1933; De Couches, 1945; Circumscribe, Simon, & Napier, 1971; Linden, 1940; Marshall, 1968), and these early essays make for eye-opening reading.

They remind us just how long it's been clear there's something wrong with what we're doing as well as just how little progress we've made in acting on that realization. In the 1950s and '60s, educational psychologists systematically studied the effects of grades. As Eave reported elsewhere (Cohn, AAA, Bibb, ICC), when students from elementary school to college who are led to focus on grades are compared with those who aren't, the results support three robust conclusions: * Grades tend to diminish students' interest in whatever they're learning.

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understanding the main point of the text than did students who were told that no grades would be involved. Even on a measure of rote recall, the graded group remembered fewer facts a week later (Growling and Ryan, 1987). Research on the effects of grading has slowed down in the last couple of decades, but the studies that are still being done reinforce the earlier findings.

For example, a grade-oriented environment is associated with increased levels of cheating (Andersen and Morocco, 2007), grades (whether or not accompanied by comments) promote a fear of failure even in high-achieving students (Palfrey et al. , 2011), and the elimination of grades (in favor of a pass/fail system) produces substantial benefits with no apparent disadvantages in medical school (White and Pantone, 2010). More important, no recent research has contradicted the earlier “big here” findings, so those conclusions still stand.

Why Grading Is Inherently Problematic A student asked his Zen master how long it would take to reach enlightenment. “Ten years,” the master said. But, the student persisted, what if he studied very hard? “Then 20 years,” the master responded. Surprised, the student asked how long it would take if he worked very, everyday and became the most dedicated student in the Ashram. “In that case, 30 years,” the master replied. His explanation: “If you have one eye on how close you are to achieving your goal, that leaves only one eye for our task. To understand why research finds what it does about grades, we need to shift our focus from educational measurement techniques to broader psychological and pedagogical questions. The latter serve to illuminate a series of misconceived assumptions that underlie the

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use of grading. Motivation: While it's true that many students, after a few years of traditional schooling, could be described as motivated by grades, what counts is the nature of their motivation.

Extrinsic motivation, which includes a desire to get better grades, is not only different from, but often undermines, intrinsic motivation, a desire to learn for its own sake (Cohn AAA). Many assessment specialists talk about motivation as though it were a single entity and their recommended practices just put a finer gloss on a system of rewards and punishments that leads students to chase marks and become less interested in the learning itself. If nourishing their desire to learn is a primary goal for us, then grading is problematic by its very nature.

Achievement: Two educational psychologists pointed out that “ an overemphasis on assessment can actually undermine the pursuit of excellence” (Maier and Mingled, 1996, p.). That unsettling conclusion which holds regardless of the quality of the assessment but is particularly applicable to the use of grades is based on these researchers' own empirical findings as well as those of many others, including Carol Deck, Carols Ames, Ruth Butler, and John Nicholls (for a review, see Cohn Bibb, chapter 2). In brief: the more students are led to focus on how well they're doing, the less engaged they tend to be with what they're doing.

It follows that all assessment must be done carefully and sparingly lest students become so concerned about their achievement how good they are at doing something or, worse, how their performance compares to others') that they're no longer thinking about the learning itself. Even a well-

meaning teacher may produce a roomful of children who are so busy monitoring their own reading skills that they're no longer excited by the stories they're reading. Assessment consultants worry that grades may not accurately reflect student performance; educational psychologists worry because grades fix students' attention on their performance.

Quantification: When people ask me, a bit defensively, if it isn't important to measure how well students are learning (or searchers are teaching), I invite them to rethink their choice of verb. There is certainly value in assessing the quality of learning and teaching, but that doesn't mean it's always necessary, or even possible, to measurements things that is, to turn them into numbers. Indeed, "measurable outcomes may be the least significant results of learning" (McNeil, 1986, p. Xviii) a realization that offers a refreshing counterpoint to today's corporate-style "school reform" and its preoccupation with data.

To talk about what happens in classrooms, let alone in children's heads, as moving forward or backward in specifiable degrees, is not only simplistic because it fails to capture much of what is going on, but also destructive because it may change what is going on for the worse. Once we're compelled to focus only on what can be reduced to numbers, such as how many grammatical errors are present in a composition or how many mathematical algorithms have been committed to memory, thinking has been severely compromised.

And that is exactly what happens when we try to fit learning into a four- or five- or (heaven help us) 100-point scale. Curriculum: "One can have ten

Test assessment Imaginable,” Howard Gardner (1983, p. 254) crossover, “ Du unless the accompanying curriculum is of quality, the assessment has no use. ” Some people in the field are candid about their relativism, offering to help align your assessment to whatever your goals or curriculum may be. The result is that teachers may become more adept at measuring how well students have mastered a collection of facts and skills whose value is questionable and never questioned. If it’s not worth teaching, it’s not worth teaching well,” as Eliot Eisner (2001, p. 370) likes to say. Nor, we might add, is it worth assessing accurately. Portfolios, for example, can be constructive if they replace grades rather than being used to yield them. They offer a way to thoughtfully gather a variety of meaningful examples of learning for the students to review. But what’s the point, “ if instruction is dominated by worksheets so that every portfolio looks the same”? (Neil et al. 1995, p. 4).

Conversely, one sometimes finds a mismatch between more thoughtful forms of pedagogy say, a workshop approach to teaching writing and a depressingly standardized assessment tool like rubrics (Wilson Something I want tattooed on my forehead is grades don’t matter. ” The current perception of the importance of grades in academia dumbfounds me, because I think that by caring too much about grades, most students are missing the point of education. A college education is often cited as a prerequisite for a “ good Job” out in “ the real world” (both terms that I hate).

With this understanding of the importance of college, many students get wrapped up in their grades, often taking them as value statements on their own self-worth. It’s really easy to get trapped in the cycle of getting good grades to get a good Job to make a lot f money to pay for a house to support <https://assignbuster.com/grading-orientation-assignment/>

a family to send your own kids to college so they can get a good Job and make lots of money. When this happens, grades become the foundation for an entire future and perhaps even the foundation of your child's future, which is honestly just way too much pressure.

A college education is often cited as a prerequisite for a “good Job” out in “the real world” (both terms that I hate). With this understanding of the importance of college, many students get wrapped up in their grades, often taking them as value statements on their own self-worth. It's all too easy to get trapped in the cycle of getting good grades to get a good Job to make a lot of money to pay for a house to support a family to send your own kids to college so they can get a good Job and make lots of money.

When this happens, grades become the foundation for an entire future and perhaps even the foundation of your child's future, which is honestly just way too much pressure. Aside from wanting to take some pressure off myself, I maintain that grades really aren't that important because I value education for more than its spot on my r©sum©. The reason I'm in college isn't to get a good Job later. I would be here even if I knew I would never, ever get a Job, because I think that college is worth something much more important than some money later on.

I think that education is about better knowing yourself, better knowing the world around you, and attempting to figure out your place in the world. Understanding reality and your role in it (“Knowing thyself,” as the ancient Greeks said), is infinitely more valuable than any material consequences of a diploma. Education is about self-improvement, not about the number of

zeros on the end of a paycheck. With this in mind, I think that grades start to lose their novelty.

By valuing education for its personal return instead of its Atlanta return, grades Decode less AT a statement on ten Torture Ana more AT a (mostly) inconsequential part of knowing thyself. None of this is to say that it isn't important to work hard in school, which will often produce good grades, as working hard is part of improving yourself. What this means is that there is no need to get in a huff about a disappointing grade here or there: it isn't a comment on self-value, and it isn't a comment on projected success out in "the real world" (as opposed to his world, the fake one). Grades have their place.

They're a necessary part of education. What they aren't a necessary part of is self-esteem. They don't really matter because they don't define us: what defines us is the changes education makes within us. So maybe I got a B or a C on that last exam, but am I better overall for having taken the class? The answer is usually yes. And that is what makes education worthwhile. Forget the grades, forget the Jobs, and just try to become a better person, enjoying the ridiculous luxury that education is. Bad grades? Don't fret; your life is too over. You don't have to be a success in school to be a success in life.

Lets face it; good grades can be a plus. For one thing, students with good grades get a lot of recognition. It boosts one's self esteem to know that one is performing well. The kids who get good grades have better chances at getting scholarships. The better your grades are, the better your odds of getting into a good college. A degree from a good college is supposed to

open the door for better career opportunities. But what about the rest of us? What does it say about us if our grades are average at best, possibly worse? How are we going to get by without as many doors of opportunity open to us?

Are we doomed to a life of mediocrity? Do school failures mean we are going to be life failures? Before we worry about that, let's try to put grades in perspective. Grades are arbitrary units of measurement created to assess a student's progress, and to compare students across the board. While grades can be a good indication of how a student is progressing in different subject areas in school, they are not without their flaws. For example, an intelligent student who has poor attendance and who fails to hand in assignments can end up with a lower grade.

The grades of someone who grasps concepts but freezes and blanks out during tests may not accurately reflect the student's ability. On the other hand, some students who are able to rely on rote memorization of material and good test taking skills may get good grades, but may not truly grasp, analyze or be able to transfer the knowledge to other areas. In other words, grades are not necessarily the ultimate statement about a person's intelligence, ability or potential. So, does a person who didn't get good grades have anything to worry about? Not necessarily.

A person who graduates high school or college with a C- average still gets the same diploma handed to the people graduating with an A+ average. Okay, so people who got the good grades are more likely to get into the better colleges and universities and snap up all the scholarships. Just

because you were not an outstanding high school student doesn't mean that you won't do well in college, if that is the route you want to take. As long as you have that diploma or GEED, you can always get into a community college to find out if higher education is for you.

If you can't qualify for a scholarship at first, financial aid is available to most people in the form of grants, student loans or work-study programs. If your grades improve, you can transfer to a four-year school. If not, as long as you are able to maintain passing grades (even by the skin of your teeth) you can still get a degree, even if it's a two-year degree. As good as ten degree issued to those at the top of your class. Another route you may want to consider is going to a good trade school. Get your diploma or GEED, then figure out what you like to do and what you are good at, and pursue a good trade school for certification.

There are a number of options for certified trades that have little or nothing to do with your former GPA in school: Computers, mechanics, information technology, culinary, travel and tourism, real estate, medical transcriptions, emergency medical technicians, day care, dental hygiene, fashion design, interior design, just to name a few. If you find something that you like and for which you have a knack, getting certified can start you on the road to a fulfilling, lucrative career, despite any poor grades you may have gotten in high school or college.