

# Standardized tests essay



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Schools across the United States are forced to give their students standardized tests. Standardized tests are multiple choice tests based on a list of state standards that a teacher is required to teach.

The state makes schools give these tests to measure student achievement. In most schools, these tests go toward a big percentage of a student's grade and in some cases determine whether the student will pass or fail a class. One can argue that standardized tests are useful; however, more people would argue that the tests are unfair and ineffective. Even though standardized tests are said to be useful in measuring student achievement, they should not be given because each student learns differently, they affect how much students will learn, they are harmful to student confidence, and some students are not good test takers. First, standardized tests are ineffective because each student learns differently.

There are four different types of learning: visual, tactile, kinesthetic, and auditory. Since each student learns differently, student achievement should not be measured by using the same form of tests each year. A teacher should know a student's strengths and weaknesses; therefore a teacher should be able to test each student in a way that is fair to the student. For example, in a case where students cannot read well a teacher could give the class a verbal test. Also, low-income students predictably score below students with higher socioeconomic status (Powell 159). Teacher made tests would be much more effective and useful than a test given by someone who has not been in a classroom setting with the students.

Standardized tests are not only unfair because each student learns differently, but also because the tests modify how much students will learn. Second, Standardized tests affect how much the students will learn. In order for a student to do well on a test, he or she has to be taught the material that will be on the test. This effects student learning because it “ requir[es] teachers to concentrate on what is tested and eliminate what is not” (Powell 159). Each state has a list of standards that the teachers have to teach; however, that does not mean that the teacher will teach the standards.

It is unfair for a student to be penalized when moving on to higher grade levels for not knowing material that a teacher has not taught them. The lack of student learning leads to poor self-confidence. Next, standardized tests are harmful to student confidence. A student should not fail a class based on the score of one test. Standardized tests make room for comparisons to be made between students. When students compare themselves to other students it leads to disappointment which can lead to a child completely giving up.

Students should not have to worry about comparing themselves to other students based on a test score. A lack of student confidence can affect students test taking skills. Last, standardized tests should not be used for measuring student achievement because some students are not good test takers. Standardized tests are ineffective in measuring achievement of students who are not good test takers.

Studies show that: It is not an uncommon thing for students to get debilitating test anxiety. Debilitating test anxiety does not refer to the

butterflies in the stomach or that moment of panic when the test is passed out. Instead it refers to the students who may freeze and cannot perform at all when faced with a test. Often times, this phenomenon is made worse when students think they will be punished in some way for a low score.

(Haladyna 160) Students who are not good test takers should not be forced take a multiple choice test to measure their success. For these students, achievement would be best measured using a performance-based observation.

Performance-based observation includes essays, projects, and activities (How np) Standardized tests should not be used to measure student academic achievement. Standardized tests are ineffective because they are not made by teachers, but by state employees who have no classroom experience. Standardized tests are not the only way to measure student academic achievement. In fact, “ the U.

S is the only economically advanced nation to rely heavily on multiple choice tests” (How np). Performance is best observed using different techniques for each test or including several different techniques in one test. Standardized tests are ineffective; therefore, giving them to students in order to measure knowledge that the student has obtained should be banned in the United States.