



Theme 10: Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

(Tony T. Tohme)

Name:	Tony Toufic Tohme	Title:	Senior Educational Consultant
E-mail:	tony.tohme@york-press.com		



Standardized Tests

What it is?

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Definition

- ❖ **A standardized test is any type of test in which all test takers must address the same questions or subset of questions from a shared pool.**
- ❖ **Standardized testing creates a baseline for measuring student performance among districts/countries, maintains teacher responsibility, and aids educators while developing their curriculum.**

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Definition

- ❖ Standardized tests measure students' knowledge of material that is deemed common knowledge for all children in their grade level.
- ❖ All standardized tests cover reading, language arts, and math, and some also include science, social studies, and other subjects.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Definition

When assessing student comprehension or competency in a particular subject area, a given teacher may use a variety of methods.

Standardized tests allow for less probability of subjective bias when scoring responses.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Definition

Standardized testing is:

- ❖ The most objective form of academic assessment.
- ❖ Well recognized by academic institutions.
- ❖ Used to know what grade level a student is in based on content knowledge.

(These tests can be more helpful than specific-subject placement tests.)

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Definition

- ❖ Standardized tests scores are not predictors of future success.
- ❖ Standardized tests can only, at best, evaluate rote knowledge of math, science, and English.
- ❖ The tests do not evaluate creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, artistic ability, or other...

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Definition

- ❖ Standardized test scores are often tied to important outcomes, such as graduation.
- ❖ Standardized exams can show student improvement over time by taking the same tests over time.
- ❖ If the scores are strong, they may help increase a student's chances of admission by showing their academic strengths and potential.

Standardized Tests

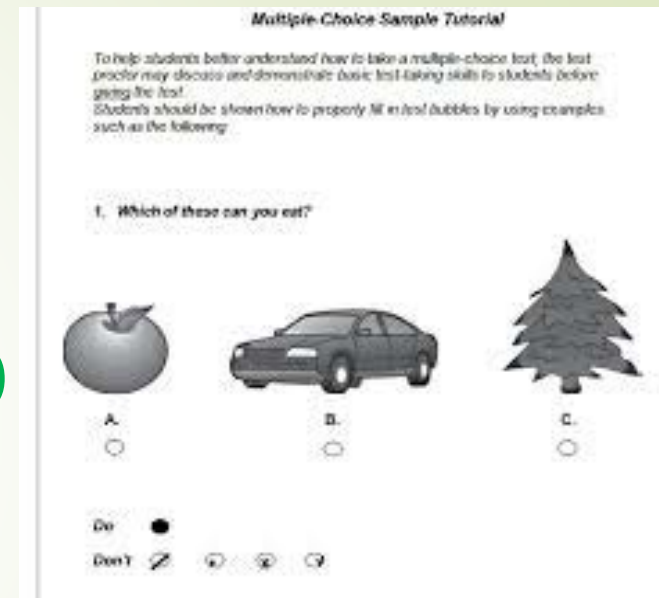
Give some
examples



Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Examples

- ❖ PISA, TIMSS, TOFEL
- ❖ ACT (American College Testing)
- ❖ SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test)
- ❖ AP (Advanced Placement) exams.
- ❖ PERT (Postsecondary Education Readiness Test)
- ❖ PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test)



Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Examples

- ❖ EST
- ❖ CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Test)
- ❖ MAP (Measurement of Academic Progress)
- ❖ IELTS (International English Language Testing System)

Name _____

Using the articles "What Do We Know About Sharks?" by Sharon Kaye and "Great White Sharks" by Peter Benckley, answer the following standardized test style questions.

_____ 1. Which evidence from the article "What Do We Know About Sharks?" best supports the claim that sharks are mostly harmless?


- a. "Sharks are top predators in the aquatic food chain."
- b. "Out of 375 shark species, only two dozen are even really dangerous to us."
- c. "In terms of risk of attacks, it's a tie-up between the great white, the tiger, and the bull shark."
- d. "But great whites usually inhabit deep water—not shallow waters where people swim."

_____ 2. In the article "What Do We Know About Sharks," how does the information about different types of sharks at the bottom of each page help to reinforce the ideas in the passage?

- a. Providing details about different types of sharks
- b. Expanding key points about sharks as animals
- c. Listing questions about whether sharks are dangerous to eat
- d. Describing ways that sharks eat

_____ 3. Which statement best describes the author's purpose in "What Do We Know About Sharks?"

- a. To explain to the reader that sharks are not actually dangerous
- b. To inform the reader about different types of sharks
- c. To explain to the reader that sharks are very intelligent
- d. To inform the reader about general facts about sharks

A misty forest scene with several tall, dark tree trunks in the foreground and a green field in the background. The trees are dark and textured, and the background is a soft, hazy green field. The overall atmosphere is quiet and contemplative.

Go as far as
you can see.
When you get
there, you can
see farther.

Thomas Carlyle

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

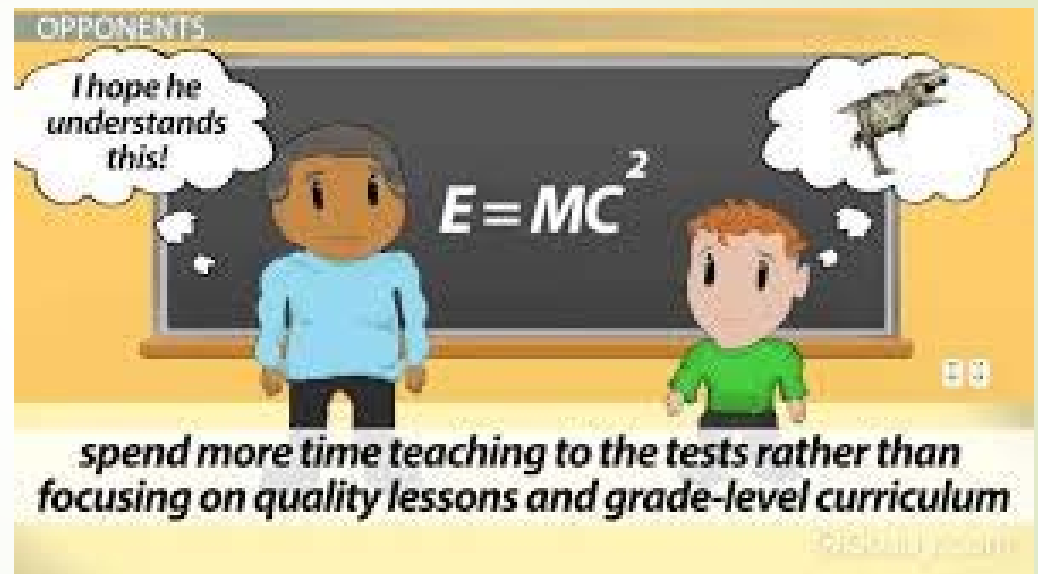
Standardized testing may affect students and teachers

- ❖ A study shows that students' level of a stress hormone, cortisol, **rises by about 15 percent on average in the week** when high-stakes standardized tests are administered.
- ❖ These tests contain too few items to allow meaningful within-subject comparisons of students' strengths and weaknesses.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing may affect students and teachers

❖ Sometimes teachers teach for the test.



Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing may affect students and teachers

- ❖ Improvement of ongoing instruction and learning. And Evaluation of instruction.
- ❖ Identify areas where a pupil or group of pupils is strong or requires additional support.
- ❖ can be applied to improve teaching and learning.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing may affect students and teachers

- ❖ There are many factors that can impact a student's test score negatively, including stress, lack of language skills, and lack of special needs accommodations.
- ❖ Additionally, standardized tests do not test every field of education, making them all the more inaccurate.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons


Standardized testing may affect students and teachers

- ❖ Lots of students struggle with test-taking and face anxiety when it comes to these types of assessments.
- ❖ Level of stress, mood and emotional state can all impact a person's ability when it comes to completing these kinds of assessments.
- ❖ As a result, it makes it difficult to know whether these tests are truly reflective of students' skills and competencies.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing may affect students and teachers

- ❖ When teachers need to prepare students for standardized tests, this can impact the way they teach the course material and it can result in teachers 'teaching to the test,' rather than the real goal of ensuring students truly understand the material.
- ❖ Everyone is different—this means we all learn at a different pace, and have different academic aptitudes and preferences. Education should not be viewed through a cookie-cutter or 'one-size-fits-all' approach; that said, standardized testing looks to apply education and understand its outcomes in this way.

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Standardized Tests

Pros and Cons

STANDARDIZED TESTING: FAIR OR NOT?

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Pros of Standardized Tests	Cons of Standardized Tests
They enable schools to track student progress.	A single test cannot sufficiently tell a student's knowledge. If the student has a bad day, it sticks with them!
They help teachers to identify areas for improvement.	Standardized tests cause stress and anxiety for children.
They help keep schools accountable to policymakers.	Teachers 'teach to the test' which leads to the lower-quality rote learning method of teaching.
The uniformity of tests minimizes marker bias.	Poor test results can lead to low student self-esteem

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Pros of Standardized Tests	Cons of Standardized Tests
Grading is efficient because it can be done by machines.	Low scores on one single high-stakes test can prevent you from getting into a good college.
All students take the same test which enables fair comparisons.	Standardized tests middleclass students who know how to 'play the game' of standardized testing better than minorities.
Test scores are objective and not ambiguous or subjective.	Standardized tests cannot effectively cater to all learning styles.
Having upcoming tests that compare students can motivate students to study hard.	A single test score does not provide a comprehensive overview of a student's abilities and value.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Pros of Standardized Tests	Cons of Standardized Tests
Standardized testing is consistent across schools and systems which keeps all teachers nation-wide on track.	Students learn to the test, meaning they will ignore any information or learning opportunities that are not part of the upcoming test.
Standardized tests encourage students to get into study habits that set them up well for college.	A test score does not indicate college readiness. E.g. Resilience and self-motivation are important factors that aren't tested.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing: PROS

1. **They Help You Track The Progress Of Education:** Schools need metrics they can reliably use to evaluate students' progress and see whether teachers are successfully implementing the curriculum. Standardized tests provide a way for school boards and regulatory bodies to determine whether learning objectives are being met according to the grade level.
2. **They Help You Identify Areas For Improvement:** Standardized testing brings light to areas of the curriculum that are lacking, and can be used to formulate education plans for improvement in those areas. For example, if standardized tests within a school showed that the average test results in math were below grade level, this is helpful for that school to know they need to improve their math curriculum and teaching.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing: PROS

1. **Standardized Tests Are Consistent And Uniform:** Standardized tests provide a reliable and objective method to assess student achievement and learning. While removing all aspects of impartiality is difficult when it comes to scoring tests, since standardized tests require all test-takers to answer the same set of questions, it creates a greater degree of consistency and objectivity in the test results.
2. **Standardized Tests Are Efficient:** Most standardized tests are evaluated by machines or AI, which makes assessing standardized tests efficient, less costly and time-consuming. Standardized tests are easy to process, generate significant amounts of education data and create a high-level picture of the state of education.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing: PROS

1. **They Allow You To Compare Students:** Parents, students, teachers, school boards and broader governments benefit from the data of standardized tests in seeing where any particular student falls according to the median grade average.
2. **They Can Motivate Students:** Students that want to do well on standardized tests are more motivated to study and learn the course material to get a better grade. For some students, a standardized test is an effective motivator to get students to learn better and take school more seriously.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing: CONS

1. **They Cause Stress:** Standardized testing can be a major source of **stress** for students and teachers alike. It's well-known that many students don't perform well on tests, however, this doesn't necessarily mean that these students are any less knowledgeable or educated than the students that do perform well.
2. Standardized tests create performance anxiety, and many students feel overwhelmingly bound by these test scores to get accepted into top schools.
3. Teachers are also indirectly assessed by standardized tests because student performance is reflective of how well kids are being taught. Evidently, when students do not perform well because of stress-related factors, this does not reflect negatively on the teacher, though it may be interpreted that way.

Standardized testing: Pros and Cons

Standardized testing: CONS

1. **Standardized Tests Are Not Comprehensive:** When it comes to standardized tests, it's important that schools do not see test scores as a comprehensive reflection of a student's academic capabilities. Besides this, schools should not base their admissions decisions on the sole basis of test results, because this ignores other factors that are relevant to the student's skills and competencies.
2. **Standardized Tests Do Not Measure:** Creativity, Motivation, Critical thinking, Self Discipline, Curiosity, Question asking, leadership, courage, compassion, empathy, reliability, etc ...

Standardized Tests

Discussion





Question for Groups

Reflect on today's experience:

Based on what we discussed in this workshop, do you recommend using standardized tests? And for what?

Be prepared to report out in 5-10 min.

Reflections and Questions

