



February 2019

# Is Testing Good?

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## Recommended Citation

Watson, Tawni (2019) "Is Testing Good?," *SWOSU Sayre Student Anthology*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 21.  
Available at: [https://dc.swosu.edu/sayre\\_student\\_anthology/vol1/iss1/21](https://dc.swosu.edu/sayre_student_anthology/vol1/iss1/21)

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## Is Testing Good?

Tawni Watson

As a junior at Cheyenne Public Schools, I am required to take end of instruction tests, also known as EOI's. These tests are designed to see if the teachers have actually taught the subject so that the students can retain it for further use. Preparation for these tests is stressful and time consuming. Last minute cram sessions and all-nighters to study can take its toll on the students' capabilities to do well on the test. As a student, I am aware of the advantages and disadvantages school testing brings. All around the nation, students prepare year round for End of Instruction tests. High School students should not have to take any, or have to take less, end of instruction tests.

Teachers have to cover certain material to help students pass the EOI. Sometimes this results in rushing through the year and not completely covering the material. However, this sets a standard that all teachers are forced to teach. This may result in confusion; if the teacher does not have time to slow things down and explain the material, students might know all the basics but not have time to learn all the details. In American History for example, students will know who won the Civil War and who the first President was, but they will not know what battles were fought and who George Washington's Secretary of State was. With as many tests as we have to take, it is hard to really learn about history, cover all of our math lessons, learn how to diagram a sentence, or learn how to dissect a frog in the science lab. Teachers do not teach the subject anymore, but instead they teach us how to pass a test. It almost seems like the tests are more to credit of the teachers than for the students, anyway. We are required to take seven mandated tests, but only have to pass four. Why not just take four tests instead of seven? How it is now, we have to take two or more tests in the same subject. EOI tests are hard to study for or know what to expect. Then there are the students who do not perform well on tests. They will make good grades on worksheet and daily assignments, but when a test is put in front of them they cannot handle the pressure. Students like this should be given credit for what they do all year long, not just the grade they make on a test. I believe we should not have to take tests in order to graduate; if we have honest teachers, the grades we get are the grades we earned. Passing the class should get us a diploma, not a test score received at the end of the year. As it has been said, "Although test results can be an indicator of what's happening in the classroom, they don't tell you everything about the quality of a particular school." This proves that what happens in the classroom does not always show up on the tests. It is unfair to cram a subject into a student's head but not get the outcome they deserve on the test.

High School students should not have to work all year just to take and hopefully pass an end of instruction test. An article by Diane Rado found in the *Chicago Tribune* reported, "Reaching the higher academic bar is important because simply passing exams can leave students struggling down the road and ill-prepared for college, according to educators and test experts. Exceeding standards requires more critical thinking, creativity and analytical skills." It is not about passing the test at the end of the year; getting prepared for college is what really matters.

