**“Standardized Testing: Is it a Scam?”  
Nandini Rana, age 13, and Amy Enyenihi, age 14**

Which of the following statements is true?  
(A) Standardized tests are a good use of valuable time.  
(B) Standardized testing is a quick and accurate measure of a child’s intelligence.  
(C) Standardized testing is in no way harmful to a student’s mental health.  
(D) None of the above.

The correct answer is D.

All around the United States, students of different learning capabilities and capacities are pressured into taking the same or similar tests to evaluate their worth in this calculating society. It is believed that these tests are helpful to teachers and can collect reliable information about a student’s ability to learn. On the contrary, standardized tests are detrimental to one’s mental health and waste priceless hours that could be used as instructional time. Therefore, they are hurting students rather than helping them on their educational path.

When looking at long term effects, these stressful tests can increase the chance of a child developing anxiety issues both inside and outside of a classroom setting. A great amount of pressure is placed on these students to perform well and accurately represent not only themselves, but their schools and teachers as well. An article from The Washington Post mentions specific situations and reports, “Teachers are reporting children throwing up, losing control of their bowels, and increased commitments for psychiatric and anxiety issues [due to the pressure of standardized tests].”

Another concern regarding this issue is that it cuts into valuable instructional time. Hours upon hours are wasted conducting these useless examinations, not to mention the countless days of preparation. In our limited experiences, teachers have confessed that a specific topic was being taught only because it would make an appearance on a standardized test and not for academic gain.

Many would argue that standardized tests are a useful tool and can help students prepare for further education. However an article from The New York Times states, “The report found that more test time does not pay off in improved learning as measured by student performance on the rigorous, federally backed math and reading exam known as the National Assessment of Educational Progress,” and proves the tests’ worthlessness.

To conclude, getting rid of standardized tests would take a great load of pressure off of future generations and allow for a better academic experience. Students would be able to learn in an environment where they are more comfortable with their capabilities and will not be constantly compared with their peers.

**Works Cited**

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