

102 學年度四年制二、三年級轉學生招生考試

四技三年級 應用英文系

第一節 英文閱讀與寫作 試題

第一頁 共三頁

注意事項：

1. 本試題共兩大題，配分共 100 分。
2. 請標明大題、子題編號作答，不必抄題。
3. 全部答案均須在答案卷之答案欄內作答，否則不予計分。

Back to Basics: Test Scores Don't Lie

By Diane Ravitch

Directions: Read the following article, *Back to Basics: Test Scores Don't Lie*, published in *The New Republic* on March 6, 1989. Answer the FIVE comprehension questions and write a short critique to analyze and evaluate the article.

When I was in public high school in Texas in the 1950s, one of the last things a girl wanted was a reputation as a good student. Girls who got good grades were "brains," and brains were socially handicapped. Most girls strived to cultivate the June Allyson image: a follower, not a leader; cute and not too smart, or at least not so smart that the guys felt threatened.

Apparently--despite the women's movement and the presence of significant numbers of successful women as role models--it is still considered inappropriate in most schools and colleges for girls to seem "smart." As a female student at Hunter High School in New York City recently explained, "I make straight A's, but I never talk about it....It's cool to do really badly. If you are interested in school and you show it, you're a nerd." In elite institutions, where students are chosen for their academic ability, girls are more willing to challenge the boys academically than they are in nonselective schools and colleges. But with the demise of most single-sex girls' schools and colleges, there are now even fewer institutions where girls can be leaders and achievers without feeling like freaks. The popular culture--through television, movies, magazines, and videos--incessantly drums in the message to young women that it is better to be popular, sexy, and "cool" than to be intelligent, accomplished, and

outspoken: Madonna has replaced June Allyson.

In 1986 Signithia Fordham and John U. Ogbu found a similar anti-academic ethos among both male and female students at an all-black high school in Washington, D.C. They noted that able students faced strong peer pressure not to succeed in school. If they did well in their studies, they might be accused of "acting white." Fordham and Ogbu observed that "peer group pressures against academic striving take many forms, including labeling (e.g., 'brainiac' for students who receive good grades in their courses), exclusion from peer activities or ostracism, and physical assault."

These attitudes, whether expressed by boys or girls, blacks, or whites, discourage academic achievement. If boys or girls who study are derided as "goobs" and "dweebs"--two of the many pejorative terms for good students catalogued in a recent New York Times survey of teenage slang--then most boys and girls are going to avoid studying. Permissive parents and permissive educators don't help the situation by leaving adolescents adrift in a culture shaped largely by the mass media. A national mathematics assessment released in 1988 revealed that American teenagers know the basics taught in elementary school, but their academic performance trails off as they get older and peer pressures begin to take effect. Only half of all 17-year-olds "reached a level of proficiency associated with Material taught in junior high school mathematics."

Unfortunately, outside the cultural bubble inhabited by Madonnas and dweebs lies in a real world, and in that world poor academic achievement is not without consequences. Last March a comparison of students in 17 nations reported that our fifth-graders ranked eighth out of the 17; our ninth-graders ranked 16th out of 17 (beating out Hong Kong only); and our 12th-graders ranked last in biology, third from last in chemistry, and fourth from last in physics. Just a few weeks ago another international test of mathematics and science was released by the Educational Testing Service, with the same dismal results. Compared to 13-year-old students in Ireland, South Korea, Spain, the United Kingdom, and four provinces in Canada, our students scored last in mathematics and well below the mean in science.

There is a growing real world correspondence between our declining test results and our declining economic prowess. Those countries that promote hard work and self-discipline in school have surged ahead, eroding the technological edge that we once enjoyed. According to the New York Times, Japan's annual share of American patents grew over the past 15 years from 4 percent to 19 percent, while our own share dropped from 73 percent to 54 percent. Experts point to the lack of a well-educated labor force as one of the prime causes of our diminishing economic position. Government policy is partially responsible, as are inadequate levels of savings and investment. But we have wounded ourselves, socially and economically, by failing to nurture scientists, engineers, inventors, and, in fact, a general citizenry who can

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read, write, compute, and adeptly use technology. In the 17-nation science study, the bottom quarter in the ninth grade of U.S. schools is described as "scientifically illiterate."

So what are we doing about it? Among the nations that regularly lead the world in international competitions, like Korea and Japan, there is a strong core curriculum that begins in elementary school. U.S. educators should be demanding that all future teachers get a solid liberal education, one that includes math, science, history, literature, and foreign language; and some educators are. Educators and concerned citizens should also be insisting that all children learn science and mathematics and history and literature and a foreign language in every grade from elementary school onward; but few educators are, because they either don't believe I doing so or know there aren't enough qualified teachers to offer such a rich curriculum.

What we shouldn't be doing is denying that a problem exists, or jettisoning objective measures that reveal our educational shortcomings. Yet that has been one effect of the anti-testing movement, which just won a federal court order in New York banning the use of Scholastic Aptitude Tests as the sole criterion for awarding state scholarships, on the grounds that the SAT (the nation's most widely used college admission test) discriminates against girls. Judge John M. Walker, noting that boys get higher scores than girls, ruled that this use of the test to distribute scholarships violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution.

Down this path lies a great deal of foolishness. Racial and gender disparities crop up on most objective measures of academic performance. On the science tests that were given to students in 17 nations, boys outscored girls in every country, and the gap increased with each age level; only among the most advanced seniors in Hong Kong and Sweden--and only on the biology exam--did girls outscore boys. In the history assessment, boys usually outscored girls, and sometimes the differences were startling. For example, in a national history assessment in 1987, boys were more likely than girls to locate the Rocky Mountains on a map, to know that Columbus discovered the New World before 1750, and to know that the Great Depression occurred between 1900 and 1950. Are these gender-biased questions? It doesn't seem so.

Some of the differences between genders and the races on tests of subject matter can be accounted for by different course-taking patterns. For example, white males tend to take more advanced courses in science than do females and members of minority groups. Something else is amiss, however, because even when girls and blacks and Hispanics take physics, the white males still outperform them by a considerable margin. Since I don't believe that white males have a genetic edge, I have to conclude that deeply ingrained self-deprecation and ever present peer pressures combine to depress the aspirations and achievements of girls and minority students.

Thus, if the SAT were abolished, there would still be gender disparities and racial disparities on other tests. But since I happen to think that the SAT has outlived its usefulness as a college admission test, I am not going to raise a hue-and-cry about its potential demise. Far better in determining whether a student deserves admission to a selective institution would be a test that measures what he or she has actually studied--or should have studied--in science, history, literature, mathematics, and foreign language. Because the SAT is content-free (except in its mathematical questions), high schools can afford to ignore content. If the SAT were replaced by achievement tests, high schools would be likelier to teach the subjects that matter, and students would be likelier to take them. Both developments would narrow the achievement gap that places us at a disadvantage in international comparisons.

But no matter what kind of test is used, we will continue to have serious cultural problems undermining educational achievement: the negative attitudes of students who jeer at those who do well in school; the negative attitude of parents who urge their sons to strive and achieve but not their daughters; and the negative attitude of educators who accept the destructive culture, not acknowledging their responsibility to establish a climate in which academic achievement, hard work, and brainpower are honored.

We could tackle the achievement gap by following the lead of Judge Walker in New York and rejecting the validity of all tests in which white males consistently outperform females and members of minority groups. Maybe we could even stop participating in international assessments that tell us how badly we are doing compared with other countries.

Or we could take a hard look at the social and cultural attitudes among teenagers and adults that discourage girls, blacks, and Hispanics from seeing themselves as future engineers, doctors, and scientists; and then we could think hard about ways to change the peer pressures that put down academic achievement. We will continue to lose ground and squander our educational resources until teenagers and their parents come to recognize that academic achievement requires the same motivation and active involvement as achievement in sports or music.

(A) Comprehension Questions: Answer the following questions briefly with no more than 150 words for each. 70%

1. What does Ravitch mean by “anti-academic ethos” (underlined/paragraph 3)?
2. What relationship does Ravitch believe exists between poor academic performance and economic strength? On what does she base this claim (paragraph 6)?
3. Ravitch offers an educational solution based on what other international competitors do (paragraph 7). What assumptions is she making about schools in the United States and in

countries such as Korea and Japan?

4. What do you think Ravitch mean by “serious cultural problems” (underlined/ paragraph 12)?

5. What solutions does Ravitch offer (paragraph 13)? What would she like to see happen?

(B) Write a short critique of at least 300 words. You need to analyze the author’s arguments and supporting information and evidence to determine its strengths and weaknesses. 30%