

# 5 Things Parents Should Know About Assessment

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### 1. Tests and Assessments Are Not the Same



A test examines a student's knowledge, understanding, and skills to determine what level of learning has been reached. It generally results in a numerical or letter grade.

Assessments involves gathering, analyzing, and responding to a student's strengths and misconceptions about their learning. It includes feedback to the learner and also informs the teacher's practice.

An analogy would be your BMI that provides a number but not a health analysis or fitness plan. Sometimes we need a test and sometimes learning requires assessment.

## 2. A Standardized Test Is Just a Snapshot

There's nothing wrong with getting an annual family portrait to provide a benchmark of growth. But in the classroom, assessment, using a variety of strategies presents a kaleidoscope of your child's educational skills and abilities. Sometimes it's okay to weigh yourself twice a year, but in order to monitor gain or loss you want to check your progress more frequently

## 3. Encourage and Acknowledge Progress

Children can become discouraged when they don't get the score or rating they expected. So can adults, athletes, and accountants. With assessment it is okay to make mistakes as long as you learn from them. The goal of assessment is improvement and small steps are important in reaching the big picture goals. It's not about the learning gaps; it's how we cross over them. "I was taught that the way of progress was neither swift nor easy." Marie Curie.

## 4. Let's Work Together: Stay Connected

All of our lives have ups and downs. If your child is going through a rough patch keep the teacher informed of their changing mindset, unusual setbacks, and setups that support improvement. Follow your child's progress on your school's learning management system. Talk with

them and their teacher, their assignments/assessments, their progress, and what you can do at home to support your child's learning.

## 5. Grades Don't Mean Everything

Test scores and report cards do not represent the whole child. You know, the one with a wonderful sense of humor, who helps others solve problems. The one who works consistently and diligently may be more successful in life than another who studies 12 hours a day and gets high test scores.

What do you think? What would you? Any lingering questions?

Laura Greenstein, Ed.D., Author, GenParenting.com Guest Blogger, and Founder of the Assessment Network

Edited by Mary Ann Burke, Ed.D.

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