

What about standardized tests?

Many teachers have reservations about the wide-scale use of standardized tests. But the government mandates their use.

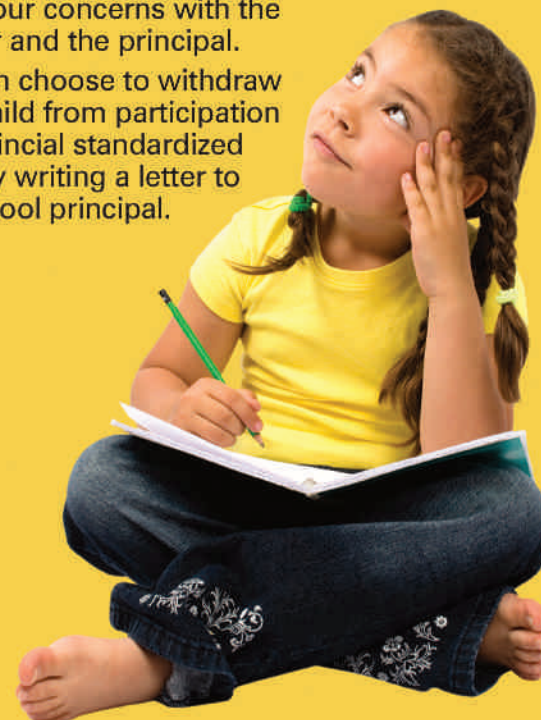
What specifically are teachers concerned about?

- More time for testing means less time for learning.
- As yet, no one has shown that testing, by itself, can improve learning.
- The most significant and complex student learning cannot be measured by large-scale assessments.
- Teacher time and public money are directed away from the classroom in order to support large-scale assessments.
- In 2005, Ontario's Education Quality and Accountability Office spent \$35.7 million. That would have provided 800 new teachers, six new schools, or 180 classrooms for 3,600 students.
- Much of the difference between boards or schools in test scores can be explained by the socioeconomic status of the students and their communities.
- Large-scale assessments should be replaced by random-sample testing. Such tests would still effectively evaluate the school system. The savings could be redirected to the classroom.

What can you do as a parent?

Parents have the right and responsibility to ask questions about how their child is doing in school.

- Ask your child's teacher:
 - How is my child being assessed?
 - Does my child know what is expected?
 - Does my child understand how classroom work is assessed?
 - How are test results used?
 - What support can I provide at home or school?
- Participate in learning activities in and outside of the classroom.
- Talk to your child; be curious about his/her classroom experiences.
- If you are worried about your child's participation in standardized tests, raise your concerns with the teacher and the principal.
- You can choose to withdraw your child from participation in provincial standardized tests by writing a letter to the school principal.



Classroom-based assessment by teachers is the best source of information about student learning.



If you want to know how your child is doing in school



...talk to your child's teacher

For more information about assessment and testing visit etfo.ca

 **Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario**
Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'élémentaire de l'Ontario



480 University Avenue, Suite 1000,
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1V2

 **Recycled** Cert no. SW-COC-001326 © 1996 FSC 



Teachers, assessment, and your child



Your child is more than a grade or a number

Assessments should reflect the variety of knowledge, skills, and abilities that allow children to be creative and critical thinkers, and value learning.

- 1** Teachers want to do what is best for students.
- 2** Teachers are experts in assessment, teaching, and learning.
- 3** Teachers are committed to helping children be the best learners they can be.
- 4** Teachers showcase what students know and can do.
- 5** Teachers use classroom assessment to improve student learning.

- 6** Good classroom assessment improves learning and supports teaching by:
 - Motivating students to learn better.
 - Helping teachers make important instructional decisions, and
 - Involving students meaningfully in setting goals for their learning.



Your child and testing



Your child has a unique learning style that cannot be captured in a single assessment. That's why teachers use a variety of methods to determine

what your child knows and is able to do.

The teacher knows each individual student in her classroom. With this knowledge the teacher – together with you and your child – can plan for future learning.

Your child learns by:

- **researching**
- **investigating**
- **thinking**
- **exploring**
- **discussing**
- **sharing**
- **playing**
- **using her hands**

Teachers assess your child's learning through:

- **oral and written reports**
- **written tests**
- **journals and portfolios**
- **student work such as projects, experiments, and labs**
- **performances**

These reflect the different ways your child learns.