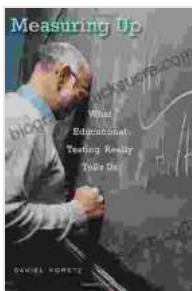


Measuring Up: What Educational Testing Really Tells Us

Educational testing is a hot-button issue, with strong opinions on both sides of the debate. Some people believe that testing is essential for ensuring that students are learning what they need to know, while others argue that it is a waste of time and money that does more harm than good.



Measuring Up: What Educational Testing Really Tells

Us by Daniel M Koretz

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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In this article, we will explore the pros and cons of educational testing and examine what the research actually tells us about its effectiveness.

The Pros of Educational Testing

- **Accountability:** Educational testing can be used to hold schools and teachers accountable for student learning. When students are tested regularly, it provides a way to track their progress and identify areas where they need additional support.

- **Identification of Struggling Students:** Educational testing can help to identify students who are struggling academically. This information can then be used to provide these students with the extra help they need to succeed.
- **Curriculum Evaluation:** Educational testing can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of different curricula. By comparing the test scores of students who have used different curricula, it is possible to determine which curricula are most effective.
- **Goal Setting:** Educational testing can be used to set goals for student learning. By setting specific targets for student achievement, it is possible to motivate students to work harder and achieve more.

The Cons of Educational Testing

- **Stress and Anxiety:** Educational testing can be a major source of stress and anxiety for students. The pressure to perform well on tests can lead to sleepless nights, headaches, and other health problems.
- **Narrowing of the Curriculum:** Educational testing can lead to a narrowing of the curriculum. When teachers know that their students will be tested on certain material, they are more likely to focus their teaching on that material, even if it is not the most important or relevant.
- **Bias:** Educational tests can be biased against certain groups of students, such as students from low-income families or students from minority groups. This bias can lead to unfair results and perpetuate educational inequality.
- **Cost:** Educational testing is expensive. The cost of developing, administering, and scoring tests can add up to millions of dollars each

year.

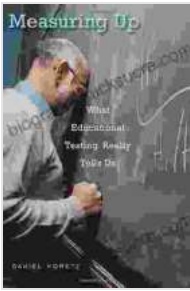
What the Research Tells Us

The research on educational testing is mixed. Some studies have shown that testing can have a positive impact on student learning, while other studies have found that it can have a negative impact. The overall effect of testing is likely to depend on a number of factors, such as the type of test, the way it is administered, and the way the results are used.

One of the most important things to consider when evaluating the research on educational testing is the validity and reliability of the tests. Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. Reliability refers to the consistency of a test. A test that is not valid or reliable cannot be used to make meaningful inferences about student learning.

Another important factor to consider is the purpose of the testing. Is the test being used to assess student learning? To identify struggling students? To evaluate the effectiveness of a curriculum? The purpose of the test will determine the type of test that is used and the way the results are interpreted.

Educational testing is a complex issue with both pros and cons. The research on testing is mixed, and the overall effect of testing is likely to depend on a number of factors. When making decisions about educational testing, it is important to consider the validity and reliability of the tests, the purpose of the testing, and the potential impact on students, teachers, and schools.



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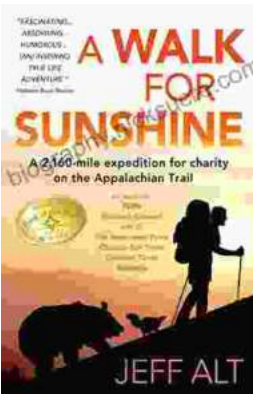
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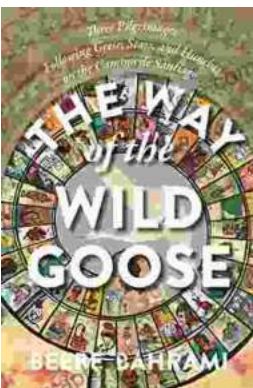
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