

“Teaching to the Test:” Impacts on Students

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Standardized testing and concerns for social equality:

- Biases in the test questions themselves put minority students at a disadvantage
- “Teaching to the test” is disproportionately practiced in schools teaching primarily minority students
- Efforts to negate the inequalities perpetuated by standardized testing overlooks the systemic issues in the education system, which are exasperated by standardized testing

The impact of standardized testing on classroom environment:

Discourages Motivation:

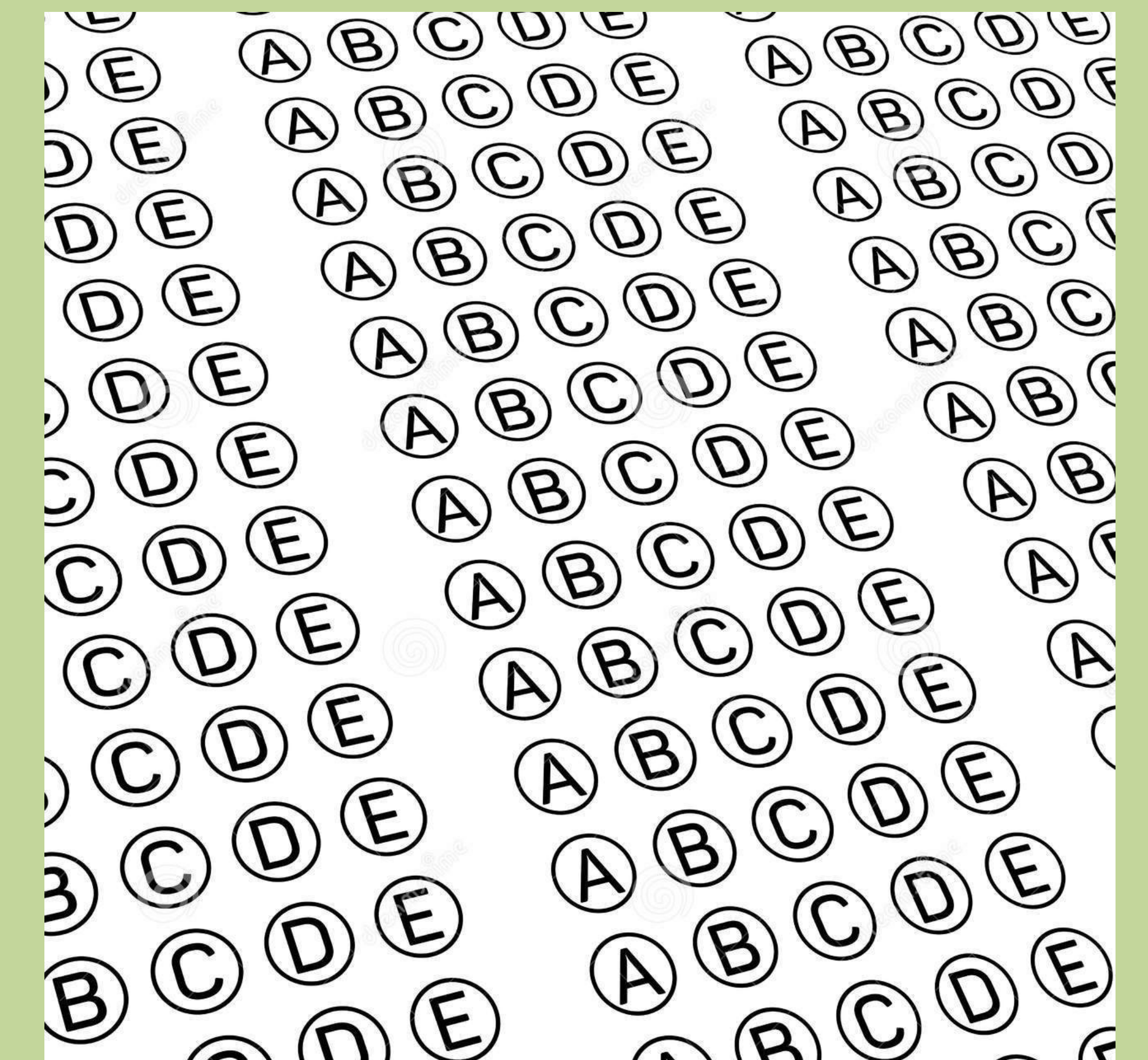
- In a system that prioritizes test scores, teachers can feel as if originality is not appreciated in the classroom, and therefore be discouraged from incorporating innovative activities into their lesson plans.

Harms Student’s Relationship with Learning

- “Teaching to the test” promotes inauthentic learning that has a limit to student achievement.
- Emphasis on scoring well can overshadow the importance of true comprehension and mastery of information.

Standardized tests as insufficient predictors of success later in life

- Admissions tests solely measure cognitive ability.
- Standardized tests do not measure perseverance, discipline, or commitment to learning, which are equally (if not more) accurate predictors of success.



Conclusion:

The lens through which we examine the effectiveness of standardized tests must acknowledge the social and racial implications of the tests, the repercussions on student learning, and the extent to which they should be used as predictors for later success.