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Literature as an Alternative to Teaching to the Test

ABSTRACT

Literature as an Alternative to Teaching to the Test

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In response to the more emphasis on standardized testing, teaching to the test has become a growing problem for American public education. Although educators frequently criticize this conventional method, they have been given few alternatives like test preparation, and teachers continue to practice teaching to the test in schools across the nation. While current professional journals recommend that teachers practice effective test preparation, teaching to the test produces only short-term results and hampers long-term learning. Consequently, this thesis explores the benefits of teaching literature in order to prepare the subjects of a literature-based curriculum as an alternative to teaching to the test. Rather than teaching skills to students or merely what teaching to the test, implementing a literature-based curriculum provides students success on standardized assessments through embedded test preparation.

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Abstract

In response to the recent emphasis on standardized testing, teaching to the test has become a growing problem for American public education. Although educators frequently criticize this instructional method, they have been given few alternatives for test preparation, and teachers continue to practice teaching to the test in schools across the nation. While current political pressures necessitate that teachers practice effective test preparation, teaching to the test produces only short-term results and hampers long-term learning. Consequently, this thesis explores the benefits of studying literature in order to propose the adoption of a literature-based curriculum as an alternative to teaching to the test. Rather than teaching skills in isolation as occurs when teaching to the test, implementing a literature-based curriculum promotes student success on standardized assessments through embedded test preparation.

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