

A Look at the Current Educational System: Introducing a Holistic Curriculum

Berlin Emerson

Antioch University

Imagine sitting in a kindergarten classroom. There is no art on the walls. There is no music, no dancing, no signs of life, except for the 25 children sitting quietly. The teacher seems to endlessly lecture about the same “sight words” and “math sentences” they hear about EVERY SINGLE DAY. A kid sitting at his desk, thumbing the corner of his chair, looks over at his 5 year old seat partner. They look at each other, knowing this is only the beginning of another long, boring day. He wants to move. He can feel it in his bones. He cannot sit still. He wants to burst outside and play “Cops and Robbers” with his friends. But then, the teacher notices him staring out the window and now he is in trouble. Again.

Unfortunately, this is a common day in the public schools of today. Teachers no longer incorporate activities that actually speak to children. Instead, they constantly drill their students on topics that are not yet pertinent or interesting to the kids. Both teachers and students alike are in a war with standardized tests. It appears as though we have become a nation obsessed with assessment. Everything students do now must be boiled down to numbers, codes, and statistics that are supposed to indicate where they have come from, what they can do, and where they are headed. This is the evolution of quantitative data. But can a scantron tell a complete story? The standardization of public schooling has left children with a partial education and a holistic style curriculum must be implemented.

Before the 19th century, there was no real public education. Our public school system came about as a response to industrialization, as there was a great need for somewhat educated people in the workforce. Since then, there has not been a radical transformation of the educational hierarchy. Around the world, subjects with the most emphasis remain math and languages, then humanities, and then last is art. “Our education system has mined our minds in

the way that we strip-mine the earth: for a particular commodity,” (Robinson, 2006) leaving very little time, if any, for activities that actually engage children.

On January 8, 2002 President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) which, for the first time, made federal funding for primary and secondary schools reliant on results derived from standardized tests (Duckworth, Quinn, Tsukayama, 2011, p. 439). The initial intention of the legislation was to be able to compare students from different classrooms, schools, cities, and countries. A reward program was set up to financially benefit schools that could raise their scores, while schools not able to do so within two years were considered “failing” schools. This stigma not only affected the morale of staff, children, and surrounding neighborhoods, but the teachers began to feel stripped of their teaching capabilities. Our obsession with quantity over quality has officially left children behind.

We have become a “...culture of compliance. Our children and teachers are encouraged to follow routine algorithms rather than to excite that power of imagination and curiosity,” (Robinson, 2013). Ideally, we should educate children how to create and conceive innovative solutions. Instead, we teach children how to be obedient and pass tests (Laplante, 2014). We are simply producing more worker bees to maintain the current structure of our economic society. Society cannot flourish on maintenance alone, though. A productive society needs growth and good leaders, not just followers.

Standardized testing has taken the traditional curriculum and, “narrows it, deflects it, trivializes it, and causes it to stagnate,” (Shepard, 1992, p.2). A standardized curriculum for standardized tests produces standardized children. To assume that each child is the same and is able to tolerate the same lesson plan is not only ignorant but cruel. When the NCLB era began,

the plan eliminated teacher-designed lesson plans. A 15 year elementary school teacher was interviewed and said, “The curriculum was purchased by the district and (teachers) were told to teach it exactly as it was presented,” (A. Garcia, personal communication, February 15, 2016). The teachers were forced to read their prompts verbatim and every class had the same mandated lesson at the same time, “regardless of students’ needs or differences in classrooms,” (A. Garcia, personal communication, February 15, 2016). Teachers lost the right to create a curriculum that is fitting for each class. Instead, they find themselves, “teaching the test,” solely to ensure the children will succeed on their standardized tests. What is commonly known as “teaching the test” means teachers will only teach the material that will be represented on the standardized tests. The fight to hold teachers accountable for students’ scores on tests is known as “high-stakes testing” and adds additional pressure.

Originally, testing was done by teachers periodically throughout the school year assessing what each student needed and how to improve each individual classroom. The current high-stakes tests are done at the end of the school year, therefore eliminating the possibility that scores could be used to help alter the curriculum (M. Levine & A. Levine, 2013, p. 17). Test results are then given to the teacher as number scores and offer no distinctive information as to what the children need (M. Levine & A. Levine, 2013, p. 17). As classrooms continue to lose their independent feel, they are set up almost like a factory now where “students are the raw materials processed by teachers; teachers are the line factory workers in need of close supervision; test scores are the product,” (M. Levine & A. Levine, 2013, p. 17). The standardized model leaves room only for written or multiple choice questions with no emphasis on practical work to demonstrate actual comprehension. Most teachers are very uncomfortable with the

teaching methods they are being forced to incorporate because it goes against how they believe children should be taught (Shepard, 1992, p. 6). Teachers no longer need to have any understanding of child development or pedagogy as they are only able to teach government mandated curricula, creating a “teacher-poof” (Shepard, 1992, p.7) environment.

The educational system in place is an objective one in that one style of curriculum is forced upon all students, no matter their background, strengths or weaknesses. Tests reinforce this mentality by comparing scores to other students’ across the country. Intelligence is diverse as every person learns in a variety of ways and at different paces and yet there is only one style of teaching (Robinson, 2006) . To assume that a purely academic lesson plan will work for every single child is refusing to view the whole picture.

The tests give almost no feedback for the children. The students may find out their score after they have completed the test but with very minimal explanation. The input of the child is invaluable as well. A student needs to be able to reflect on his journey to see how far he has come and what improvements he needs to make. This concept is an integral part of growing up. Children need to be able to assess themselves, make individual decisions, and deal with the consequences. Making children responsible for their own learning gives them the tools to think independently and strive on their own (Sato, 1993). Having the ability to discern what is needed to improve is a foundational step in critical thinking.

Not only do standardized test results leave out any feedback for improvement, there is also no way to know how well students can transfer what they have learned into the real world (Bachrach, Hu, Peter, Schmitt, 2008). The lessons learned are simply memorized and spit back onto a test, not necessarily taken into children’s daily lives. As it is, children are not able to make

cognitive connections between what they learn in class and the world around them, giving the current lessons very little life value. Identifying spelling errors and solving math equations has no purpose without being able to connect them to the students' lives.

Children are especially sensitive to rushing through formative years of learning. The current curriculum asks young children in kindergarten to have prematurely developed cognitive function before they are ready to do so. Our education system is expecting kids to learn, understand, and remember what was taught in class well enough to be able to duplicate it on a test down the line. Very young children are still developing out of a “dreamy state of consciousness,” (Rees & Waite, 2014) part of the time, which is not designed to be able to respond to high-stakes testing. Forcing cognitive awareness at such a young age is, “counterproductive to long-term intellectual development,” (Rees & Waite, 2014) and considered detrimental to the entire learning experience.

Some rough numbers about the cost of standardized testing emphasizes the need for reform. Over a nine year period after NCLB was instituted, test scores raised a shockingly low amount. For instance, based on a 500 point scale, eighth grade reading went from 261 in 2003 to 264 in 2011, a mere three point increase. Eighth grade math only increased seven points, from 276 to 283. For the three and four point increase over nine years, we spent \$25.2 billion, “making the cost per increment nationally in eighth-grade math...about \$3.6 billion,” (M. Levine & A. Levine, 2013, p. 21). There are parts of the country where almost 60 percent of high school students will drop out before graduation (Robinson, 2013). If we could cut that number in half, it is estimated that it would generate nearly one trillion dollars for the U.S. economy. If we stopped

throwing away so much money trying to raise test scores and focused on making school more student friendly, we would actually be investing money.

Though the national test scores rose, it was at the expense of lessons involving critical thinking and creativity (Shepard, 1992, p.1). The rise in test scores was most likely due to the trend of teachers who are “teaching to the test” rather than focusing on individual curriculum. Teachers now spend most of their time preparing the children for high-stakes tests, often at the detriment of other subjects like history, P.E., science, art, and music. Even recess time is being reduced or eliminated completely so kids can spend more time obsessing over testing material (Shepard, 1992). Teachers are given the tests ahead of time so they know exactly what to teach. The fact that children are doing a little bit better on standardized tests is more indicative of being exposed to the same material again and again, rather than demonstrating a deeper understanding of the material. Results show, “students know dramatically less reading and math content when given an independent assessment than they appear to know on their routinely administered standardized tests,” (Shepard, 1992, p. 3). Though the scores are technically higher, they are skewed because the children had been exposed on a daily basis to the kinds of questions presented on standardized tests, not because they are now suddenly able to comprehend the material.

An example of how “teaching the test” leaves out cognitive learning is: kindergarten children will learn a set of 10 words and need to be able to spell each word and recognize any spelling errors. They do not need to know what the words actually mean or how they relate to them. Word recognition and word knowledge are two completely different skills. A deep-seated understanding of a concept will give the child a cognitive understanding of language rather than

simply being able to recognize the correct answer in a multiple choice question. Learning skills that are isolated or out of context leads children to have trouble dealing with real world problems (Shepard, 1992, p.5). Unfortunately, the world is not divided up into multiple choice answers.

Because the pressure to ensure students pass their tests is so great, low scoring children are often left to continue even more tedious and repetitive lessons to force memorization. Children with low reading scores often think the goal of reading is fluency and having the ability to detect errors. The children with high reading scores were the only students to mention a goal of actual comprehension (Shepard, 1992, p. 5). Recurring low test scores often leads to children being retained a grade or taking kindergarten twice. Holding a child back a grade lowers self-esteem, lowers grades further, and increases the chance of dropout (Shepard, 1992, p. 6).

At the end of its first ten years, we can see how detrimental the assessment process really is. High-stakes tests are putting teachers' careers at risk, unnecessarily ranking schools, and funding them based on scores. Encouraging teachers to "teach the test," deprives children of a full education and fills low scoring kids with anxiety and low self-esteem which may turn them off of the school setting forever (Black & Broadfoot, 2010, p.11). To put it simply, "NCLB took away the joy of being a teacher and it also took away the joy of learning from students," (A. Garcia, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Leaving teachers' careers uncertain and threatening their jobs based on standardized tests that vaguely gauge how much a child is able to memorize rather than comprehend, is nonsensical and robs children of a true educational experience. Teachers make up half of the education equation, and they need to be able to use their knowledge, creativity, and experience to be able to create lesson plans that are unique to their classrooms. "There is no system in the world or any

school in the country that is better than its teacher,” (Robinson, 2013). Unfortunately, some teachers reached a point in their careers when they chose to alter the student’s results after the testing was finished because they were terrified of losing their jobs (A.Garcia, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

And yet, in this ‘era of assessment’ there is hope. We need an education reform that will introduce a more holistic style curriculum into the school system which integrates more than just reading, writing, and arithmetic (3 R’s). Finding the balance of teaching art, music, socializing, etc while still incorporating reading, writing, and math can be tricky but in time, they compliment each other in a well-balanced symphony that is a complete education.

In 1921, Steiner Waldorf created the first Waldorf school in Germany which would alter the way education is perceived. The Waldorf education system embraces age appropriate lesson plans that revolve around children being *children*. This education style accounts for, “the natural rhythms of body movement, language, and social interaction,” (Henry et al., 1996, p. 119). Rather than forcing kids to engage in a curriculum that is solely designed to ensure they pass tests, the Waldorf teaching method recognizes the importance of art, socializing, and being imaginative and creative. Our nation has forced premature literacy learning and suppressed the human and essential need to maintain our imaginations.

The idea behind this different way of thinking is an, “unhurried force,” (House, 2013) that lets children learn when they are naturally ready to learn. Reading, writing, and math are all integrated seamlessly while the main curriculum focuses on creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration (4 C’s). When building a strong foundation in any aspect of life, each building block needs to be laid with care, time, and patience. The same idea applies to

a child's education and each step they take towards growing older. Children will transition from purely sensory learning at a very young age to, "the free use of mental activities," (House, 2013) at their own pace, on their own time. Waldorf believes the idea, 'the earlier the better' is setting children up for failure. Children cannot rush through the highly sensitive and crucial time period that defines young childhood.

Creativity can only happen when the creator is not afraid of the outcome. Unconscious and fearless innovation comes naturally for a child, but teachers suppress it because our system stigmatizes any mistakes by punishing teachers and schools for low test scores. "We are educating people out of their creative capacities," (Robinson, 2006). Developing creative skills is crucial because we create our own lives, and keep recreating them as we grow.

One of the ways Waldorf embraces childhood is by integrating the arts into the curriculum. An example of how the Waldorf classroom may integrate art into the lesson plan is when a teacher tells a story to the classroom, the teacher will recall the story from memory rather than reading from a book. When children have no pictures for reference, they immediately start to imagine what the story may look like in their minds. After the story is over, the teacher asks the students to draw or paint their favorite scene from the story. This enables the students to be creative while also practicing their retention skills. Retention skills can of course be utilized in learning the 3 R's as well. By practicing creativity and retention in a non-threatening age-appropriate environment, the kids are more likely to associate those lessons with positive emotions, furthering the opportunity of continued learning (Chauncey, 2006).

In the Waldorf setting, a large amount of time is spent reflecting on the lesson and its outcomes. Not only are the teachers reflecting on their lesson plan decisions, but the children

also consider their experiences with the lesson. Kids are encouraged to consider what the lesson means to them. The lesson plans are structured in a way that initiates curiosity and interest amongst the students. For example, in a standard public school setting, a science teacher lectures while students take notes before possibly conducting an experiment to showcase the chemical reactions explained in the lecture. In a Waldorf classroom, the teacher would begin with the experiment to peak the students' interests. In this setting, the science experiment is meant to evoke a sensorial reaction before conceptual understanding, giving the students a chance to reflect and consider a possible explanation (Chauncey, 2006, p.41). By initially learning through their *senses* rather than having the facts spewed at them, students are more engaged and curious about the lesson. They are more likely to show interest and retain the information. As one of Waldorf's strongest components, "...ideas are introduced only after they have been presented through stories, pictures, and rhythmic movement," (Henry et al., 1996, p. 121). By introducing concepts in this way, children are able to soak the lesson in on a visceral level before an academic level, understanding concepts through their bodies before their brains.

Another key aspect of the Waldorf system is developing community through collaboration. Considering what the true value of a good education is, sending children to school means so much more than just making sure they learn math and reading. The reason why a good education is so important is because the students will soon grow up and become a part of our society. One day the children that are enduring an uninspired and deeply flawed education system taught by teachers who are too afraid to go against the grain, will grow up and be our fellow community members. We, as their current leaders and teachers, need to make sure they can be effective members of a community. We need to show them what it means to care about

other people, how to empathize, and how to make decisions based on their fellow man. Reading, writing, and math will not teach them how to care about other people. Waldorf schools all have the same, “fundamental goal of inspiring in children a sense of ethics and a sense of themselves as part of a social organism,” (Chauncey, 2003, p.43). There are too many powerful leaders now who are terrifyingly lacking this empathetic component.

In Japan, their public school system is based on similar principles. Japanese public schools are notoriously effective in achieving high scores and they consistently score above average on international assessments (House, 2007, p. 476). Japanese students are also reported to be highly attentive in class and actively listen to their teacher (House, 2007, p. 478). But academic emphasis is not only on reading, writing, and math. Japan has a holistic view on how the curriculum should be shaped. They believe, “rather than knowledge transmission, the ultimate goal of schooling is to develop ningen (human beings)...[which means] one must develop one’s kokoro (heart, center of physical, mental, social, and emotional being)...” (Sato, 1993, p.122).

Japanese schools deeply believe setting children up to succeed for the betterment of the group, rather than for individual gain. One of their most frequent sayings is, “Kokoro o hitotsu,” which means “make our hearts one” (Sato, 1993, p.130). By embracing art, music, social, and moral skills, they are developing well-rounded beings with diverse perspectives on the world around them. The main goal of the Japanese schooling system is forming a sense of connectedness through community. This is conducted in many ways, including ceremonies throughout the school year. The ceremonies are the same across the entire country of Japan so every citizen has gone through at least some of the same experiences. The lesson plans are filled

with collaborative activities and the children often partake in school wide ‘competitions’ which include all the students and staff. The ‘competitions’ normally involve dancing, music and very minimal competing (Sato, 1993).

The students are also given much more responsibility. They are expected to clean their respective classrooms and hallways every day after class which gives them a sense of pride in their workspace. The responsibility is then spilled over to their academics. Because of their large classroom sizes, children begin to rely less on the teacher and more on each other. They are responsible for studying and helping each other with classwork. (Sato, 1993).

Lessons of community can and should be taught in early childhood. Waldorf shows its commitment to teaching children how to socialize in many different ways. One way, is every morning as the children file into the classroom, they shake hands with the teacher as the teacher asks how each student is feeling. This instantly makes the children feel heard and witnessed, a component that is often lacking in the classrooms today. Throughout the day, elements of socializing are also peppered in to different lesson plans.

Giving children the opportunity to work on projects together they actually care about forces them to engage with one another, and collaborate to create a successful outcome. For example, in the handwork crafts class where the students were working on an astronomy lesson, the main purpose was actually to promote collaboration (Chauncey, 2006, p. 42). Though making crafts in class might seem counter intuitive and definitely going against the grain of the current education system, there are extremely valuable lessons underlying the actions. In this scenario, the children are divided into groups. Each group reads a number of folktales pertaining to the cosmos, and they have to agree on which folktale to choose to recreate with hand-sewn

puppets. Coming to a consensus about which story to choose proves extremely tricky for the children. They have to mentally transition from the position of knowing what they individually want to considering what the other group members might want. These practices have shown, “cooperative, small-group learning does in fact encourage students to help and support each other,” (Chauncey, 2006, p. 43).

Teaching children how to live harmoniously gives our society hope for a better tomorrow. Our world is already filled with so much corruption, greed, and hate. If we foster a happy and healthy community, we have a chance at reversing the trend. Children are inherently social and will find a way, “to live harmoniously in a social group,” (Rees & Waite, 2014) but they need to be able to develop empathy skills. Fostering imagination in young children strengthens their ability to empathize and to understand another perspective (Rees & Waite, 2014).

Empathy cannot be taught, but must be *felt* to be understood. By letting children partake in imaginative play, or role play, they naturally learn how to see the world through a different lens, even though their role play is completely imagined. For example, a game with two children pretending to be a queen and a jester might seem simple enough externally, but on a deeper level they are learning how to act in ‘leader’ and ‘subordinate’ roles. Role play games gives them a chance to ‘practice’ their understanding of the world around them. These situations when played out let the kids explore different ranges of emotions and scenarios. From experiencing emotion and imagination, children begin to form an appreciation for others and what they may be feeling, (Rees & Waite, 2014). These little lessons stick with children as they grow into their societal roles and start to play out similar scenarios in reality. Without developing empathy, the

children's ability to actually use their intelligence in a meaningful way is very limited (Rees & Waite, 2014).

The Waldorf style kindergarten embraces this idea and allows space for the children to engage in imaginative play whenever they want. The teachers feel very strongly about this and will not interrupt the children if they are in the middle of role playing. In this sense, Waldorf classes move away from the standard system because they want kids to be, "distanced from the concrete, rational, and analytic thinking of everyday life," (Rees & Waite, 2014).

The children are encouraged to talk it out when they have a fight or disagreement and they need to be able to discern what actually happened. If there is ever an instance when the situation escalates into arguing, the two children are asked to step aside and figure out what happened amongst themselves. Once they have come to an agreement they will come back to the teacher with an explanation (Henry et al., 1996, p. 132). They learn at a very young age to negotiate and compromise which cannot be learned by simply being reprimanded.

In this setting, teachers also encourage movement in their classroom that coincides with children's natural rhythms. For example, in the morning, children may rehearse poems or stories and with each new line, there is a corresponding movement to help tell the story. "Rhythmic activities... burn up excess energy and enable children to pay attention, focus, and concentrate for longer periods of time on intellectually demanding tasks," (Henry et al., 1996, p. 125). Movement and rhythms are interwoven into all academic lessons. Because the children are naturally happy exploring the world through movement, they are more engaged and will learn the academic lesson because it is attached to something they understand.

So far, the Waldorf system has created tremendous academics results around the world. When holistic curriculum was introduced into an inner-city public school in Milwaukee in 1991, Waldorf schools were hoping to gives the kids a second chance at a good education. The project was called Urban Waldorf. What they found was, “after its first two years, the percentage of third-graders reading over grade level rose from 25% to 41%,” (Henry et al., 1996, p. 135) and after two more years, it rose to 63%. The rate of suspended children dropped to 0% and the attendance shot up to about 92% (Henry et al., 1996, p. 135). Teaching kids a wide range of topics that incorporate the 4 C’s also strongly benefits their academic learning. Teaching through feeling and imagination are seen as imperative building blocks for intellectual gain (Rees & Waite, 2014).

Our education system is what defines our culture as a nation by teaching children what values and ideals are truly important. We are overdue for a radical educational revolution. It is time to honestly ask ourselves: Has true happiness ever stemmed from the perfect scantron? By placing value back on community ideals, we can come together as a society. We, as teachers and parents, cannot rush our children through the fundamental years of childhood. The early, formative years in primary school should be seen as a gestation period essential to development. Skipping over this period of time inevitably creates underdeveloped adults. Teachers need to learn how to speak the language called *Children* all over again so the kids will know how to actually listen. The biggest gift we can give back to our children is the gift of childhood. Let them play, let them imagine, let them create. Because they are learning.

References

- Abdulkadiroğlu, A., Angrist, J. D., Dynarski, S. M., Kane, T. J., & Pathak, P. A. (2011). Accountability and Flexibility in Public Schools: Evidence from Boston's Charters And Pilots*. *Quarterly Journal Of Economics*, 126(2), 699-748.
- Bosmans, G., & De Smedt, B. (2015). Insecure attachment is associated with math anxiety in middle childhood. *Frontiers In Psychology*, 61-7. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01596
- Broadfoot, P., & Black, P. (2004). Redefining assessment? The first ten years of assessment in education. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 11(1), 7-26.
- Calgren, F. 1976. *Education towards freedom*. East Grinstead, UK: Lantern Press.
- Chauncey, B. (2006). The Waldorf Model and Public School Reform. *Encounter*, 19(3), 39-44.
- Duckworth, A. L., Tsukayama, E., & Quinn, P. D. (2012). What No Child Left Behind Leaves Behind: The Roles of IQ and Self-Control in Predicting Standardized Achievement Test Scores and Report Card Grades. *Journal Of Educational Psychology*, 104(2), 439-451. doi:10.1037/a0026280

Emdin, Christopher (2014, April). Teach Teachers How to Create Magic. Ted Talks. Podcast retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/christopher_emdin_teach_teachers_how_to_create_magic

Fischer, H. F., Binting, S., Bockelbrink, A., Heusser, P., Hueck, C., Keil, T., & ... Witt, C. (2013). The Effect of Attending Steiner Schools during Childhood on Health in Adulthood: A Multicentre Cross-Sectional Study. *Plos ONE*, 8(9), 1-14. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0073135

House, J. D. (2007). Mathematics Beliefs And Instructional Strategies in Achievement of Elementary-School Students in Japan: Results From the TIMSS 2003 Assessment. *Psychological Reports*, 100(2), 476-482. doi:10.2466/PRO.100.2.476-482

House, R. (2013). Understanding the Steiner Waldorf approach: early years education in practice. *Early Years: Journal Of International Research & Development*, 33(4), 429-430. doi:10.1080/09575146.2013.852721

Kim, M. K., Kim, S. M., Khera, O., & Getman, J. (2014). The experience of three flipped classrooms in an urban university: an exploration of design principles. *Internet & Higher Education*, 2237-50. doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2014.04.003

Laplante, Logan (2014, January 7). This is What Happens When a Kid Leaves Traditional Education. *Collective Evolution*. Podcast retrieved from

<http://www.collective-evolution.com/2014/01/07/this-is-what-happens-when-a-kid-leaves-traditional-education/>

Levine, M., & Levine, A. (2013). Holding Accountability Accountable: A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Achievement Test Scores. *American Journal Of Orthopsychiatry* (Wiley-Blackwell), 83(1), 17-26. doi:10.1111/ajop.12014

McDermott, R., & Henry, M. E. (1996). Waldorf education in an inner-city public school. *Urban Review*, 28(2), 119.

Robinson, Ken (2006, June). Does Education Kill Creativity? *Ted Talks*. Podcast retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity

Robinson, Ken (2013, May). How to Escape Education's Death Valley. *Ted Talks*. Podcast retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_how_to_escape_education_s_death_valley

Rottenberg, C., & Smith, M.L. (1990, April). *Unintended effects of external testing in elementary schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston.

Sato, N.. (1993). Teaching and Learning in Japanese Elementary Schools: A Context for Understanding. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 68(4), 111–153. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.antioch.idm.oclc.org/stable/1492624>

Schmitt, E. M., Hu, A. C., & Bachrach, P. S. (2008). Course Evaluation and Assessment: Examples of a Learner-Centered Approach. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 29(3), 290-300. doi:10.1080/02701960802359524

Waite, S., & Rees, S. (2014). Practising empathy: enacting alternative perspectives through imaginative play. *Cambridge Journal Of Education*, 44(1), 1-18. doi:10.1080/0305764X.2013.811218