



# The Truth About Testing: An Educator's Call to Action

*W. James Popham*

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With public and political demand for educational accountability never higher, educators are under enormous pressure to raise students' scores on standardized achievement tests. Policymakers are backing large-scale, high-stakes testing programs as the best way to determine which schools are failing and which schools are succeeding, and the only way to ensure the quality of students' schooling.

Nonsense, says distinguished educator and author W. James Popham.

*In The Truth About Testing: An Educator's Call to Action*, Popham explores both the absurdity and the serious destructive consequences of today's testing programs. He uses actual items drawn from current standardized achievement tests to show what these tests *really* measure and why they should *never* be used to evaluate school quality or teacher ability.

But, Popham insists, there's a way out of this measurement mess. And it's up to educators to take the first steps. Throughout this commonsense and conversational resource, the author appeals to educators to build their own assessment literacy, spread the word about harmful testing, and reexamine how they use test data in the classroom. He provides advice for distinguishing between sound and unsound large-scale tests, guidelines to help teachers maximize the instructional benefits properly constructed classroom tests can bring, and evidence-gathering strategies for teachers and administrators trying to survive and thrive in an accountability-driven environment.

The book closes with a series of action items for educators interested in ending the score-boosting game, halting the erosion of educational quality, and establishing the kind of testing that can improve student learning.

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