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Section 2

**Ayers Chapter 6 Response**

In this chapter, Ayers discusses different ways to keep track of student progress. One of the first things that comes to mind is standardized testing, which Ayers is clearly against. I agree with the fact that standardized testing is really not a fair or accurate way of testing a student’s progress. It puts so much stress on the students and teachers to do well so that the school can look good. This takes the focus on learning the information well and puts it on giving the students a bunch of information and hoping they can memorize it. When I was in middle school, I received a letter offering me extra help sessions in preparation for an English standardized test later in the year. Since I had very good grades and was in the advanced English class, it took me by surprise that I would be offered extra help. Well, as it turns out, all of the students in the advanced English class were given the same letter. Rather than trying to help the kids who would struggle on the test, the school decided to try boosting the scores of the students they thought would do well. Looking back, it is really sad that my school resorted to something like this because they were completely missing the point of the test. They should have been helping the students who really needed help in an attempt to have all students succeed. Instead, they focused on the image their school would have in the eyes of the state. It is for this, among many other reasons, that standardized testing is flawed.

Ayers discusses many alternative ways to track a student’s progress. He calls them the three p’s: projects, portfolios and performance. I agree with this approach because it gives students an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned rather than just recite it. As a result, students need to have a more in-depth understanding of the material than if they were just taking a multiple choice test. I’m not saying that we should eliminate tests completely. There are definitely situations where testing is required to check for understanding. However, I think teachers should integrate project-based learning as much as possible into their teaching. I agree with Ayers beliefs in this chapter and would be interested to see how they work when integrated into the classroom.