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Having been in the field of education for 24 years now, I have seen many changes come along. Some for the better, some not. Common Core has negatively and drastically changed the way we approach instruction, and it is not for the better. A great deal of the units I used to teach feel like long lost friends. Author studies, learning about weather, dinosaurs, and other topics of interest to my students had to be filed away. Units that we could take our time with are now replaced with reading passages that have no relative connection to the students. Highlighting, learning how to narrow down multiple choice questions to find the best answer, and learning to fill in bubble sheets have taken the place of enriching learning. Young children are natural learners. They are excited and want to learn all about their world. This curriculum has narrowed that learning and has stripped the natural spontaneity that a classroom should have. In math, children are not learning basic skills to mastery. We are rushing to shove the basic skills at them, only to unnecessarily complicate and confuse them. I see that skills meant for more mature learners are being pushed down to younger grades and the children are not developmentally ready. That will never work. It only creates a feeling of lack of success among children. In closing, linking student scores to teacher evaluations only further exasperates this issue. It creates a culture of forced, unnatural instruction and puts unnecessary stress on all involved. The teacher only has so much impact on how a child performs on a given day on a specific test. The tests are setting the whole system up for failure. I had a former student visit me and he asked if our 2nd Grade Thanksgiving Feast was coming up soon. He said it was his favorite memory of 2nd Grade. Sadly, I had to tell him, "We don't do that anymore. There is just no time for that kind of thing." No child will ever remember me for how well I prepared them for their high stakes testing.