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My issue is more with the NYS testing and teacher evaluation system. The ELA CCC is challenging and meaningful. I have always been committed to challenging my students to think deeper and push limits. But some concepts required are beyond the developmental capacity of students. And the standardized tests are simply too difficult.

For example, I graduated third in my high school class, Summa Cum Laude in college, and earned a 4.02 GPA in grad school. I have taught English 7-12 for 24 years. Two years ago I moved from the high school to grade 7, so I sat down to try a text set of 7th grade NYS ELA test questions. I missed two of the seven! I forced my husband (CEO of a company) to try the questions. He spent 10 minutes on each of the two I missed. One he got right, and the other he chose a different wrong answer than I chose. Yet we expect 12-year-olds to perform better on this timed test which forces them to rush. Anyone can see how little sense this makes.

Each year the grade 7 test is more difficult than the 6 or 8 test, also causing us to question the integrity of this system.

The test scores are then used to evaluate my performance as a teacher. A test beyond the developmental level at which 3/4 of my students are capable of thinking. A test they have way too little time to complete. A test successful, professional adults are unable to master.

Furthermore, many other factors impact a student's performance in school besides the teacher. Parent support, health, poverty, nutrition, and so many other factors contribute. To pretend those factors have no impact is irresponsible and illogical.

The curriculum is not the problem. It's the extremely flawed testing and teacher evaluation systems.