

## **Ellen M. Wood, Retired Teacher, Parent, Grand Parent and Great Grandparent**

I don't know why we, in education keep trying to reinvent the wheel. Common Core Math is so confusing that even my brilliant granddaughter (who did mental math in Kindergarten) has a hard time explaining it to me. I predict that it will and should go the way of New Math. It's fine for the right-brained student but confusing to all others.

Your tests are long and your questions way beyond the cognitive ability of the students they are geared for. I understand the need to coordinate curriculum across the country, but constant testing is doing a disservice to a whole generation of children causing burnout in young children and frustration for parents and teachers.

Testing should be done to determine how well children have learned the material. It should be based on the material that is taught. The teacher should have immediate access to the results so he/she can reteach or remediate as needed. The only people benefiting from the Common Core Testing right now are the Test makers. The money used on testing would be better spent on hiring more teachers and on teacher training.

If you want to improve learning, do what works. Read the literature. Make class sizes smaller. The smaller the ratio of students to teachers, the better children learn. Put more stress on "hands on learning" and less on Rote. There is a place for rote learning, but it should not be the entire curriculum.

There is also talk of extending the day and making the children put in an 8-hour day. Children need to get out and play. Some 5th grade students recently assaulted a 9-year-old in Buffalo. What was even more stunning was this happened at 5:30 in the afternoon? Why was he on a bus at this time and not home with his family?

Since "No Child Left Behind" children have been subjected to one experiment after another. We need to accept that not all children are miniature Einstein's and let them be children. Children learn best through experiment and play. Not all children learn in the same way. We cannot treat our children like raw material for the business world. We need to teach them to love learning and how to be good citizens. Teachers are striving to make the learning experience meaningful and worthwhile but the Politicians are busy making it stressful and unproductive. Get the politics out of the business of Education and let children be children and teachers teach.