

# Can You Measure an Education? Define Life's Meaning?

*Written by Peter Gray for Psychology Today.*

We, in America and many other modern nations, are obsessed with measurement. Our motto seems to be, "If you can't count it, it doesn't count." We're especially obsessed with measuring children's education, and, with No Child Left Behind, we've run amok with that obsession. Our children have become pawns in contests that pit parent against parent, teacher against teacher, school against school, and nation against nation in the struggle to see who can squeeze the highest test scores out of their kids. We are depriving our children of sleep, depriving them of freedom to play and explore—in other words depriving them of childhood—in order to increase their test scores.

It's time that we as a people step back, draw a few deep breaths, and come to our senses. What, really, is education? What is its purpose? In the light of our answers to those questions, is education measurable, and if it is measurable does it make sense that the same measures would apply to everyone?

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