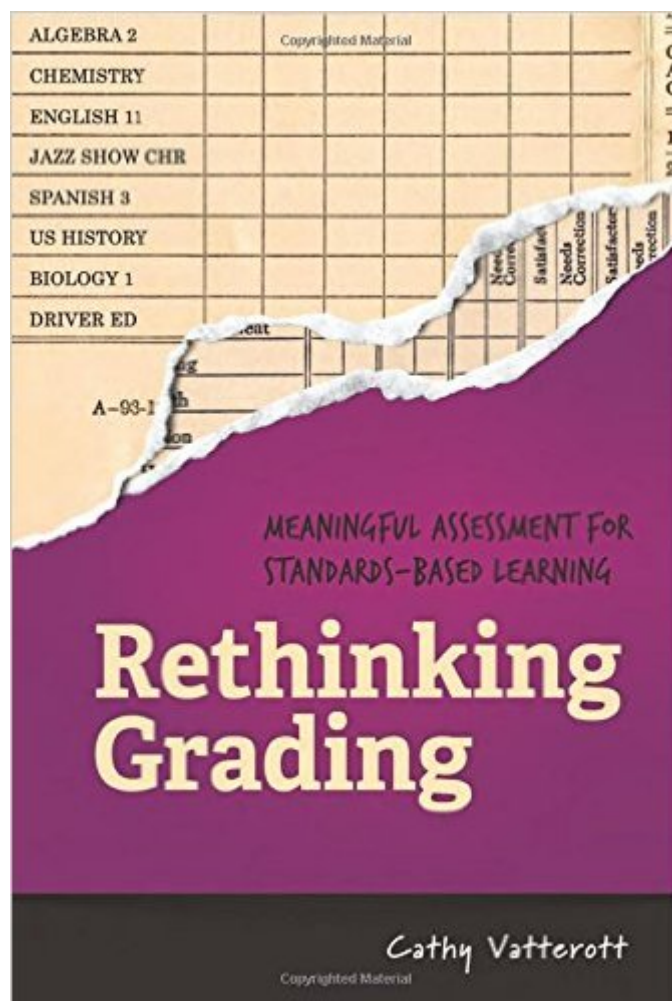


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# Rethinking Grading: Meaningful Assessment For Standards-Based Learning



## Synopsis

Grading systems often reward on-time task completion and penalize disorganization and bad behavior. Despite our best intentions, grades seem to reflect student compliance more than student learning and engagement. In the process, we inadvertently subvert the learning process. After careful research and years of experiences with grading as a teacher and a parent, Cathy Vatterott examines and debunks traditional practices and policies of grading in K-12 schools. She offers a new paradigm for standards-based grading that focuses on student mastery of content and gives concrete examples from elementary, middle, and high schools. *Rethinking Grading* will show all educators how standards-based grading can authentically reflect student progress and learning--and significantly improve both teaching and learning. Cathy Vatterott is an education professor and researcher at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, a former middle school teacher and principal, and a parent of a college graduate. She has learned from her workshops that grading continues to be the most contentious part . . . conjuring up the most intense emotions and heated disagreements. Vatterott is also the author of the book *Rethinking Homework: Best Practices That Support Diverse Needs*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Rethinking Grading" by Vatterott is an important contribution to the idea of developing meaningful metrics. The author discusses the need to teach higher order applications, student independent learning, solving complex problem sets and enabling mastery. The idea of learning through

experimentation and errors is promoted so that students can handle complexity and deep thinking. More pre-testing is recommended to refine teaching methodologies and probe for areas where learning can be bolstered or enhanced. A corollary is that standardized grading has its origins in quality feedback. Learning transfer is an area only tangentially covered by the author. Yet, this item is critical to understanding pre-requisites completely for the next sequential course. A standard ELA test should require a writing sample, several paragraphs of reading, simple logic, synonyms, antonyms and not much else. The idea is to assess students quickly without engendering a lot of resistance to the testing itself. Ultimately, the objective is to determine whether or not everyone qualifies to advance to the next grade. Another important aspect is identifying the matter of the test. Testing should be geared to the recommended grade-appropriate readings issued by the Public Libraries throughout the United States. Generally speaking, librarians set the reading goals and issue publicized lists of books appropriate for each grade level. A related aspect concerns the texts issued by the largest educational publishers. It's the publishers that control the required readings and problem sets of the students. If students aren't doing enough critical thinking problems, then the publishers must create textbooks which reflect relevant critical thinking problem sets throughout.

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