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## Alhambra Unified School District Argumentative Writing Assessment--Final Draft

(Write on the lined side only. Please use blue or black ink.)

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In her essay "The Essentials of a Good Education," Diane Ravitch claims that the purpose in educating students does not solely revolve around preparing these students for college and/or for the workforce after graduation. Rather, she claims that it is to prepare these students to be responsible citizens and contribute to the nation's (the United States) democracy. To do so, the ~~school~~ school system should refrain from rating each individual student's abilities based on standardized tests but, rather, let them develop their own character and skills that will enable to become knowledgeable, responsible U.S. citizens. To an extent, ~~the school system~~ I agree with the author's claim. Schools ~~today~~ focus on educating students systematically to prepare them for their "future" which is either college and/or jobs, undermining these students' abilities and character development by suppressing their creativity and intrinsic motivation to learn at school. School ~~should~~ <sup>should</sup> help educate the students and help them develop a sense of individuality, not just to get ready for college, work, and ~~also~~ becoming a "responsible citizen" like Ravitch said.

Students today are pressured into getting good grades at school, merely for extrinsic reasons: pressure from parents, pressure from teachers, ~~pressure~~ <sup>pressure</sup> from peers. Children today grow up with ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ideology of getting good grades at school equates getting into good schools/universities which equates a getting a good job and living a good life. This ideology is enforced by <sup>their own</sup> parents who continuously tell them to earn good grades and have straight A's. This doesn't apply to one student but rather multiple if not all. Because ~~so~~ so many students are extrinsically motivated to do well in school and score the top ranks, they end up competing with each other. Eventually, those who "succeed" in getting good grades or top ranks managed to get there "at the expense of other students" (John Holt). School to them ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> no longer a place to learn for the sake of educating themselves but rather is a ~~the~~ "battleground" amongst students for the best grades. ~~At that point,~~ the school system has failed at its one and only job which is to educate students to be better people because all they've learned is how to get A's.

Standardized tests are the bane to students' <sup>and development,</sup> ~~creativity,~~ suppressing their independent thinking and forcing them to see themselves as numbers rather than individuals. Standardized tests have been concentrated on more ~~tests~~ "at the expense of the more important goals of education, like character and love of learning" (Diane Ravitch), so much to the point that these tests are