

Implications for the work of teachers in classrooms

The review emphasises what teachers in classrooms can do to avoid the negative impact of tests on motivation for learning. It also indicates the actions that can enhance motivation for learning. To accomplish these goals, teachers should:

do more of this ...

- Provide choice and help pupils to take responsibility for their learning.
- Discuss with pupils the purpose of their learning and provide feedback that will help the learning process.
- Encourage pupils to judge their work by how much they have learned and by the progress they have made.
- Help pupils to understand the criteria by which their learning is assessed and to assess their own work.
- Develop pupils' understanding of the goals of their work in terms of what they are learning; provide feedback to pupils in relation to these goals.
- Help pupils to understand where they are in relation to learning goals and how to make further progress.
- Give feedback that enables pupils to know the next steps and how to succeed in taking them.
- Encourage pupils to value effort and a wide range of attainments.
- Encourage collaboration among pupils and a positive view of each others' attainments.

and do less of this ...

- Define the curriculum in terms of what is in the tests to the detriment of what is not tested.
- Give frequent drill and practice for test taking.
- Teach how to answer specific test questions.
- Allow pupils to judge their work in terms of scores or grades.
- Allow test anxiety to impair some pupils' performance (particularly girls and lower performing pupils).
- Use tests and assessment to tell students where they are in relation to others.
- Give feedback relating to pupils' capabilities, implying a fixed view of each pupil's potential.
- Compare pupils' grades and allow pupils to compare grades, giving status on the basis of test achievement only.
- Emphasise competition for marks or grades among pupils.