# Tests

Ask almost any teenager what the most stressful part of school is and the most common response will be tests and quizzes. Everyday brings a new batch of tests that measure the "intellengece" of students. Many students feel pressure from themselves, teachers, and parents to succeed on each and every one of these tests. There are many students who base their self worth and self esteem in their grades, therefore the pressure to succeed is especially prominent. Teachers place so much emphasis on scoring well on tests, that those who don't test well feel as though they are behind the rest of the class. To have your knowledge tested again and again on a whole array of subjects, day in and day out, can be an exhausting and stressful experience.

There are many different ways in which children learn and express their knowledge. Unfortunately, the majority of teachers will only measure what students have retained by the use of tests. These tests tend to be focused on the students' ability to read, write, and work through math problems in the "right" way. When a student performs poorly on a test, they can feel as thought they are a failure to not only their parents, but to themselves. There is also a feeling of competition among students. "Even the most jaded childfeels that he is a dummy if he has test scores lower than those of his friends." (Youngs) The knowledge that a student must take a test which they are unprepared for can also cause a great deal of stress. Knowing that they won't perform well can fill a child with anxiety and dread, to the point where they are sick with worry. This stress itself can cause a drop in a student's score on a test. In one study "researchers imposed high stress on subjects taking a test. Not only did it take much longer for the students to complete the test, but their error rate rose dramatically as well." (Time-Life) It has also been proven that no matter "how intellegent they are, no matter how well prepared they are, (there are students who) simply do not test well." (Youngs) These students become frustrated and feel helpless. Although there are many different ways in which students learn, most schools "tend to operate on a narrow, test-taking model that relies most heavily on high aptitude in verbal and mathmatical intelligences, leaving out many other areas in which children excell." (Lewis) The low self-esteem and frustration that testing can cause for students causes stress in their daily lives.

By looking at the data we collected, one can see that among Amador students, there is not a large differnece in GPAs dependent on how often students stress out over tests. The students who had the highest average GPA were those who stated that they sometimes stressed out over tests. That is is comparisions to the group with the lowest average GPA, the students who only occasionally stress out over tests. One possible reason for these results is that students who are more prone to stressing over tests are also more prone to study. If a student is concerned witht their grades, they will worry about how they will perform on tests. On the contrary, a student who does not place as much importance in their grades, is less likely to stress out about it. As the two extremes, alway and never stressing out, are concerned, they're average GPAs fall in the middle. This is probably explained by the fact that both catagories have both very high, and very low GPAs added in. Those students with very low grades are either very concerned about their poor performance, or their bad grades are a result of their lack of caring and effort. That would place those with very low grades in either the always or never worrying. The same goes for those with very high grades. Either they work very hard to accomplish what they do, and worry about their grades all the time, or the good grades come naturally to them and they don't worry at all. The lack of a significant difference shows that tests can effect the stress levels and performance of students in a variety of ways, depending on the individual.

One-Way Analysis of Variance  
  
Analysis of Variance  
Source DF SS MS F P  
Factor 3 1.238 0.413 1.08 0.359  
Error 269 103.099 0.383  
Total 272 104.337  
 Individual 95% CIs For Mean  
 Based on Pooled StDev  
Level N Mean StDev ---------+---------+---------+-------  
A-test 61 3.1374 0.6598 (---------\*----------)   
S-test 115 3.2121 0.5561 (------\*-------)   
0-test 68 3.0471 0.6806 (---------\*---------)   
n-tests 29 3.0969 0.6176 (--------------\*---------------)   
 ---------+---------+---------+-------  
Pooled StDev = 0.6191 3.00 3.15 3.30