I definitely agree with the main idea of the reading. The way the current education system is designed doesn't incentivize students to properly learn the material since they're so concerned with managing a certain point count and deadlines for assignments and tests. I liked the talk about metaphors, and I think his students initially agreed with the brick building metaphor because that's how education is ideally designed to function. The sports metaphor is also quite apt with how most students operate, but I don't believe that just telling students to change their mentality from point counting to achieving a detailed understanding is enough to solve the problem.

At its core, the current educational system just encourages the sports approach and incentivizes students to focus on what's required like it's a simple list of checkboxes. Turn in assignments, study for quizzes and exams, and prepare for participatory discussions by doing required reading. It doesn't actually train us to think critically about key concepts, and instead has us chip away at what usually feels like busywork. I don't think just telling us to think of it differently fixes very much for the average student. Points are still important regardless, so we have to both keep up with our grade and achieve what feels like a "bonus" understanding. Most students are just getting by, especially in a quarter system, so you need structural change to make an impact.

I think the structural changes discussed in the reading were quite interesting, though. It's a vague thing to say that lectures need to be more engaging, but it's right. It's difficult and complex to make that happen in high school classrooms, but it's nearly impossible in full sized college lecture halls. Lectures for some classes seem optional, which adds to the feeling of true

understanding being a “bonus.” The fact that professors have to create in class quizzes or otherwise incentivize people with points to come to lecture is a perfect example of how lectures are broken. There’s no systematic incentive to understand the material. You just need to engage with the material only to the point where you can complete assignments and exams. Ungraded, quick, mid lecture polls to check understanding may be one way to help with this engagement issue, but there still needs to be more of a reason for students to motivate themselves to learn.

Tschinkel’s second potential solution is my absolute favorite, replacing multiple choice question exams with essays. I especially think this advice is best suited to midterm or final exams instead of weekly quizzes. It takes away the stress of cramming and guessing what might be on the test, and replaces it with a retrospection on all the concepts that actually stuck with you throughout the class. If cheating is a big concern with this approach, it can even be a shorter reflection done in class. It also gives the professor more leeway with how to grade your final, making your final grade more personalized than a standard set bar that everyone needs to pass.

The third proposed solution, integrating the material into future classes, is also something I agree with. But it’s something I think is already improving, at least from a college computer science major program. Even though CSE12 seemed useless at the time, it was clear to me that in this class I’ll be using the concepts of memory and binary operations that I previously learned in order to write assembly. The fact that I knew what I was learning would be immediately helpful in the next major class made it more motivating to put in the effort to learn more than I needed to do well in the class, but there are clearly many more things that need to be changed in the field of education to incentivize students to learn.