

Should SATs be 'sat'?

Every year, 600,000 Year 6 pupils across the country take part in Standard Assessment Tests – more commonly abbreviated into SATs. No matter your opinion, these tests are compulsory for every 10 – 11 year-old in the UK, and, although you may not know it, these sneaky SATs have crept down into year 2. That's right, year 2s will be sitting under these wretched test conditions as young as 7! Unless you live in Wales, where you are lucky enough to be SAT free until Year 6 as Year 2 SATs have recently been abolished.

But why do we need SATs? Well, teachers and local authorities use your results to reach a conclusion about your progress throughout primary school, and to take note of a student's strengths and weaknesses. This can help them predict your possible future grades, but, never the less, some believe that SATs can have a negative impact on a student's will to learn. In an interview with a local primary school teacher, she said: 'I do feel sometimes it can be too much pressure for our children and we would like to have more fun with them, rather than putting them through the SATs testing all the time.'

Furthermore, just under two years ago, a new curriculum was put in place. The new

curriculum consists of more challenging questions, needing four years' preparation in order for pupils to achieve their full potential. However, the current top three year groups leading up to year 6 will not receive this amount of time, creating an unfair disadvantage. This is not its only flaw according to nearby schools. They think parents find it difficult to help and support their children because the new curriculum differs so much to previous exams. As a result, the majority of the class may begin to stress over SATs, which discourages them from enjoying school and putting in the effort required.

After all the preparation approaching SATs, several people believe that the final test result does not accurately reflect the true ability of a student. The reasons for this vary: anxiety prior to the test; feeling under the weather or lack of practice under timed exams. If this is the case, the test does not represent what a person is actually capable of.

Aside from the negatives, SATs enable local authorities to have an idea of where a person stands in their education and also 'helps them to be secondary ready,' stated by a deputy head. Although these are positive attributes, teachers still wish to reduce the amount of pressure inflicted on students of this age and keep their passion towards school alive.



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