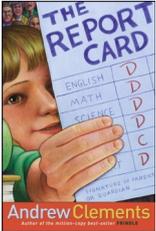


School

Testing, Testing, Testing...



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It's test time again for Indiana students. Children in grades 3-8 are taking the *Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+)* tests to measure student achievement in the subject areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science (Grades 4 and 6), and Social Studies (Grades 5 and 7). This seasonal event - and the recent news that teachers and parents in Chicago decided to boycott the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, an annual test for Illinois students in third through eighth grade - brought to mind the book: *The Report Card* by Andrew Clements.

Clements is one of my favorite authors. He writes thoughtfully about school-age students, the issues they face, their relationships with each other and with their teachers. And many of his books pose a "what if?" question that make for marvelous discussion opportunities. In *The Report Card*, it's 5th grader Nora who ponders: what if students just all refused to take tests? What if they intentionally answered all the questions incorrectly? [Read more](#)

Posted by Lisa C. on March 5, 2014

- [The report card](#)
- [School](#)
- [Oh, the Thinks You Can Think](#)

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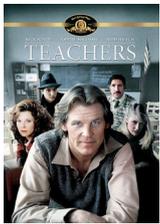
Posted by Ryan S. on February 24, 2014

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Teachers



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Today we are faced with a rising tide of legislation designed for one purpose, to test the learning of our children in schools and the efficacy of our teachers in teaching them. We often think of this as something new. **Teachers**, a comedy made in the early 80's, features a school under attack. It has teachers who care about their students, some who don't care about their students and almost every other type in between including those who are just trying to stay alive. The students are not really any better. Some want to learn, some don't and some are also just trying to stay alive. The school is also under attack from the outside. It seems that they are being sued for giving a diploma to a student that is functionally illiterate. [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on October 16, 2013

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Acid, Projects, and Pit Bulls: Fiction by

Paul Griffin



There are plenty of Young Adult books that portray the difficulties of being a teenager.

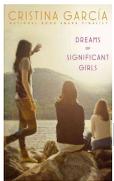
Some are funny, some serious, and some are pretty dark. There's even a name for ones that focus on a specific issue -- the problem novel (you've got your teen pregnancy, drug abuse, suicide -- you name it). Some are great, but often times the more one topic takes center stage, the less realistic these books seem. It's never just one problem in real life, is it? For pretty much anyone at this age, times are hard all around. [Paul Griffin](#) writes about hard times. [Read more](#)

Posted by Chris H. on December 10, 2012

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Dreams of Significant Girls - Not Building Romans



Every reader knows that once in a while, you come across a strange word, often from

another language. This word may take hold of your imagination because it looks or sounds so weird, or you might be exposed to it over years and years in the most disconnected contexts, until you just have to look it up. Such is the word *Bildungsroman*. [Read more](#)

Posted by Chris H. on August 30, 2012

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The Year of Secret Assignments by Jaclyn Moriarty

*The Year of
Secret Assignments*



Jaclyn Moriarty

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Lydia, Emily, and Cassie have been best friends through everything, guy problems, family issues and even Secret Assignments. While they all attend a posh private school, each girl has a unique way of expressing herself. Lydia sometimes declares that she is a fish, with the intention of becoming a writer someday. Emily's dream of becoming a lawyer might never gain steam if she can't remember the difference between cinnamon and synonym. And Cassie just wants to stop being too afraid to get up on stage and sing. This year their English teacher has assigned them pen pals from public school Brookfield High to acquaint them with the Joy of the Envelope. Over the course of the year they each get to know a stranger. Sebastian is an artistic soccer player who sometimes can't control his temper. Charlie is a sweet guy who always seems to be in trouble. And Matthew is either very dangerous or nonexistent. Prank calls, mistaken identities, spy missions, Dates with Girls, with a side of blackmail and revenge make for an interesting year!

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Posted by mreeves on July 11, 2012

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