

# Debunking the Myth: Navigating the Shift from Test-Oriented to Comprehension-Centric English Language Teaching

In the domain of English language education, a pervasive myth exists that underpins the teaching methodology employed by a significant cohort of educators. This myth posits that while the ostensible objective of teaching is to foster comprehensive English language proficiency, the actual pedagogical practice often veers towards preparing students for standardized testing. This discrepancy between intended educational outcomes and instructional focus forms the crux of our investigation. This study aims to delineate the implications of this misalignment for pedagogical strategies and, consequently, for student learning outcomes.

My research underscores the propensity of educators, influenced by curricular demands and the high stakes of standardized assessments, to prioritize examination-oriented skills. Such skills, including skimming, scanning, and the mechanical identification of correct answers, are emphasized at the expense of deep reading comprehension skills. Although these techniques may bolster test performance, evidence suggests they contribute little to genuine language acquisition or the ability to engage critically with texts. This approach not only impedes the development of critical reading skills but also overlooks the cultivation of a passion for reading—integral for sustained language learning and comprehension.

Addressing this pedagogical gap necessitates a paradigmatic shift towards a balanced approach that equally emphasizes test preparation and the cultivation of deep reading comprehension skills. This paper argues for a holistic reevaluation of teaching practices, assessment methods, and educational objectives to foster not only test readiness but also comprehensive language proficiency. By advocating for this balanced approach, we aim to equip students with the skills necessary for academic success and lifelong engagement with the English language.

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