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DeMiero

Computers or Booklets: How to Take a Test

Taking tests is something we all have to do, a lot! So isn't it important that we take them in the best way possible? The debate on computers vs. booklets is very controversial within the school systems. On one hand, computer generated tests are eco-friendly, fast in giving results, and more technologically in tuned. While booklets or paper tests, are interactive, easier to go back, re-read, and correct miss-spellings. So which do you prefer?

A recent poll, taken by an MTHS student on which testing method is preferred showed that students tend to favor booklets over computers. Their reasons? Booklets have less glitches, are easier to work with, and the content is easier to read. However, students who said that they prefer computers said that they were easier to write lengthy responses with, the test seemed to be completed faster, and results were known sooner. Debate has also been going on in the administrative staff about how tests should be given. An interview with MTHS Principal, Greg Schwab brought up some really good points. "Online testing makes a lot of sense." "I think that the hardest part will be teaching the adults how to use the electronic testing methods because you guys already know this stuff." Students are already plugged into technology. They receive their information electronically every day through phones, computers, television, and other hand-held devices. "You can't walk through the halls without seeing a kid on their phone or iPod." "I'm not sure how the results will turn out, but I am really excited to start trying it." While an interview with freshmen English teacher Vincent DeMiero showed a different side. He explained how after many years of teaching and testing, he has seen students do much better while using a booklet compared to those using a computer. He also had a good point when he said, "When you give a booklet or paper test to a large group of students, they are even in the ways that they can take the test. They can interact in the same ways, they can turn back in the same ways, and they can highlight the same things. When a test is given using a computer, students are on very uneven grounds. Using the same computer, in the same room, students can have very different results. One might have a mouse that doesn't work, or one key might not work, or one computer could be slower than another. There are so many things that could go wrong. I would hate for technology to disadvantage somebody in such a high stakes testing world." Vincent has also been working with the Hawkeye for over 20 years, so he has seen a lot of stories be composed. "Most of the time, students who work with a paper and pencil at some point in their process, tend to have less spelling errors, less punctuation errors, and overall better stories than those students who rely fully on technology."

So there are some mixed feelings on this matter. However, educators are trying their best for students of the future, adapting, learning, and changing methods to teach and test in the best ways possible.