Benjamin Pallant

Mr. Brocato

Creative Writing

30 March 2011

**New Findings Suggest High School Students do not Have Enough Homework**

AMERICA – According to a new study conducted by the Associated Press, U.S. high school students do not have enough work on a day-to-day basis. The study was conducted in response to recent findings that America has fallen behind almost the entire world at math, science, reading, writing, philosophy, world history, ceramics, string theory, geometry, photography, quantum physics, and pretty much everything else educational. Even Singapore, which has, like, 137 people living there and could fit in the average American Wal-Mart parking lot, beat America at algebra on standardized tests. As Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, said in recent a press conference, “What the crap? Why ain’t we doing good enough to beat Finland and stuff? I mean, that place didn’t invent the deep-fried Twinkie or the 72-ounce Big Gulp Slushie, so I’m not buying it when those researcher people say that we have less innovation-ness than Finland.”

 Duncan then boldly took the lead in the nation-wide investigation as to why America is failing on the international standardized-test-ranking scale. The investigation uncovered, to the amazement of researchers, that even honors students at the top-performing U.S. high schools only do about 4 hours of homework a night. Said Duncan, “Can you believe that? There’s 24 hours in a day, so that’s like, 20 extra hours *every single day* that student aren’t doing work.” Duncan noted that students in Germany do about 8 hours of homework per night.

 Several solutions have been proposed by the Department of Education as remedies for the shocking problems revealed by this study:

1. Increase the school week to 6 days, to prevent students from “forgetting stuff” over the weekend. If necessary, a seventh day might also be added to allow students to do rigorous standardized test practice so that, as Duncan put it, “maybe we can frickin’ beat Japan at English next time.”
2. Shorten, or eliminate altogether, the time-wasting, outdated American tradition of eating lunch during the school day. This will provide for more class time, and help students focus more because, as everyone knows, it is harder to fall asleep in class if you are hungry. Similarly, bathroom usage should be strictly limited.
3. Have all teachers meet regularly in order to schedule all of their tests on the same day. The added stress will help students become acclimated to the intense pressure of international standardized test competition.
4. Caffeinate drinking water, orange juice, milk, and other common beverages in order to decrease or eliminate the need for sleep altogether during the school week. According to Arne Duncan, “We spend 1/3 of our lives asleep. If we eliminate that need to sleep, that leaves us with, like, 3 times as much free time to work on math.” The survey noted that much drinking water is already fluoridated, and “nobody likes fluorine, but everyone loves caffeine, so why not just put caffeine in the water, too?”
5. Eliminate co-curricular activities like music, theatre, environmental clubs, and especially sports. These are all distractions to teens which consume immense amounts of time and encourage discussion with peers regarding topics other than those strictly related to academia and standardized tests.
6. Create strict limitations and guidelines for teenage social interactions. For example, outlaw activities like bowling, gossiping, eating together in groups, and “hanging out” as these are all counterproductive activities which usurp time that could be used for studying. Group study sessions would be permitted, given that none of the students involved gossips, talks about social events, or laughs.
7. Increase school-related stress altogether, in order to raise the suicide rate among teens. As Secretary Duncan said, “the dumb ones will crack under the pressure first, so they’ll kill themselves. That’ll bring up the national average up on tests so we can finally kick China’s butt. Ask any biology teacher. You get rid of the dumb ones and the leftover smart ones do better. It’s called ‘natural selection.’ Einstein made it up before he invented electricity.”

It is unclear which of these solutions will be implemented or when new policies might be expected to kick in, but, as Duncan noted, “We better hurry up and start moving toward education reform, otherwise we might even get beat by some countries in Africa!”

 In related news, John Jacobson, an honor-roll student in Iowa who forgot to do his math homework once, was finally located living in a cardboard box in Billings, Montana. He had mysteriously disappeared three years ago after his missing assignment caused him to not get into college, not succeed in life, and eventually turn out as a total failure.