

to be altogether separated from that which is truly good. Hence it is impossible for any sorrow or pain to be man's greatest evil.

5. *From a newspaper call-in column:* My opinion regarding the amount of homework a child receives is basically threefold. I don't believe the children should receive any homework whatsoever. One, because the teacher has seven or eight hours during the course of the school day to instruct children and do work assignments with them, to review material for tests. They do not need to be sending work home. To me, homework is an excuse for a teacher's lack of ability to do their job properly. Two, there are too many children that come home with either no adult there or no adult with the ability to help them with their homework. That places too many children at a disadvantage compared to other children who have their parents there to help them with their homework. Three, an adult spends eight hours at work, comes home, and has the rest of the day to enjoy themselves. That is a luxury that a child should definitely be afforded. They don't need to spend time after school. Teacher, it is time to wake up.
6. *Gregory Bassham on why grades shouldn't be based on effort:* A recent study by Professor Ellen Greenberger and fellow researchers at the University of California, Irvine, found that a third of students surveyed said that they expected a B just for attending lectures, and 40 percent said they deserved a B for completing the required reading.

Jason Greenwood, a senior kinesiology major at the University of Maryland, would go even further.

"If you put in all the effort you have and get a C, what is the point?" Greenwood said. "If someone goes to every class and reads every chapter in the book and does everything the teacher asks of them and more, then they should be getting an A like their effort deserves. . . . What else is there really than the effort that you put in?" (Quoted in Max Roosevelt, "Student Expectations Seen As Causing Grade Disputes," *New York Times*, February 18, 2009, A15.)

What else is there other than effort? What about performance?

As a college professor, I have no problem basing grades *partly* on student effort. I regularly reward students who faithfully attend class, participate actively, and do all the assigned readings. Sometimes I even give extra credit for extra work.

I do this because I believe that qualities like hard work, discipline, and determination are critical to success in both college and in life, and so deserve to be rewarded. Also, effort is the one thing students can completely control. Everything else that factors into academic success—IQ, memory, college preparedness, health, outside work and family commitments, and so forth—is at least partly a matter of luck.

Nevertheless, most college professors—including myself—base grades much more on achievement than we do on effort. There are two good reasons for this.

First, there is no fair or objective way to measure effort in one's academic work. When I hand a student a test, I have no idea if they have studied one hour for it or ten. If I gave out grades based on my *perception* of how much effort my students have expended, the grades would be wildly unfair and I would have to barricade myself in my office to ward off all the pleaders and complainers.