

“Can Never Be Tested”

The latest fear-mongering jargon
From the education business proclaims
That we have “high stakes” standards
And clients at our school.
Yet, when I signed up for this job
They were known as students and families.
(Now they are often referred to behind closed doors as dollars and data)

You, my dear child,
Struggling to understand English,
Are victimized by circumstance and poverty,
And I, by my own government and negative press

No child left behind here I guess
Except little miss equity
And young man creativity
Cause I’m teaching to the test

I know a school should be more than this
Children learn with both sides of their brain
And their hearts and hands
And whole bodies as well...

But there's less time for that now
For our pacing coaches and guides
Tell us to pick up the pace
In the race against time
To raise our scores
In the fight to keep funding
In the cause to keep our careers

I agreed with Mr. Demon when he mentioned
That my job is actually to unleash the true potential
In a youngster – yes!

To teach a 12 year-old to pause, reflect, guess,
Create, question, think -
To define him or herself in this age of instantaneous overload,
To thrive, in his or her own way, each day -

And this, I know, can never be tested in May.