

Section 1:

#1 Strengths: Your introductory paragraph effectively establishes a dramatic contrast between traditional testing and project-based learning (PBL). You've created a vivid picture of test anxiety that many readers can relate to.

Weakness: Imbalanced argument presentation → Your opening paragraph introduces your position strongly but lacks clear signposting of the specific supporting arguments you'll explore. The final sentence mentions "student stress levels, preferences and skill divisions" but these don't clearly match the structure of arguments in your subsequent paragraphs.

Exemplar: ***Traditional tests create psychological distress, fail to reflect real-world applications, and limit creative thinking, whereas project-based learning offers a more effective educational approach that I will examine through three key perspectives: student wellbeing, practical relevance, and holistic skill development.***

#2 Strengths: Your paragraph on psychological impacts of testing uses specific data (68% statistic) to support your argument. You've included physical symptoms to illustrate test anxiety.

Weakness: Underdeveloped connection → While you mention that PBL reduces stress by giving students more time, you don't fully explain how the project approach specifically addresses the psychological issues you've identified with traditional testing.

Exemplar: ***Project-based learning distributes assessment pressure over time, allowing students to process information naturally without the cortisol spikes that impair memory retrieval. When working on week-long projects, students can engage with material in a state of focused flow rather than panicked cramming.***

#3 Strengths: Your counterargument paragraph acknowledges opposing viewpoints about standardised measurement. You use a colourful metaphor (decorative pieces) to illustrate your point about diverse thinking.

Weakness: Incomplete counterargument resolution → You introduce several criticisms of PBL but dismiss them without sufficient evidence. For example, you state that cheating "regularly happens" in traditional exams without supporting data, and claim that friend groups will prevent cheating in PBL without addressing how this would work.

Exemplar: ***While traditional tests offer standardised measurement, this apparent objectivity comes at the cost of recognising diverse thinking styles. PBL can incorporate safeguards against academic dishonesty through staged checkpoints, individual reflection components, and presentation requirements that make outsourcing work more difficult than in one-off exams.***

■ Your piece presents a passionate case for project-based learning with several compelling points about student wellbeing and real-world relevance. To strengthen your argument, consider developing a clearer structure where each paragraph explores one distinct advantage of PBL with specific examples. For instance, in your paragraph about psychological impacts, include a concrete example of a successful project that reduced student anxiety while achieving learning outcomes. Also, when discussing real-world applications, you could describe specific projects that mirror workplace scenarios. Your discussion of academic dishonesty would benefit from addressing how teachers can design PBL to minimise cheating through individual components and regular check-ins. Additionally, consider including some transitional sentences between paragraphs to guide readers through your argument more smoothly. Your conclusion effectively restates your position but could be strengthened by adding a forward-looking statement about how educational systems might implement this change.

Score: 43/50

Section 2:

Traditional Tests or Project-Precise ~~Practises~~ [Practices]?

The agonised faces of students leaning over exam papers, sweat beading on their necks. They sit there with their faces in their hands, a worrying silence hanging in the air. Their shoulders are tightened with anxiety, concern lingering on their faces even after the tests. Fingers cramp with the hours of vigorous writing and the pressure hardens. This all reveals one crucial detail most people miss – we have mistaken torture with tests, a 'regular' part of life. Schools must reevaluate their methods from outdated psychologically harmful tests that are mentally painful to project-based assignments which are easier on the mind and body but still deliver the same results. Studies continually show that project-based learning (PBL) can lead towards enhanced learning outcomes, improved student performance, and better engagement compared to standard tests. While tests assess comprehensive recollection, PBL lets students apply concepts in practical, real-world contexts, promoting intellectual understanding and critical thinking. #1 ~~By observing student stress levels, preferences and skill divisions, we can clearly see that the benefits of PBL against the opposition is imperative for educational evolution, pupils' health and wellbeing and the overall advantages of PBL.~~ [By examining student stress levels, learning preferences and skill development, we can clearly see that the benefits of PBL over traditional testing are imperative for educational evolution, pupils' health and wellbeing, and long-term academic success.]

First, traditional tests generate a mentally worrying environment. The pressure hangs in the air and continuously damages students' psychological wellbeing and studying ~~voluminosity~~ [capacity]. According to a study made in 2022 by the Educational Psychological Institute, at least 68% of students experience critical test anxiety with bodily indications such as palms sweating, hands shaking and inability to keep still, which critically impairs cognitive functions. These issues consistently have been

shown in even the highest-scoring students. Many of the children in the classes are extremely academically intelligent, and their true form remains encased by a barricade of stress. When these tests happen, the body's fight and flight hormones get triggered, releasing a flood of chemicals into their bloodstream that makes hands clammy, heads dizzy, and minds clouded. It severely injures the student's ability to retrieve information and recall notes. #2 PBL is conducted over time, such as one whole week, giving students time to prepare, research and release their stress. Traditional exams consistently fail to adjust to ~~focusable~~ [achievable] standards and do not ~~pursue to link~~ [connect] to the high standards life has.

Furthermore, we must admit that life ~~has, for every adult alive, has~~ [for every adult alive, has] not delivered three-hour tests sitting in a claustrophobic room with barely any light and anxiety clouding over your head. Traditional tests do not reflect real-world scenarios, especially the current curriculums of standard assessments. According to the Journal of Curriculum Development, the present-day syllabus does not accurately represent the actual world. Run-of-the-mill tests are always missing some crucial details we need to consider. For one, they focus on memory recall and knowledge memory, which is why some students ace tests while others fail. PBL would centre on embedding material into the student's memory, by making lessons interesting, important and memorable. We could do this by beginning to implement later project deadlines and adjusting the curriculum to make lessons fun and have multiple teachers that are masters in their subjects. Traditional tests are only a burden of childhood – we all need to recognise that they are not used as much as centred skills, which we can achieve from PBL.

~~#3 Critics may say that traditional assessments are objective and have standardised measurement. While this is partially true – they are easy to mark with only one correct answer, but this is exactly where the problems begin.~~ [Critics may argue that traditional assessments provide objective and standardised measurement. While this is partially true – they are straightforward to mark with definitive answers – this apparent strength actually reveals their fundamental limitation.] Tests zone in on black-and-white, narrowing down opinions and possible answers onto a singular path. PBL will encourage creativity and a diversity of answers. Much like decorative pieces – only one or two colours would be boring. A swirl of vivid shades would make the piece brighter and more beautiful. This may be a mild inconvenience for teachers, having to read everything and mark slowly by hand, but that is precisely the best way to achieve feedback – read properly, considered, and tells the student how to improve. Which is extremely unlike regular tests, where you are sworn to absolute secrecy about the questions, as the teachers are concerned about copyright and technical issues and so on. Another important point to acknowledge is that 'PBL is more vulnerable to academic dishonesty,' which is entirely false. Teachers and students all know that cheating regularly happens in the classroom (especially for the finals) while PBL will deliver enjoyable lessons with groupwork activities. Working with friends will regulate a balance of fun and work, further extended as friend groups are more likely to remember the goal, as they'll recall what the purpose of this was.

We have all seen how regular exams strangle any chance for creativity and colour, as it focuses on black-and-white questions that only count on memory recall. These statements imperatively verify that traditional tests absolutely must be replaced with project-based learning assessments, to create a better

learning environment with healthier psychological conditions and more appropriate real-life based assignments. Each time a student sits sweating at their desks, staring at stapled booklets that seem to have no end, we are torturing their mental health, making them misinterpret the real world and unknowingly opening an opportunity for academic dishonesty. What will we do now? Change or continue?