

IMPROVING LEARNING (EVEN WHEN MEASURED BY STANDARDIZED TESTS)

When we began sharing thinking routines and visible thinking practices, we often received questions about how their use related to students' test performance. To be honest, we couldn't answer those questions. We knew that the routines engaged students in their learning, got them to think, and helped them build understanding. We felt this would help them on standardized tests, but we had no evidence. However, in the intervening years we have been able to collect this data. In determining the effects on students' performance, we rely on the data from individual teachers and schools who have embraced MTV as both a goal and a practice and nurtured it at their schools or classrooms through sustained professional learning. The results have been impressive. We've seen gains on a diverse range of tests used across a variety of countries, subjects, and grade levels including on PARCC, Smarter Balanced, IB Diploma, VCE, HSC, and MEAP. In an experimental study, conducted by our colleague [Yerko Sepulvada](#) at the university level, students who received instruction using thinking routines scored a full 1.3 points higher (on a 7-point scale) than their peers receiving traditional instruction.

As Cameron Paterson states, "When I make students' thinking visible, it becomes shared, so it is 'our' thinking, bounced off each other, rather than locked inside their heads. This process of publicly sharing thinking builds our collective understanding. We all learn more AND they do well on the tests."