Overtested: How High-Stakes Accountability Fails English Language Learners (Language & Literacy)

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This timely book explores what is often overlooked in policy debates about the education of English language learners: how the day-to-day dynamics of the classroom are affected by high-stakes testing and the pressures students and teachers experience and internalize as a result. The author presents and analyzes classroom observations, student work, and test scores, as well as interviews with students and teachers. A disturbing picture of today's overtested public school classroom emerges from the events and practices described in this book. While hard to believe, all the depictions presented took place in a real elementary school classroom and reflect the current culture of extreme accountability.

Overtested not only describes the flaws in our current accountability system, but it also provides real-world solutions that can have an immediate and positive effect at the classroom, state, and national level. Chapters address key debates such as how to measure proficiency, the validity of various language assessment tools, the overuse of assessment, and the risks and benefits of teaching language arts to English language learners via mandated, structured curricula.

Jessica Zacher Pandya is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Teacher Education and Liberal Studies at California State University, Long Beach.

"This book tells an important tale that cannot be conveyed by numbers and tables.... It is important information for teachers; for those who depend on, employ, and train teachers; and for those who create the policies under which teachers are required to operate."

—From the Foreword by **Robert Rueda**, University of Southern California, author of *The 3 Dimensions of Improving Student Performance: Finding the Right Solutions to the Right Problems*

"How many more dire tales of 'schooling for assessment' must be told before we realize that teaching and testing are not the same and that scores on standardized, multiple choice achievement tests are a sorry substitute for an engaging learning environment? In this book, Jessica Zacher Pandya reaches across ideological and institutional borders to offer reasonable, pragmatic solutions for change."

—**Linda Valli**, Jeffrey & David Mullan Professor of Teacher Education & Professional Development, College of Education, University of Maryland

"Zacher Pandya's invaluable book exposes the injustices and absurdities of our high-stakes accountability era. Just as importantly, it limns a more academically robust and culturally relevant instructional vision for English language learners."

—**Gerald Campano**, University of Pennsylvania

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