

Test Scores Drop as the School Day Drags on

February 26, 2016

Pacific Standard:

You've probably noticed that it's harder to think clearly after a long day of reading, writing, and arithmetic—in short, after a long day of thinking. For the most part, that's not a particularly big deal, but a study out today in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* suggests it might matter to schools and their students. As it turns out, each hour that passes before starting a test drags scores down by a little bit, meaning students who take a test late in the day will perform noticeably worse.

A core assumption underlying academic achievement testing is that the tests measure, at least roughly, how much students have learned. Of course, that assumption isn't really true; for one thing, there are persistent racial biases in academic testing. But, economists Hans Henrik Sievertsen, Francesca Gino, and Marco Piovesan wondered, could there be even more fundamental cognitive biases? Like, say, how tired students are when they take a test?

Read the whole story: [Pacific Standard](#)