

From Les Examables

By Don Zolidis

ANNA, teenager

ANNA is giving a speech to an assembled crowd of students to revolt against standardized testing.

ANNA

Fine. Everybody listen! I know what Mr. Tomasino is trying to do here. He thinks he's doing the right thing, doesn't he? He wants us to learn, right? He wants us to have an education

JASMINE

I'm totally lost.

ANNA

Oh sure, we could spend the next month of school slaving away over a test that means nothing, we could eliminate the arts, we could eliminate sports, we could eliminate the ROTC. I'm sure he has great reasons for that. I don't know what they are, but I bet he knows. And I bet he has a great reason for disbanding the ROTC and forcing them to work in mines. I mean, sure, some of them will die or come down with black lung, but they're willing to make that sacrifice for our school. They're heroes. And yes I'm sure the Principal thinks of them as expendable heroes and he won't really care if they all die, but that's part of the plan.

TAD

Um... wait a minute –

ANNA

So we could do all that, but you know what happens if we pass the STAAR Test?

JASMINE

No! I don't know that at all!

ANNA

WE GET ANOTHER TEST! And you know what, if we did well on the previous test, you know what we have to do?

JASMINE

Still no!

ANNA

WE HAVE TO DO BETTER ON THAT TEST! And then what do you think's gonna happen? We're gonna have to study longer, we're going to have to get rid of more stuff! Maybe we'll

have to use the ROTC's blood or something, or cut up their heads and take out their sweet, sweet brains!

TAD

What?

ANNA

Well I say! No more tests!

EVERYONE

Yeah!

ANNA

I say, let's learn what we want to learn!