

**APPENDIX H
RAW DATA MATRICES FOR INTERVIEWS**

Data Themes with Rules for Inclusion

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Data Themes with Rules for Inclusion

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Data Themes with Rules for Inclusion

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Data Themes with Rules for Inclusion

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APPENDIX H

Raw Data Matrix: Theme A, Principal Influence on Stress

Definition: Principal behavior influences the stress teachers feel as a result of SOL testing.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I137	There ' s one or two of the principals I work with that are a little bit more laid back and their attitude is we all have to do this. Let ' s do it and not worry about it, and I know you ' re doing a good job –that kind of stuff. And these teachers don ' t look as harried as the teachers in the other buildings that I go in. They ' re doing the same types of things, but the principal support really does set the climate for how teachers will feel and that ' s for everything. But, since the SOLs are at the forefront, it makes a big difference.
I137	Question: What effect, if any, will SOL testing make in teachers ' job satisfaction? You know, that ' s really very dependent on their building principals. If the principals hold it over their head and look at their classroom test results and say, I know your children aren ' t doing as well as so-and-so ' s children, then it becomes very stressful and it has a very negative effect. If the building principal says, you know, this is something we all have to do together, and it ' s a minimum skill, the minimum of what the children need to know, and I ' ll help –whatever I can do, and we ' re in this together, and you won ' t be judged individually on it, then I don ' t think it ' s a problem.
I212	I think it depends on how the administrator at the local school level handles the stress, whether they pass it on to the teachers or whether they make it seem like it ' s life or death.
I212	I don ' t know if it is the school administration –if you have someone administering the school who can keep it in perspective and say that we want to do well, and we know you want to do well, but this is not the end of the world, and we know that this too shall pass, and absorb some of that pressure.
I265	Question: What, if anything, has the whole emphasis on SOL test scores done to the relationship between teachers and principals? It really depends on the principal. I have a wonderful principal. But unfortunately, his attitude is that, I ' m going to retire in 2004. He ' s going to ride it out, and when the going gets tough, he ' ll be gone. So, we know that we have a couple of good years left. And what I mean by good with him is he ' s extremely professional, but everybody in the school, he ' s hand-picked to be there and everybody gives 150%, so it ' s a wonderful place to be.

(matrix continues)

I344	(Y)ou can ' t teach discipline while trying to teach SOLs. Because you have to teach SOLs and so you kick the student out who is causing the blockade. I have to get these SOLs taught by the end of the week. You ' re sitting here acting silly, so get out. The principal is saying, "Keep the student in class so they can learn these SOLs." But do you see how that ' s ignoring the human factor? You can ' t be programmed to sit in a desk for 90 minutes and learn a multiple choice question.
I397	Question: If the administration were not putting undue pressure on teachers for test results, would there still be an impact from SOL testing just due to the publishing of SOL test results by school? I believe that if the administration would stand and say that we may not have the highest test scores in the county, but we know that our children are learning and are progressing in basic reading and math skills, I believe the negative effects will be minimal.
I397	Question: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the degree of stress that teachers feel in their jobs? I think it will, even in those grades that don ' t test. Again, I think an administration that puts emphasis on the teaching process and not on the testing process could take some of the pressure away, maybe most of the pressure. I think that there is still going to be some pressure there, but I think the administration can make it worse. Question: If school boards are demanding test scores and superintendents are demanding test scores, do you think your school leader will be able to keep that pressure away from folks at the local school level? Well, I don ' t know. Really, if the central office people were pushing for test scores and if you had a principal who said, "Well, you know, I ' m not going to do this. I want my students to be able to read and think." To some superintendents that principal could be seen as being ineffective, and I don ' t know if I were a principal if I would want to put myself in that position either. It would be a rough call for him or her. You could almost consider it, you know, refusing to do what they ' re telling you to do. But if they could and if they could show improvement, maybe people would see that you don ' t need to go to extremes to get better test scores.
Q322	Administrators are helpless to assist teachers with these stressful conditions.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme B, Uncertain Long-term Effects

Definition: The long-term effects of SOL testing are unknown.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I149	Really, I do feel in some ways positive about what 's going on, and in other ways very negative about it. I guess we 'll find out in the end what is the right thing to do.
I149	The bottom line with us is that we can do this. We know we can do this, but that 's not an issue. With us, the issue is what 's going to happen to the whole testing process? How is it going to be used? To what end will it help or hurt students? We haven 't had enough time into it.
I397	What I think will happen is when it comes to that year when children are denied diplomas, that there may be some lawsuits, and maybe by that time they 'll have to step back and say, maybe we need to do something different.
I420	As far as being able to track them through elementary and high school, I 'm not really sure if they retain the information or what happens. I think that would probably be the best indication.
Q89	Schools will get better at taking the tests as the years pass and eventually the SOLs will be scrapped as were the Literacy Passport Tests.
Q100	(The) state will be served a lawsuit by minority groups representing the floods of students who are either not passing, therefore not graduating, or are dropping out of high school.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme C, Parent Responsibility

Definition: Parents often do not meet their responsibilities to help ensure student Achievement on SOL tests.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212	What we did at our school—we did an informal study—and we found that children who did not do their homework did much poorer on SOL tests than those who did. And we have a lot of children who do not do their homework on a regular basis, and of course, that comes from the home. And that is really somewhat out of the power of the teacher to control.

(matrix continues)

I212	You know, I find that everyone says we are going to raise test scores. The president says so and that schools are going to be held accountable, and of course, by that they mean the principals and the teachers. I want to know, and all the teachers want to know—schools that are barely passing and schools that are not—when are the parents going to be held accountable for their end of the deal? When are the parents going to be responsible for letting their children go to school without doing their homework?
Q8	Students and their parents will take learning and remembering material more seriously. Now many feel they deserve a diploma for just sitting in class for 13 years.
Q453	Need parents to be committed to preparing their children for learning.
Q327	Teachers do not oppose testing, but teachers cannot be held accountable for all students because we cannot go home with them.
Q350	Parents will continue to blame others for what they are not doing at home. Teachers will need more support from the home and they will NOT get it.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme D, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

Definition: SOL testing results in less joy in teaching and learning.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	There is no time for anything fun or just to explore something if they 're interested in it. I don ' t have the leisure time to do that anymore because I have to complete this very rigorous curriculum.
I91	Some people are very dissatisfied, and I think I ' m one of them. It takes a lot of excitement out of teaching.
I91	I really feel like they ' re missing out on the joys of education and being able to do some of the in-depth studies and projects because they ' re doing these little worksheets and I ' m not happy with it.
I212	(I)f the child ' s not passing the SOL tests, it can ' t help with what may already be a poor self-esteem. I think we are very much going to see a split where the children who are in economically affluent areas and are doing well and all the kudos go to them, and children who are economically poor will often be struggling, and the pressure will be put on them by the teachers because pressure is being put on them and the children are not going to be happy. That, I think, is going to cause them to find the school experience to be much less positive than it was in the

(matrix continues)

I212	past. I'm afraid that when the pressure is really on you are going to find a lot more children who find school to be not at all fun—which is a sad thing, because elementary school should be fun and you can't have fun when your teacher is yelling at you because you aren't doing well and your principal is on your back and you're a little kid and it's not your fault to begin with.
I344	The principal is saying, "Keep the (misbehaving) student in class so they can learn the SOLs." But, do you see how that's ignoring the human factor? You can't be programmed to sit in a desk for 90 minutes and then learn a multiple choice question.
Q102	Creativity is stifled. It's not fun to teach an SOL grade.
Q126	We are losing those special "teachable moments" because teachers are so stressed about covering all the SOL that the fun is gone from teaching and learning.
Q149	Much less creativity and joy in teaching!

Raw Data Matrix: Theme D, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

Definition: SOL testing results in less joy in teaching and learning.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q153	Less enjoyment and creativity for teachers and students.
Q191	Gifted, honors, and higher achieving students will neither reach the levels of competence because time is wasted on lower level thinking skills, nor will they enjoy classes as much as in the past.
Q267	Not enough time to enjoy learning.
Q301	Students will no longer be able to participate in fun activities related to non-SOL topics.
Q397	Teachers will be required to perform more menial tasks which take time away from preparing materials. This will lead to teacher dissatisfaction.
Q425	There is less time for fun things, art, games, etc.
Q434	The joy of teaching is disappearing.
Q448	No more fun activities. More parental referrals to special education. My daughter hates what the tests do to her classes and how teaching styles have changed.

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Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	I just encourage them to do their best (on SOL tests). Bur for the most part, they 're very anxious. And you know, the teachers are anxious about it also.
I14	And this kind of curriculum that is developmentally inappropriate just makes it stressful for us.
I14	It makes more work for us. What we have had to do is my teaching team took those explorers, divided them up, went to the library, did research, broke it down, wrote it on a second grade level, and we 've basically written our own book on explorers. Tried to find pictures so they would have something visual to look at, tried to find maps, and so that 's what we 've tried to do as teachers. It 's really placed a lot of extra work on our shoulders to go out and find curriculum that 's not there.
I14	There 's a lot of pressure on if the children don 't pass from year to year. What 's going to happen? There 's been rumors that schools wouldn 't be accredited, teachers could be fired. I really feel for the teachers in the low economic areas. The amount of stress that must be on their shoulders. Because there are supposedly consequences if these children continue not to pass.
I14	It (SOL testing) just puts undue stress. Each teacher has stress to get each student from point A to point B. But now we 've got added stress of making sure that they 've got to pass these SOLs.
I14	<p>Interviewer: Will the stress be felt differently depending on which school you are in?</p> <p>Oh, most definitely. For example, the school that I 'm in is a very high socio-economic neighborhood. There 's a lot of parent support starting from the time they are in kindergarten. Parents make sure their children are prepared and they read and follow up on homework, and we live in the D.C. area and these parents expose them to the museums and Mount Vernon and things like that versus children in that lower SES group in this same community maybe three schools over, you know, and their parents aren 't as likely to do that. So we have been fortunate that year after year from the very first test we have been one of the few schools</p>

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Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>that passed that. But I really do believe that before these SOL tests came into being, I think a child's background makes a world of difference as to whether they are successful or not in school</p> <p>Interviewer: So are you thinking you would feel greater stress if you were in a low SES school?</p> <p>Oh, absolutely.</p>
I14	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' plans to remain in teaching?</p> <p>Well, there is a lot of teacher burnout. I'm not sure if it's due totally to SOL testing. I think, though, that it's just one more stressor. I know that people are saying that, this too shall pass. It's just another phase in education. We've seen these fads come and go before. Give it five or ten years and it will be gone. And, so I think that people are hoping that there will be light at the end of the tunnel and that they will be done away with, but while they are here, just make the best of it and do what you can.</p>
I91	<p>I know that two weeks before the test last year there were teachers who were just essentially reviewing for the test, and these were teachers who were teaching lower socio-economic children and children who were lower academically, so they really felt the push.</p>
I91	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the degree of stress that teachers feel in their jobs?</p> <p>I think it has a great effect, because when these scores come out, everybody's wanting to know how their kids did and, of course, there's articles in the paper, comparing schools, comparing districts, and of course, every spring those teachers that have been cheating and caught. So, some people feel that competitive stress is good, but I don't know. Education isn't a business.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	<p>Interviewer: Is this good stress or bad stress in your view?</p> <p>I think it's a bad stress because I know people are trying to make education a business now, and I know they're trying to say that if people are doing their job then they shouldn't be stressed, but the problem is that children are not a manufactured product. You can't control everything. Your kids come to you differently every year, with a different set of needs, and I think it's preposterous to say that we can have the same outcome year after year after year if we just put the kid in and pour these things into their head and I think teachers are stressed, especially in those areas where children are more disadvantaged.</p>
I91	<p>Interviewer: Do you see any effects on the principal-teacher relationship related to SOL testing?</p> <p>I saw that happen last year because the school I was at is a lower functioning academic school and the pressure is there to get those scores up within the next few years and when accreditation happens and teachers whose children were not performing—and I kind of agree that some of those teachers need to be on the ball a little more—I hate to see scores be the bottom line.</p>
I91	<p>Interviewer: Did you see any difference in how teachers perceived SOL testing according to the grade they taught?</p> <p>It affects the third and fifth grade teachers differently. Even though we all say that every year is important and we're building up to those years, those teachers' names are the ones that are on those scores. Yes, there is definitely more pressure. And, you know, it does make some people not want to teach those grades.</p>
I137	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the degree of stress teachers feel in their jobs?</p> <p>Oh, it's ultimate stress.</p> <p>Interviewer: What do people say, or how do they act that makes you believe they're stressed?</p> <p>A day doesn't go by when I walk down a hall in a school that I don't hear the word SOL. You don't ever eat lunch with the teachers in the</p>

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Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I137	lounge when you don't hear: I can't get this all in. The tests are the second week in May or the third week in May and I don't see how I'm going to get all this math in. I can't just open up their heads and pour it in. I mean, I'm hearing this every day, especially I've heard this a lot from fifth grade teachers lately. They feel the pressure most, I guess. I don't know why; the content is based on other grades also. But they feel like they're carrying the burden.
I137	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect students with disabilities? If it's a special education disability, it might be more stressful for that classroom teacher associated with that child and the special education teacher for that child.
I149	But, I think in some classrooms...where there's someone, perhaps, who doesn't have as much experience or doesn't feel as prepared to teach the SOLs that there could be a real problem with confidence in handling that much material.
I149	I think there is more pressure in the SOL test grades. I've even had other people tell me, I don't know how you can teach fifth grade.
I149	Interviewer: What effect, if any, will SOL testing have on teachers' job satisfaction? Oh, I've already seen people who, I'm 46, but I've seen people who are about 10 years older or a little less who have a few years left, or they're right at the border line of they could retire if they really wanted to—ten years ago you didn't see as many people saying yes, I'll take early retirement and let's just be done with it. I'll do a second career, you know. And now we're seeing a lot more people say, "It's time to pack it up." There's just so much pressure and I could have a second career doing something I really enjoy more where there's less pressure involved. I think that, especially if you have a testing year, so much depends on the particular group you get each year. You know, there are so many variables in human behavior and human beings that just because you do it one year doesn't mean you can do it the next. You'd think you could, but there are so many uncertainties.

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Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I149	<p>There are a lot of positives (from SOL testing) for me, but I think it depends on what the county or the state does with the testing results as well. You know, are they going to track your records for the last five years and teachers who don't have 70% or more of the students passing, what's going to happen to them? We've always heard that, no, that won't happen, but could it?</p>
I149	<p>My daughter tells me, Mom, I know this testing has an effect on you because she could tell a difference when the writing tests would come around in March and then again in May when we would test again. And, sometimes you are so wrapped up in your daily routine that you don't even feel it yourself, but it's there and other people notice it.</p> <p>Interviewer: Do you see the stress among fellow teachers?</p> <p>I think so.</p> <p>Interviewer: How does that play out? Are there things that they say?</p> <p>You know, I think it is in their attitude and their commitment toward the teaching profession. I really think that when there's that kind of pressure to perform, and yet so many factors are beyond our control in order to make it happen, that I believe is part of the problem with the stress at least. It's always been that there are things that teachers couldn't control, but now you've got to get results.</p>
I212	<p>(O)nce you pass (the SOL tests), if you don't continue to pass, there is a tremendous amount of pressure put on you. Schools that don't pass in our county go through a great deal of stress, pressure that is put on them to try to pass.</p>
I212	<p>We noticed that while other schools passed without any extra effort on their part, we had to bust a tremendous amount of you-know-what to get where we got—teachers working on the weekends, working at night, and a huge amount of stress.</p>
I212	<p>But there is a huge amount of stress for teachers whose students do not pass SOL tests. A lot of the doctors said they had noticed more stress-related illnesses.</p>

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Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212	I will tell you I have gotten several letters from the county and from the state for us to remind our friends and young people to go into education, and you know I don't know if I can do that with a good conscience, I really don't. Because they're not getting the kind of pay for the pressure that they're being put under. The kind of pressure some of these teachers are under, depending on their location, is every bit as great as someone on Wall Street, and they certainly aren't getting the pay from it; they aren't getting anything back from it. And you always have to ask yourself, what's the payoff? Are you doing it because of the little lightbulb that goes off from knowing that you helped a child learn? I don't even think you can notice the lightbulb anymore because teachers are so overwhelmed with the pressures of the SOLs and the paperwork. And I think that varies from county to county.
I212	At our school there's a vast amount of paperwork that's being done at the computer, and that creates a huge pressure all of its own because the computers break down, you can't get into the file server, and then you get behind and it just throws people into a huge tizzy.
I212	Interviewer: How is this positive outlook and of teachers having inner strength affected by scores being published in the newspapers? It is very demoralizing sometimes because they don't say that a school went up so many points. They just rank the school and that's it.
I212	Part of the stress that teachers feel will be when those who are ranking the schools and looking at the tests and wagging their tongues and pointing their fingers don't understand what the teachers are up against. When you have politicians and other people who don't have any idea what is going on down in the trenches, do not offer any support, and say that we understand what you are dealing with and we are going to do what we can to help, and occasionally a pat on the back. No educator these days is getting a pat on the back, even if they do pass the SOLs. That rarely happens.
I264	I've seen an increase in stress. It's more associated with having to cover a large amount of material. I'm beginning to see among some of my colleagues stress that the material be covered, stress that they teach at a certain pace, and so it's slowly turning into what we might call "burnout."

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme, E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I264	And it ' s all because of the stress to make sure that students do well on the tests, because the schools have to do well. We haven ' t gotten into where the teachers ' jobs will be related to how well the school does on SOLs, but I have a feeling that is probably going to be next on the agenda, and pay scales will be based on that. The stress will be going up. It ' s not as bad as it ' s going to get.
I344	You ' re breaking your neck. Even if we are successful with meeting the demands of these SOL requirements, you ' ve broken your neck to do it. It ' s a painful process, a very painful process. I want to make an analogy here. It ' s like an obese person who wants to get slim. If you starve yourself to death and you ' re anorexic and you get slim, you ' ve taken away all of the happiness in your life—all the fun—all the health. You ' ve gotten slim, but you ' re out of breath. What ' s left? It ' s a depleted feeling like, " Yes, my kids have passed the SOL tests, now go ahead and shoot me so I can rest." And then you have people who complain that teachers get the summer off. They don ' t have a clue!
I344	We ' re breaking our necks. It ' s a totally uncomfortable atmosphere. I have teachers who complain to me about not being able to sleep; they ' re so stressed out about their children.
I344	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the degree of stress that teachers feel in their jobs?</p> <p>Blood pressure pills.</p> <p>Interviewer: How does that play itself out for the teachers that you know? Is it a big deal in terms of stress that they may feel?</p> <p>Teachers are just an older bunch of students, honestly. I think our concepts of things are a lot better, but we ' re still people. The underlying fact is that we are still people. We are still human.</p> <p>There are two types of stress. There ' s good stress and there ' s bad stress. You want stress to propel you to become better. And then you have stress that ' s going to cause you to deteriorate. And, in more cases than less, SOLs is a bad stress because the percentage of teachers who take off is steadily increasing. Substitutes are in high demand. I see substitutes every day. I see the same substitute every day. She ' s on the faculty. She needs her own (name) badge. They have offered a bonus if</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme, E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I344	you're not absent. I mean, they will give you a bonus if you don't take off. Hopefully I'll get that. I've not taken off a day yet. I want you to know that I am trying to meet the demands of these SOLs, but I am shaking as I talk to you because I want the people who are in charge of this thing to know how important it is to be fair. And SOLs are just totally unfair, because all students do not learn the same way.
I344	I don't think that many (teachers) will be able to stay because it's unrealistically demanding. Demands are good. They can help you to become better. But when they are overly demanding, and you see that the children are not rising with you to meet the demands, how effective are you? And, everybody has a need to be effective. I learned that in ninth grade health. Everybody has a need to feel successful. If you're not successful, what is there for you? You're miserable. Some people can stand to stay in a miserable situation, and some people can't.
I406	Interviewer: Do you believe that SOL testing causes teachers to teach any differently? I feel like you can't let your hair down and be yourself. There's a lot of pressure. It's like you're competing with so many people. You've got to please this, this, and this person.
I406	Interviewer: Are the third and fifth grades any harder years for teachers to teach? Well, we don't have fifth grade, but I think the third grade teachers are pushing as hard as they can to get the students ready (for the tests) if they're ready or not.
I406	There will be stress because some of these kids are not ready. And what you end up doing is to try to teach five years and nine months of learning into nine months because their educational home life is not there. Interviewer: How does this affect teachers? Teachers are trying to get everybody to score well on this test, and the stress of it...it's there.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme, E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I420	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect how students feel about school?</p> <p>I think that depends on how the students are doing. If the students are not doing well, then that kind of sets them up for failure. Just like the problem I'm having at my school, when we're barely reaching accreditation, then it makes your school look bad and your faculty look bad and overall it's not a very happy situation.</p>
I420	<p>It doesn't really upset me too much because I'm so used to the SOLs. But I do think that if you are teaching in a school that is testing poorly, then I do think that the pressure falls on the instructors' shoulders—your class, your students, your grade levels did not meet the standards. And, it's hard to pinpoint because they could have done poorly on questions taught by a teacher from another grade. I think it's a lot of pressure.</p>
I420	<p>But, I teach first grade and we don't do SOL testing, so it's really not the same for me. But we've been working on a schoolwide SOL plan to help bring up our scores. But, right now it's only some teachers who are held accountable.</p>
I420	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL tests affect the degree of stress that teachers feel in their jobs?</p> <p>I think it stresses a lot of them out, greatly. They don't stress me a lot because, maybe, I am not testing my students on SOL tests, but also, it's the way I was taught to teach. I was taught to teach to the SOLs so they've been around as long as I've been teaching. But I do know that it's very stressful for a lot of teachers. Because you feel like it's kind of an attack on you and your teaching ability if your students do not do well.</p>
I463	<p>I think it puts a lot of pressure on the teachers...I think teachers feel the pressure that they'll lose their jobs if their kids don't do well on the SOLs. And, I think that's a problem because this year I have fourth and fifth graders. My fifth graders were taught by this same team last year. So, the fifth graders who took the SOL writing test this year did a wonderful job, not because of anything I did. Whoever taught them last year, she was a remarkable teacher because I have their pretests and posttests, and the kids were taught some really good skills. So, who gets</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme, E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I463	the credit for these guys? Am I going to get the credit because they're in my fifth grade class? She should get the credit because she's done all the work with them.
I463	You know, like I said we're always hearing about the school in the county who's passing. They're wanting to know why are we stating that we can't do it. I think there is an inference that if you can't do it, then maybe they can find someone who could.
I463	I know it puts a lot of pressure on teachers to perform and to hope they won't be looked at negatively in terms of their jobs. I think they worry about losing their jobs, and I think there is a big pressure put on the ones where they are taking the tests.
Q37	New teachers feel they will not be tenured if their students don't do well on SOL testing.
Q56	Teachers working more overtime.
Q134	Stress levels are at their highest among teachers, students, and school staff.
Q184	Teacher transfers if scores are low. Poor evaluations for teachers. Because teachers will transfer out of SOL test grade levels or subjects, there will be a shortage of qualified professionals who are willing to move into these areas. Also, because I am a strong teacher, I have been given the academically challenged groups of students and have been told to increase their scores. I changed grade levels and schools because of this.
Q238	Negative public opinions toward public school education. Teachers worried that SOL will reflect on their teaching ability.
Q314	Teachers will ask to be moved to a non-SOL testing grade. Teachers will ask for a transfer within the division to a school that has a high passing rate.
Q322	Undue pressure is placed on parents, students, and teachers.
Q337	A decline in teacher and student self-esteem.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme, E-1, Negative Consequences for Educators

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in increased stress and loss of self-esteem for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q407	Students and teachers seem to be less interested in learning. This will result in apathy and burnout in both students and teachers.
Q420	I feel that Virginia needs Standards of Learning, however, it is too stressful for teachers and students to perform based on standards that do not reflect appropriate content and knowledge base.
I212	I will tell you I have gotten several letters from the county and from the state for us to remind our friends and young people to go into education, and I don't know if I can do that with a good conscience, I really don't. Because they're not getting the kind of pay for the pressure that they're being put under. The kind of pressure some of these teachers are under, depending on their location, is every bit as great as someone on Wall Street, and they certainly aren't getting the pay from it; they aren't getting anything back from it. And you always have to ask yourself, what's the payoff? Are you doing it because of the little lightbulb that goes off from knowing that you helped a child to learn? I don't even think you can notice the lightbulb anymore because teachers are so overwhelmed with the pressures of the SOLs and the paperwork.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-2, Negative Consequences for Educators, Pressure from Above

Definition: Teachers feel controlled and manipulated by mandates, rewards, and requirements from those above them in the organizational hierarchy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	<p>Interviewer: Is that the source of their dissatisfaction, the outside influence?</p> <p>Yes, I think they feel that the legislators are telling them what to do, when to do, and how to do, and these are people who have never been in a classroom, and that's very frustrating.</p>
I91	Others see it (SOL tests) as an imposition and aren't as flexible.
I137	<p>Interviewer: Have you seen difficulties in the relationship between principals and teachers resulting from the SOL testing requirements?</p> <p>Oh, yes, I really do. And, it goes up the ladder. It's not just the principals. It's the supervisors above that, the superintendent. I see people, unfortunately, pointing fingers rather than just shouldering the burden. I see it's like you need to do your job so I can do my job rather than, this is just something we have to do. How can we do it best for the kids and for our school and for our district? Unfortunately, I think it's a lot of attitude.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-2, Negative Consequences for Educators, Pressure from Above

Definition: Teachers feel controlled and manipulated by mandates, requirements, and rewards from those above them in the organizational hierarchy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I149	<p>Interviewer: What is the source of that pressure? Is it superintendents, school boards, principals, all of the above, or parents? How does that stress come about?</p> <p>You know in our building we've actually been lucky because my principal seems pleased with what we've done and I don't feel that kind of stress from her because I feel she knows we're doing what we can to make it happen. But, I even see principals having this unbelievable amount of pressure on them too. And I think that filters through. So, I really think it's straight from the state to the superintendents, straight to the principals, and straight to us. And I hope it doesn't feed into the kids.</p>
I212	<p>It is ironic that the administration gave these teachers, they were awarded briefcases and there was a big celebration because they passed the SOLs. Now the other schools did not.</p> <p>I am an elementary Art teacher, so I see what happens in a lot of classrooms. Now, our school did pass SOLs last year, but by the skin of our collective teeth. And, we certainly want to pass this year because, once you pass, if you don't continue to pass, there is a tremendous amount of pressure put on you. Schools that don't pass in our county go through a great deal of stress, pressure that is put on them to try to pass.</p> <p>Interviewer: Where does that pressure come from?</p> <p>The administration.</p> <p>Interviewer: From the principal?</p> <p>That would be from the highest levels, then through the principal—not because the principal wants it that way, but because their feet are being held to the fire. And because of that, our county has done very well with SOL tests.</p> <p>As I mentioned before, teachers who did well last year got briefcases and we got nothing. But this year we passed and we are going to have an assembly on Wednesday and it will be interesting to see if we get</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-2, Negative Consequences for Educators, Pressure from Above

Definition: Teachers feel controlled and manipulated by mandates, requirements, and rewards from those above them in the organizational hierarchy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212	anything because we certainly didn ' t have any kudos given to us after we passed like other schools did.
I212	There has been talk that when schools do not pass SOL tests that teachers may lose their jobs. Now I understand that isn ' t true. But there has been an iron fisted approach and a lot of money has been spent, and the thrust of it is that the teacher is responsible.
I212	But it also depends on the pressure that the superintendent is giving the principal. We happen to have a superintendent who <i>really</i> wants to look good, and we are. He ' s looking really good because we ' re making that happen.
I212	Now, I will tell you at our school that if the scores are improving—even if they haven ' t passed yet—then great kudos are being given. You know, look at us. We have gone up 10 points, and so that is being monitored and that is being praised.
I212	Part of the stress that teachers feel will be when those who are ranking schools and looking at the tests, and wagging their tongues and pointing their fingers don ' t understand what the teachers are up against. When you have politicians and other people who don ' t have any idea what is going on down in the trenches, do not offer the support, and say that we understand what you are dealing with, and we are going to do what we can to help, and occasionally a pat on the back. No educator these days is getting a pat on the back, even if they do pass the SOLs. That rarely happens.
I264	<p>Interviewer: Have you seen any deterioration in principal-teacher relationships because of SOL testing?</p> <p>There is a little bit of that in the school where I ' m at, but it ' s more at the school district level. Just this past week they approved an extension of the school year. The students will be coming to school the week before Labor Day. They got the waiver approved by Richmond. Teachers will be coming two weeks before Labor Day. So, there is a lot of tension around the SOLs. The reasoning behind the extension of the school year was to improve SOL scores in the school district.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-2, Negative Consequences for Educators, Pressure from Above

Definition: Teachers feel controlled and manipulated by mandates, requirements, and rewards from those above them in the organizational hierarchy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I264	Differentiated pay scales have been discussed so your pay would be determined by student SOL test scores. They don't plan to do that right now, but reading the crystal ball, it looks like that's going to happen real soon.
I264	We haven't gotten into where the teachers' jobs will be related to how well the school does on SOLs, but I have a feeling that it is probably going to be next on the agenda, and pay scales will be based on that. The stress will be going up. It's not as bad as it's going to get.
I265	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the degree of stress that teachers will feel in their jobs?</p> <p>If you haven't been reading the <i>Virginian Pilot</i> lately, we've been having a big argument because the superintendent went to the State Board of Education and asked for a waiver for the Labor Day start time. And, of course, that was just the straw that broke the camel's back as far as a workload goes. It's called Smart Start, and it will give us an extra 4 days to work with students to prepare them for the SOL tests.</p> <p>Interviewer: And then you end the year 4 days earlier?</p> <p>Oh no. June 16, same as always. So, we will have 191 teaching days. Most of us were saying, it's not about the starting time or having four extra days. It's about not having teacher input. We are the ones in the trenches, and we know how we can do better.</p>
I265	<p>Interviewer: Then, has the financing been reduced as a result of the SOL tests?</p> <p>Instead of paying for buses, we can pay for an extra person to be in the classroom. The administrator makes that choice. And now we are being told that after next year, our PE assistants are going to be pulled to work in the classroom. We'll only have PE twice a week and then we'll have to teach PE one day a week ourselves.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-2, Negative Consequences for Educators, Pressure from Above

Definition: Teachers feel controlled and manipulated by mandates, requirements, and rewards from those above them in the organizational hierarchy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I265	<p>Then I'm looking right now that the superintendent has three pay scales. So, the teachers who have the high SOL scores will have the high pay scale. And the ones who don't will have the lower ones.</p> <p>Interviewer: Do you mean regardless of school?</p> <p>Regardless. So, that was implemented this year. The principals are going to get fired was implemented this year.</p>
I397	<p>I think that probably there will be no effect (from SOL testing) on some students. Not because of SOL testing, but how the whole setup is put into place by the administration. That's where the negative effects are going to come in. If the administration where the student attends goes about it in the wrong way, where instead of wanting teachers to teach, they want them to teach taking tests, then you are going to see some negative effects. And you are going to see students under pressure. I'm already seeing this in my location. I don't attribute the negative effects to the SOL tests themselves. I blame how the people are interpreting how to get higher test scores. I don't think of the SOLs as a negative. I think they could be a valuable assessment, not only of how your teachers are doing, but of how your students are able to master the content. But, from where I'm sitting, I'm not seeing that.</p>
I397	<p>That's where the dissatisfaction to somebody like me comes in. I can take the SOL manual and go into my room and teach. I'm not an idiot. But every time you turn around, somebody is telling you you've got to do it this way, you've got to do it that way. These little numbers have to go on the board. They've got to be in your plan book. To me you shouldn't have to prove what you're doing. Why should I have to prove what I'm doing when I know I am? Some teachers may not do a good job, but for those of us who are doing the work, you're killing us by mandating all these little things.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-2, Negative Consequences for Educators, Pressure from Above

Definition: Teachers feel controlled and manipulated by mandates, requirements, and rewards from those above them in the organizational hierarchy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I406	<p>Interviewer: Do you believe that SOL testing causes teachers to teach any differently?</p> <p>I feel like you can't let your hair down and be yourself. There's a lot of pressure. It's like you're competing with so many people. You've got to please this, this, and this person.</p>
I420	<p>I do think that if you are teaching in a school that is testing poorly, then I do think that the pressure falls on the instructor's shoulders—your students, your grade levels did not meet the standards.</p>
I463	<p>We're always hearing about the school in the county who's passing. They are wanting to know why we are stating that we can't do it. I think that there is an inference that if you can't do it, then maybe they can find someone who could.</p> <p>Interviewer: Who did you hear that from?</p> <p>It would actually be the people who are in charge of curriculum and instruction here...the supervisory types. And when meetings are held and questions asked, and teachers stating their concerns about SOLs, and the emphasis being placed on them, we are asked if we are saying we can't meet the standards when other students are meeting them.</p>
Q389	<p>Some school divisions are threatening to compensate high SOL scores with teacher salary. So the socio-economic communities with high scores have higher paid teachers. We have very little or no control over our "product."</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-3, Negative Consequences for Educators, Loss of Trust, Power, and Autonomy

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in teacher perceptions of lost power, trust, and autonomy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' job satisfaction?</p> <p>I think it's really brought teacher morale down quite a bit. First of all we feel powerless that we had no input into these. And yes, they did have one or two teachers from each county supposedly making up this curriculum, but I think that teachers generally feel that this has been forced upon us.</p>
I91	<p>I think it (SOL testing) inhibits creative teachers, and I think it inhibits teachers who might see that their students have other needs so I think it depends on the situation.</p>
I91	<p>Some people are very dissatisfied, and I think I'm one of them. It takes a lot of the excitement out of teaching. Teachers I think are used to being in the classroom, being in charge and I feel like people don't trust me to be able to look at my students each September and say, this is what they need this year. And, I know we need to teach certain things at certain levels, but I am one person who didn't like it. I think teachers with strong personalities don't like it. But, I haven't met a lot of people who are thrilled with it.</p>
I137	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that teachers teach?</p> <p>I think that is the driving force behind their curriculum. I can't say that all teachers teach to the test, but I'm a gifted education resource teacher and I go into K-3 classes and teach higher level thinking lessons, and my lessons, even though I'm not required to have SOLs attached to my lessons, they want to see SOLs attached to my lessons. The general feeling in the schools in my district is if it's not in the SOLs, I don't have time to teach it.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-3, Negative Consequences for Educators, Loss of Trust, Power, and Autonomy

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in teacher perceptions of lost power, trust, and autonomy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I149	(W)e really do have to focus on teaching to the test that sometimes the creative process isn't there the way you'd like it to be. Or, for example, when you're teaching a colonial unit in history, you may want to veer off and give the identified gifted kids some further projects you know they want to research further into certain areas, well you just don't have time to do that because it's not truly a part of that curriculum. What they want to go into might be a sixth or seventh grade level. That's been a real issue for us too, with the identified (gifted) kids.
I149	We know that it's a reality that we must deal with. But what can you do to beat it (SOL testing)? You play their game and win.
I149	<p>But, then again, instead of being able to take a group that needs and can handle enrichment in a certain area, you feel like you don't have the time to do as much individualized or small group types of instruction. With the SOLs we have to do, say, adding and subtracting of decimals. Well, then if the multiplying of decimals is not a part of the curriculum—but some kids are ready to do that—that's been the hardest part of dealing with SOLs.</p> <p>The kids who really are gifted will suffer. But what do you do? Is there a plan to test them out of the curriculum so they can go on? It's not really doing them justice that you could do without that feeling of being locked into that curriculum.</p>
I212	There is absolutely a trend to teach what is on the SOLs. At every school that I know of, the teachers have some kind of timeline that they go by.
I264	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' job satisfaction?</p> <p>It will decrease their job satisfaction. They don't feel themselves able to teach what they would like to teach or what they think students need because they are tied to having to teach SOL required items. So, I see a downgrade, if anything with the teachers.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-3, Negative Consequences for Educators, Loss of Trust, Power, and Autonomy

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in teacher perceptions of lost power, trust, and autonomy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I264	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that teachers teach?</p> <p>One of the things that is happening is that teachers find themselves tied down too specifically to what the SOLs are requiring them to teach. They're setting up the curriculum. They're setting up their lesson plans all around what is required for SOLs. And it sort of restricts how far they would want to go with a class. It also requires them to cover "x" amount of material within a given time frame so slower students could cover that material so the teacher could say that, yes, everybody had covered the required material.</p>
I265	<p>Interviewer: Do you have any other comments about the topic of SOL testing?</p> <p>Well, I got on the Internet two nights ago, and I downloaded some applications for Department of Defense Schools and international schools, so I'm looking to go and do something else.</p> <p>Interviewer: And why is that?</p> <p>Well, because of my background of working with LD students. I feel like I work well with the at-risk students. I've had several this year who weren't doing well and I looked up their records, and my first thought was, well, what are we going to do differently? So, I did interviews with the parents and surveys with the kids, and we have been doing so many things that meet their needs, and they have just done a 180 turnaround. I am giving rigorous, complex work; we are going deep into it; we are using gifted strategies; they're writing their own plays; they are performing for other classrooms; we're writing business letters to people who are really making a difference and try to make changes in our community. And everything has an SOL attached to it.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-3, Negative Consequences for Educators, Loss of Trust, Power, and Autonomy

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in teacher perceptions of lost power, trust, and autonomy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I265	And, so I don't think I am alone, but two other Writing Project teachers I know, they're out of the system. Because, really good people, they don't tend to hang around for that kind of mentality. And, I just feel like there's a place for me that doesn't have to deal with this kind of stuff. Because I'm doing the job, regardless of who's looking over my shoulder. All I need is for you to do is just help provide basic support. You know, a stick to draw in the sand with, and I'll do the rest.
I344	We have gotten to the point in my county where we have to use the state's resource guide. You have to document the page that you are teaching from in our lesson plans. We are to that point—my principal—because we are really trying to meet the demands of the SOLs.
I344	The teacher is gonna be put in that robotic mode. If the student scores well on the SOL tests, "I love them, yes, I look good." If the student fails an SOL assessment, then the teacher feels like, "I've failed." Because, see, we come from a generation where we know what a work ethic is. So the teacher is going to feel like if the student failed, the teacher failed, but that's not a fair assessment. Some are going to feel that we haven't done our job, but that's not true. But our county says we have to evaluate how we're doing strictly on the data. What does the data say? If 30% of your students are not passing, you're not doing your job, but that's not a reality.
I344	I don't really have any experience without the demands of SOL testing. But, I believe that without the tests, I would have time to say, let's go back and make up this test. You all have missed something. Let's just turn back the page and I would take one day or two to go back and remediate and then pick up.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-3, Negative Consequences for Educators, Loss of Trust, Power, and Autonomy

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in teacher perceptions of lost power, trust, and autonomy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I397	If the administrations would give teachers the opportunity for teaching the material and not pressure them for improving test scores, they could still be happy. I could be happy with taking the SOL manual and covering the material, because I think there ' s some very interesting things in the curriculum. For example, the information on Egypt and China is very interesting, and I think I can share interesting things with my students. I think that when the pressure is to improve the scores–you know, we had this percent last year, we ' ve got to up that for this year, you ' re going to see some negative effects on teachers because the power is taken away from you, and it ' s almost as if everything is dictated to you. You have to do this. You have to do that.
I397	At one point we were told to teach until a skill was mastered. Now you have to teach until you cover the skills. With the pacing guides, the emphasis is on covering the material, not on teaching the student.
I397	I want to get picky about my own situation. When you have to write SOL numbers and topics on the board daily to prove that you are covering them, you could be questioned about why you are teaching that.
I397	(O)ur administration told us we had to put the SOL numbers we were teaching on the board every day...He said, " We want to keep the superintendent happy." That ' s not my number one goal. My number one goal is to teach the children, not to make somebody in the central office happy because there is a number or a word on the board.
I406	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the curriculum that teachers emphasize? Well we teach what ' s handed down to us. Interviewer: How do you feel about that? Well, it doesn ' t leave you much room to do what you want to, really.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-3, Negative Consequences for Educators, Loss of Trust, Power, and Autonomy

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in teacher perceptions of lost power, trust, and autonomy.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I463	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that teachers teach?</p> <p>(J)ust from experience, if you have kids come up who are in fourth or fifth grade and they don ' t know how to write in cursive writing because the teacher before has not been able to get to it, you know you can ' t teach the kids actual handwriting because your time is constrained by teaching SOLs.</p>
Q153	Cannot pursue "teachable" moments.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-4, Job Satisfaction

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in diminished job satisfaction for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	I think it ' s [SOL testing] brought morale down and it ' s taken a certain amount of our creativity away because we ' ve got this jam-packed curriculum that we ' ve got to cover, and there is very little time for us to explore our areas of interest or the children ' s areas of interest, so I think SOLs have affected teacher satisfaction in a very negative way
I212	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers ' job satisfaction?</p> <p>Well, it really goes back to the student population. In a school where the students are doing well and the teachers receive a great deal of praise because the students are doing well on the SOLs, I ' m sure they have a very high rate of job satisfaction. In those schools where the teachers have to work a whole lot harder, and never know if they will get the children to where they need to be, it [job satisfaction] may depend more on their inner strength. If they can see beyond that and know that they are doing a good job regardless of whether the child passes the SOL tests, then their job satisfaction may be coming from internal sources.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-4, Job Satisfaction

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in diminished job satisfaction for teachers.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212 (Continued)	But, they probably aren't going to be getting very much from external sources, and that's a shame.
I264	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' job satisfaction? It will decrease their job satisfaction. They don't feel themselves able to teach what they would like to teach or what they think students need because they are tied to having to teach SOL required items. So, I see a downgrade, if anything, with the teachers.
I420	I know that some of the older teachers like their jobs less now because they say that there are so many things expected of them now.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-5, Teacher Retention

Definition: SOL testing negatively affects teachers' desire to remain in teaching.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I137	I'm in that group of teachers who are starting to retire now. And I see a lot of them looking for other avenues. Some of them—if they're staying in teaching—they're going into itinerant fields like reading specialists and gifted resource teachers and so on so that they don't have to have that burden.
I149	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' desire to remain in teaching? Well, even for me, I'm undecided about what I want to do. I'm 46 and I don't know where I want to be when I'm 55. Because I don't know what the climate will be like at that point. It makes you wonder, you know, when the governors change, what's going to happen at that level. There are just too many unknowns and too much on the line.
I212	I forget what our (SOL) ranking is, but it's very high. So we have been successful, but it has already caused a very high rate of early retirements.
I212	I do think that a lot of them (teachers) are taking early retirement, especially if they are third or fifth grade teachers.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-5, Teacher Retention

Definition: SOL testing negatively affects teachers' desires to remain in teaching.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212	<p>I will tell you at our school I've noticed that a lot of the newer teachers do not stay very long. And I think it's very ironic that there's such a push and advertisement for new teachers because we so desperately need them, but we seem to be doing everything we can to discourage them. And that's not to say the SOLs are bad, but it's just very hard for the beginning teacher to come in and to be pushed the way they have to be pushed. And because there is such tension about passing the SOLs, some things that might have been just—well they're a beginning teacher. They'll be fine. We'll give them some time and they'll get better. Just the tiny problems you run into when you are a beginning teacher and you have to tweek, now are becoming more critical to fix immediately.</p> <p>I personally think that because there is a greater sense of tension on the part of many of the teachers that the new teachers feel that too. And the question is, do you really want to put up with that for the money that they're paying you? And that depends on whether you are truly a career teacher—whether you got into education because it truly was a calling or if it was because it just seemed like a good idea at the time. It's really starting to separate the chaff from the wheat.</p>
I264	I think as the SOL requirements continue, and teachers' pay and teachers' retention is going to be based on SOL scores, we are going to see teachers starting to leave the profession even faster than they are leaving now.
I265	(A) lot of teachers who are close to retirement, maybe they have four or five years left, if they are in an economic situation where they can, they are going ahead and retiring. They've kind of had it.
I265	I will say that 10 years ago there were teachers that retired and then signed back up to do substitute teaching or long-term subbing, and I haven't seen that in the last three or four years. Teachers are getting out and they are staying out. They're getting out and they're staying out. They're getting into other fields, financial fields, or community service activities.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-5, Teacher Retention

Definition: SOL testing negatively affects teachers' desires to remain in teaching.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I265	<p>Interviewer: Do you have any other comments?</p> <p>Well, I got on the Internet two nights ago, and I downloaded some applications for Department of Defense and international schools, so I'm looking to go and do something else.</p>
I344	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' plans to remain in teaching?</p> <p>That is a funny question. Because those teachers who teach because they like teaching, and they can shape themselves so that if you move the prize, they'll go to find it, they're going to continue teaching. But those teachers who are there because they need a job, they're gone. They're going to find another occupation.</p> <p>Interviewer: Does it matter how long teachers have been in teaching as to which decision they make?</p> <p>The young teacher is gone. The young teacher, they're out of here.</p>
I397	<p>From what I've seen in the couple of counties where I live and interact with teachers, I see and hear a lot more talk of teachers retiring as soon as they're able now, like in early 50's instead of maybe waiting a few years because of the pressure, because of just so much paperwork requirements. I think that, overall, teachers will probably want to take early retirement sooner, possibly even leave the profession if there were other opportunities, but that won't happen as much in this area because there aren't those kind of good opportunities where somewhere else that might not be true, say in northern Virginia.</p>
I406	<p>I do not think that our young people will be happy in the teaching profession. I feel like that in a short time they'll be begging for teachers. Many will use that 30 years and 55 and just leave.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-5, Teacher Retention

Definition: SOL testing negatively affects teachers' desires to remain in teaching.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I406	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' plans to remain in teaching?</p> <p>I think that some of them are searching now. They're wondering why I'm here, and could I find something else to do?</p> <p>Interviewer: Is it the younger teachers who feel this way, or "old timers" who have taught a long time?</p> <p>A lot of our older teachers, they're just longing to get their years in so they can leave.</p> <p>Interviewer: But you feel that some younger teachers are considering leaving as well?</p> <p>Yes, and some of the younger teachers say to me, "Why are you still here?" "nd I say, because I still enjoy it. If I didn't enjoy it, I'd leave it. I'm 59 with 38 years (in teaching).</p>
I420	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' plans to remain in teaching?</p> <p>I think it depends on how much burnout you get from the constant pressure and the testing. I have definitely heard a lot of teachers say that it's just so difficult that they can't handle it and they might want to find alternate careers.</p>
Q85	<p>I have definitely seen increased burnout and stress on the part of students and teachers. I am seriously considering leaving the only profession I have ever had and have always loved.</p>
Q100	<p>It has definitely been our feeling amongst teachers that the SOL tests have done very little to improve our creativity or desire to continue in this profession.</p>
Q110	<p>Experienced teachers will opt for early retirement and deprive Virginia localities of their wisdom and experience.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-5, Teacher Retention

Definition: SOL testing negatively affects teachers' desires to remain in teaching.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q118	I am eventually going back to PA where the system has been implemented in a more developed manner.
Q127	There will be fewer teachers staying in the field of education if the current application for testing continues.
Q197	A future shortage of educators.
Q205	Individuals not pursuing the teaching profession. Teachers taking early retirement or leaving the profession.
Q302	I believe the SOLs are an effort on the part of a political group of Virginians to undermine the public schools of Virginia. I am already aware of many teachers who have quit, retired, or gotten out of teaching due to SOLs.
Q337	Loss of excellent teachers.
Q344	Many teachers and students have already expressed to me their desires to quit or give up.
Q353	I believe most young new teachers will leave the profession because of lack of creativity, stress to pass tests, and low pay.
Q358	There will develop a teacher shortage due to burnout and young new teachers who will stay only two or three years.
Q376	Greater teacher shortage.
Q399	Retiring at Christmas. Praise the Lord!
Q392	I will retire early.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-5, Teacher Retention

Definition: SOL testing negatively affects teachers' desires to remain in teaching.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q434	Shortage of teachers will become even more critical.
Q453	Less students entering the teaching profession.
Q457	Less students majoring in education going to college.
I344	And when you demean teaching, you have more people who want to get out of teaching, OK, because there is no discipline in the home, and so you have to pass this Praxis test, which requires the highest scores in the nation. Do you see what it's doing? That is setting you up for an astronomical downfall. So, Virginia has these SOLs and then the highest requirements for the Praxis in the nation. So you're taking a certain amount of teachers and you're pushing them away. So you're saying, get anybody in here for the three year probationary licensure and after that, just go away. We don't care if you leave the profession. So, you have some college students who say, I'm going to just teach for three years and then just leave. You have people like that.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-6, Use of Testing for Evaluation

Definition: Over-reliance on test scores to evaluate students, teachers, and schools is bad practice.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: Do you see the whole issue of SOL testing affecting the relationship between teachers and administrators?</p> <p>Well, stress is inherent because our superintendent has mandated that each school every year has to raise its SOL scores by five points. Which many, many people have gone to him, including principals, to say, you know, if you are already at the top, mathematically you can't get higher every year. Not only that, you are not testing the same groups of students every year, and he has not taken that into account. So, every year we are given a new target index and this year I think our index was supposed to be 70 and we didn't make it. So, every year it's a different group of kids that's tested, so it's really comparing apples to oranges. And we have a high level of special education students in our school. And some of their parents want them to take those tests, so that can change things dramatically.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-6, Use of Testing for Evaluation

Definition: Over-reliance on test scores to evaluate students, teachers, and schools is bad practice.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, does SOL testing affect the degree of stress that teachers feel?</p> <p>I think it has a great effect, because when those scores come out, everyone's wanting to know how their kids did, and of course, there's articles in the paper comparing schools, comparing districts, and of course, every spring those teachers that have been cheating and caught. So, some people feel that competitive stress is good. I don't know. Education isn't a business.</p>
I137	<p>So, I know there were good intentions, but I think there were just too many stipulations. It's too many rules like you have to achieve a 70% pass rate. You know, my thought all along was that if you took the child from the beginning and had some testing measurement about where they were when the year started and you took something and if you saw at least four or five months growth in that child in a year, that's good. That's a good thing. But there are some children who are never going to be at that 70% level. And, I don't think principals or teachers or school districts should be penalized for those students.</p>

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-6, Use of Testing for Evaluation

Definition: Over-reliance on test scores to evaluate students, teachers, and schools is bad practice.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I149	<p>There are a lot of positives for me, but I think it depends on what the county or the state does with the testing results as well. You know, are they going to track your records for the last five years, and teachers who don't have 70% or more of their students passing, what's going to happen to them? We've always heard that, no, that won't happen. But could it?</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-6, Use of Testing for Evaluation

Definition: Over-reliance on test scores to evaluate students, teachers, and schools is bad practice.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I149	Well, having a daughter who is now in college, she had a 4.1 GPA when she graduated, but she didn't pass one of her science SOL tests. So, if you have an honor student with a high GPA who doesn't pass an SOL test in high school, you're telling me they shouldn't be allowed to graduate? Well, I disagree with that one. And I think they've just shot down the multiple criteria bills in the General Assembly, so testing is still the only way to graduate.
I212	Interviewer: And, I take it that those are locally developed assessments? Yes, they are. And, like I said, there are a lot of good things about this because all the teachers share in the pressure so that the pressure is not felt by just two grade levels. The tests for the other grades are not published in the paper, of course, but there is still that edge.
I212	Interviewer: How is this positive outlook and of teachers having inner strength affected by scores being published in the newspapers? It's very demoralizing sometimes because they don't say that a school went up so many points. They just rank the school and that's it.
I212	The down-side is that if a school has a large mobile population, you may find that the people you test in May are only two-thirds of the people you started with in September. And, of course, your test scores will not be reflecting how hard the teacher has worked all year.
I265	(T)here are other schools with other principals where—it was in the papers this year—principals were told that if they did not raise their scores, the principals would be fired. And so many of the principals are at at-risk schools.
I344	I feel really bitter about SOLs. I'm completing my third year of teaching. It's totally unfair to say that if a student passes an SOL test, the credit should be given to the teacher, and if they don't pass, the teacher should get the blame. It's just totally unfair to hold a teacher accountable for the performance of a student on a test. The SOL test is assessing a person on one criteria, and that's their ability to retain knowledge, to regurgitate it in a given format. To say a teacher is going to be held responsible for the way politicians have chosen to test students is just totally unfair. From another perspective, yes, you have to have standards, and you have to have some criteria for holding students accountable for what the school system is

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-6, Use of Testing for Evaluation

Definition: Over-reliance on test scores to evaluate students, teachers, and schools is bad practice.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I344 (continued)	doing. But to have it totally reflect back on teachers is bogus! That's a good word!
I344	The frightening part about it is if we reach these criteria, it's going to be accepted like, "Yes, it works!" Well, no. We're breaking our necks..
I344	I take the content area test of the Praxis in April, so I know what these students are going through. To say that your diploma is in jeopardy because of an SOL test just like my career can be in jeopardy because of my score on one Praxis test. I feel their pain.
I344	Interviewer: How about for schools? Should it (SOL tests) be the sole criterion for evaluating schools' success? No, no, no! In order to see how a school is performing, send in a panel. Do we not do that for factories? Do we not send in inspectors to evaluate the situation? For crying out loud, you don't judge people on whether they are being successful at what they do just by looking at the end product.
I344	I think that SOL testing should be used for statistics, and that's about it. Don't use it as the sole criteria as to whether a student has done a successful job in high school. That's not fair.
I406	Really, we're teaching what the teachers know...plus. Maybe it's the way we're going about it. What I don't like is the outcome of it. Why should a child who makes A's and B's be jeopardized by not getting a diploma so they can go on to college if they don't pass these SOLs.
I406	The SOLs themselves are not as bad as the outcomes. I never felt that you could give one test and find out everything that every child knows.
I420	If the students are not doing well, then that kind of sets them up for failure. Just like the problem I'm having at my school, when we're barely reaching accreditation, then it makes your school look bad and the faculty look bad. And overall it's not a very happy situation.
I420	You do have to teach the SOLs because they are going to get tested on it in a couple of years, even kindergarten, first, and second you know. You really have to make sure that they know it because they will be tested on that information in third grade.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-6, Use of Testing for Evaluation

Definition: Over-reliance on test scores to evaluate students, teachers, and schools is bad practice.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I420	I do know that it (SOL testing) is stressful for a lot of teachers. Because you feel like it's kind of an attack on you and your teaching ability if your students do not do well.
Q37	New teachers feel that they will not become tenured if their students don't do well on SOL testing.
Q140	We have been told to teach <u>only</u> reading and math in grades 1-3 to improve scores.
Q155	My husband who was a sixth and seventh grade social studies teacher has already been transferred to two different jobs because of his students' low scores on the eighth grade social studies tests.
Q184	Teacher transfers if scores are low. Poor evaluations for teachers. Because teachers will transfer out of SOL test grade levels or subjects, there will be a shortage of qualified professionals who are willing to move to these areas. Also, because I am a strong teacher, I have been given the academically challenged groups of students and have been told to increase their scores. I changed grade levels and schools because of this.
Q265	I like being held accountable, but the tests do not test knowledge. They are analytical, too hard for ten year-old kids.
Q314	Teachers will ask to be moved to a non-SOL testing grade. Teachers will ask for a transfer within the division to a school that has a high passing rate.
Q327	Schools could lose accreditation over one test which does not make sense.
Q406	One test should not determine what someone knows. Everyone doesn't have the same test ability.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-7, Teacher Dissatisfaction in SOL Test Grades

Definition: Teachers in SOL test grades feel greater stress and may seek to avoid teaching in these grades.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	<p>Interviewer: Did you see any difference in how teachers perceived SOL testing according to the grade they taught?</p> <p>It affects third and fifth grade teachers differently. Even though we all say that every year is important and we're building up to those years, those teachers' names are the ones that are on those scores. Yes, there is definitely more pressure. And, you know, it does make some people not want to teach those grades.</p>
I137	<p>A day doesn't go by when I walk down a hall in a school that I don't hear the word SOL. You don't ever eat lunch with the teachers in the lounge when you don't hear: I can't get this all in. The tests are the second week in May or the third week in May and I don't see how I'm going to get all this math in. I can't just open up their heads and pour it in. I mean, I'm hearing this every day, especially I've heard this a lot from fifth grade teachers lately. They feel the pressure most, I guess. I don't know why—the content is based on other grades also. But they feel like they're carrying the burden.</p>
I149	<p>I think there is more pressure in the SOL test grades. I've even had other people tell me, I don't know how you can teach fifth grade.</p>
I149	<p>My daughter tells me, Mom, I know this testing has an effect on you because she could tell a difference when the writing tests (fifth grade) would come around in March and then again in May when we would test again.</p>
I212	<p>But there is a huge amount of stress for teachers whose students do not pass SOL tests. A lot of the doctors said they had noticed more stress-related illnesses.</p>
I344	<p>You're breaking your neck. Even if we are successful with meeting the demands of these SOL requirements, you've broken your neck to do it. It's a painful process, a very painful process...What's left? It's a depleted feeling like, "Yes, my kids have passed the SOL tests, now go ahead and shoot me so I can rest."</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme E-7, Teacher Dissatisfaction in SOL Test Grades

Definition: Teachers in SOL test grades feel greater stress and may seek to avoid teaching in these grades.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I406	Interviewer: Are the third and fifth grades any harder for teachers to teach? Well, we don't have fifth grade, but I think the third grade teachers are pushing as hard as they can to get the students ready (for the tests) if they're ready or not.
Q102	Creativity is stifled. It's not fun to teach an SOL grade.
Q184	Teacher transfers if scores are low. Poor evaluations for teachers. Because teachers will transfer out of SOL test grade levels or subjects, there will be a shortage of qualified professionals who are willing to move into these areas.
Q314	Teachers will ask to be moved to a non-SOL testing grade.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme F-1, Positive Outcomes

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in a consistent statewide curriculum.

Sources I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	There is some good to the SOLs. If you take the good out of the SOLs and use that—and some people can do that creatively.
I91	Interviewer: Is that (crowded curriculum) a good thing or a bad thing in your view? It can be good if you have maybe a young teacher who's not as strong. You are definitely covering things that children need.
I149	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect student achievement? You know, I think it depends on what you consider learning. I think again, that with the consistency from grade level to grade level and being focused on the SOLs, I think they are probably learning more—you know, less gaps from grade level to grade level in skills. As far as the depth of material, I'm not sure that's happening.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme F-1, Positive Outcomes

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in a consistent statewide curriculum.

Sources I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212	On the plus side, teachers are now very single-minded in what they need to teach. It's very clear what they are supposed to teach, and they do that...and that may not be all bad. In the past you may have had certain teachers who would say if they didn't get to a topic in math or in history, it really didn't matter.
I212	The positive thing is that the SOLs have everyone on the same page, especially when children are moving—at least in the state.
I265	(P)ersonally, I like having standards. Like, having the enduring understandings in front of me, that's kind of an outline or a guide for me. There's a lot of other things I want to teach too, but I want to make sure that I do nail those.
Q53	I have seen more curriculum covered.
Q56	More standardized curriculum across the state.
Q124	Student curriculum is the same throughout Virginia.
Q341	Teachers will have a guide to important facts to stress once all problems in all tests are established and solved.
Q371	More standardized teaching of curriculum. (SOLs) give teachers a guide. Less time will be spent teaching "pet" units.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme F-2, Positive Outcomes

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in positive outcomes for disadvantaged students.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect economically disadvantaged students?</p> <p>Well, I think they are the ones who are targeted with this. In one way it's good because you are forcing some teachers that might not focus with these kids.</p>
I137	<p>Interviewer: What effects, if any, will SOL testing have on economically disadvantaged students?</p> <p>I really don't know that it has any effect. In the long run, maybe their standards will be raised a little bit. You know, the students who are economically disadvantaged are getting a little extra help—you know, tutors or after school programs, or parents coming in and helping.</p>
I212	<p>Interviewer: What effects, if any, will SOL testing have on economically disadvantaged students?</p> <p>I think there is probably a cultural bias in some instances. That can be addressed. I don't know if it can be totally done away with. Children who are deprived may not have been encouraged to think independently, to feel a sense of positive self-esteem to believe they can do it.</p>
I264	<p>Interviewer: What effects, if any, will SOL testing have on economically disadvantaged students?</p> <p>If anything, I think that's the arena where SOLs may help the most. Students that fall under that area, it gives them an equal balance. Now we are more certain that they will be exposed to the entire curriculum and now they can show what they can actually do. And, just because Mom and Dad don't make X amount of money, there are a lot of very intelligent students who are economically in a disadvantage. So, a curriculum required for all students will allow them to show what they can do because it's more of an equal footing for all.</p>
Q162	<p>Improved education for minorities and poor students.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme F-3, Positive Outcomes

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in clearer educational standards.

Sources I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I265	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers' job satisfaction?</p> <p>I think a lot of teachers are pretty grumbly about it. Personally, and I'm probably in a small minority, but I personally like having a standard as long as the curriculum and the test are going to be aligned, and I know that what I'm teaching is truly what's going to be evaluated, I don't mind.</p>
I265	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect student achievement?</p> <p>Yes, I think there is a potential for that. I know my own child was in eighth grade and she took Algebra II/Trig, and she got an A in the class, but she did not pass the SOL test. So, she went back to summer school and she got tutored all summer, and she took the test again, and she did pass. So, parents have to ask, if a child goes through a curriculum in a school setting, and gets an A or a B, you used to think that was good enough. And I know that all kids are not going to be able to pass standardized tests. But, at least you know if they pass the test, at least they got some of what was expected.</p>
I420	<p>I think it's so important to have standards. I don't necessarily agree with all of them, but I definitely think you need standards in education.</p> <p>I have always liked having standards because this is my first year of teaching, but it's been helpful for me to make my lesson plans.</p>

Raw Data Matrix: Theme F-4, Positive Outcomes

Definition: SOL testing results in increased accountability for students and teachers.

Sources I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I 463	<p>I think there are standards that teachers should meet because obviously some teachers are not doing the job that should be done. And because of that, I think that's why standards have come up. We've got teachers who are just going through the motions, and kids are getting out and they can't read and they can't write. And that's a problem.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme F-4, Positive Outcomes

Definition: SOL testing results in increased accountability for students and teachers.

Sources I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I 463	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect student achievement? I think it's got good qualities. I don't think it's a bad thing to hold teachers accountable.
Q 53	I have seen more student-parent responsibility. I have seen better teaching strategies.
Q 119	Accountability that is measured is here to stay. "I'm OK, you're OK, everybody gets an A" is out.
Q 124	Teachers will be seen as competent professionals.
Q 162	Increased responsibility equals a positive view of teaching as a profession.
Q 232	I feel that VA will pull up nationally in rank. I feel that teachers who don't want to work hard will be routed out, and that is good! Finally we can weed out the lazy teachers if tenure does not let them hang around.
Q 260	We will get rid of teachers who do not teach and think it is an easy job. There are too many of these in our classrooms.
Q 285	I believe in gateway teaching. Too many students are passed along without meeting a minimum competency. Although SOL tests may not be perfect, I feel they are a step in the right direction.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-1, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, and Rote Memorization

Definition: SOL testing results in an emphasis on teaching of isolated facts and rote memorization.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: What effects, if any, will SOL testing have on student achievement?</p> <p>Well, if they interpret those test scores and see scores going up in some schools and seeing some schools consistently doing well, then they may believe that they are increasing student achievement. But, overall, when you look at education and everything that education has to say about measuring student achievement, it's not by rote memory. It's not just by memorizing facts. So, I don't think that these tests are any indication of achievement. It's just whether certain children can remember certain facts from year to year. And that's not a true measure of achievement or growth in a child.</p>
I137	I'm seeing content stuffed into heads in a rote manner.
I265	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that teachers teach?</p> <p>I haven't seen it yet, but I hope to, and what I hope to see is that teachers will realize that the way to truly get to children is through a lot of creative endeavors. A lot of the gifted strategies work for every child. Those are ways that have them up and moving in hands-on activities, writing their own plays, but so far the teachers that I've talked with or been in classes with, it seems like they don't have time for that. When, actually, I think that's how your time is best spent. So, I think that teachers are just having to drill and kill to get the facts memorized, but kids don't learn that way. They never have and they never will.</p>
I344	I'm an intelligent person, and if someone said I am incompetent because I didn't put 536 pages in memory in my head, that's an insult to the highest degree. That's not fair to me as a person. I'm human. And you have people in Microsoft companies, and they can refer to their textbooks. They need to refer to their textbooks, and they're making billions of dollars.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-1, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, and Rote Memorization

Definition: SOL testing results in an emphasis on teaching of facts and rote memorization.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I397	<p>I don't think the SOLs have anything against teaching critical thinking. But what I see is that there is a strong tendency in grades where there is testing, just to shove the facts out. And, if I were in third or fifth grade—I hope I wouldn't—but I can see being caught in that same vortex. There is so much to cover. You've got to go back and review, and I guess social studies is probably the worst area. Where you know that the questions that have been put out in the past—other than graph reading—a lot of them are just retention, full retention of facts that children may have been exposed to in kindergarten or first grade. I can see people getting caught up in, you know, you're trying to get all that material out as quick as you can, and that's the quick way to do it.</p> <p>Critical thinking skills, if the teachers are left to do what they've been doing, I think those skills can still be taught, but from what I'm seeing, I'm almost afraid that there will be pull the other way. Our math series, for example, provides a lot of opportunities for critical thinking skills, but I think a lot of people skip over that because they want to skip to a new SOL. But if you take the time to do a good job with those thinking skills, you are taking more time on something. So, I always think I'm the last one out of the gate. I'm still on something else doing all these other things instead of going on. And, I think kids need to be presented to problems with more than one answer. I think they need to be exposed to that at a younger age. But I do see a trend to pull away from those experiences and just teach facts.</p>
Q13	I strongly disagree about the whole SOL thing. Promotes short term learning...
Q26	With the first test I noticed panic among my colleagues. Now kids are focused only on rote materials. Discussions are weaker.
Q134	I deplore the lack of higher level thinking skills in curriculum focused on rote memorization.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-2, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, and Negative Effects on Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in a crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	<p>Interviewer: Do you have any other comments about SOL testing?</p> <p>I moved from Florida and we didn't have SOLs. We called them benchmarks there. We didn't quite handle it the same way Virginia does, so when I came here, it was a shock and not only as a teacher, but as a parent, and I think mostly as a parent, watching how it's affecting my kids. I really feel like they're missing out on some of the joys of education, and being able to do some of the in-depth studies and projects because they're doing these little worksheets and I'm not happy with it.</p>
I137	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any will SOL testing affect the curriculum that teachers teach?</p> <p>It's 95% SOLs, I think. It's the steering wheel. It drives everything.</p>
I137	<p>The content, though, it's all content. I'm seeing everything being attached to SOLs. In fact, in another school district I taught in just a couple of years ago, any field trip that I took my gifted kids on, I had to fill out the field trip form and there it was: List the SOLs that will be reinforced by this field trip. Everything is attached to SOLs.</p>
I137	<p>I know I taught in Texas when they did something similar and it was a good thing for some districts that did not have quality curriculum. But for those school districts that already had good curricula in place, it was a cat and mouse game. It was just trying to slide all these things that didn't look like sequential skills in strange places. Especially the SOLs in social studies are just ludicrous. We look at ancient Egypt in third grade. You know, we need to look at local things and then spread out.</p>
I149	<p>I think we're covering lots of areas thinly, but we're not going into any areas of depth in materials or in skills even.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-2, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, and Negative Effects on Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing has resulted in a crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212	(O)f course, fifth grade teachers are not only reviewing the fifth grade curriculum, but they are also reviewing the fourth grade curriculum. And third grade teachers are reviewing second and first grade curriculum because you never know what is going to be on there.
I212	On the other side, first of all you ' ve got huge gaps in the SOLs that nobody looked at. I ' m afraid that may be in several areas. When they chopped the SOLs apart and put them back together again, they left out things that were kind of big and global and important. And that ' s mostly in social studies.
I463	What I see as a teacher here, coming from other states that have something like SOLs, the curriculum is designed to meet those marks. And so, basically, a teacher can come in and teach the curriculum and feel confident that they ' ve met those marks. What I see here is that everyone is trying to get together and make up a curriculum all of a sudden whereas, as a teacher I feel like a curriculum should already have been made.
Q301	Teachers will be encouraged to teach only the test. Students will no longer be able to participate in fun activities related to non-SOL related topics.
Q423	Since my students already score consistently high on national and state tests, I will be asked to perform at some level inferior to the present one.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-3, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Test Preparation

Definition: SOL testing results in a significant amount of time being devoted to preparing for tests rather than learning new material.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the amount of time that is spent on test preparation? Well, it is something that I never spent much time on before, but I do now. I ' m having them get ready to use the different test formats.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-3, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Test Preparation

Definition: SOL testing results in a significant amount of time being devoted to preparing for tests rather than learning new material.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>They 're working on bubbling in answer sheets, and giving them reading samples and giving them questions that they 've got to go back and record in this passage so they can get used to that. The poetry unit that we 've always taught, we 're going back and using some of the SOL terminology like stanzas and phrases so we are spending more time in introducing them to test-taking strategies. You know, reading through your choices, what 's your best choice? Things that I had never spent time on before. Giving their spelling test in some of the SOL format so they get used to it.</p>
I91	<p>There is a great deal of (test) preparation. I know we did everything from testing booklets to practice tests to computerized practice tests and a lot of time covering it. I know that two weeks before the test last year there were teachers who were just essentially reviewing for the test, and these were teachers who were teaching lower socio-economic children and children who were lower academically, so they really felt the push.</p> <p>Interviewer: Is the amount of time that 's spent on test preparation a good thing or a bad thing?</p> <p>I don 't really think it 's a good thing. You know, we only have the kids for a limited amount of time and I think that we need to be teaching material, not teaching tests.</p>
I149	<p>There 's a lot of teaching to the test—a lot of teaching how to test, how to take tests, and sometimes that interferes with the creative process, I think. You spend so much time in preparation for the tests—we pretty much end our teaching of any new material about three weeks before the SOL tests, and we spend two to three weeks going over the SOLs we 've taught. So, although you have to do something to enable kids to pass those tests, that 's time that could be spent in doing other things rather than this.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-3, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Test Preparation

Definition: SOL testing results in a significant amount of time being devoted to preparing for tests rather than learning new material.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212	(I)n our county we plan to get everything taught two weeks before the SOLs are actually administered, and then doing a two week review of the curriculum for the whole year. And, of course, fifth grade teachers are not only reviewing the fifth grade curriculum, but they are also reviewing the fourth grade curriculum. And, third grade teachers are reviewing second and first grade curriculum because you never know what is going to be on there.
I212	We have just had a three afternoon class on effective teacher-made tests. And, I attended it because I was curious, and I learned a great deal. I think more time should be put into how you prepare a test to measure a child's knowledge. A bad test is a pretty bad thing to have to take. I know that our teachers spend a lot of time reviewing teacher-made tests and commercial tests as well.
I212	Some counties have a lot of money to put into staff development, and that's not a bad thing, but most of us would say that we would just like to have time to teach the children instead of testing the children. And everyone is saying that. They are spending so much time testing the children that they don't have time to teach them.
I265	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the amount of time that will be spent on preparing for tests?</p> <p>Well, right now I've spent about seven weeks out of the school year doing some kind of test that prepares students to do better on the SOL tests. We call it quarterly tests in language arts; we call it pre-and post-tests in math, and we have pre-and post-tests in social studies. And, this testing has nothing to do with the regular chapter tests and quizzes. This is all an aside to whatever you used to do. And, the language arts has helped because the basal reader that the school division uses has questions that are formulated in the SOL style so that students get used to reading questions like that and they get used to finding answers like <i>correct as written</i>, or <i>none of the above</i>, or <i>A and B</i>, so they are not just used to one type of testing.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-3, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Test Preparation

Definition: SOL testing result in a significant amount of time being devoted to preparing for tests rather than learning new material.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I265	A lot of people are upset about the testing that goes on to focus on doing better on the SOL tests. And, that takes a lot of time away from teaching itself.
I397	Now, we are being given manuals with volumes of test practice stuff and being told to be sure that kids practice test-taking, even down into kindergarten and first grade. Edu-test, being told that you have to do that. And, even though the test-taking grades are third and fifth in the school where I am, the other grades are strongly encouraged to make use of it [Edu-test is a computer-based program designed to improve test-taking skills.] And, that particular test is very difficult and it seems to include things that are not part of the SOLs themselves. But, you're still told that your students need to do this, even though when you hear other teachers talk about taking kids into the lab setting to do it.
I397	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the amount of time that is spent on test preparation?</p> <p>Maybe in certain settings it might not, but from personal experience, yea, I think in many places it will, because people will see that as a way to a quick fix. Personally, I don't have anything against a little practice. For example, when I took the GRE many years ago, I bought the books where you practice the tests. That helped me to do better on them. Because when I sat down to do the test, I knew the format. So, I'm not against test practice. But, I don't think you need to do a lot of it. I think that to provide children with occasional opportunities to do the "blacking-in" so they understand that process, maybe a week or two letting them see the format to become familiar with that, so when they do sit down, it won't be like handing them something they've never seen before. I don't think it would give you necessarily better test scores, but I think it would make the child feel more comfortable in the actual testing situation. So, I'm not against test practice, but I'm against teaching by using test practice to teach.</p>
I397	You have to make your children spend a portion of the year practicing test-taking so that they will be able to take tests better, instead of letting me do the diagnosis.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-3, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Test Preparation

Definition: SOL testing results in a significant amount of time being devoted to preparing for tests rather than learning new material.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I406	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the amount of time that will be spent on test preparation?</p> <p>Quite a bit. There 's quite a bit on it. But, these children need to know this anyway but maybe it 's just the way we 're doing it.</p> <p>Interviewer: So, you are seeing some extra time spent on test preparation? Is that true even in kindergarten?</p> <p>Yes, we use the Flannagan. We use the post-test in Silver-Burdette and Ginn, and we use the PALS test in our reading.</p>
I420	<p>Interviewer: You are a first grade teacher. Do you think you would feel a different level of stress if you were in an SOL test grade, say third or fifth?</p> <p>Yes, I do. Because I know they quit after they finish the first semester and just keep going over and over the material again and they pretty much don 't learn anything new for the rest of the school year. I think our SOL testing starts in May, so they probably start going over this stuff in February.</p>
I420	<p>Like our math problems, we give them four choices and they have to bubble in the correct choice. So, we do get them ready for the format.</p>
I463	<p>I think as the year ends, teachers spend lot more time on it, a lot more time reviewing, a lot more time making sure the kids know exactly what they need to know for the test, finding any information you can find that will give you exactly what 's going to be on the test.</p> <p>Interviewer: When do teachers start that preparation?</p> <p>I think the teachers work on it all year, especially if it 's a class that 's going to be taking the test. There are tests out that are basically side-by-side tests of the SOLs. And, I think that we are encouraged to give those tests to make sure that kids know how to bubble in and they feel comfortable doing it, and they 're familiar with what types of questions will be on there.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-3, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Test Preparation

Definition: SOL testing results in a significant amount of time being devoted to preparing for tests rather than learning new material.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q238	Too much time spent with practice SOL tests (pre- and post-tests).
Q270	Additional tests mandated by local systems designed to provide practice for SOL tests (i.e., tests to test the test).

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-4, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Critical Thinking

Definition: SOL testing causes a reduction in opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the teaching of critical thinking skills?</p> <p>I think it 's diverging from critical thinking because it seems to be more mastery of information. Me, I equate it to playing Trivial Pursuit: Learn these facts, remember these facts for two years until your next test. So, for many years our trend was to teach these kids how to think, higher level strategies, but it seems that now we 're going backwards to just rote memorization.</p>
I91	<p>I think it will have a very detrimental effect (on critical thinking skills), not just from a teacher, but as a parent. I have a child that took the third grade SOLs last year and I think spent the whole year preparing for those tests and having to learn isolated facts, everything from ancient Egypt to government to this and that and nothing was tied together. Of course, she did well on the tests, but we don 't spend enough time on the higher level skills at all. There 's not time for it. And that 's very, very sad.</p> <p>Luckily, being a gifted education teacher, my kids were pretty much going to pass anyway, so I didn 't have to change what I was doing, so I could spend time digging into things and doing projects and things like that, that teachers in regular ed. weren 't allowed to do.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-4, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Critical Thinking

Definition: SOL testing causes a reduction in opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	I personally feel that some children may be learning more basics. But as far as critical thinking and integration of the curriculum, I think we are not reaching it yet.
I137	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the teaching of critical thinking skills?</p> <p>Unfortunately, it's not positive. I'm seeing content stuffed into heads in a rote manner rather than teaching critical thinking skills, without the content attached and teaching the kids how to draw the critical thinking from the subject themselves. It's a reactive response rather than a proactive response. That's one of the good things about me going into the classrooms and teaching critical thinking lessons because I don't see enough of it. Especially for some of the young teachers who are a little bit more intimidated by this whole SOL thing. They're just going for the content and for what they think will be answers.</p>
I212	My class this week was saying that the SOL tests are going toward more higher level thinking and not just regurgitation, which is a wonderful thing. Because this has been a great criticism of the SOLs. But when you are talking about teaching and assessing critical thinking, you are talking about time, and time is absolute. You can't create any more of it. I'm not sure that all teachers in the state are aware that this is a trend of the SOL tests, and if they are not, they are not doing as much critical thinking as they might have done seven or eight years ago.
I265	I think that in a general sense, it's (critical thinking) not going to be implemented, or if it is, it will be outside the realm of what you're already doing. I think that teachers will be going to the teacher store to buy critical thinking activities just because they've heard it will be on the test and kids really need to know how to do this, but what they really need is training on how to get at the heart of what needs to be understood and to use critical thinking activities to help students learn the big ideas.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-4, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Critical Thinking

Definition: SOL testing causes a reduction in opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I344	School is supposed to teach you thinking skills, how to be a human being in a civil world. It's supposed to teach you how to be civilized.
I344	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the teaching of critical thinking skills?</p> <p>I think what it's coming to is that you're going to teach toward the test. Critical thinking is going to have to be developed somewhere else. The books we use may emphasize Bloom's Taxonomy, from knowledge through evaluation and synthesis. But realistically, you're teaching your kids toward that test, because if they fail it, it's going to reflect back on you. Who told you to teach critical thinking when your resource guide says teach that Robspierre was head of the French Revolution? It doesn't tell you to discuss <i>why</i>. Critical thinking? No.</p>
I406	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the teaching of critical thinking skills?</p> <p>Well, it's more rote. More repetition and they don't have much creativity there.</p>
I463	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the teaching of critical thinking skills?</p> <p>I think it's going to take a backseat. Unless a group comes in and you see that their skills are well-developed for the SOLs, then naturally you are going to be able to do a lot more with them. You'll do more creative things. If you have a group that's not doing well, you are going to throw out all those creative things, and you're going to buckle down into those skills and make sure that they meet those skills that will be on that SOL test.</p>
Q134	I deplore the lack of higher level thinking skills in curriculum focused on rote memorization.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-4, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Critical Thinking

Definition: SOL testing causes a reduction in opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q136	Students will not be the problem-solving, initiative-taking workers businesses are looking towards to hire.
Q154	Students will be force-fed test material to the detriment of creative and critical thinking skills which goes against job market skills for the future.
Q191	Gifted, honors, and higher achieving students will neither reach the levels of competence because time is wasted on lower level thinking skills, nor will they enjoy classes as much as in the past.
Q290	Critical thinking skills will not be emphasized.
Q308	If testing continues in its current fashion, it will discourage our students from thinking laterally and set the progression of Virginia ' s education system back for years.
Q331	Decrease in critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
Q337	Less critical thinking skills being taught.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practicess, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: You said that social studies dominates the curriculum. Would you say it dominates to the exclusion of, say, reading?</p> <p>At times, yes. I guess my whole thrust on this is that I believe in accountability, but I think that if they would just give us the leeway so we could teach these younger students to read and to write effectively, so that each second grader leaving my class is able to read on a second grade reading level, and to write a short paragraph and to do mathematical computations, that would be the key to them being successful in every grade.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	They should be studying those explorers back up in fifth and sixth grade where it's a little more meaningful to them. And so, that's where I am. And so, therefore, I am forced now to teach all these subjects that I think are developmentally not appropriate. I have to teach colonization. I have to teach economic terms like interdependence that they can't spell, let alone read, and we have to teach all these social studies concepts that are just meaningless to a seven year-old at this point. So, it does dominate my curriculum.
I14	There is no time for anything fun or just to explore something if they're interested in it. I don't have the leisure time to do that any more because I have to complete this very rigorous curriculum.
I14	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that teachers teach?</p> <p>Absolutely! I just know in second grade our whole curriculum was revamped. And so now social studies really dominates my curriculum in second grade. And I am teaching things that I know are not developmentally appropriate. For example, I am required to teach 17 explorers to second graders. First of all, there is probably only one explorer, Christopher Columbus, where there are any books written on a second grade level. So, in our timeline we were allowed three weeks for us to teach 17 explorers. And so we are supposed to teach the country they sailed from, their destination, what problems they had on the trip, what their objectives were, what they were hoping to achieve, and that is too much knowledge for seven year-olds to retain or to understand.</p>
I14	<p>Interviewer: If you were to design your own curriculum, you and your fellow teachers, how would it be different from the SOL curriculum?</p> <p>I don't think it would be as intense or in depth. For example, a few years ago, we made up a very simple booklet about Virginia, so that they could understand where Virginia is, that it's the state they live in, and we just made it very simple. This is the state that you live in. These are the neighbors. This is where your county is. These are the other counties. So, it's a very simple little 8-10 page booklet, but it's fill in the blank, it's highlighting, it's maybe color in one of the states, but it's very simple.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practicess, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	This is the state that you live in. These are the neighbors. This is where your county is. These are the other counties. So, it's a very simple little 8-10 page booklet, but it's fill in the blank, it's highlighting, it's maybe color in one of the states, but it's very simple. It's on their level. So I think we would probably simplify the curriculum a lot. Science seems to be somewhat in alignment. I know that some math objectives are definitely out of alignment. We are supposed to be teaching about real estate. I'll honestly say that we haven't even begun to cover that. We just think that it's inappropriate. I just think that we wouldn't be as in-depth and as intense, and we wouldn't jam as much into our curriculum as what we're being required to do.
I91	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that teachers teach? I think that in my school system it seems to have affected them greatly as far as you really want your children to pass that test so you definitely want to make sure you've covered the SOLs and your lessons are geared toward the SOLs and very few extraneous activities are included.
I137	The general feeling in the schools in my district is, if it's not in the SOLs, I don't have time to teach it.
I149	(W)hen you're teaching a colonial unit in history, you may want to veer off and give the identified gifted kids some further projects you know they want to research further in certain areas. Well, you just don't have time to do that because it's not truly a part of that curriculum.
I149	To me with critical thinking, there is an emphasis on products you would want to design, and that's not something that shows on an SOL test. Projects, hands-on kinds of things—doing a Web Quest, you know, I've had kids who love that, but then you think, oooh, I'd have to find one that matches the SOL. Everything is so geared to that. I think too that you can still have those kinds of questions in your tests, but it's hard to assess that on a standardized test. You don't really see an opportunity for students to answer using open-ended critical thinking on SOL tests.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I149	But then again, instead of being able to take a group that needs and can handle enrichment in a certain area, you feel like you don't have as much time.
I212	I have a friend who is teaching in the classroom and she says that, basically, she has gone back to the whole group approach. Yes, they certainly do small group projects, but there is far greater whole group instruction than was the case five years ago because that is the most efficient way of transmitting information, and because efficiency is of the highest priority now. It is critical that you not waste time dawdling about how to get information to students. There is, of course, concern that you will go so fast that some students will not get it.
I212	There is absolutely a trend to teach what is on the SOLs. At every school that I know of, the teachers have some kind of timeline that they go by. Whether they are able to give their students experiences and instruction that is outside the SOL realm is dependent on whether or not they think they have time to do it. And that depends on what school they're at. If it's a school where it's pretty much a given that the kids will pass the SOLs, then they'll have speakers and they will take the opportunity to do the kinds of things that you and I used to think of as a given for elementary school students. If a dinosaur display came to town and someone was going to do a presentation to the whole elementary school, then, yeah, that was the way it went. There are certain areas now that would say, I'm sorry, but only those grades that are studying dinosaurs as part of their SOLs may see the presentation.
I212	I think that there are many areas where teachers might not concentrate on it (critical thinking) as much as they might have in the past because they first have got to make sure the students know the dates of the Civil War and the dates of the Revolutionary War, and the names of the presidents. And then, if they had time, they might do the critical thinking in some of the areas.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I264	One of the things that is happening is that teachers find themselves tied down too specifically to what the SOLs are requiring them to teach. They 're setting up the curriculum; they 're setting up their lesson plans all around what is required for SOLs. And, it sort of restricts how far they would want to go with a class. It also requires them to cover X amount of material within a given time frame so slower students could cover that material so the teacher could say that, yes, everybody had covered the required material.
I264	I 've seen an increase in stress. It 's more associated with having to cover a large amount of material. I 'm beginning to see among some of my colleagues stress that the material be covered, stress that they teach at a certain pace, and it 's slowly turning into what we might call "burnout."
I265	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the curriculum that teachers emphasize? Well, it already has in (large Northern Virginia school division). About three years ago when the SOL tests came out and we all did poorly, the administrators suddenly changed around all the grade levels and what they were going to teach and who was going to teach what curriculum. And so, instead of having a state test assess or evaluate what our curriculum was already doing, they created the test and now the curriculum has to be revamped to match the test. And right now I think that 's where we are, especially with social studies. The two are not aligned, and until they are aligned, we won 't be seeing progress.
I344	You know you have to prepare a student to pass the assessment level that the state demands. Why would you have a student doing hurdles if you know all they have to do is throw a discus? Running hurdles will assess your physical capability. But why develop just one arm so all they have to do is just to throw a discus? It takes a three dimensional world and converts it into a one dimensional multiple choice test.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I344	We have gotten to the point where everything is resource guide. I might as well make 61 copies of the resource guide and distribute it at the beginning of the year. You know what? I just now thought of that. I believe I'm going to do that, Mr. Margheim. I think I'm going to do that. I'm going to copy the resource guide and give it to them. I'm a genius! I've just come up with a way for every student to pass the SOL test. Just copy the dang-blasted resource guide and give it to them. And test them on the resource guide, because that's where the track is leading to. I know a teacher who said that was his notes. He gave them the resource guide as his notes. But I'm going to go a step further. I'm going to give them the book. I'm going to copy it and give it to them.
I344	But you can't teach discipline while trying to teach SOLs. Because you have to teach SOLs and so you kick the student out who is causing the blockade. I have to get these tests taught by the end of the week.
I344	I don't really have any experience without the demands of SOL testing. But, I believe that without the tests, I would have time to say, let's go back and make up this test. You all have missed something. Let's just turn the page and I would take one day or two to go back and remediate and then pick up.
I344	The SOL factor is a speeding train, and if you miss it, you just miss it. You have 30 kids to teach. I have a class of 31. With SOLs, teachers and principals are trying to find ways to meet the demands and we have things called pacing guides, curriculum maps. It's really about trying to satisfy the customer. I have a very strong work ethic. So, if I, say I have three blocks to teach the French Revolution, then I am supposed to have three blocks to teach the French Revolution. So, if you miss the bus, or the SOL train, you missed it. You can't go back and remediate...there's no time. And if you do, you're going to put the crunch in teaching World War I. Forget seven days. You're going to have to teach World War I in two days. Therefore, read page 56 of our resource guide. Otherwise, the train is gone.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I344	The teachers I teach with—the older teachers—say we’ve always had the threat of SOLs in some form. But I remember when I was in school. If we didn’t get to a topic, fast enough, or if we were running out of time, they would give you an open book test. They wanted to expose you to the information. You weren’t expected to necessarily keep it in your head for a two hour session of testing. We had time to slow down and get the concepts.
I397	At one point you were told to teach until a skill was mastered. Now, you have to teach until you cover the skills. With the pacing guides, the emphasis is on covering the material, not on teaching the student. Again, I know that’s not in all cases. I just know this is becoming more prevalent where I live. At one time you could just teach the material, and your assessment could take on a variety of forms, especially in the lower grades.
I397	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the curriculum that teachers emphasize?</p> <p>Very strongly, just from what I see, and I’m in second grade now, just to cover the SOLs that are listed and the time that it takes and as you go to third, fourth, and on up and having to go back and review previous content, there’s just not a lot of time left for the “fluff,” I guess, for things that used to be fun. For example, if you wanted to do a unit on dinosaurs in kindergarten, teachers say it’s tough to work that in. Fun units, which could still be educational, but because the topics aren’t listed in the curriculum, maybe being afraid that you may not be able to do it because you might not be able to get all the other areas in.</p>
I406	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that teachers teach?</p> <p>That’s the main goal.</p> <p>Interviewer: Is that good or bad.</p> <p>Well, I don’t think it’s good.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I406	<p>We teach what 's handed down to us.</p> <p>Interviewer: How do you feel about that?</p> <p>Well, it doesn ' t leave you much room to do what you want to, really.</p>
I406	<p>Interviewer: Do you have any concerns about the curriculum at the kindergarten level? Are there parts that you think are great, or are there parts that you think don ' t work?</p> <p>Well, I think we should pay attention to the 3 R ' s and leave the science and social studies in depth to someone else. I think if kindergarten could get reading, writing, and arithmetic going for them real well, then I think that ' s enough.</p>
I463	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that teachers teach?</p> <p>Well, I think everyone teaches to the SOLs. I think the SOLs are good. I ' ve read the SOLs and they ' ve obviously been made to say that this is what we feel that kids in this grade should know before they leave. But, just from experience, if you have kids come up who are in fourth or fifth grade and they don ' t know how to write in cursive writing because the teacher before has not been able to get to it, you know you can ' t teach the kids actual handwriting because your time is constrained by teaching SOLs. I consider that to be a problem. See, the third grade teacher may have to spend so much time teaching the SOLs that she won ' t be able to teach handwriting. And then the fourth grade teacher has to do the fourth grade SOLs as well as try to compensate for what hasn ' t been learned in third grade.</p>
Q24	<p>Concentration on minimal skills. In Algebra I, SOL testing is causing teachers to omit content which should be covered for most students for long-term results in math competency.</p>
Q108	<p>How can a teacher (cover) the entire SOLs before the end of the school year? Ridiculous.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-5, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices, Rigid Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in a complicated, crowded, rigid curriculum that prevents teachers from using their judgement about what students need.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q126	We are losing those special "teachable moments" because teachers are so stressed about covering all the SOL that the fun is gone from teaching and from learning.
Q166	I don't mind having the SOLs for a curriculum focus, but I do resent not having any time to go with student interests, etc.
Q238	Rigid curriculum and pacing charts.
Q267	So much focus on SOLs and so much to cover.
Q273	Teaching to the test. Only Virginia history taught. Therefore, what important information will students learn other than that? Very little.
Q307	Teaching the test rather than educating the student. Teachers are forced to march ahead leaving lost students behind.
Q308	SOL testing severely limits our students' knowledge to the narrow range of facts that they will be tested on.
Q337	A narrowed curriculum.
Q410	I feel that students should have fewer SOLs so that they can learn them well. A teacher can spend more time on less, but the children will learn fewer SOLs well enough to be tested.
Q412	Fine arts classes will suffer due to increased demand on SOL scores. Students will have fewer elective choices due to taking SOL tests.
Q463	I think teachers are narrowing the curriculum to teach only SOLs and they are leaving out some good material.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme G-6, Negative Outcomes for Instructional Practices,
Developmentally Inappropriate Curriculum

Definition: SOL testing results in the teaching of curriculum that is not suitable for some students.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	They should be studying those explorers back up in fifth and sixth grade where it ' s a little more meaningful to them. And so, that ' s where I am. And so, therefore, I am forced now to teach all these subjects that I think are developmentally not appropriate. I have to teach colonization. I have to teach economic terms like interdependence that they can ' t spell, let alone read, and we have to teach all these social studies concepts that are just meaningless to a seven year-old at this point.
I14	And this kind of curriculum that is developmentally inappropriate just makes it stressful for us.
Q67	Less ability to fit curriculum to students ' needs and interests. Must be responsible for material teachers cannot see. We are set up to fail. Testing should be a positive affirmation of work well done.
Q100	The tests are not in sync with our students ' abilities or cognitive potential.
Q244	The SOL curriculum should be age appropriate. Also, the pacing of the curriculum is too fast.
Q270	Age inappropriate curriculum.
Q420	I feel that Virginia needs Standards of Learning, however, it is too stressful for teachers and students to perform based on standards that do not reflect age appropriate content and knowledge base.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-1, Negative Outcomes for Students, Students with Disabilities

Definition: SOL testing can negatively affect students with disabilities.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect students with disabilities?</p> <p>I think there is a great deal of pressure and a lot of misinformation given to parents. I know that there was this controversy going on in our district that if these children did not take SOLs then they would not receive a regular diploma from high school. So, that upset parents greatly, and they were pushing for their children to take these tests even though otherwise they would then be exempt. So, this becomes very stressful for those students because, yes, they can have accommodations, and they are in a smaller test group and they have somebody to read the questions to them and they can take more time, but the people who have administered those tests have told me how painful it is to be in the room with those little kids who don't understand what's being asked of them. Some of these children are labeled mentally retarded, but they are taking these tests because their parents want them to get a regular diploma from high school. So, even though these children can receive certain accommodations, it doesn't make that test any easier.</p>
I91	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect students with disabilities?</p> <p>I know some are exempt, and some aren't. It's hard for me to say, but I've talked with learning disabilities teachers and things and they've been frustrated with it because their students are frustrated. They've got to learn this material in the same way and in the same amount of time as other children. It's frustrating, and I think those kids have their own set of frustrations to begin with. So, this is one more for them.</p>
I212	<p>You know next year students who had been in LD classes will be in regular classes so they can have instruction in all of the SOLs and their resource teachers are supposed to support them there, but I don't think that's going to work because their teachers are not always going to be there to help them. And so, a large part of helping these students will be going back to the classroom teacher. I think that the parents are going to be hysterical about this thing because many of these students have parents who are very protective of them to begin with, and they're going to be through the roof. They're not used to having their child put under this pressure. They're used to their child having half the math problems, to 10 spelling words instead of 20.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-1, Negative Outcomes for Students, Students with Disabilities

Definition: SOL testing can negatively affect students with disabilities.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I264	<p>Unfortunately, it's going to be worse for students with disabilities because they are going to be required to pass the same tests that the rest of the students are, and since the numbers at the school are based on schoolwide scores, they're going to be required to listen to and be exposed to information at the same speed as students without disabilities, and many will not be able to comprehend that.</p>
I265	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect students with disabilities?</p> <p>I think my initial thought is that there may end up being a higher drop-out rate. We'll have to wait and see. I taught learning disabled children for 16 years in elementary school. And I really made it my goal when they were in elementary school for these children to learn everything that they could. Because when they went on to middle school, a lot of them didn't have teachers who met with them on Saturdays or met with them at night, or let them call their house at night to let them find out about stuff or went on field trips on weekends, or just didn't stay in touch with their lives. And, those kids drifted away when they felt like nobody cared about them, and ninth or tenth grade was a good time to drop out. And now you've got tests that say that you've got to pass this—Algebra is one of them in our school district. Everybody had to pass it—even if you are EMR [educable mentally retarded] and that just seems so absurd. It would seem like such a waste to have a student come through your school system and to have potential in some way to go out and be a meaningful person in society, and to have maybe restaurant skills or construction skills, or car-fixing skills and because they couldn't pass Algebra they didn't graduate with a diploma and now maybe they aren't employable. We all know that kids without high school diplomas can stay in dead-end or low-paying jobs. So, I think that students with disabilities might be more inclined to fall into that category.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-1, Negative Outcomes for Students, Students with Disabilities

Definition: SOL testing can negatively affect students with disabilities.

<p>Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire</p>	<p>Comments</p>
<p>I344</p>	<p>I used to think I had a gift that just when I walked beside a student, the answer automatically came to them. But then I reevaluated and found that when I came to them and rephrased the question...boom, that's when the answer came. It wasn't my presence. And, some students have a problem with reading. See, that's why I say it's totally unfair to assess someone just by that one tool. So, I think those students with a reading disability, they're going to be crushed. It's just so difficult because I don't think they're going to do well, those students with a disability. They're going to be lost in the shuffle. They're going to fall through the cracks.</p>
<p>I397</p>	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect student achievement?</p> <p>Maybe there's a group of students, let's say your strongest students. It will have minimal effect on them because they're going to be able to master that content, plus they're probably going to be able to go on to bigger and better things. But there will be a group of students where the emphasis will be just on improving scores. Their education will be sort of centered on a limited thing there, and their focus will be limited to improving scores, and since more and more of the time will be devoted to social studies and science and to getting those scores up, maybe the reading and math will be cheated to a certain extent. There will be a group of students who won't receive the kind of instruction they need. I don't believe that just teaching to the test will improve test scores. I'm one of those people, I believe that in the long run student achievement will be hurt because it's going to take away from developing stronger reading skills, maybe too much focus on the content.</p>
<p>I397</p>	<p>I know the laws in testing them (students with disabilities) seem to be in the developing stage, but from what I've seen in more than one school, the tendency is going to be to exempt these students from testing in order to improve the school scores. I think the time taken away from the basic reading and math would be detrimental to them. If we do have to go to a mode where they are tested in all areas, it could be like trying to cram facts into them, which is not what I think they need. They need to spend more time learning basic skills and thinking skills. I can almost see them being left out in some cases.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-1, Negative Outcomes for Students, Students with Disabilities

Definition: SOL testing can negatively affect students with disabilities.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I463	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect students with disabilities?</p> <p>Every kid has a level that would be successful for them. If they meet that level, then they 've achieved it. If we 're grouping them all together and saying that this is the requirement for all kids in the grade, then I don 't know that we are meeting every child 's needs.</p>
Q10	Lack of accommodations for special education students. Tests will cause many to request exempt status; the only option will be an IEP diploma or a "vocational" diploma.
Q13	Special education students will suffer.
Q15	Special education students will not be able to earn their diplomas.
Q59	ESL (English as a Second Language), Sp.Ed., and low achieving students will be pressured to try to learn curriculum not appropriate for them, leading to less learning.
Q114	I am concerned about my students who have severe processing difficulties, poor memory skills, and failure to understand a question without rephrasing has me concerned.
Q261	I am concerned that students (Sp.Ed.) who are unable to participate in SOL testing "gray area students" will be unable to earn high school diplomas.
Q326	If Virginia continues on its mandate that special education students should take the SOL tests, they are absolutely wrong! Students working on kindergarten curriculum in a third grade placement have no chance of being able to answer questions on the third grade SOL test, even if the teacher is allowed to read the test. It 's nonsense! Special education is for students to be taught at the level where they will be able to learn, not to throw them into a level [at which] they can 't comprehend.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-2, Effects on Students Who Are Economically Disadvantaged

Definition: SOL testing can have specific negative effects on low socio-economic students.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect students who are economically disadvantaged?</p> <p>Well, it's probably one more time they won't do well on a test and that just makes their self-image that much lower.</p>
I91	<p>I think some of these kids come from homes where their parents are working two or three jobs. They may want to be involved. They may care very much, but they can't. Or, there are a lot of kids coming from families with all kinds of either drug or marital problems, whatever. It's hard enough for adults to go through these things, but when we tell little kids who are going through these things and we're saying on top of it, you have to learn. That's kind of ridiculous, too. Yes, we want them all to learn, but each child doesn't come to school well-fed with two parents giving them a kiss out the door.</p>
I149	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect students who are economically disadvantaged</p> <p>There is added stress on them. Typically the ones we have seen not doing well, not being in the 70% group who pass, are the more disadvantaged kids. Now what does that say about the testing or the SOLs? I don't know, but it seems that these kids are the ones who don't do well because they don't have the language skills to begin with. They may not have parents who are as educated to help them. I've had parents tell me, this math is beyond me. I can't help them any more. So, we do offer courses to parents to help them to help their kids. So, at some point that breaks down from home to school because the parents think they can't help them because they don't know how any more.</p>
I212	<p>I think we are very much going to see a split where children who are in economically affluent areas and are doing well and all the kudos go to them, and children who are economically poor will often be struggling, and the pressure will be put on them by the teachers because pressure is being put on them, and the children are not going to be happy. That, I think, is going to cause them to find the school experience to be much less positive than it was in the past.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-2, Effects on Students Who Are Economically Disadvantaged

Definition: SOL testing can have specific negative effects on low socio-economic students.

<p>Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire</p>	<p>Comments</p>
<p>I344</p>	<p>You could say I was from an economically disadvantaged background where I didn't have a computer. I didn't have access to going places and doing things, and I could tell the difference, right off. That's because I had a consciousness about what I wanted. Some students will be able to propel themselves over that gap like I did. But, if you don't have an inner push to want to succeed, some will think: This bar is way too high for me to jump. Why should I even attempt it? I don't have a computer, and you know, computer is a technology objective they have to pass.</p> <p>I (the student) have 90 minutes to get a concept, maybe two or three concepts because the teacher is rushing because he or she knows that they have SOLs to teach. And you only have a certain amount of time to make a document or a Powerpoint, how can you go home and refine your skills when you don't have a computer to refine your skills? And, your parent doesn't tell you it's important to read or it's time for you to go to work. So, how are you going to get them to come home to read a stupid book when food needs to be on the table. So, how can you afford college? So why even worry about passing the SOL test? You know you're not going to college, so why not get a menial diploma, the second rate diploma? Why bust your head? Why try to pass Algebra II? Why give a hoot about chemistry? Why worry about who was president in 1795 if you're not going to college? And you don't have the money; you're not in that bracket. Well, Ms. X-, I'm going to be in County for the rest of my life. I ain't going nowhere. So, why I gotta know this mess? I plan to work in the _____ Mill.</p>
<p>I344</p>	<p>SOL is going to create a peasant class. When you require SOLs for every student and they don't pass, they're not going to stay in school for 15 years! They're not going to pay to go to school, certainly. You're going to create a peasant class. And then you raise the requirements for students. That is a perfect equation to create a peasant class. If you have students who are going to fail, and you don't have teachers who have a desire to teach them, you are going to have a generation of students who are going to be menial labor workers.</p> <p>Interviewer: Of that group of students who might become part of that peasant class, what percentage of students might we be talking about</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-2, Effects on Students Who Are Economically Disadvantaged

Definition: SOL testing can have specific negative effects on low socio-economic students.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I344	<p>here that might not graduate because of SOL tests and diploma requirements?</p> <p>I would say about 60%, maybe 65%. It doesn't have to be that many, but there are so many students who could make it, who have what it takes to graduate from high school, but they think the cards are stacked against them.</p>
I397	<p>Those children are usually the ones who usually come into school, they've not had as much reading done to them. They don't have access to library materials. There are not as many opportunities for developing language and early math skills, so by the time they get to school, they're not going to have as much in their bag as a child from a higher socio-economic group. With the pressure to master skills, they'll be behind by the time they reach kindergarten, and I think this is totally contrary to what educational philosophy should be. But, they will have to be pulled along at such a pace to make up for that lost time, the opportunities that other kids may have had, that they may end up being left out, because they will be expected to do instead of being given time to build pre-reading skills and things like that. They'll be further behind than they would have been because there will be such pressure to move fast that they won't be able to follow.</p>
I406	<p>Interviewer: Well, then, are students from poor families any less likely to pass SOL tests?</p> <p>Yes, because it's hard to teach five years and nine months in nine months.</p>
I420	<p>I think that children from lower SES families definitely have a harder time taking these tests because there tend to be questions on there that don't apply to these students that they don't know. The questions tend to be so general that they just assume that everybody knows what things are and some of these students just don't get the same support at home as maybe a higher SES family might provide.</p>
Q358	<p>Schools with financially challenged students will have even less success with already weak kids who are needy in so many ways.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-3, Student Stress

Definition: SOL testing can result in increased levels of stress and lower self-esteem for students.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the way that students feel about school?</p> <p>From my experience, I think children are basically very anxious about them. I teach second grade and they mention in second grade we know we have to take those SOL tests next year and we heard that they ' re hard. And I just encourage them to do their best, but for the most part they ' re very anxious.</p>
I91	<p>What I ' ve observed is even the brighter students–I was teaching gifted– get nervous about them because I think there is a lot of undue pressure that ' s put upon them. There is an awful lot of anxiety about being ready and am I going to pass and am I going to pass in the early elementary grades.</p>
I212	<p>I do believe that a lot of students are being caused a tremendous amount of stress over this. Some of this is from the parents, but most is from the school. For those students who have difficulty to begin with, it ' s just going to add one more point of stress. For students who are good students, I don ' t think it ' s going to cause them any more stress. Some comments I ' ve heard from teachers whose children go to very affluent neighborhood schools. Those with children in affluent schools say that the term SOL is rarely mentioned. It ' s a given that the children are going to pass. Many of the families are two parent families. They are economically well-to-do, and the children are highly motivated because of the parents ' motivation to do well in school. If an assignment is given for homework, the assignment is done. And these are, indeed, the schools that first passed the SOLs the first year out without much trouble with like a 90% passing percentage.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-3, Student Stress

Definition: SOL testing can result in increased levels of stress and lower self-esteem for students.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I265	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect how students feel about school?</p> <p>My experience and impression so far is that it is a negative impact. Students are really feeling stressed out. All the stress that administrators and schools and teachers might be feeling is being transferred to students. A neighbor told me just the other day, her little girl is in fourth grade, and she was crying while doing her homework. She said, Mom, this is just too much. I'm just too stressed out. And I think kids are really starting to feel that way. And, instead of having a joy for learning, and becoming lifelong learners and readers, it's all about the test.</p>
I344	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect how students feel about school?</p> <p>Since students know that this will affect their entire educational process, it's totally strenuous. Students are knowing that these SOLs are like life or death for them. Some, I feel, will rise to the occasion, and others are just going to "cop out." They will just get too burdened and just fail at it.</p>
I397	<p>Even the most capable kids become frustrated and almost cry. To me, when it comes to that point, you need to take a step back and say, maybe more is not best.</p>
I406	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect how students feel about school?</p> <p>It's just a lot of pressure, I feel like. Because a lot of them are not ready for this kind of thing, and we're just trying to cram a lot in fast.</p>
I406	<p>I've got one (student) that's just ready now where the others were ready at the beginning of kindergarten. It's really detrimental for him for me to even test him, because he is going to be frustrated to be asked to do things he can't do.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-3, Student Stress

Definition: SOL testing can result in increased levels of stress and lower self-esteem for students.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I406	Even my granddaughter in the fifth grade is wondering. "Grandma, will I get a diploma so I can go to college?" And she's on the A/B honor roll.
I463	<p>I think that it (SOL testing) puts a lot of pressure on the kids...just from my own kids. I have fourth and fifth grade and the fifth graders have just finished the SOL writing test. I teach language arts and I teach writing. I know for my kids everything is related back to the SOLs, everything. They talk about the SOL tests. They're worried if it's going to be on the SOL test. They even ask that when you're going over the curriculum. "Is this going to be on the SOL?" and that kind of thing.</p> <p>You know how in high school the kids worry about the SAT to get into college? I think the SOLs have become that kind of influence on the kids where they have so much pressure to do well on the SOLs. You know I think the pressure comes from everywhere. I think it comes from them hearing about it all the time—from teachers and other students and in the paper.</p>
Q1	Students who understand the concepts but who do not test well will become disadvantaged and discouraged.
Q123	Students will feel more failure.
Q134	Stress levels are at their highest among teachers, students, and school staff.
Q205	Students stressed out.
Q209	Abnormally high work loads for students.
Q337	A decline in teacher and student self-esteem.
Q282	At a recent doctor visit for my son, the doctor reported an increase in teacher referrals for ADD/ADHD (my son included in that) as well as an increase in visits for anxiety and stomach problems. She says she thinks it's the pressure placed on students. My son attends an accredited school.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-3, Student Stress

Definition: SOL testing can result in increased levels of stress and lower self-esteem for students.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q322	Undue pressure placed on parents, students, and teachers.
Q344	Many teachers and students have already expressed to me their desires to quit or give up.
Q407	Students and teachers seem to be less interested in learning. This will result in apathy and burnout in both students and teachers.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and differing levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>There ' s a lot of pressure on if the children don ' t pass from year to year. What ' s going to happen? There ' s been rumors that schools wouldn ' t be accredited, teachers could be fired. I really feel for the teachers in the low economic areas. The amount of stress that must be on their shoulders. Because there are supposedly consequences if these children continue not to pass.</p> <p>Interviewer: Will the stress be felt differently depending on which school you are in?</p> <p>Oh, most definitely. For example, the school that I ' m in is a very high socio-economic neighborhood. There ' s a lot of parent support starting from the time they are in kindergarten. Parents make sure their children are prepared and that they read and they follow up on homework, and we live in the D.C. area and these parents expose them to the museums and Mount Vernon and things like that versus children in that lower SES group in this same community maybe three schools over, you know, their parents aren ' t as likely to do that. So we have been fortunate that year after year that our school from the very first test we have been one of the few schools that have passed that. But I really do believe that before these SOL tests came into being, I think a child ' s background makes a world of difference as to whether they are successful or not in school.</p> <p>Interviewer: So are you thinking you would feel greater stress if you were in a low SES school?</p> <p>Oh, absolutely.</p>
I91	<p>I think teachers are stressed, especially in those areas where the children are more disadvantaged.</p> <p>Interviewer: Why is that?</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students, continued

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and differing levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I91	Because not every child comes to school equally prepared for school, and for us to say you can take every five-year-old into the system and teach them all the same things in that one year is ridiculous. And, I think it is doing a disservice to the children.
I91	(T)o say that every child is going to be able to be at the point in May— you know, as adults, we’re not all the same. And I think what we are trying to say is that we can make every child be alike almost, or perform the same.
I137	(T)here are some children who are never going to be at that 70% level. And I don’t think principals or teachers or school districts should be penalized for those students.
I149	You know, there are so many variables in human behavior and human beings, that just because you do it (pass SOL tests) one year doesn’t mean you can do it the next year. You’d think you could, but there are just so many uncertainties.
I149	I think that with the way the SOLs are set up, you can’t fit every peg into the same hole. I really believe the tests are set up as if we are all equal, we’re all the same, and that’s just not the way it is. Why are all children being asked to take Algebra? For what? Why do they really, really need that? If they want that as an option, that’s one thing, but as a requirement, it doesn’t make a lot of sense.
I212	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect teachers’ plans to remain in teaching?</p> <p>It may have an awful lot to do with the population they serve in their school. I can only speak from the point of view of my county. I am a 28 year veteran teacher of this county. If you teach in one of the affluent schools, your life is not changed a great deal because of the SOLs except, of course, you receive great kudos when you pass. But you know you’re going to pass, and it’s not a huge deal because in schools like that, the teachers are simply doing enrichment on work that is</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and differing levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212 (continued)	<p>mostly being done at home. The teachers are giving the assignments; the students do the assignments; there is very little disruptive behavior; and things flow very smoothly.</p> <p>What we found at our school—we did an informal study—and we found that children who did not do their homework did much poorer on the SOL tests than those who did. And we have a lot of children who do not do their homework on a regular basis, and, of course, that comes from the home. And that is really out of the power of the teacher to control.</p>
I212	(W)e noticed that while other schools passed without any extra effort on their part, we had to bust a tremendous amount of you-know-what to get where we got—teachers working on the weekends, working at night, and a huge amount of stress.
I212	In those schools where the teachers have to work a whole lot harder, and never know if they will get the children to where they need to be, it (job satisfaction) may depend more on their own inner strength.
I212	<p>The downside is that if a school has a large mobile population, you may find that people you test in May are only two thirds of the people you started with in September. And, of course, your test scores will not be reflecting how hard the teacher has worked all year.</p> <p>It seems to me that a lot more low SES students move around and these students will be negatively affected because of their moves. One family I know has moved four different times between schools in the county. You know they’ re just trying to beat creditors and so just survive or run away from an abusive father, and that will have an effect on test scores.</p>
I265	So, one of the things I like to do is to work with at-risk kids. And if I go to a school that just has at-risk kids, and we might make major progress every year, but we might not make that 70 (%) mark.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and differing levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I344	<p>Those students who come from a higher socio-economic class, they might want to excel because they see the benefits of education. Some students whose parents aren't as successful, or who come from manual labor, they might not feel the importance of education. Some students who are from a rural background, they don't know what's going on in the world. They don't know how important education is in trying to get ahead. So, they're not looking at it as something vital. Whereas someone from an upper SES, they're looking at it as a challenge. "If I score high on my SOL tests, then I'm obviously a better person." And then you have students who are from a low SES background, like myself, for instance, I'm a first generation college student, and I know I have to better myself. I have all sorts of people in my class. That student who doesn't have parents to push them, they might still, by nature, want to be competitive and rise to the occasion of taking the SOLs.</p>
I344	<p>You know, after two weeks of school, I can tell if a student is an A student, a B student, a C student, or whether they're just pretending to be a C student and could really be a B or an A student. Usually it comes out to be the way I thought it was. Whether you put the SOL in front of the student or not, this generation, they don't care. If you're an A student, you give me an SOL test, OK, I'm going to pass the SOL test. That student that says, I don't want to do this work. I want to go home and play my new Play Station II. They're not going to pay attention. They're going to go home and play that Play Station II. And you can make that assessment within the first two or three weeks of school. And then you will be able to tell whether you can motivate that student and push them. Maybe 2% of the time it won't work out that way, but the rest of the time it does. Most of the time, the SOL test is something <i>we're</i> doing. The teachers are doing SOL tests. Some of those students who I said you can tell if they are A or B students, they're going to help to lift those weights.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and differing levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I344	I want you to know that I 'm trying to meet the demands of these SOLs, but I 'm shaking as I talk to you because I want the people who are in charge of this thing to know how important it is to be fair. And, the SOLs are just totally unfair, because all students do not learn the same way.
I397	I was in Abingdon, at one of the first public hearings they had about the SOLs. At that meeting, I remember listening to the other side of the coin. A couple of our community college people spoke, and a couple of our business people spoke, and they were talking about more and more of kids coming in without basic skills and they had to remediate, and-of course-the blame went back to the public schools. You know, we 've got to up our standards. And, I thought, if I were just listening to these people and now knowing the other side, I would go right along with them. I do see their side to it. But then, people aren 't looking at that now. Almost everyone is going to college. A few years ago, it was a very select group. You know, not everybody is supposed to be able to take Algebra in high school. I 'm sorry. You talk about critical thinking, Algebra does require higher, advanced thinking skills and some people just don 't have that. But that doesn 't mean they don 't have other things they can do.
I406	Interviewer: Do you worry about the coming year and what results you 're going to get? Right. It 's like our children aren 't ready for this. This year I have six "repeaters" and five of those are special education out of a class of 17. We 're having a lot more that are repeating kindergarten since the SOLs. We 've never had more than one or two. Interviewer: Do you believe that 's occurring in other grades as well? Yes, last year 16 or 17 repeaters in kindergarten out of seventy. Interviewer: So you have a 20% retention rate.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and differing levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I406	A lot of our children don't hear anything. Like, the holidays aren't discussed in their homes. A lot of our children live in a house with people in it—it's not a real home.
I406	I feel like the ones who are going to achieve will achieve. I have some, whatever I put out there, they go right ahead with it. But it's the little immature people who are not ready.
I406	There will be stress because some of these kids are not ready. And what you end up doing is to try to teach 5 years and 9 months of learning into 9 months because their educational home life is not there.
I406	<p>Interviewer: Has this program had any positive or negative effect, then, on how much children have learned? You've said that some students will learn no matter what. So, what about the other students?</p> <p>They're going to be retained.</p> <p>Interviewer: Are they going to learn more or less than they would have without the SOL testing program, or about the same?</p> <p>Well, you can't cram it in. You can't open it up and pour in a gallon when they're only ready for a teaspoon full. The immature little fellows will be retained.</p>
I463	I know where we are one of the schools has met the 70% requirement and I mean, that's all we hear about is how that school has met the percentage. When our teachers sit around and discuss it, we don't understand how you can compare all the schools. Like the school I'm at, a lot of the kids are rural—very rural, and putting all that weight on standardized testing is a problem, especially when you have kids from two different regions. Kids from northern Virginia are meeting the SOLs, well, you are talking about totally different socio-economic backgrounds. They're exposed to different things. Then you give the same tests to kids here who live on farms and are bussed 45 minutes to school, coming out of the mountains, and you are asking them city

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and differing levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I463 (continued)	<p>questions. And, I don't know how they can set a standard for kids who are all different when the test is all the same.</p> <p>Last year when I taught in another state, we had benchmarks for the kids to reach on the Stanford 9, but you didn't have to reach the benchmark in order to keep your accreditation. But, when the kids took the Stanford 9, they didn't know what a skyscraper was—they were fourth graders. They didn't have a clue. And, it wasn't because they weren't intelligent, they just didn't have any ideas what one was. They had never seen one. So, I guess that's always been my concern with testing. The kids from the cities might know what a skyscraper is and those from the farm don't really care what a skyscraper is and probably will never see one. So, they're answering these questions and they're told that so much weight might be put on them where they won't get to graduate or pass to the next grade and, so are the questions geared for those kids or not? You've got kids from vastly different backgrounds and they're all taking the same tests.</p>
I463	<p>And, then you've got kids in different groups. The kids I have this year for fourth and fifth grade, you know, they're totally different groups. And, you're not going to have kids come through—I don't care who the teacher is—and breeze by the SOLs. Not all kids learn the same. Your groups aren't always the same. And, your kids aren't always the same. So, I don't think we can just say that 70% of your kids need to pass the SOLs this year when kids are not the same.</p>
I463	<p>So, and inference is being made that all kids are the same, and that's just not true. That's why every year you have kids who leave and you say, "What a great group." And you have other kids who leave and you say, "I hope they do well."</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and differing levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I463	You know when you 've got kids starting school, you 've got kids who start out with a background of preschool, and kids who start out with nothing and some may say that those kids aren 't as intelligent. Well, not necessarily. I 've got kids in my room that know all the parts of a tractor and I don 't know that. Does that mean they have less intelligence because we don 't consider that a skill? However, when it comes to farming, I 'm sure they can do it a lot better than I can. And, where are we looking at what 's an important skill and what 's not? If they 're going to do farming, then that 's definitely an important skill, not whether they can do calculus or not.
Q265	One year my scores can be high. I have kids with strong parent support and high IQ 's. The next year scores drop because I get students who can 't work on grade level. Nothing I did changes the outcome. I can work harder, but (what can I do) when one half of my class comes to me reading 3-4 years below grade level? I like being held accountable, but the SOL tests do not test knowledge. They are analytical-too hard for ten year-old kids.
Q387	We are expecting all students to reach the same level at the same rate.
I14	Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the curriculum that teachers emphasize. I know there is a lot of news in the papers that teachers may be teaching to the test. Well, you know what? We have to teach to the test because that 's the curriculum. I know that (my) County has given us this curriculum which is supposed to be aligned very closely to these SOL objectives, so it does affect our teaching. So, we are required to teach this now. It 's considered to be our program of studies.
I149	We really do have to focus on teaching to the test that sometimes the creative process isn 't there the way you 'd like it to be.
I344	The books we use may emphasize Bloom 's Taxonomy, but realistically, you 're teaching your kids toward that test, because if they fail it, it 's going to reflect back on you.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-4, Differences Among Students

Definition: Students come to school with different backgrounds, and different levels of support, making it harder for all of them to reach the same standards.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I397	(T)here will be a group of students where the emphasis will be just on improving scores. Their education will be sort of centered on a limited thing there and their focus will be limited to improving scores, and since more and more of the time will be devoted to social studies and science and to getting those scores up, maybe the reading and math will be cheated to a certain extent.
I397	Interviewer: Are there any other topics about SOL testing that you might want to express an opinion about? Just the fear...from what I've seen there is more teaching to the test. You know, some schools say they have seen the released test items, and some schools say they haven't. You know, they haven't viewed past test items and they think they should be able to because they think that will help their scores.
Q41	Teachers are teaching to the test and limiting the curriculum.
Q241	There will be teaching to the test.
Q307	Teaching the test rather than educating the student. Teachers are forced to march ahead leaving lost students behind.
Q425	I think teachers are now teaching to the test. I also believe the SOLs restrict a teacher's creativity.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-5, Teaching to the Test

Definition: Teachers will teach directly to SOL tests to help ensure higher scores.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I14	<p>Interviewer: To what degree, if any, will SOL testing affect the curriculum that teachers emphasize.</p> <p>I know there is a lot of news in the papers that teachers may be teaching to the test. Well, you know what? We have to teach to the test because that's the curriculum. I know that (my) County has given us this curriculum which is supposed to be aligned very closely to these SOL objectives, so it does affect our teaching. So, we are required to teach this now. It's considered to be our program of studies.</p>
I149	<p>We really do have to focus on teaching to the test that sometimes the creative process isn't there the way you'd like it to be.</p>
I344	<p>The books we use may emphasize Bloom's Taxonomy, but realistically, you're teaching your kids toward that test, because if they fail it, it's going to reflect back on you.</p>
I397	<p>(T)here will be a group of students where the emphasis will be just on improving scores. Their education will be sort of centered on a limited thing there and their focus will be limited to improving scores, and since more and more of the time will be devoted to social studies and science and to getting those scores up, maybe the reading and math will be cheated to a certain extent.</p>
I397	<p>Interviewer: Are there any other topics about SOL testing that you might want to express an opinion about?</p> <p>Just the fear...from what I've seen there is more teaching to the test. You know, some schools say they have seen the released test items, and some schools say they haven't. You know, they haven't viewed past test items and they think they should be able to because they think that will help their scores.</p>
Q41	<p>Teachers are teaching to the test and limiting the curriculum.</p>
Q241	<p>There will be teaching to the test.</p>

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-5, Teaching to the Test

Definition: Teachers will teach directly to SOL tests to help ensure higher scores.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
Q307	Teaching the test rather than educating the student. Teachers are forced to march ahead leaving lost students behind.
Q425	I think teachers are now teaching to the test. I also believe the SOLs restrict a teacher's creativity.

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-6, Negative Outcomes for Students

Definition: SOL testing limits student enrichment opportunities in favor of "testworthy" curriculum.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I149	But then again, instead of being able to take a group that needs and can handle enrichment in a certain area, you feel like you don't have as much time.
I212	Whether they are able to give their students experiences and instruction that is outside the SOL realm is dependent on whether or not they think they have time to do it. And that depends on what school they're at. If it's a school where it's pretty much a given that the kids are going to pass the SOLs, then they'll have speakers and they will take the opportunity to do the kinds of things that you and I used to think of as a given for elementary school students. If a dinosaur play came to town and someone was going to do a presentation to a whole elementary school, then, yeah, that was the way it went. There in certain areas now that would say, I'm sorry, but only those grades that are studying dinosaurs as part of their SOL may see the presentation.

(matrix continues)

Raw Data Matrix: Theme H-6, Negative Outcomes for Students

Definition: SOL testing limits student enrichment opportunities in favor of “testworthy” curriculum.

Source I = Interview Q = Questionnaire	Comments
I212	I think that enrichment will suffer, but it won't suffer in those schools where the children already get so much enrichment anyway. That is the sad thing. It is actually weighted to deprive the children who need it most because so much time has to be given to teach the basics.
I265	<p>One of my concerns is that field trips are being cut. I mean, they think that learning only takes place if you are sitting at a desk. And, that is to untrue. I think that well-planned field trips are really important. And a lot of those are being cut out.</p> <p>Interviewer: How is that “cutting” going to work?</p> <p>They put the monetary burden of the trips on the schools. You have to pay for the buses now, whereas before the system would pick up the tab. It's always about money.</p>
I397	(T)here's just not a lot of time left for the “fluff” I guess for things that used to be fun. For example, if you wanted to do a unit on dinosaurs in kindergarten, teachers say it's tough to work that in.