play, interacting with them in that way also. This will cut down on peer "cruelty" on the playground and allow teachers to let off steam, too. (Who needs a "playground duty" list?) The presence of teachers on the playground helps students learn to get along with all kinds of other children in a less structured situation. As parents, we rarely shut ourselves away during the day and leave the children to themselves. It is a relief most times to have them in

bed, asleep at night; and your relief from the physical teaching comes at 3:15 PM. At school, you are all a family unit, since school is an extension of all our homes. A family that doesn't pull together, fails! Never forget I John 3:18: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." Teach through God's strength and grace.

Shirley Gunnink

Book Review

The Plug-in Drug, Television, Children, and the Family (revised edition) by Marie Winn, Penguin Books, N.Y., \$6.95, 288 pages. (Reviewed by Mrs. Faith Noorman.)

Marie Winn is the mother of two and author of many books for parents and children. Her book, The Plug-in Drug, is based on interviews with mothers, families, teachers, and child specialists. Writing from a refreshingly different point of view, the author says it's not necessarily what you watch, it's the very fact that you are watching TV that needs to be examined.

Here is a sampling of the valid points Winn raises with regard to children and television. Television viewing takes away from a child's free time in which he finds opportunities to reduce his dependence on his parents. Television watching produces "feeling of activity" where there is none. Also, TV and its control, or lack of it, becomes a source of unresolved struggle between parent and child. example, with TV present, parents are less capable of interacting with their child directly; they find themselves competing with the set for their child's attention. stricting television viewing as a disciplinary measure almost always fails because parents are inconsistent and ambivalent about their control of TV and their own lack of discretion in viewing habits.

Marie Winn compares TV watching to drug use, stating that

both can be equally addictive, and in removing the television set from the home the family will experience withdrawal symptoms.

Finally, the book lists the positive effects of a no-TV household based on experiments with families, such as more help from children, more family interaction, and more creative playtime among

siblings. A no-television home has a less rushed atmosphere and promotes pleasant meal-time conversation.

For the social and spiritual health of his family, anyone who owns a television set does well to read *The Plug-in Drug*, a truly pointed and thought-provoking book.

from the TEACHERS' LOUNGE

STANDARDIZED TESTS: BANE OR BOON?

Lois Kregel

They will soon be upon us again, those standardized achievement tests. Just when the school year is well under way, just when the classes have settled into their new routines, just when teachers have learned about the diverse personalities of the students they are teaching, all must be interrupted for those Iowa Basics. You hear questions raised: "Is it worth it? Why must we do this if we never use them?" Sometimes you merely see looks of resignation. It is safe to say that few teachers enjoy administering

achievement tests.

Why, then, have we continued this practice, year after year? Is there value in it for our schools?

What are standardized tests? They are tests constructed by specialists in test construction, with the help of curriculum experts, teachers, and school administrators, for the purpose of determining a student's level of performance, relative to that of other students of similar age and They are normed on a representative sample of students nationwide. Students are tested in math, science, language arts, and general knowledge. There are several kinds of standardized tests: we are concerned here with two of them: achievement tests,

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