From Degrading to De-Grading
Grades can be a powerful tool in the classroom, but they can also create a culture of fear and apathy. Students who believe that they can only succeed if they receive high grades may be more likely to give up when faced with difficult tasks. On the other hand, students who believe that they can succeed regardless of their grades may be more likely to persevere and learn. Therefore, it is important for teachers to consider the impact of their grading practices on their students' attitudes and behaviors.

One way to begin the process of degrading is to eliminate grades completely. This is not a radical step, but it can have a significant impact on students' attitudes and behaviors. When grades are eliminated, students are more likely to focus on the process of learning rather than the outcome. They are more likely to take risks and try new things, and they are more likely to feel confident in their abilities. This can lead to improved learning outcomes and a more positive classroom culture.

However, eliminating grades completely is not the only way to begin the process of degrading. Teachers can also begin by eliminating the most pernicious practices, such as grading on a curve. This can have a significant impact on students' attitudes and behaviors, and it can set the stage for further changes.

In the end, the goal of degrading is to create a more positive classroom culture, one in which students are more likely to learn and thrive. This requires a commitment from teachers and administrators, but it is a commitment that is well worth making. The results can be significant, and they can make a real difference in students' lives.