

Education

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I think education is an essential aspect of everyone's lives. But the system under which it operates suppresses the real spirit behind it. Instead of children learning from an early age how to communicate, survive, and become complete individuals, they are weighed down with exams, preparing themselves for a working life, and not breaking rules, and the teachers are so obsessed about how much money they're earning, and keeping the children 'in line', that they forget what the children actually need.

At the age of sixteen, children leave school, able to recite french verbs, and regurgitate simultaneous equations, but they are, invariably, boring, incomplete people who wouldn't know individuality if it stared them in the face. Children need to be treated separately, and the present educational system cannot cater for this.

Children are brought into secondary schools at the age of eleven, which is an extremely unnatural process for a young child to go through. Their youth is suppressed, and they are forced into an immediate level of maturity, and often they sadly miss out on what should be a time of finding out for themselves, experiencing difficulties and learning from their own mistakes.

All children are born with a natural spirit which should be encouraged and developed, so forming an interesting, free-thinking adult, but this spirit is forcibly suppressed. I wouldn't go so far as to say it destroys it, because I think, depending on the strength of character of the child, it can be retained throughout the eleven years of compulsory education but unfortunately, most people allow themselves to be dictated to, and moulded into the expected image, that the headmasters, governors, etc. .. wish to portray, and so not developing into the kinds of people they might have been if they hadn't been pushed through the education system. Taking into consideration that education is supposed to be the starting off point, the foundations, upon which to build your life, it is badly thought out, badly designed, and badly carried out.

The exam system has got to be one of the cruelest processes of elimination in the world, it dis-regards people with a low academic ability, and wrongly builds up the importance of people who, by chance, find they can answer irrelevant questions on one particular day; this system provides no hope, future or alternative for those seemingly 'ungifted' children, and those children are left feeling isolated, unwanted, and stupid. The teachers ignore them, or help them only because their job requires them to, and if they don't do the required job, then they don't get that all-important pay-cheque each month. But those children who can pass exams, making the teaching look as if it must be good, so needless to say, they get all the attention.

Even when you make it into the sixth form, the rules become even more rigid. You have a lot of free periods, sometimes whole mornings, even days, but you are still required to be in school full-time, even if it means sitting there all day doing nothing, which means you have nothing constructive to do, which the teachers find impossible to believe, you get bored, and that is the worst environment in which to educate people.

The number of people in our sixth form has nearly halved since last year, and the teachers sit back and think that the individual couldn't handle the work, when really they have been driven into boring dead-end jobs because of the lack of personal responsibility given to them.

On the other hand, we do need some sort of education, because if left completely to ourselves we would grow up with basic, animal instincts, and education is all about developing an individual beyond that stage. Unfortunately the people at the top don't see it like that. Why is a person with 10 O' levels treated with a lot more recognition and respect than someone who didn't get to the stage of taking exams? Because you can almost be sure that the person with no qualifications has regrets about not having any, because he's treated as an outcast, his prospects of a job, an interesting one at any rate, have vanished. Schools know this to be true, but they still insist on 'pushing aside' those who can't cope academically. This in itself proves the lack of intimacy, which should appear. The new exam system that is coming in, the G.C.S.E, should hopefully be a lot fairer, in that everyone's doing the same exam, there's no settings, but the prejudice will never disappear, those who've got what it takes in the way of school subjects will get all the help they need, those who can't might just as well stay at home.