

Attention: All Students

**GETTING THROUGH KINDERGARTEN (AND GRADUATE SCHOOL)**

It's important to understand what schools are all about so that you can get through as painlessly as possible -- and with minimal damage to your thinking, confidence, sociability, curiosity, and creativity.

Teach'en-Test'em compulsory schooling, with its emphasis on obedience, formal assessment, the curriculum, and age-grading, was imported from Prussia around 1845. Its primary goal was to produce passive soldiers for the army. And then we used this model to supply the factories with workers trained to plug away at dull and repetitive tasks in the face of chronic boredom and fatigue. In the meantime, schools and colleges have changed very little in 150 years. And, as Diane Ravitch has said, "The system we have serves adults, not children." (N.Y. Times, 6/27/94). Furthermore, no grownup would let the system do to them what we routinely do to you; i.e. the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

Meanwhile, at home and on the job virtually everyone has managed to learn a zillion facts and many ideas including how to speak the native tongue, the most difficult thing we'll ever learn. And we learn without being forced although avoiding TV, being read to, stimulation, talking with adults and peers, having questions answered and being shown how to do things is helpful, useful, or vital. Thus, numerous children, both rich and poor, have -- when the brain was ready -- taught themselves to read while 34 million adults have, with a mentor, coped with computers. But again and again: Everything we know we've basically taught ourselves; i.e. pressured teaching will not, indeed cannot, make learning happen.

Given rapid change and the information explosion, we can't predict the future and nor do we know what you are going to need to know. But basic skills are important; i.e. speaking, listening, thinking, reading, writing, calculating, cooperating, borrowing ideas, and how to ask those relevant questions so that you can learn the job on the job. Subject matter, therefore, except in certain training situations, is dead as a doornail and is largely forgotten as soon as the final exam is over.

But if you memorize and regurgitate and jump through hoops and please the teacher, you'll be rewarded with a pretty piece of paper which is the ticket of admission to the next institution -- with its same/old/same/old. B students, meanwhile, end up doing better in later life than A students. And the home-educated do the best of all, socially and intellectually.

So, along with feeling sorry for those who have to work in a prison-like place filled with concern, fear, boredom, resistance, inept thinking, criticism, and humiliation leading to anger, we would recommend (given The Credential Society) that you turn half your brain into a floppy disc on which you put all the junk that the teachers want to hear about while the other half becomes a hard drive on which you put everything that's interesting or useful like the basic skills. But you could download from floppy to hard, join in some fun activities, and get to know a number of teachers who, beneath their depressed and irritable facade, can be very nice indeed. A nation-wide boycott of testing may, however, eventually become necessary.

Ref: The Teenage Liberation Handbook; Grace Llewellyn - Lovry House, Ore.  
How Children Fail; John Holt and Dumbing Us Down; John Taylor Gatto  
[www.co-operation.org/pages/contact.html](http://www.co-operation.org/pages/contact.html) [HTTP://734.com](http://734.com) [RU-wwww.Unschooling.com](http://RU-wwww.Unschooling.com)  
The Committee for Clear Thinking, Apt. 15E, 210 Locust St. Phila. PA. 19106

**In Hard Times Lured**

**NY Times 3/14/10**  
**NY Trade School and Debt**

**A Google: SALON PETER GRAY**

**Not everyone belongs in college**

**J. Liedloff--THE CONTINUUM CONCEPT**

[www.InvitationalEducation.net](http://www.InvitationalEducation.net)  
[WWW.EDUCATIONREVOLUTION.ORG](http://WWW.EDUCATIONREVOLUTION.ORG)  
[WWW.HOLTGWS.COM](http://WWW.HOLTGWS.COM)

COME HOME AMERICA - Wm. Greider -- Yes, there IS hope!  
Vedder and Gillen - NationalReview.com  
[www.youthactivismproject.org](http://www.youthactivismproject.org)  
Google: Opt Out Testing

Harvard: -B students end up achieving more than the As; Cs often the best of all

The hardest-working students ever were at a British university where the reward for demonstrated learning by their questions, arguments etc. was to be excused from all examinations for the entire four years!