**Autobiography of a Learner**

My education, its all become a blur... a twisting mosaic of various images, some good and some bad. For all but a few years of my life, I have been waking up five days a week for school. Of course there are exceptions like sick days, holidays and so on, but for the majority of my life, my weekdays have consisted of getting up and going to school. The repetition, it seems has become completely entwined with my everyday life. Schedules are built around school, time is budgeted to make room for school. "I can't go to the movies, because I have too much homework." How many times have I said this? I notice that after awhile I get so into the routine of going from class to class, that by Friday I often can't tell the difference between Monday and Tuesday. It is just one of the many strange mysteries of education. I have discovered that the more I like the class, the more I will remember it. A class where the teacher blandly recites information from the book becomes a drag. It is a classic example of the Banking Concept of Education. The teacher expects the students to sit there and take in everything. A student asking "why" is an inconvenience, and that is causes not paying attention. It's sad, and it happens... far too often.

After awhile you lose interest in actually gaining information. Memorize the information so you can ace the quiz on Thursday, and remember none of what you memorized by Friday. This sort of lifestyle gets old real quick, and it is the sad reality for many students. The situation is entirely different when the teacher actually takes the time to check and see if the students are indeed learning. I have always enjoyed it when a teacher allows the students some room for creativity, as opposed to the "do it this way or else" style of teaching that we know so well. I like to put my personality into what I do, be it formal essay or not. When a teacher hands me a piece of paper that says, in short, "you must do it this way," well... .the effects are not exactly motivational. Classes where creativity is common place tend to actually stick in my mind. I have plenty of memories for the English class that I enjoyed in 6th grade, but the only memory I have of that class in 7th grade is me sitting at my desk wishing it was lunch. This single memory sums up the entire year, one photographic image representing 250 odd days of class attendance. Me sitting at a desk. I love the freedom of writing, and have always been grateful to teachers that say, "Ok I want you to go nuts with this one." Of course there is some give and take requirements must be fulfilled, and not every assignment can be completely free. This does not mean, however, that every assignment has to be rigidly controlled. A teacher that asks his or her students to challenge the information presented to them, is one that has made the commitment of making sure that students who enter the classroom leave with something new. Perhaps the students will gain new writing skills, or develop a sense of critical and creative thinking. So as long as it isn't just another class that you go into, and come out retaining nothing, glad that it is over.

 I know that I have been in a good class when I find myself feeling had that I won't have the same teacher next year. My English teacher from freshman year was the same way. His way of teaching had a massive impact on me. I discovered that writing was not the tiresome chore that I had previously made it out to be. When I left that class I regretted the fact that I would not have him again, and by some twist of fate he ended up being the only teacher that I have ever had twice. The papers and stories I wrote in my freshman and sophomore years of high school are what I consider my finest works. Ever since, my writing has been different, I have developed a style that reflects me. It does not matter if it's a free expression, or a more analytical piece. I decided from that day forth, that every piece I write will be my own, and the ideal learning situation would be walking away from every class with that feeling. In the next chapter of my education, I like to picture the ideal environment. College is a whole new thing, and I am free to take courses that interest me. I hope to put myself into a learning environment that is challenged, but not an overload. The perfect situation would be having the same kind of experience that I did in my freshman English class, in all of my academic endeavors. This dream is, of course, not the easiest thing to achieve, but I think that now is the best time to try to get as close to it as possible.

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