

The New Scientist carried an article in May 1964 in which the American psychologist, Burrhus Skinner, contended that: "Education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten." As I reflect on my own experiences in education I am convinced of the validity of his statement. Much of what survives in my memory of my school days is not factual, subject specific material, but rather a set of value systems and character sketches.

For me the apotheosis of a good teacher was my sixth form geography teacher, Mr Mrowiec. Above all, I remember Mr Mrowiec as being supremely organised. His work was always refined with clockwork punctuality, while worksheets and handouts were always immaculately produced and clearly catalogued. I recall how closely he managed both the entrances & exits of pupils from his classroom - chairs always had to be placed under the desks and pupils were only ever allowed to leave row by row. These apparently semantic habits had the effect of instilling a sense of order and respect in his classroom. Pupils were left in no doubt that when they entered his room they were entering his personal and carefully managed space.

Most importantly for me, Mr Mrowiec taught me about ordered, systematic learning. Complex notions and ideas were always broken down into manageable chunks, which in turn were sub-divided by headings, sub-headings and bullet points. The systems of note-taking and essay planning which he based around the division of subjects in this manner have remained with me throughout my university career. Largely thanks to his tutelage I now feel I am a much more polished learner than I ever was before.

There were several other teachers too who I felt had a profound impact on me while I was at school. Notably, my P.E. teachers, Mr Uttery and Mr Ing. Both these men were exceptionally well muscled and kept themselves extremely fit. Mr Uttery was a huge man. I remember being fascinated by the size of his hands, and particularly of his big, fat fingers, the largest of which was almost as

think of a baby's arm. He had played rugby for England in the 1950s so that many pupils (including myself) were in awe of him. Our other P.E. teacher, Mr. Jay, was no less impressive. He was a Royal Marine Reservist and a man of considerable strength, endurance and power. Because both these men were themselves such formidable sportsmen they instilled in many a weedy adolescent a desire to take fitness and sport seriously. Everyone in their classes knew that however hard or unpleasant the activity they were being asked to do was, both Mr. Utley and Mr. Jay could do it themselves with ease. In essence they both practised what they preached.

Having reviewed briefly some of the teachers who had an influence on me at school, I would like to make some more general observations about what ^{think} makes a good teacher. More specifically - What did these school masters have in common, and, what qualities or characteristics do I attempt to emulate in order to teach effectively?

First and foremost I think ^{if} three men have referred to were masters of their own subjects. Mr. Mowbray had himself been academically brilliant - he had gone to Oxford and knew his subject inside out. Mr. Utley and Mr. Jay were first class sportsmen in their own right.

Secondly I think all these men were ~~also~~ highly committed to teaching. For them teaching was more than just a job - it was a way of life. All of them were prepared to go the extra mile in order to help the pupils in their charge. They frequently got involved in extra-curricular activities which entailed taking a long hour for little or no extra reward.

Needless to say that are a plethora of other common qualities that these men exhibited which aid effective teaching - personal integrity, patience, clarity of thought - to name but a few, but there is little time to discuss them here. I feel strongly that I learnt a lot about how to teach by being taught myself. In trying to become a successful teacher a quality that will be essential will be the ability to revise memories of good teaching and try to look for circumstances which I can apply to my own school experience.