

# Preparing Graduates for Life



Making sure our high school graduates are prepared to take on the challenges of life should be one of our nation's top priorities. After all, these graduates *are* the future of our society.

Legislators and school boards have tried to develop guidelines to handle this challenge. These guidelines primarily list subjects to be studied in each grade. State Boards of Education often take this a step further by approving texts for different subjects. Teachers then verify that students have learned these materials by how well the students can parrot them back on exams.

In effect students are expected to memorize a lot of data. But, does this give them the knowledge they need to handle life?

## **Is Information the Same as Knowledge?**

The keyword here is *knowledge*. Educators are attempting to prepare students by giving them information. This may seem workable, but a closer look will show it has problems. Einstein said, "Information is not knowledge," and concluded, "The only source of knowledge is experience."

Even if knowledge were proportional to information, we now live in an information age where the amount of data available is beyond what any one person could

know. Success in today's society is not limited by the information we have, but by the ability to acquire the knowledge we need.

### The Quick-Study

We will never be able to memorize enough data to be fully prepared for life. Instead, we must assimilate data as needed. This requires an ability to research and learn like never before. People who can do this are sometimes called a *quick-study*, because they learn quickly.

Instead of graduating students with a head full of facts, we should be graduating *quick-study* students.

A few schools, on the cutting edge, have already changed their emphasis from learning a lot of facts to learning how to research and study. Graduates from these schools truly are prepared for life. They know they can take on any job, confident that their research and study skills will carry them through.

If you know students who are just learning a lot of facts, you should encourage them to find a school that will successfully prepare them for life.

May your studies be rewarding.

John McCormick,

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