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Humanities

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Does School Prepare You for Life?

Do schools prepare students for their life after graduation? This is a commonly debated topic, and there are many strong arguments for both sides. While being recognized for its education system, the U.S. public school system has not changed much since it was first created, and much of the traditional structure of school is still in place. This includes the class curriculums and the way schools function, both of which were made to prepare people for life in the 1700's. Much has changed since then, including types of jobs, technology, how society works, and much more. The current education system does not sufficiently teach students skills that are needed for life after school, thus failing to adequately prepare students for their life post graduation due to this lack of necessary skills.

Schools do not teach skills needed to complete tasks outside of school, thus failing to prepare students for their life outside of or after school. Schools do not teach “kids critical skills such as effective communication, personal decision making, realistic goal setting, conflict resolution, and social responsibility” (Rethinking Education). Important skills such as social interactions and problem solving are often neglected in school, causing people to be unaware of how to interact and how to successfully achieve their goals. This can be further seen in a survey conducted by Hartej Anand[©], in which most people felt math and English/humanities were the most useful and most

people did not use the other classes as much (Figure 1). While most of the participants agreed that high school was important for preparing them for outside school, they also found the most useful skills from it to be decision making and social life (Figure 2). However, even decision making was a very split decision. Important parts of post-graduate life are often not taught in schools, including taxes and handling money, arguably some of the most important post-graduate life skills. Since school does not prepare you for these important parts that all individuals must undergo, schools fail to adequately prepare students for post-graduate life. Also to be noted, participants mentioned that college prepared them for their job better, and high school only covered a basic foundation for their job. This shows how high school is important, but only for a basic understanding of topics. More work is needed after high school to adequately prepare you, meaning high school itself does not properly prepare students.

Schools also cause the development of skills that are not helpful to an individual, and therefore further fail to prepare students for after school. For example, schools were originally made for the purpose of creating factory workers, as well as assimilating immigrants into the American way of life. School became “a high-pressure “melting pot”” (Hood) where students lost their culture rather than grow as individuals. Though there have been many reform movements in the past, “they demonstrate[ed] very little change in student performance (and most measurable changes were downward)” (Hood). Despite changes to make schools more accepting of diversity, schools have not changed much. Despite being an article from the 1900’s, this quote shows how the problems that existed decades ago still exist, and a lack of much needed change. One instance is in public high schools, which still have a daily pledge of allegiance, patriotic

dress down days, and other events that push for the Americanization of students. Additionally, the way of learning focuses on learning certain patterns. These were useful to know when learning how to work in an assembly line, but with the increase in technology, research, and jobs, this skill is no longer helpful. Over the past 400 years, the US education system has changed, “there is one thing that seems to have remained the same: students are still taught in a basic manner where learning is based on repetition and memorization” (U.S. Education). This article is much newer, from 2020, and still discusses the same problems that have been around for centuries. With the advancement that we as a species have made in that time, it is surprising that schools barely reflect it. While the curriculum has changed to include more information as it is discovered, the foundation is the same. If the foundation does not reflect how society has changed, then school will never prepare students for modern society.

On the other hand, some people might argue the education system is adequate because it is known worldwide as a good system. However, “20 years ago, the United States was ranked No.1 in high school and college education” (Mandykinne). Currently the US is 14th, showing how while the education system might have once been good, it is now outdated and continues to worsen unless it is changed. This was also because without current technology, schools’ teaching was more adequate. Since school did not change with the technology, it no longer teaches as well. Without a system that prepares students for modern society, this problem will continue to grow.

Overall, schools fail to adequately prepare students for post-graduate life because while it is important and teaches some life skills, it does not teach all necessary components for post-graduate life. Additionally, some skills taught - such as

patriotism - take away from the goal of the public education system of fairness and equality for all. If schools add the lacking skills and remove the unnecessary components, then it will better prepare students with the skills they need. For now, though, schools do not adequately prepare students.

Which high school classes often help you in your current job:

15 responses

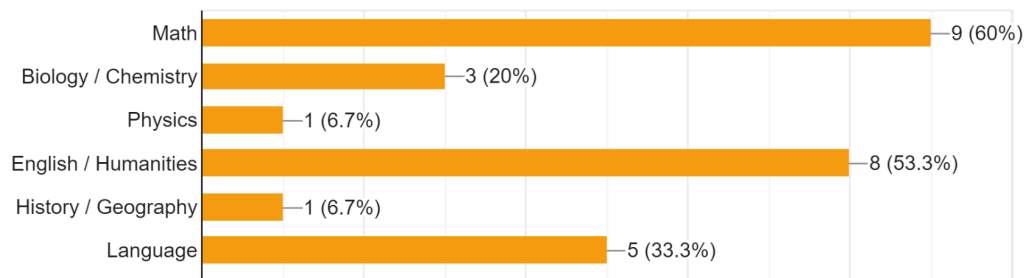


Figure 1

Which of the following do you feel high school prepared you for:

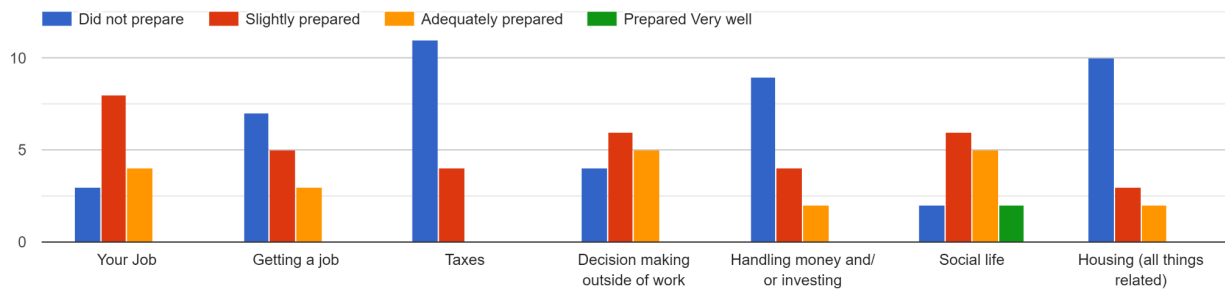


Figure 2

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