

Are There Too Many Rights for Teenagers?

By Tuhin Zahur

As any elder person about teenagers and you won't get better answers than fast, insubordinate, intrusive, wacky, extravagant, impractical... the list goes on. Teenagers do behave like the above comments made about them. They know very well why they behave in such ways and they blame the causes of their behaviour on their parents. But are the parents always the ones to blame?

Being a teenager I find a lot of differences between other teenagers and myself. My parents put a lot of restrictions on me, but I never speak a word against them because I believe them and I know whatever they will do will be the best for me. Many teen writers in RS are always writing against their parents and claiming for their teen rights! They want freedom, telephone rights, staying out rights and so on.

They badly want those rights, but the parents are adamant. I think the parents should stay stubborn! I don't know how many teens are swearing at me right now, but I am sure that after reading this article they will understand my reasons for thinking so.

A few days ago, I was bitterly shocked and infuriated when I went through a newspaper and found out what the teenagers did on the eve of the new millennium. That was really a dirty and shameful game played by the teens of Dhaka City. I blamed the parents for the teens' vulgar behaviour. Do you know why? It's because the parents did not keep their children under control and have given them too much freedom and too many rights! For such ignominies, of course, the parents are to blame. They have brought up their children in a so-called modern society and with hardly any restrictions. Without any restrictions, children go astray. So, I think parents should impose restrictions on us.

After stepping into teen years, teenagers think they are mature enough to make their own decisions and lead their life in their own way. They don't prefer parents interfering in their matters; they only want parents to make food for them and supply them with money. Why

do teenagers misbehave with their parents? I really felt bad when I went through an article in RS written by a teen writer who does not want parents to ask questions about their friends and their way of doing things. But I say parents should have the right to know who their children stay with and talk to. They need to know about their children's friend circle and whether their children are up to anything bad or not. Our parents did not give birth to us only for us to grow up till we are 13 years and let us live in any way we want. They gave birth to us with the plan that they shall make us proper human beings, no matter how long it takes. So don't treat your parents as if they are insignificant little ants.

Parents do not let us teen girls go outside because they don't want us to be harmed. They can't always let us hang around with our friends and gossip for hours after hours on the phone. Teenage life does not mean gossiping and hanging around. It means that you are growing up and that you have to get busy with your studies and have to be more considerate. That's why our parents constrict our movements. Our parents bring home money, which are the results of their hard work. If we keep on talking on the phones and augment the phone bill unnecessarily, then much of our parent's income will go in vain. Today's teens are only thinking about themselves and their own pleasures. They never understand that for our happiness our parents have sacrificed a lot of things. We teens have to be sympathetic to that.

One of the writers in RS wrote that our parents put restrictions on us because they don't trust us. Yes, in some cases it is true. But why would parents, without any rhyme or reason, disbelieve us? Our parents can't trust us while we keep on lying to them. It's the children's duty to build up trust in their parent's mind by listening and doing to what their parents say.

Last but not least, I should inform you all that there are no such rights as teenage rights. We teenagers are not too small or too grown up to have such rights yet. Our fate still depends on our parents.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY

By Zoheb mahmud khan

Hi there! I'm a regular reader of the best teen magazine of Bangladesh, the RS. The other day I read an article presented by Mr. Titoo titled 'What a Shame!

The RS editor invited people interested in the topic to write. Now, I don't exactly want to write anything against the facts put up by Mr. Titoo, but I want to put in a few things that probably slipped his mind.

The first thing is, which was actually hinted by Mr. Titoo at the end of his article, that sports and politics have indeed no connection. A sport is mere entertainment, whereas politics concerns the running of a whole nation. These two have nothing whatsoever in common. Even politically steamed up countries like Pakistan and India have decided against pouring politics into sports and have played against each other in a friendly manner. Sport is a symbol of unity, a way of expressing friendship and love. Sports help to unite nations.

So now we can come to the point. The Pakistanis fought against us in 1971 in the freedom war. They wanted to rule us and make Bangladesh a part of Pakistan. But the people of this country protested. They wanted to live as a different nation, a different country. They saw dreams of a country that would one day become a part of the developed world and would have a name and fame of itself as a free and capable nation. And so the war. And as they say 'God helps he who helps himself' The Pakistanis were defeated. They surrendered to a nation better than theirs and thus Bangladesh became an independent nation. But that was 29 years ago. Today, if we say that we won't play with Pakistan just because of what it did to us in 1971, it would not only separate us from Pakistan but also from the whole world. That would be sheer foolishness. Why make enemies with the nation that surrendered to us? If you lose a friend, you make an enemy. Why go and make enemies? Maybe sometimes it does make you wonder of what the 30,000 souls lost in the liberation war would say if they did some how get to see that we are supporting the same nation that they, 29 years ago, gave their life to defeat.

Editor's Note: The RS would like to thank all the people who sent in replies to this debate. Your response is most welcome.

Homework

By Areeb A Choudhury



Homework is a necessary evil of every student's life. It is a devious agent, employed by teachers all around the world, to make students utilise their free time solving long and tedious mathematical problems and writing out draft essays on relatively silly subjects such as "homework". In general, it is a tool used by teachers to bring pain and suffering into the lives of students cursed with lower comprehending powers than average. But seriously, if there were no homework at all, we would be bored stiff, but happily bored stiff, I think. We are extremely reluctant to admit that this fact is true, but it is. Being bored is a definite part of growing up into a sane human being. As some person once said, "All homework and no free time makes Ben into a raving and deranged psychopath in the near future."

Sometimes the teachers get a little too exuberant and "generous" with their hall of homework and we, the students, wind up with tons of it during the weekend. It has often happened that my plans to watch a good movie during the weekend were dashed, because some teacher, striving to finish the syllabus ahead of time, decided to give that little extra chapter or maths or essay or question in the overall heaped helping of homework. All homework is not bad, so say my friends. The thought must have crossed your mind that the guy who heaps so much abuse on homework must not want any part of it in the present or the future. But that thought is not entirely correct. I do like homework. Well, perhaps not all the time, but some are really a lot of fun to do. Such as writing a silly essay with no value except that it makes you smile. Or perhaps not...

Writers of Yesteryears

FROM PAGE 1

Born in 1902, John Steinbeck has earned much literary acclaim and is one of the vertebrates in the backbone of world literature. A Pulitzer prize-winner and winner of the 1962 Nobel prize for literature, the image of Steinbeck is slightly intimidating for us ordinary readers. Nevertheless, his books are written in deceptively simple English, and his plots, though compelling, are kept to a simplistic minimum. One of the most powerful and forceful writers of the English language, Steinbeck's books provide easy but thought-provoking reading.

In his books, Steinbeck creates a poignant yet vividly and starkly realistic picture of life for the low-income workers of the 30's Americas. His novels present a picture of the US rarely presented nowadays: as opposed to glamorous and luxurious, Steinbeck's America is one created by struggle and crude hard work. Each book etches out Steinbeck's confidence in the workers of America.

'The Grapes of Wrath' is perhaps Steinbeck's most important novel. It chronicles the struggles of a peasant family in Depression-struck USA as they travel from the harsh midlands to the west-coast in search of jobs, food and a new life. Getting there is not easy, but is the least of their struggles. Police harassment and persecution by rich, advantage-taking monopsonists are fringed by hope and untiring efforts to find a better life.

'Of Mice and Men' is an equally famous book, but appears more like a short story than a novel. It is the story of two landless farm hands who hope to find betterment for themselves, and how they deal with a tragedy that befalls them.

'East of Eden' is a retelling of the biblical

story of Cain and Abel, stressing upon mankind's fight between good and evil, and with a large amount of detail, in the form of 'human element', added.

None of Steinbeck's characters are perfect. They are incredibly, and at times, infuriatingly human. His novels, though widely acclaimed, are easy to read (and go a long way to disprove the 'the more long words, the better' hypothesis). Poignant, vivid and powerful, Steinbeck is one writer whose books really seem to be alive, whose characters really do seem to leap off the pages.

Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie remains acknowledged throughout the world as the Queen of Crime Fiction. She has written over seventy-eight detective novels and books of stories which remain popular even today. She was made a Dame in 1971. Her books are one of the most widely read books in the world. Her books have sold over a billion copies in English language with over a billion in 44 other foreign languages. Her books are outsold by only the Bible and Shakespeare.

In her first novel she created the now-famous Belgian detective Hercule Poirot, the most popular sleuth in fiction since Sherlock Holmes. Her other famous characters are Miss Marples, the old spinster whose mind never fails to surprise the readers and the enigmatic Harley Quin. What make her novels so irresistible is her intricate plots, the slow build up to a climax and the surprise endings which lingers in the reader's mind for a long time after he has finished reading the novel.

She has a simple writing style, which is suitable for young readers, but at the same time holding its appeal to adults. The plots are

unique in their mixture of simplicity and intricacy with subtleties which keep the readers guessing till the end. She lays out all the clues, letting the reader's mind wonder and roam from conclusions to conclusions, from one cul-de-sac to another, before she herself reveals the truth. Choose any Christie book from the shelf, and what you are likely to find is a murder (often more than one) which leads to multiple suspects. That is her common theme. But do not be discouraged to think that all her books are the same. The conditions are always different and I can bet you a million dollars that you will never guess who is the murderer.

Critics may criticize her for her single theme, and after reading forty of her novels you may find many of the characters reappearing again in different forms. But reading a Christie Novel is never monotonous. She rarely wastes words and never digress from her plot.

If you are planning to sit for O' level English I would suggest you read Agatha Christie novels. Since it is the English who are going to check your scripts and that they are naturally inclined towards a simple English style of writing, you may profit from reflecting Christie's style in your work.

So what are you waiting for? Pick up a Christie book, sit back in your easy chair, relax and enjoy the novel.

Suggested books by the author:
Curtain: Poirot's Last Case
Murder of Roger Ackroyd

Robert Ludlum

Robert Ludlum is an ingenious storyteller, with a wonderful and convincing imagination. Most of his books are political thrillers with

international settings. He wastes no words... What he writes about never happened, but it is so vividly done that the reader begin to believe that it could have. Some of his bestselling books are the Parsifal Mosaic, the Chancellor Manuscript, the Matarese Circle, The Bourne Identity etc.

The plots are very intricate and complex constantly demanding your attention. A careless reader might get lost in its myriad of complexities. If you start a novel at night you are likely to lose a night's sleep as you wouldn't be able to put it down.

Common elements in his plots are Nazis (or some equally compelling cults) and international conspiracy. The hero is always in danger and therefore constantly on the run, making narrow escapes all the time. In few of his books you would find him running all over Europe and America. Mostly the hero faces an opponent many times larger and stronger than him and of mammoth dimensions. Inevitably it is an individual against a whole organisation. Somehow or the other the individual always seem to come out on the top.

The plots are interesting and action packed but the reader may tire of their complexities. But if you like political thrillers, Ludlum is the man to read. He piles conspiracy upon counter-conspiracy, keeping his hero and the reader dangling right to the end. His writing style is not very descriptive, writing to the point and with relevance. He does not digress from the plot and builds up the story convincingly and effectively. The vocabulary is rich, but not out of grasp and people planning to sit for the SAT would find his books beneficial. It is sure to improve their verbal scores.