

# PARENTS SPEAK

Nityaa Gurumoorthy

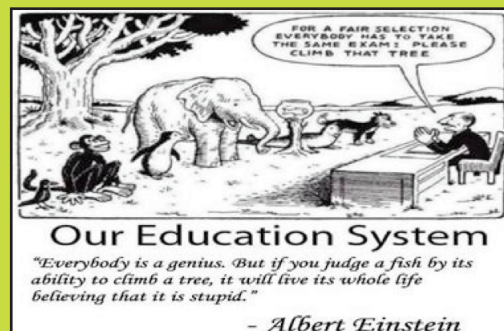


Assessment has become an integral part of the present school system right from Pre-KG. As a mother of 3-year old twins, who have had to undergo assessment from the very first month of joining school, I am unwillingly forced to pressurise my kids in an endeavour to prove their mettle. Comparisons and constant suggestions from teachers for improvement drive parents towards putting pressure on their kids even when they do not intend to do so. I have friends who sent their kids to extra classes after school to hone their skills in storytelling, drawing etc., which I felt was completely unwarranted at such a young age. We actually end up curbing their curiosity and innocence because of this undue stress and burden.

In school, children are expected to talk in English at an age where they do not even know their mother tongue very well! Children who do a lot of mischief or those who are hyperactive are sidelined, maybe due to the inability of teachers to hold their attention. They just end up being judged as trouble-makers and poor performers in school!

While my daughter loves to draw and colour, my son's interests are slightly different. He loves outdoor activities. However, the school expects a certain level of performance (according to me, quite high!) in both these areas, apart from many other as well. The focus and attention is always on the skills in which the child is not excelling, either due to lack of interest or various other reasons. Instead of focussing on what each of my children likes doing, extra attention is given on developing their skills in what they are quite not interested in, slowly resulting in an aversion to schooling itself.

While I think there definitely has been a lot of improvement since the time I myself went through school and teachers are a much more sensitive and aware of children's developmental needs now-a-days, there definitely is a long way to go before teaching and evaluation systems in schools actually become as progressive as some of the latest theories in education and schooling recommend.



*Nityaa Gurumoorthy is a home-maker and mother of 3-year old twins, Gurupriya and Kumaraguru, who are studying Pre-KG in a reputed school in Chennai.*