

Build an education based on praise rather than fear of punishment — Positive reinforcement vs negative reinforcement (operant conditioning)

We don't understand why we are learning what we learn in school. We aren't shown how to apply it in the real world. People aren't motivated if they don't see the vision for the goal they are working towards. Some people will if they are "visionaries" or goal-oriented, in which case they can focus and bear the suffering to achieve the goal in the future, but for the majority, there just isn't a clear enough connection between what they are learning and school and the practical application of it.

On top of that, the education system is built on a system where fear of punishment (low grades, which in turn affects university opportunities, affecting career opportunities) is the sole motivating factor to do well in school. Alex Hormozi said "Punishment only gets short term obedience. Praise gets long term loyalty." In the video saying "[How being in a relationship made me rich](#)". Since fear of not having career opportunities thus not being able to financially sustain ourselves, we do the bare minimum required NOT to be punished, which creates apathy towards school. We don't actually see a point in what we are doing, we just know we have to do it because it's what we have been told.

On the other hand, building a system of praise-first would build long-term loyalty. What does that mean? Not loyalty to the school, but loyalty to learning. Since in this case, the behavior being rewarded is self-education and personal development. The behavior is positively reinforced, which psychologically drives the person to continue doing it.

What would I do to build a school where nobody is inclined to learn?

- I would evaluate students using numbers (quantitatively) rather than qualitatively
- I would focus on grades rather than feedback on how to improve
- Punish those who do not follow instructions, rather than questioning why
- Evaluate learning in a standardized way using a rubric (checklist) to check for meeting expectations, rather than observing their learning through what they are doing
- I would not allow them to work on any projects that they are passionate about
- I would force them to take subjects that they are not interested in
- I would make them sit down for long periods of time, every day without mental breaks
- I would have teachers that do not continuously educate themselves and only recite their lessons year after year, without change
- I would have a rigid and outdated curriculum that does not adapt to integrate the latest information and technologies

What would I do to make a school where students are excited to learn?

- I would evaluate students qualitatively, and reinforcing good work positively
- I would focus on qualitative feedback, rather than grades. Grades don't do anything but create fear of punishment. By focusing on feedback, the student will know how to improve, and will be allowed to explain their thinking as to why they did what they did
- I would question those who don't follow instructions, to understand their thought process and allow them to build metacognition skills
- I would evaluate their learning through long term projects rather than checklists and rubrics
- I would allow students to work on passion projects that they will use to explore their curiosity and ingenuity
- I would guide students to learn the fundamentals of the topics they need to build passion projects and be a functioning well-rounded person. This does not mean no mandatory courses,

but it means a minimal number of compulsory courses, that students can go through at their own pace

- I would allow students to stand up, collaborate, walk around classrooms, go outside and enjoy nature + fresh air, with a focus on living a physically active and healthy life.
- I would only hire teachers who are actively working in the field that they are brought to teach. These would give lectures based on their expertise and continuously updated information. People who are passionate about a topic teach it the best.
- I would have a continuously updated curriculum to teach the latest technologies and allow students to go through it at their own pace.

The Result

This would rather look like a community of students all working together towards self-improvement and building a passion project, and where shared interests intersect, they can learn from each other.

More ideas:

In computer science, “It doesn't matter how you know how to do it, you just know how to do it”

How to positively reinforce learning:

Start at 0, add points for every assignment rather than starting from 100 and removing marks

Once a student sees their average mark at something like a 95%, they'll do the minimum amount of work necessary not to get punished. This means that they'll put in only the amount of work necessary to get 95%, so that their mark does not drop. On the other hand, if each assignment is assessed separately and does not impact your “overall” competency in the field, but rather shows a progression of your learning, students will always be motivated to do as much as possible to get the best grade, or highest quality work. If you get a 50 on the first assessment then a 100 on the next, but your average becomes a 75, you'll be demotivated because even though you put in your maximum effort on the 100% assignment, it's as if your level of competency in the subject is still average, (75%). If you simply get points for every assignment, and these points are independent of one another, and the points are a holistic representation of your understanding and competency in the subject, students will be much more likely to put in all their effort. The last grade should be the one used to assess your current understanding. The learning should compound, it shouldn't be the grade that is compounded and averaged throughout the semester

Political/ideological bias to promote creativity and critical thinking

In order to think critically and be creative, you have to challenge the status quo, which risks being offensive. Fostering a safe and respectful environment where students can share or question “politically correct” or socially accepted ideas is crucial to teaching critical thinking and creativity.