Source Entry for “Schools Kill Curiosity”

Part 1 MLA Citation

Berliner, Wendy. “ ‘Schools Are Killing Curiosity’: Why We Need to Stop Telling Children to Shut up and Learn.” The Guardian, Guardian News, and Media, 28 Jan. 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/jan/28/schools-killing-curiosity-learn>.

Part 2 Summary

**The passage “’Schools Are Killing Curiosity’: Why We Need to Stop Telling Children to Shut up and Learn,” by Wendy Berliner is about** how children get less curious when they start school and as they get older. **According to the writer**, teachers should place more emphasis on encouraging students’ curiosity, which may be even more important than encouraging focus and good behavior. **Berliner mentions that** children are born curious but when they start school, they stop. **The writer emphasizes** how certain teachers stimulate and promote children’s curiosity. **The writer uses** the example of a nursery school that confiscated toys from two-year-old children and replaced them with household items. This approach motivated the kids to be more imaginative and creative. **Berliner concludes by** quoting Paul Howard-Jones, professor of neuroscience and education at Bristol University, who said, “Children should be prompted and encouraged to ask questions even though that can be challenging for the teacher.”

Part 4 Rhetorical Analysis

The **genre** is a feature piece. The primary **audience** is teachers and parents of young children; the secondary audience is the general reading public. The **purpose** is to inform. The author’s **writing style** is objective and factual. She employs a logical tone. Berliner uses the **appeal** of logos by referring to research studies. Berliner is **credible** because she is the author of the book “How to Succeed at School. What Every Parent Should Know.” She uses the appeal of ethos when she writes that she is co-author of this book. She also employs pathos in the story of the innovative pre-school classroom where kids played with household “toys.” The classroom felt so ideal and fun. The Guardian is a **reliable** source because they were rated the most trustworthy online UK newspaper brand – ranked as such by 73% of regular readers. The Guardian’s values include encouraging a welcoming and open culture, standing up for what they think is right rather than what seems convenient, and aiming for perfection to serve their audience’s interests. This article was written in Jan 2020, so the information might not be **current**, but it is not too old.

Part 5 Notable Quotables

“Dr Prachi Shah, a developmental and behavioral pediatrician and research scientist. . . says: ‘Promoting curiosity in children, especially those from environments of economic disadvantage, may be an important, under-recognised way to address the achievement gap. Promoting curiosity is a foundation for early learning that we should be emphasizing more when we look at academic achievement’” (Berliner).

“When teachers teach young children not to ask questions, it is not surprising that high-performing students studied by American researchers in 2013 were found to be less curious, because they saw curiosity as a risk to their results” (Berliner).

“Children are born curious. The number of questions a toddler can ask can seem infinite – it is one of the critical methods humans adopt to learn” (Berliner).

Matt Caldwell headteacher says, “School kills curiosity. When do children get to ask questions about things that interest them? As soon as they are at primary school they have to shut up and learn. It’s not the fault of teachers. They have so many targets to meet” (Berliner).