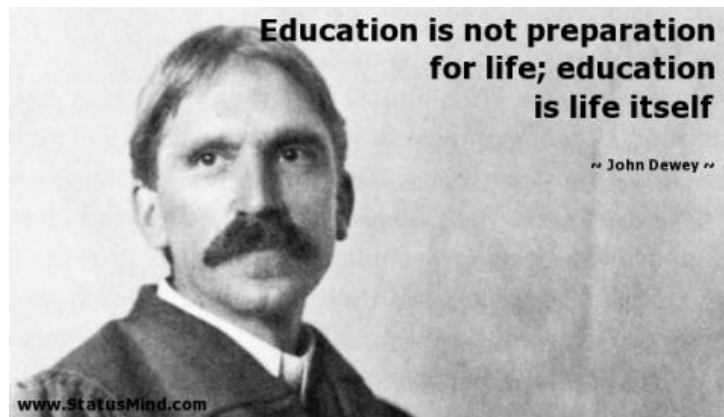




Merriam Webster's definition:

Education is the action or process of teaching someone especially in a school, college, or university.

Although this definition of education seems very simple and straightforward, I believe there is a much deeper meaning to the word.

The most influential education thinker of the 20th century, John Dewey, expressed the importance of “learning by doing”, relevance of what students learn to their real life and future objectives. These ideas called for changes in schooling and the importance of learning outside of school. If Dewey were alive today, I think he would object to Merriam Webster's limited definition, as I do. So, I am going to add to their definition here.

Education is the process of learning through school and life experience, new technology access, and well-rounded activities.

I think that education can definitely come from a school or university but that is only a part of it. Knowledge comes from education but it is not the only way to attain knowledge. Getting knowledge does not only come from schools or universities but you can also achieve knowledge from experiencing different aspects of life. This can be referred to as ‘street knowledge’. Knowledge can be something simple like understanding not to punch a brick wall or it can be something complicated like something you learn in school such as being able to solve advanced calculus problems.

Howard Gardner, a Harvard professor, developed the concept of ‘multiple intelligences’ to describe the many different ways that people learn and their many different strengths. In his [“Big Thinkers”](#) video you can watch he states

“unless they learn to ask questions, to do things hands-on, to essentially recreate things in their own mind and then transform them as is needed, the ideas just disappear.”

Gardner identified seven types of “intelligences” explaining that one might learn more easily in one area than another. If we are stronger in one or another of these “intelligences” we may be more likely to spend more time learning in that way. One may be more educated in sports than in art, for example. This does not mean one is not educated it simply means one is not educated in that area. As with all knowledge, no one person is exactly as good as another person at the same things, we are each unique individuals with our own patterns of strengths and preferences. Again, Merriam Webster seems to have missed out. But my definition covers it.

Multiple Intelligences

Visual-Spatial

Thinking in terms of physical space, as do architects and sailors

Bodily-kinesthetic

Using the body effectively, like a dancer or a surgeon

Musical

Showing sensitivity to rhythm and sound

Interpersonal

Understanding, interacting with others

Intrapersonal

Understanding one's own interests, goals

Linguistic

Using words effectively

Logical –Mathematical

Thinking conceptually

Traditional education also includes more book knowledge and less hands-on knowledge because people used to think that book knowledge was much more important. In fact some people today still think that having street knowledge is not important but one could argue that it is actually the most important type of education that there is. Today technology gives us immediate access to knowledge that previously had to be memorized. Now we can learn through our phone or computer what we needed to go to school for in the past. And now we need to learn new skills that were not needed before—such as how to evaluate truth of sources we find, how to formulate questions to find answers. With the changes in our world, ‘street knowledge’ is critical.

Some people have more ‘street knowledge,’ they are wiser and have a lot of common sense. Although these strengths are overlooked sometimes by schools and universities, if you do not have this education you will have a very hard time getting through life. Having book knowledge allows you to get into many more universities than street smarts. Getting jobs can depend more on ‘street knowledge’ than doing well on a test. This knowledge is harder to see because you can’t give it a score and you can’t test it. You just have to accept that it is important without proof.

Some of the most successful contributors to the world did not choose book knowledge and did not graduate from college. As a result the idea that all people require a college or graduate degree for success in life is debated more now than in the past. Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Larry Ellison are technology leaders who did not choose to complete college and even in the arts F.Scott Fitzgerald, Charles Dickens, William Faulkner and Mark Twain- literary giants educated themselves outside of higher education.

In conclusion, many people say that education comes from a school or a university. Some think education comes from the learning we can gather in all aspects of our lives. It is impossible for any one person to be educated in everything, ideally each person will find their strengths and will be a life-long learner in whatever interests them.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/What-Does-It-Mean-To-Be-An-Educated-Person>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/What-Does-It-Mean-To-Be-An-Educated-Person>

Media Stream

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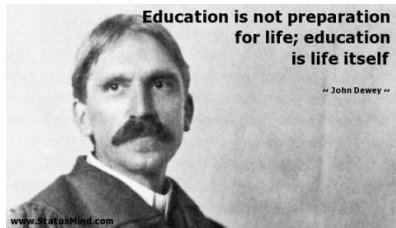
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View this asset at:

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John Dewey's Education Quote

Teaching and Learning in Higher Ed, John Dewey

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