

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

A Free Growing Person: Thoughts on School and Education Recorded *ad verbatim* on 20 July 2012 by Her Mum

Emily Butcher (aged six and three quarters), York, UK

School has no purpose. School makes you feel like you have no freedom. I have no purpose to be at school.

I always liked school in foundation stage but then it got bad in year 1. In year 1, I started to hate school. I learnt lots in foundation stage, I had a proper and decent teacher (Mrs Y) and plenty of friends, and I had a decent class. Most of my knowledge I learnt at home. In year 1, I had not very many friends. It was absolutely terrible and too easy. In year 1 they recapped what we did in foundation stage twice; Mrs X was a decent teacher, also Mrs Z.

I don't like being told what to do by people who have no common sense and tell you things that are foolish and boring. Bad teachers are: Mrs A and Mrs B and Miss C—she tells everyone off. If you don't like children, why be a teacher?

A school is basically a big torture centre full of idiots who tell you boring things.

I don't need idiots to tell me what to do; I am a free growing person.

Mum asks: How does it make you feel to be at school? You know how we live close to school? I feel like creeping out and going home. I feel angry and I feel

like going back home and lying in bed and cuddling (mum).

Mum asks: how did you learn writing? Nobody taught me, I didn't need to be taught by anyone, not even myself. I just could write. I started to write when I was three.

Every day when I go to school I feel like I'm being kidnapped by lots of idiots. I have no purpose to be in that torture centre. I only enjoy break-times, the rest is boring. Mum asks: what do you enjoy about break-times? Just the freedom, people don't tell you what to do, so not loads of people going blah blah blah. I don't really want to play with people, I just want to get a break and get away from people.

The teachers are evil, incredibly evil and that's why I call them idiots. It's the way they think that they can torture us.

Mum asks: what would you do all day if you were not at school? I would be reading books that are actually interesting. I would go to the library every day and just have a look through and it depends on what I find in the library. That's how I would get my education.

I wish we had chess lessons at school because it's interesting. I find Othello,

scrabble and monopoly interesting. I like board games. I like to do jigsaws as well. Some of the teachers like Miss C think that the school is for stopping children being naughty, instead of giving them an education, which, by the way, I am not getting.

I never thought this school is a Christian school. Mrs D is making us sing about God, that doubles all the badness and is making it worse. Mum asks: you don't like singing about God? No, because he doesn't exist.

I don't like to speak in front of millions of kids. I've emptied my brain out. I might still have some more things to say.

I just generally think that school is just a big building full of guys that talk to you about stuff that is boring and foolish.

I think that school is just like giving birth, only birth is not as long—lots of pain and getting over the hump of getting the baby out. You've got to get over the hump (indicates with her hands) of school and then you've got your free adult time. I only think that because I have a big imagination. Most people think they are completely different things (birth and school) but actually there is a connection. (Then she drew on a piece of paper a 'thin line of connection' between the letters B and S)

I've got a big imagination. T [brother] has maximum headsize and a big imagination. My head is so big because it has lots of imagination and my brain is going to explode. I've got so much imagination that I just don't need idiots in a big building to tell me what to do because I can think for myself. Other people want to be told what to do so they don't have to think for themselves!!

School is just somewhere you don't need to go, just a big building with people in it who tell you what to do. You get non-educated, they are meant to educate you but they don't, well I don't at least.

I think school is just destructing your brain, they get an invisible crane and lift out all your thoughts about not going to school and hating school and replace them with thought of "school is really awesome" (accompanied by little dance and funny exaggeratedly happy voice).

I work hard because I go with the flow. I just try hard, I go with whatever happens. Even though it's boring I don't want to say it's incredibly boring because they will tell me off and push me around, like this and push me into Mr P's office and then Mr P will go "you did this," "you did that" blah blah blah.

I like talking about school, just because, you know, I get rid of all my ideas. There is no reason for me to be going to school, I just don't get schools.

I wish that I had a decent teacher. (we talk about Mrs B shouting at year 5 and year 2's about not lining up properly and how she likes to have power in this way). That's right mum, you really get it.

Teachers love to have power over kids like "you are feeling sleepy" (voice of Kaa) and then they kill them. I don't literally mean that, but that's how it makes you feel.

It makes you feel really babyish, I'm getting really annoyed because they are so mean (this all said in a baby-voice).

School is a bright and happy and cheerful place, but for me it is a dark gloomy and miserable place—not literally dark.

Mum asks: what would make you feel happier, do you think you could feel happy

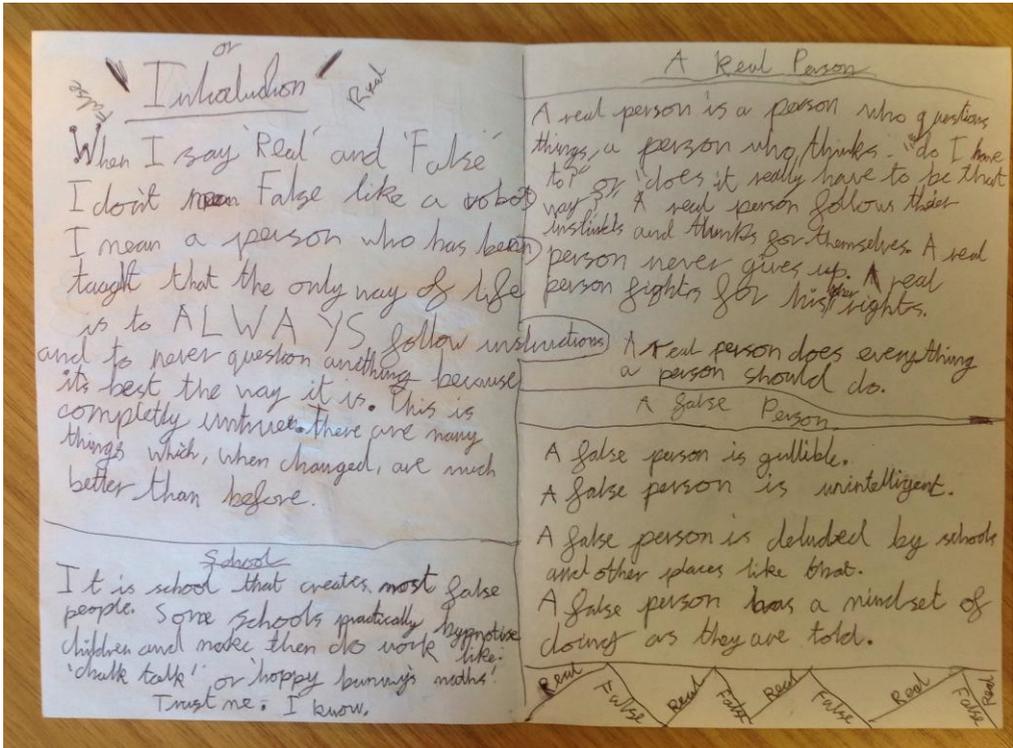
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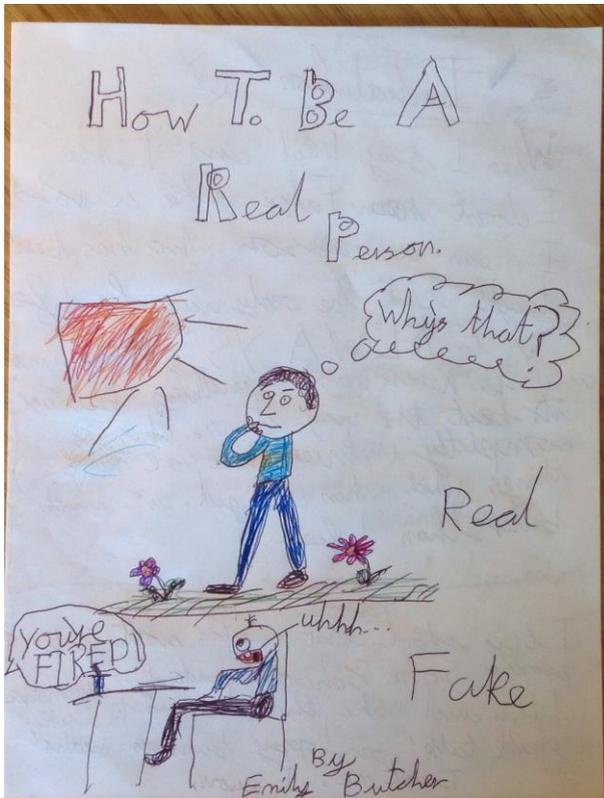
at school again as you did in foundation stage? No, because the teachers don't bother to find any harder stuff for me to do.

School is a torture centre with people in it who tell you to do things, they tell

you to go outside and then they ring a bell and shout "get inside, get inside."

Here are some things I wrote and drew in December 2013 which follow on from the things I said above.





Author details

Emily Butcher is 8 years old and lives in York with her older brother, mum and dad. She loves reading, hamsters, writing, playing the piano, walking and climbing and collects lots of things. She has written numerous stories and comics and wants to be an author. She is an unwilling year 3 pupil at her second primary school (the first one was just too bad). She doesn't like her new school either and she wants to be home educated. She is determined not to be fooled by the school system and feels very strongly that education should be about free choice and learning to think for yourself—not something her school encourages. **Email:** aukjenoorman@btinternet.com



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