

UNIT 13

John Dewey

Let's hear from... (1938/1998) *Experience and education*.
Indianapolis: Kappa Delta Pi Publications, pp. 4-8.

The rise of what is called new education and progressive schools is a product of discontent with traditional education. In effect it is a criticism of the latter. When the implied criticism is made explicit it reads somewhat as follows: The traditional scheme is, in essence, one of imposition from above and from outside. It imposes adult standards, subject-matter, and methods upon those who are only growing slowly toward maturity. The gap is so great that the required subject-matter, the methods of learning and of behaving are foreign to the existing capacities of the young. They are beyond the reach of the experience the young learners already possess. Consequently, they must be imposed; even though good teachers will use devices of art to cover up the imposition so as to relieve it of obviously brutal features.

- If one attempts to formulate the philosophy of education implicit
 15 in the practices of the newer education, we may, I think, discover
 certain common principles amid the variety of progressive schools
 now existing. [...] To imposition from above is opposed expression
 and cultivation of individuality; to external discipline is opposed
 free activity; to learning from texts and teachers, learning through
 20 experience; to acquisition of isolated skills and techniques by drill, is
 opposed acquisition of them as means of attaining ends which make
 direct vital appeal; to preparation for a more or less remote future is
 opposed making the most of the opportunities of present life; to static
 aims and materials is opposed acquaintance with a changing
 25 world.

More than words

Glossary

acquaintance	(l. 24)	conoscenza, dimestichezza
amid	(l. 16)	tra (molti)
attain (v.)	(l. 21)	ottenere, raggiungere
device	(l. 12)	artificio, strumento
end	(l. 21)	fine, scopo
make (irr. v.) appeal	(l. 22)	invogliare, suscitare interesse
reach	(l. 10)	portata massima, limite
read (irr. v.) as follows	(l. 4)	recitare così (di testo)
rise	(l. 1)	nascita
somewhat	(l. 4)	piuttosto, più o meno
subject-matter	(l. 6)	tema, tematica

drill (l. 20)

This word, which originally indicates an electric tool for making holes in hard materials, stands for a systematic training consisting in multiple repetitions. This term is used in the military environment, e.g. *He was a member of the rifle drill team*, but also in civil contexts, especially with the meaning of 'exercise, practice', as in *Yesterday our office closed earlier due*

to a fire evacuation drill. In education, drills (or drilling) are repetitions - uttered by students - of a model given by the teacher, as in *We drill English irregular verbs every day*. Students can be drilled individually or in a group.

This teaching technique may be used to improve pronunciation and intonation, or to practice new grammar and vocabulary. Drilling is a controlled practice activity: this means that the teacher can make students talk early in the lesson, before they are ready for freer speaking practice activities. It also allows the teacher to check and make corrections as necessary before errors become embedded.



EXERCISE 1. The first column contains words found in the opening text. Match each of them with the corresponding synonym.

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
| 1. product | (l. 2) | a. camouflage (v.) |
| 2. foreign to | (l. 8) | b. range |
| 3. cover up (v.) | (l. 12) | c. excogitate (v.) |
| 4. variety | (l. 16) | d. outcome |
| 5. formulate (v.) | (l. 14) | e. alien to |

Odd pairs & false friends

subject (l. 6) vs. **argument**

subject = argomento, materia

*My best **subject** at school is maths.*

argument =

- serie di affermazioni fornite a favore di un'opinione:
*I am going to bring my **argument** against nuclear power stations.*
- scambio di opinioni, discussione emersa tra due o più persone su una questione:
*You will not draw me into an **argument** about football.*

above (l. 5) vs. **over**

Utilizzati come preposizioni o avverbi, entrambi significano **sopra**.

above =

- come preposizione è usato per misure, temperature, altezza e in altri contesti nei quali ci si riferisce a una scala verticale:
*Our village is 200 metres **above** sea level.*
*The temperature is 30 °C **above** zero.*
- come avverbio è usato spesso nei documenti
*See **above** for further details.*
*Consider the data displayed in the table **above**.*

over =

- 'sopra' senza contatto
*The sun is **over** the hill.*
- 'sopra' in modo tale da toccare e coprire ciò che è sottostante
*Fit the plunger **over** the sink hole.*
- 'oltre', per indicare che qualcuno ha superato una certa età o velocità
*She can't marry him, he's **over** 70 years old!*
*We are driving **over** 130 mph.*
- 'nel corso di', per indicare un periodo di tempo
*He has been alone **over** the last few years.*

Osserva anche **on**, che indica 'sopra' con contatto:

*The book is **on** the table.*

Ricorda, però: **on the lake**, **on the river**, **on the sea**.

already (l. 10) vs. **just**

already = già

A: *Shall I wash the dishes?*

B: *No, thanks, I've **already** washed them myself.*

just =

- (adj.) giusto, imparziale
*Did he get a **just** trial?*
- (adv.) solamente, semplicemente
*I **just** want to be left alone, nothing else.*
- (adv.) appena, da poco tempo
*I've **just** come back from school.*



EXERCISE 2. Fill in the sentences below by means of the words explained in *Odd pairs & false friends*.

1. Paul's _____ falls apart when it comes to bringing evidence.
2. They live _____ lake Como.
3. The eagle was flying _____ our heads.
4. This summer the temperature has never reached 30 degrees _____ zero.
5. Well done George, this is a nice _____ for discussion.
6. His latest book is _____ another repetition of his previous novels.
7. You don't need to phone him, I've _____ talked to him.
8. Did you leave the papers _____ the shelf?



EXERCISE 5. The text below summarizes Dewey's notion of new education. Fill in the gaps using the following words.

response, should, who, will, according to, acquiring, attempted, reality, educator, proponent, develop, on

In *Experience and Education* the author _____ to explain what constitutes progressive education. Dewey wrote this book in _____ to the educators and the advocates of traditional education _____ attacked progressive education. It was his hope to _____ a principle of education which might focus _____ students and to define the roles of the _____ in progressive education. Being a _____ of positive educative experience, he noted that progressive education and traditional education provide experiences: what is important is what sort of experience the educator _____ use to have the student acquire knowledge. _____ Dewey, traditional education would just transmit the knowledge accumulated through history without connecting the past to the _____ of the student. _____ the knowledge became the end goal of the education process: Dewey expressed the view that the present _____ always remain in focus.