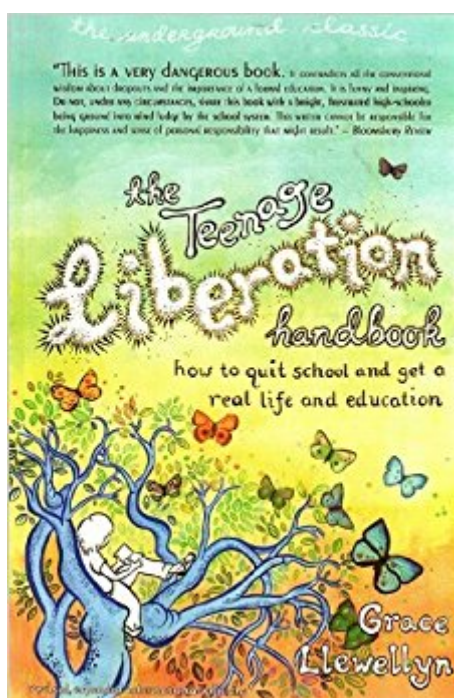


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# The Teenage Liberation Handbook: How To Quit School And Get A Real Life And Education



## Synopsis

An estimated 700,000 American children are now taught at home. This book tells teens how to take control of their lives and get a "real life." Young people can reclaim their natural ability to teach themselves and design a personalized education program. Grace Llewellyn explains the entire process, from making the decision to quit school, to discovering the learning opportunities available.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

You won't find this book on a school library shelf--it's pure teenage anarchy. While many homeschooling authors hem and haw that learning at home isn't for everyone, this manifesto practically tells kids they're losers if they do otherwise. With the exception of a forwarding note to parents, this book is written entirely for teenagers, and the first 75 pages explain why school is a waste of time. Grace Llewellyn insists that people learn better when they are self-motivated and not confined by school walls. Instead of homeschooling, which connotes setting up a school at home, Llewellyn prefers "unschooling," a learning method with no structure or formal curriculum. There are tips here you won't hear from a school guidance counselor. Llewellyn urges kids to take a vacation--at least for a week--after quitting school to purge its influence. "Throw darts at a picture of your school" or "Make a bonfire of old worksheets," she advises. She spends an entire chapter on the gentle art of persuading parents that this is a good idea. Then she gets serious. Llewellyn urges teens to turn off the TV, get outside, and turn to their local libraries, museums, the Internet, and other resources for information. She devotes many chapters to books and suggestions for teaching yourself science, math, social sciences, English, foreign languages, and the arts. She also includes advice on jobs and getting into college, assuring teens that, contrary to what they've been told in

school, they won't be flipping burgers for the rest of their days if they drop out. Llewellyn is a former middle-school English teacher, and she knows her audience well. Her formula for making the transition from traditional school to unschooling is accompanied by quotes on freedom and free thought from radical thinkers such as Steve Biko and Ralph Waldo Emerson. And Llewellyn is not above using slang. She capitalizes words to add emphasis, as in the "Mainstream American Suburbia-Think" she blames most schools for perpetuating. Some of her attempts to appeal to young minds ring a bit corny. She weaves through several chapters an allegory about a baby whose enthusiasm is squashed by a sterile, unnatural environment, and tells readers to "learn to be a human bean and not a mashed potato." But her underlying theme--think for yourself--should appeal to many teenagers. --Jodi Mailander Farrell

"Bursting with ... wise guidance .... the sole inspiration for ... an endeavor we thought was out of the question." -- The Millennium Whole Earth Catalog  
The TLH is more than a book. It's a map . . .  
Sometimes funny, sometimes sad, but always thought provoking... -- In2Print Magazine, Fall 1997  
The single essential book for those who value learning but not school... a complete tool kit. . . -- LUNO (Learning Unlimited Network of Oregon), April 1992  
Will . . . embolden homeschoolers to be courageously creative . . . and will encourage parents to trust their children's choices. -- Clonlara Home Based Education Program[Llewellyn's] enthusiasm. . . , great faith in kids, and... wonderful educational possibilities she presents will make her book tantalizing reading.... --Booklist, October 15, 1991

My teen just wouldn't read it all...I think, w/online courses offered today that its onlyj OK...I'm sure when it first came out it was essential but not so much any longer....the online EDU opportunities are changing the entire landscape for homeschooling....nicely written and very sincere tho.

The most essential principles that school children learn from regimented institutionalized schooling are 1.) that they are incapable of teaching and directing themselves 2.) that their time does not belong to them and 3.) that hatred of the unbearable present is a natural part of human existence. This conditioning follows most of us into our adult lives, as we exchange one domineering form of authority for yet another and never learn intellectual/mental independence. We enter the workplace to sell our time to bosses and fulfill alienating, drone-like work positions, without ever really figuring out what is important to us or fully understanding the vital concept of self-direction. The spoon-feed cycle spills over into all aspects of our lives, as we look to media talking head

"specialists" and "experts" to tell us what we should know and point us to information they deem important. Worst of all, we are constantly living for the promise of a utopian future that never arrives. School children are waiting for recess, the 3 o'clock bell and summer, while adults are waiting for lunch, the 5 o'clock hour and vacation. Our lives basically become an abstract mosaic of past and future. The present loses all meaning and becomes irrelevant, yet the idea that present misery is necessary for future happiness/comfort has been driven into our psyche since the day we entered the schooling regiment. Llewellyn passionately encourages kids to cast off these lies and take their minds and futures into their own hands, rather than buying into the empty abstractions and false promises of a institutionalized education system that kills off innate human spontaneous curiosity and love of learning. I won't reiterate what other reviewers have stated, but my favorite part about this book is Llewellyn's argument that true learning/intellect is born out of lived experience, not regurgitated facts memorized sans meaningful context and later forgotten. She shatters a slew of myths associated with institutionalized schooling, particularly the idea that the school setting provides a child with "friends." (Any meaningful friendships that occur within the age-segregated, institutionalized school environment truly occur accidentally, despite school authorities' best efforts to prevent "unauthorized" interaction!) Or that conventional schooling is a prerequisite for college and a "good job" later on in life. None of these myths bear a spark of truth, but what they are designed to do is prevent children from harnessing their unique potential as individuals and realizing the world of possibility that exists outside of the four walls of One-Size-Fits-All Junior High. And if they starting thinking along these lines, who knows where such radical thinking might lead? Give this book to every school kid you know. At the very least, it might provoke a shift of consciousness that just might save their intellectual life during their time in the schooling machine.

I started home-educating before there was even a trend--back in the 1980's. Though I am most likely not an example of the demographics that Grace wrote about, I benefited greatly by the freedom that the book availed. Why not lean to a teen's bent and form their educational experience around it? I have seen the benefits of this type of non-traditional approach to learning and it is a valid model for many. This book is interesting and well written; I highly recommend it. For any book to stick with a person for years like it did with me (I've read tons of books on educating, I'd say it is a valuable voice which should be heard. It is definitely worth your time and it will expand your mind to new possibilities--as a student, parent, or one in the business/calling of education.

I remember a classmate of mine reading the first edition of this book back in the early 1990's. I

wanted to put myself in my 17-year old shoes and see what he was reading about so, i purchased a copy of the book the other day. i soon realized that my 17-year old self was thoroughly well trained and indoctrinated into the system that she would have thought this book was ridiculous. Now, as a 40 year old mother of an unschooler (he has NEVER been to school and fills his days in ways that I would have never thought imaginable when I was his age) i find the book to be completely reasonable. Props to you Grace!

Great book, good read, novel ideas. I think all teens, especially those that feel stuck in school, should read it. Maybe their parents should, too.

We need to liberate children from this American "education" system far before they reach teenage. This is a great guide. Also, not to be missed, is anything written on the matter by John Taylor Gatto! He stopped teaching, though he was one of the top teachers in the country, because he no longer wanted "to hurt children".

"How strange and self-defeating," observes Grace Llewellyn, "that a supposedly free country should train its young for life in totalitarianism." I couldn't agree more. At 39, I'm still enraged by the condescension and repression I experienced in junior high and high school. I'm so glad this book has come back to print that I plan to buy multiple copies to give away for free to local teens as they walk home from yet another day at the public skulag. Youth liberation now!

According to Douglas McGregor, an uber-famous professor from MIT's sloan business school, a person can be viewed in two ways. 1st way is externally-directed known as "theory x." 2nd way is self-directed known as "theory y." (In learning circles, "unschooling" can be equated with "theory y.") This book's methods are for those who see a young person from a "theory y" viewpoint. It's the rare teacher, principal, or guidance counselor who views a student as "theory y." The demands and pressures put on them by the school-system itself tends to make them and even their students hold a "theory x" viewpoint. (Private school-systems are no better than their public counterparts in this regard. This reader's contact with private school-system educators has been contact with those who believe "theory x" to pretty much the only credible viewpoint.) I read this book and it does provide a lot of good pointers on how to "unschool" a teenager. This reader has some reference to judge methods on how to school a teenager. This reader has taught public high-school courses for nearly a year as a long-term sub.

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