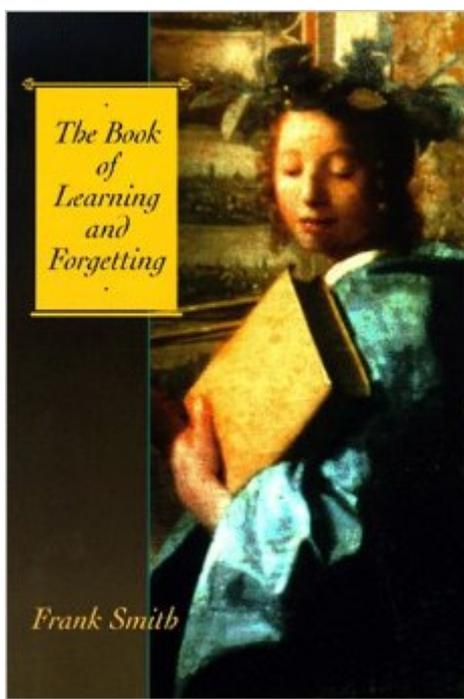# The Book Of Learning And Forgetting

Synopsis

In this thought-provoking book, Frank Smith explains how schools and educational authorities systematically obstruct the powerful inherent learning abilities of children, creating handicaps that often persist through life. The author eloquently contrasts a false and fabricated "official theory" that learning is work (used to justify the external control of teachers and students through excessive regulation and massive testing) with a correct but officially suppressed "classic view" that learning is a social process that can occur naturally and continually through collaborative activities. This book will be crucial reading in a time when national authorities continue to blame teachers and students for alleged failures in education. It will help educators and parents to combat sterile attitudes toward teaching and learning and prevent current practices from doing further harm.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Frank Smith has given educators substantial arguments for resurrecting the need for change debate. Smith goes underneath the surface and exposes the governing ideas that shaped western learning environments. He nicely explains how the influence of the triple whammy of military, behaviorism, and testing all contributed to making the monolithic educational machine more blind and resistant to natural learning. I love the way he ties the forgetting into the equation, and forces us to reflect on our methodologies and goals. In essence, learning according to the "official" system simply is a matter of compliance for the students, and control for the teachers. This is good material for those teaching overseas.I like the way he addressed how teachers may focus on measuring

what is not learned and may fail to see what is actually learned. Instead of finding fault with the student, he comments on the deficiency of the institutionalized "official" policy that goes unquestioned. Simply marvelous. Smith includes objections to his ideas and answers them in a fair manner. The book is easy to read, nicely dotted with interesting educational insights, and does a superb job in contrasting the official view with the classical view of learning. His ideas are no nonsense and resonate with any teacher and student. While his analysis is quite helpful, his simple three step solution was too simple for me. Smith proposes we be more understanding, honest, and I wish he would have given more examples or data that demonstrate how the changes have affected other teachers and systems. I also wish he would have said more about rewarding the self-directed learner.

This book is an easy read -- but filled with engaging content that helps you rethink your teaching methodology. Frank Smith stresses that students learn what is modeled, not just content. He occasionally reassures us not to memorize the book's content, but to read with interest. Do we take away that interest from our students by making them memorize information?Frank Smith talks about how we build up our own identity by "interacting with the significant people in our lives." He talks about the "clubs" we belong to -- those communities of influential people (both formal and informal)."Work experience and learning," should be recognized as a significant educational experience. Many times the greatest learning experiences do not come from classroom "sit time." What can we do as educators to effectively link our classrooms to the world of work?You'll be so glad to read about correct and incorrect spellings of words stored in our memory -- sometimes we aren't able to sort them out. I thought it was just me -- I was glad to know I wasn't the only one!I have always heard that once something is placed in long-term memory, it's always there. It's also nice to know that just because it's securely stored away, it's not always easy to access it. Frank Smith talks about creating a trail to that stored information. One thought triggers another and so on. That's why brainstorming is such an effective way of pulling together all those concepts so safely packed away in our heads.Frank Smith goes into the militaristic history of the educational system, and explains why we do certain things -- and challenges educators to understand and change some of that tradition.

The Book of Learning and Forgetting In Praise of Forgetting: Historical Memory and Its Ironies Strength in What Remains: A Journey of Remembrance and Forgetting The Forgetting River: A Modern Tale of Survival, Identity, and the Inquisition Seeing Is Forgetting the Name of the Thing

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