

Synopsis

One day, third-grade teacher Kyle Schwartz asked her students to fill in a blank in this sentence: "I wish my teacher knew _____." The results astounded her. Some answers were humorous, others were heartbreaking—all were profoundly moving and enlightening. The results opened her eyes to the need for educators to understand the unique realities their students face in order to create an open, safe and supportive place in the classroom. When Schwartz shared her experience online, #IWishMyTeacherKnew became an immediate worldwide viral phenomenon. Schwartz's book tells the story of #IWishMyTeacherKnew, including many students' emotional and insightful responses, and ultimately provides an invaluable guide for teachers, parents, and communities.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have received the book in exchange for an honest opinion, this will not change my viewpoint regarding the book. I wish my teacher knew was an assignment thought up by third grade teacher and author Kyle Schwartz, the answers were not all published, except tear-jerking ones. But the revelation from the assignment should spark a new fear for our future generations, I am not talking about just American school system, even though the book is written based on U. S. statistics. The truth is, a lot of countries are having the same problem, a lot of developed countries, First World countries where these problems should not exist. First of all, the author discusses poverty, unstable environment and lack of teacher support and its impact on student life. We talked about it, how being hungry makes it hard to concentrate, kids from lower socioeconomic classes tend to do badly

in studies etc, but the author takes it one step closer: suggesting how to make a change to help. From a welcome pack to acknowledge a new student to a food closet where kids could take food without being judged, a gesture that means a lot to young souls. When you read those notes, you would realize how badly we are failing, or have failed our future. This is not just a simple assignment: to find out what students want the adults to know. You can attack the thought of asking the student to fill in the blanks. Honestly, he was just trying to understand his charge better. Knowing that your student is homeless, starving or is being abused is no laughing matter, but what are you doing to do about it? *I Wish My Teacher Knew* is a book everyone who care about our future should read, it highlights a lot of sore points in the education system. Worse of all, it highlights society's hidden problem, and we should work to solve it quickly. These children are the pillars of our future, and if we screw up their education, what will become of the future?

An honest and sincere look at why teaching is such a difficult and critical vocation -- so many of the problems our children bring to class are things over which the teacher and the individual students have so little control. The author goes into detail about poverty, food and housing insecurity, family and personal loss and grief, abuse and trauma. She brings the statistics to life through the words of her students, as they share their answers to her simple writing prompt. I appreciate her passion and her belief in her students. Her enthusiastic endorsement of the necessity for the classroom to become a community of learning and support (I love that word "allyship") is spot on, and it is wonderful that her administrators are so open to her and her cohorts' creative ideas for outreach activities. It is also excellent that she provides several unique lesson ideas and charts of ways educators can adapt her ideas in their own classrooms. She also admits some of her own errors in implementation and what she learned from them, which is refreshing. Many of her ideas are inspiring and thought-provoking. But three concerns kick around my mind after reading this. One: yes, she briefly mentions Common Core standards and how she can address a few of them in a language arts context. But those academic pressures and the huge push for accountability in terms of standardized test scores, especially at the upper grades, are barely touched upon in this book. There are only so many minutes in the school day, and too many wonderful, essential "soft skills" are lost in the rush to cover required curriculum. How does a successful teacher reconcile this dilemma? Two: each of the thoughtful, caring ideas is presented from the lower elementary perspective. Things like classroom safe spots, food drawers and positive high-fives from each student are great ideas. I wish the author might have expanded just a bit more on ideas for upper grade and high school teachers who interact with upwards of 125 students a day, not 25. Has she

been able to follow up with some of her students as they rose through the grade levels? Were they able to sustain their positive attitudes? And three: I just want to extend a little word of caution about the hot-button issue of character education. For any young, enthusiastic, idealistic teacher who reads this book (and I hope many do!), please proceed cautiously and with eyes wide open in this area. Be sure you understand the culture of your school and your potentially very diverse community before jumping with both feet into instilling "values" into your students. Always ask yourself WHOSE values, and how and why you "know" this. Please develop a relationship with your administrators, your guidance department (I pray you have one!), social workers, special needs coordinators and your teaching counterparts at your grade level and those below and above you. Be ready to question your own beliefs and biases about what values are "right" and "wrong" and be prepared for a whole bunch of gray areas. No one said this teaching stuff would be easy!

I received this book free from Netgalley and Perseus Books Group, Da Capo Press for a fair and honest review. Thank you!! To begin with I am not a teacher or connected in any way to any educational profession. The first thing I would say about this book is that the author is clearly passionate about her job and willing to go the extra mile to help her students. It would be nice to say that all those in the teaching profession would be as passionate about their job but we are only human and have different motivations and levels of professionalism. The author goes through, in detail, a variety of topics, including food insecurity, dealing with grief, student engagement in the classroom, to treating all students equally, and the author's perspective on how things should be changed, is backed up with research and sociological theory that has been carried out. She also includes examples and ideas to kick start the readers off on their quest to improve student learning. I highly recommend this for anyone who is teaching students, or has hopes of entering the teaching profession. It is written to be accessible for teachers. However, every country has its own methods and rules of teaching and I am unsure if these methods would be or even could be used outside the U.S.

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