



## The School

The school is an agent which has formally been given the task of socializing the young in particular skills and values. Unlike preindustrial societies, modern industrial and especially postindustrial societies require a skilled and literate work force, and so the facilities and professional staff for schooling are provided at public expense.

In this setting, the young come for the first time under the direct supervision of people who are not relatives. The individual child is no longer considered somebody special; he or she is now one of a crowd, subject to the same regulations and expectations that everyone else is subject to. Personal behavior and academic achievements or failures become part of a permanent official record, and the children learn to evaluate themselves by the same standards that others apply to them. Participation in the life of the school also lessens the children's dependence on the family and creates new links to the wider society beyond.

The immediate task of the schools is to socialize the young in cognitive skills such as reading or mathematics and to provide knowledge about a variety of subjects, such as history or chemistry, that may not be available in the home. But the schools in every society also engage in values.

At a more subtle level, the school socializes through the "hidden curriculum" implicit in the content of school activities, ranging from regimented classroom schedules to organized sports. Children learn that they must be neat and punctual. They learn to sit still, keep quiet, wait their turn, and not be distracted from their work. They learn that individuals who can outdo their classmates are rewarded, while those who cannot compete successfully are regarded as failures. They learn that they should respect and obey without question the commands of those who have social authority over them. In teaching these attitudes and behaviors, the school is subtly socializing children for their later roles in the work force, where punctuality and obedience are highly valued.

**QUESTIONS:** Based on the ideas of the text, and in your own words, answer the following questions. Write complete sentences.

- 1.- What's the difference between workers in the preindustrial era and the one in the postindustrial societies?  
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- 2.- Are the students treated in the same way at home and at school? Give reasons to support your answer.  
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- 3.- Besides academic contents, what other skills do young people learn at school?  
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- 4.- What are the two main lessons for life students can learn at school?  
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- 5.- What essential communication strategy ( or strategies) is mentioned in the text?  
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