Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.

- **What is the essence of true education?**
- **How it is different from school learning?**
- **What aspects of school learning might be forgotten and why?**
- **What contributes to enduring education?**
- **How this education positively impacts personal growth?**
- **How society influence the nature of education?**
- **What needs to be done to transform school learning to life-long learning?**

Introduction:

- **On the eve of 15th August 1947, two countries gained their independence from the imperial yoke. One of them opted for independent secular education, based on the recommendations of its pioneering forefathers, while the other opted for an education system that was heavily influenced by religion.**

  Nearly 75 years later, the first country, which made a tryst with destiny long before she gained freedom, is well on course to fulfill its pledge, while the other has seen a near breakdown of its socio-political system and has been on the brink of collapse for nearly a decade.

  This story, of India and Pakistan, respectively, reflects how the education system of a country lays down the foundation of its future. Education is much more than what is being taught in school and classroom. In fact, education is a system of value that goes beyond books and is left with us, even when we are out of classrooms.

- **The Adaptive Journey of Steve Jobs**: Steve Jobs, dropped out of college but never stopped learning. The specific lessons or coursework he encountered during his formal education may have become a blur over time. However, his ability to adapt, innovate, and envision the future of technology persisted and shaped his revolutionary products. **Jobs epitomizes the concept that education extends beyond school, emphasizing the importance of creativity, adaptability, and the relentless pursuit of one's vision.**

- **Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, widely celebrated as the "Missile Man of India," embodied the essence of the quote**. His education went beyond the conventional boundaries of a classroom. Despite being deeply entrenched in academics and later excelling as a scientist, he never forgot the importance of morals, humility, and human values in the pursuit of knowledge and innovation.

  On the other side of the spectrum lies Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, often hailed as the "Father of Pakistan's Nuclear Program." While he certainly received an education

and conducted pioneering research, his contributions have been marred by ethical controversies.

The paradoxical representation of the quote through Dr. Kalam and Dr. Khan's educational journeys sheds light on the duality of education. It is not only about the **knowledge acquired in school but also about the choices, values, and ethical considerations that determine the lasting impact of that knowledge**. The enduring influence of education can either be a beacon of inspiration and progress, as seen in Dr. Kalam's legacy, or a reminder of the responsibility that comes with knowledge, as observed in the case of Dr. Khan.

- **In school, we learn with all our might,
Facts and figures, day and night,
But as memories fade with time's cruel jest,
True education endures, it's the heart's bequest**

Explanation:

The quote "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school" is often attributed to **Albert Einstein**. The sentiment expressed in the quote aligns with Einstein's views on education and **the importance of <u>critical thinking and lifelong learning.</u>**

The quote encapsulates
- **the idea that true education involves more than <u>rote memorization of facts</u> or knowledge acquired in school**.
- It emphasizes that the **lasting value of education lies in the <u>broader skills, perspectives, values and critical thinking</u> abilities.**
- endure even when **specific details or <u>subject matter may fade from memory</u>**.

What is the essence of education beyond school learning?

The essence of education beyond school learning lies in instilling critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and moral values.

For example, a person may forget specific historical dates learned in school, but the ability to critically analyse historical events and understand their impact on society remains a lasting aspect of education.

What is the distinction between school learning and education?

School learning is a **structured**, **formal process** within educational institutions, while **education encompasses a broader spectrum** of lifelong learning from various sources such as **experiences**, **interactions,** and **self-study.**

- **For instance, a person who never attended formal schooling but learned valuable life skills and wisdom from their grandparents and community is still considered educat**ed.

- **Sir Richard Branson**, a successful entrepreneur, **struggled with dyslexia and left school at a young age.** Despite limited formal schooling, he educated himself through real-world experiences, ultimately **founding the Virgin Group, a multinational conglomerate**.

- **Abraham Lincoln**, the 16th President of the United States, **had limited formal schooling, yet his journey is a testament to continuous self-education.**

What aspects of formal schooling might be forgotten, and why?

- **Specific facts, dates, and equations might be forgotten due to disuse or lack of relevance in daily life.**

- **For instance**, a person might forget **complex mathematical formulas taught in school if they do not pursue a related career or interest**. However, **the problem-solving methods and logical thinking acquired during math education remain valuable throughout life.**

- A successful lawyer may not remember every legal case studied in law school, but the **analytical and research skills** acquired during legal education are applied daily in their profession, showcasing the enduring impact of their education.

- **Dr. Manohar Parrikar**, an IIT alumnus and former Chief Minister of Goa, demonstrated **how problem-solving skills acquired in engineering education can be applied to governance and leadership.**

- A doctor-turned-bureaucrat, **Dr Rajendra Bharud**, the collector of Maharashtra's **Nandurbar** has managed to keep the district running with an **adequate supply of medical oxygen, hospital beds, isolation wards for Covid-19 patients and a well-planned vaccination drive.**

What contribute to enduring education?

- **Experiential learning**, such as conducting science experiments or participating in group projects, helps solidify concepts and fosters a deeper understanding.

   For example, a biology student may forget the details of a textbook definition but remember the excitement and learning from a hands-on dissection experiment, leading to a lasting understanding of anatomy.

Dr. Kiran Bedi, the first woman IPS officer in India, utilized her diverse experiences in law enforcement, social activism, and prison reform to educate and empower marginalized communities

- **Critical thinking** encourages individuals to **question, evaluate evidence, and form well-informed judgments.**

  For instance, a person might forget specific historical events but retain the ability to critically analyse various perspectives on historical occurrences, aiding a nuanced understanding of past events.

  For example: Socrates " life unexamined is not worth living".

- **Adaptability** allows individuals to apply knowledge to diverse contexts.

  For instance, a person who learned a programming language in school may forget the syntax but can adapt their problem-solving skills to learn a new language quickly, showcasing the lasting impact of their education.

  Elon Musk, a tech entrepreneur, continually adapts to new challenges, transitioning from co-founding PayPal to leading SpaceX and Tesla

- **Value system: "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all". Aristotle.**

- **Emotional intelligence**

How does education influence personal growth and self-awareness?

Education contributes to personal growth by fostering <u>empathy and understanding diverse viewpoints.</u>

- For example, a person who learned about different cultures and histories in school might have a broader perspective, enhancing their ability to relate to others and promote tolerance.

- **Malala Yousafzai**, an advocate for girls' education and women's rights, embodies <u>how education can shape personal values and activism.</u>

- **Sudha Murthy**, a renowned author, philanthropist, and Infosys Foundation chairperson, <u>emphasizes the importance of education in fostering empathy and social responsibility</u>.

What societal or cultural factors influence the long-term impact of education?

Societal factors, such as the availability of educational resources and opportunities, can significantly influence the enduring impact of education.

- For example, a person growing up in a community that values education and encourages lifelong learning is likely to perceive education as a continuous process, ensuring its lasting impact on their life and society as a whole.

- **Nelson Mandela, a prominent anti-apartheid revolutionary and political leader, demonstrated** how **societal values and a commitment to education can drive lasting change.**

- **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a key architect of the Indian Constitution and a social reformer, demonstrated the** transformative power of education in challenging societal inequalities and advocating for the rights of marginalized communities

- **As Victor Hugo famously said, "He who opens a school door, closes a prison",** governance is relatively smooth in an educated society.

What needs to be done to transform literacy to education?

We need to **revive the core values of education**. Capitalism led materialistic era has reduced education to a pursuit of professional degree rather than being a path to the critical thought process. This needs to be changed.

Firstly, we need to emphasize the **development of skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and collaboration**. Our education system needs to be aligned with our real-world problems.

Secondly, **education has always served as a moral compass**. However, the age of technology has revealed how education can also become the most advanced tool for unethical uses. From **Cybercrime to Dark Net**, the misuse of education is rampant. **In the words of CS Lewis, Education without morals always create more clever devils.**

We need to integrate ethical education into the curriculum to foster moral development and responsible decision-making. **We are again reminded of Gandhi and his vision of the Wardha Education Scheme, which focussed on holistic development.**

From the earliest days of **Vedic Education to Plato's Academy** to modern universities, the goal of education has been to create **innovative and responsible men**, who can add to societal progress. Education has always been a transformative process that goes beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge in schooling system.

Or,

"Nai Talim" (New Education) was a concept of education proposed by Mahatma Gandhi, aimed at transforming the education system to align with the principles of self-reliance, morality, and social justice. Here are some of its key features:

- Nai Talim emphasized a **holistic approach to education** that nurtured a person's physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions.

- Central to Nai Talim was the **idea of experiential learning,** where education was hands-on and practical, allowing students to learn through direct experiences.

- It focused on imparting **essential skills and knowledge** needed for everyday life, ensuring that education was relevant and useful to the learners and their communities.

- Nai Talim **integrated education with productive work**, linking classroom learning with practical skills and vocational training to develop a strong work ethic.

- The approach encouraged active involvement of the community, enabling students to learn from **local traditions, crafts, and skills** while contributing to community development.

- Nai Talim promoted **equality and inclusivity** by breaking down barriers of caste, creed, and gender, aiming to make education accessible to all, regardless of socio-economic background.

- It advocated for a **decentralized education system**, giving flexibility to adapt the curriculum according to the needs and interests of the local community.

- The education under Nai Talim focused on **instilling values like truth, non-violence, compassion, and honesty** to shape students into responsible and ethical individuals.

- Nai Talim encouraged an understanding of the **environment, sustainability, and ecological balance, promoting respect for nature** and responsible living.

- Students were encouraged to **develop a sense of social responsibility** and contribute to society's well-being, fostering a sense of citizenship and community service.

Nai Talim was aiming to create an education system that would empower individuals and communities, promote self-sufficiency, and lead to a just and inclusive society.

Or,

To further this idea and suggest a way forward, we can focus on fostering lifelong learning, critical thinking, and holistic education.

Promote Lifelong Learning:
- Encourage continuous learning
- creating a culture that values self-improvement, curiosity, and adaptability.
- Support avenues for online courses, workshops, and community learning programs.

Singapore's SkillsFuture initiative, for example, provides lifelong learning opportunities and upskilling programs for its citizens, enabling them to stay relevant in a rapidly evolving job market.

Emphasize Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:
- Education should prioritize the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills.

Finland's education system is often cited as an example, where students are encouraged to think independently, analyze information, and collaborate to solve real-world problems. This approach prepares individuals for various challenges beyond the classroom.

Integrate Practical Learning and Experiences:
- Blend theoretical knowledge with practical application through internships, project-based learning, and experiential activities.

Switzerland's dual education system effectively combines classroom instruction with on-the-job training, ensuring students have both knowledge and practical skills for their future careers.

Incorporate Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):
- Education should focus on nurturing emotional intelligence, empathy, and interpersonal skills.
- **The RULER approach developed by Yale Center** for Emotional Intelligence provides a framework for teaching emotional intelligence in schools.

Encourage Inclusivity and Diversity:
- Foster an inclusive educational environment that respects diversity
- **Canada's multicultural education model** encourages schools to embrace diversity, promoting tolerance and inclusiveness, preparing students for a globalized world.

Leverage Technology for Personalized Learning:
- Utilize technology to tailor education to individual needs and learning styles.
- Adaptive learning platforms, such as **Khan Academy,** provide personalized learning experiences, allowing students to progress at their own pace and revisit concepts they may have forgotten.

Advocate for Values-Based Education:
- Promote education that instils **moral and ethical values**, encouraging students to become responsible and compassionate global citizens.
- The "**Character Education"** approach in the United States emphasizes teaching values such as respect, responsibility, and integrity alongside academic subjects.

By incorporating these principles and drawing from successful international models, we can develop an educational approach that leaves a lasting impact, aligning with the quote's essence of education enduring beyond what we learn in school.

Government schemes like 'Education for All' or 'Skill India' demonstrate our commitment to empower individuals through knowledge. Let's embrace the idea that true education endures beyond school, shaping our character and values. Let's strive for a world where education's impact goes far beyond the classroom, contributing to a better society for all."

"Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's words, **'Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever,' we must recognize that education is a lifelong journey**.