The reading states that Chevalier’s memoirs aren’t accurate and thus they cannot be used for historical purposes. The lecturer expresses a contrary opinion, and explains why they are indeed accurate enough to be considered a historical source of information.

The first point presented by the lecturer to cast doubt on the reading is that borrowing money that actually mean you are poor. She argues that people who liquidate their assets, usually have to wait a few days before the receive the cash for the sale, so if they run out of money in between the sale and that moment, they may very well need to borrow money. This does not mean they are poor, but the opposite.

The second point used by the lecturer is that Chevalier usually took notes of the conversations he had with influential people. This casts doubt on the statement made by the reading, which says that a memoir written years after a conversation cannot reflect the topics and position accurately. Moreover, the lecturer presents the declarations made by people close to Chevalier, who comment that he usually read personal notes while writing his memoirs.

The third and final point presented by the lecturer is that Chevalier most probably did not get the guards at the prison he was at bribed because there where other much more influential and politically connected prisoners who were not able to escape that way. This contradicts the reading which states that Chevalier’s escape through his prison’s roof was not real and that he was let go by bribed guards. Besides, the lecturer introduces evidence in the form of Venician government documents that prove that the ceiling had to be fixed after Chevalier’s escape, indicating that for some reason, it had broken, most probably, his escape.

In conclusion, the points made by the speaker contrast with the reading. The justification for the loans together with information about Chevalier’s note taking demonstrate that the inaccuracy of the memoirs is in doubt.

I agree with the statement. I believe it is important for students to learn concepts in school, and not just memorize facts, even if they are relevant to the topic in question. I mainly have three reasons for having this opinion.

The first one is that understanding ideas is very useful, because it allows students to solve real-world problems that may come up. If, for example, a student learns about the social uprising during the french revolution, and understand the role every player had in it being solved, if a similar problem ever again arises, the population will be more prepared for dealing with it. If instead, they had just learnt facts about the revolution, like the number of weapons, soldiers, dates, that would not be of much use.

The second reason is that nowadays, there is an abundance of readily available information on the internet, that can be looked up easily with a search engine. This eliminates the need of having to remember facts about certain topics because if you understand the idea, you can look up specific facts you do not remember to be able to overcome the problem you are facing.

Finally, understanding the core of a topic or subject, the main concepts behind it, we are able to not only apply them, but also mix them, and evolve them into new and maybe more promising ideas. With facts, you cannot do this. Facts are facts and cannot be tampered with. If in school we just learned facts, science, sociology, anthropology would not be able to advance.

In conclusion, because of the many advantages presented in the real world by learning ideas rather than facts in school, it is that I agree with the statement.