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Destroying the wonderful thing called childhood

Good schools give a child both time and space. Growing kids need all the time in the world to gather their thoughts, while still dreaming their dreams. They need space to wander around the grassy fields - and also play vigorous games.

Our children have an enormous capacity for fun, and often see life as comic. Good teachers know this, and encourage it while stressing the serious.

The essence of schooling is teaching, with the occasional joke as condiment. Just like a meal.

The essence is never testing, and more testing, and still more testing. That destroys the wonderful thing called childhood, which is in our trust - and on which we all depend for the future.

We must always let these young creatures be happy. A cheerful child is our best hope for the future. A miserable child indicts us all.¹

¹ *The Times Register (Debate)*, 22 April 2003. (Lead letter, signed as Co-Founder, Professional Association of Teachers. As to the latter see [5.4](#)).

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