

William Sydney Porter (1862-1910), who wrote under the pseudonym of O. Henry, was born in North Carolina. His only formal education was to attend his Aunt Lina's school until the age of fifteen, where he developed his lifelong love of books. By 1881 he was a licensed pharmacist. However, within a year, on the recommendation of a medical colleague of his father's, Porter moved to La Salle County in Texas for two years herding sheep. During this time, Webster's Unabridged Dictionary was his constant companion, and Porter gained a knowledge of ranch life that he later incorporated into many of his short stories. He then moved to Austin for three years, and during this time the first recorded use of his pseudonym appeared, **allegedly** derived from his habit of calling "Oh, Henry" to a family cat. In 1887, Porter married Athol Estes. He worked as a draftsman, then as a bank teller for the First National Bank.

In 1894 Porter founded his own humor weekly, the "Rolling Stone", a **venture** that failed within a year, and later wrote a column for the Houston Daily Post. In the meantime, the First National Bank was examined, and the **subsequent** indictment of 1886 stated that Porter had embezzled funds. Porter then fled to New Orleans, and later to Honduras, leaving his wife and child in Austin. He returned in 1897 because of his wife's continued ill-health, however she died six months later. Then, in 1898 Porter was found guilty and sentenced to five years imprisonment in Ohio. At the age of thirty five, he entered prison as a defeated man; he had lost his job, his home, his wife, and finally his freedom. He emerged from prison three years later, reborn as O. Henry, the pseudonym he now used to hide his true identity. He wrote at least twelve stories in jail, and after re-gaining his freedom, went to New York City, where he published more than 300 stories and gained fame as America's favorite short story writer. Porter married again in 1907, but after months of poor health, he died in New York City at the age of forty-eight in 1910. O. Henry's stories have been translated all over the world.

1. Why did the author write the passage?
 - A. because it is a tragic story of a gifted writer
 - B. to outline the career of a famous American
 - C. because of his fame as America's favorite short story writer
 - D. to outline the influences on O. Henry's writing

2. According to the passage, Porter's Father was _____.
 - A. responsible for his move to La Salle County in Texas
 - B. the person who gave him a life-long love of books
 - C. a medical doctor
 - D. a licensed pharmacist
3. The word "**allegedly**" in line 9 is closest in meaning to _____.
 - A. supposedly B. reportedly C. wrongly D. mistakenly
4. Which of the following is true, according to the passage?
 - A. both of Porter's wives died before he died
 - B. Porter left school at 15 to become a pharmacist
 - C. Porter wrote a column for the Houston Daily Post called "Rolling Stone"
 - D. the first recorded use of his pseudonym was in Austin
5. The word "**venture**" in line 17 is closest in meaning to _____.
 - A. challenging experiment
 - B. bold initiative
 - C. speculative action
 - D. sorry experience
6. The word "**subsequent**" in line 19 is closest in meaning to _____.
 - A. resulting B. police C. alleged D. official
7. Porter lost all of the following when he went to prison EXCEPT his _____.
 - A. home B. wife C. job D. books
8. According to the author, how many stories did Porter write while in prison for three years?
 - A. more than 300 B. 35
 - C. at least 12 D. over 20
9. The author implies which of the following is true?
 - A. Porter would probably have written less stories if he had not been in prison for three years
 - B. Porter was in poor health throughout his life
 - C. O. Henry is as popular in many other countries as he is in America
 - D. Porter's wife might have lived longer if he had not left her in Austin when he fled.
10. Where in the passage does the author mention a habit of Porter that was to become very useful for him later?
 - A. lines 7-13 B. lines 16-22
 - C. lines 22-28 D. lines 28-34



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DEATH OF THE CLASSROOM
The New Wave of Online Education

By Scott Reekie

Picture a society where learning can happen at any time, in any place and can be completed without ever going to class. This could be the new wave of education and the Internet technology now exists to support such a system.

The virtual classroom is here. If you are interested in English, or Civil Engineering, then head to the university and click yourself a degree. Well, maybe it's not that easy, but you would be on the right track. The flexibility of studying at your own pace, and the money you save with online courses are two of the main attractions.

The Web is a powerful educational tool. Yet some feel that virtual classrooms will isolate students from each other, which will result in problems developing interpersonal relationships and that these skills are much more important than computer skills. Should teachers teach kids how to behave in society, how to respect others and how to co-operate or should kids have already learned this from their parents? No one is saying that social skills aren't important, however, virtual classrooms are far about more than just computer skills. Some strongly believe that education can be taught via the Web and social skills can be gained from joining sports teams, summer camps, or just hanging out! Others argue that this virtual classroom may place pressure on students: to become computer literate or be left behind in life. Is this undue pressure or reality? Maybe being left behind in life is a little dramatic, but the reality is that the computer age is here. Whether you want to pay for your new jeans with your debit card, or check to see if the library has the book you want, you're going to need some computer skills.

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- B. To prove that teachers overestimate the value of students' social behaviour.
 - C. To prove that individualized attention is hardly possible in a traditional classroom.
 - D. To prove that teachers feel no special concern for developing students' flexibility.
6. What role are parents supposed to play in the web-based education of society?
- A. They will have to do home assignments together with their kids.
 - B. They will have to balance social activities and learning of their kids.
 - C. They will have to control the virtual and real-life activities of their kids.
 - D. They will have to help their kids get access to the virtual classroom.



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YOUTH REVIEW

New statistics show that, as schools in Britain prepare to break up for the holidays, over one million teenagers could be wandering the streets because there is nowhere else to go. The year-long enquiry consulted 16,000 UK teenagers and recommends radical action to transform their lives, including a "youth hub" in every community to tackle anti-social behaviour and crime.

The Review, undertaken by children's charity *4Children* and supported by Nestlé, comes at a time of unprecedented debate about the welfare of young people in the UK – with statistics demonstrating worrying trends in all aspects of teenagers' lives from risky behaviour

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to youth-on-youth violence and anti-social behaviour. Researchers spent 12 months touring each region of the country and consulting over 16,000 teenagers of all ages to find out what life is truly like for young people today in the UK and how they themselves believe that improvements can be made. Publicising the report today, pop star and youth icon Lily Allen said: "I want to see a new start for teenagers in communities where they have nothing to do, nowhere to go and nowhere to call their own. The Youth Review has consulted 16,000 teenagers across the country and their message was clear: they said to give young people more of a stake in communities and give us more opportunities. The number of teenagers who go off the rails is a problem for us all and instead of helping them only after they're in crisis we need to stop them getting into trouble in the first place."

The enquiry discovered:

- Young people were fearful for their own safety, with 60% of young people in deprived areas becoming victims of crime in their community.
- 80% of young people said they had nowhere to go and nothing to do outside school and hung around on the streets as a result.
- 70% of teenagers said that, in their opinion, young people got involved in anti-social behaviour because they were bored.
- More than 70% of 11-16 year olds said that they have witnessed anti-social behaviour over the last year, whilst 12% of young people belong to a gang.
- 62% said that they did not know where to go to get help or information if they needed it.
- Youth crime costs up to £13 billion per year compared to £1.6 billion spent by government on positive prevention and youth programmes. It costs £35,000 to put a young person in a detention centre for a year.

The Review is calling for an urgent transformation of support for teenagers. It recommends a programme of government investment and action to provide positive opportunities for all young people, with early support and intervention for troubled teenagers to prevent difficulties escalating.

The key recommendations are:

- A Youth Centre in every community providing dedicated spaces for young people to meet, as well as access to music, creative arts, sports, classes and specialist intervention and support for teenagers in difficulty.
- Mobile Intervention Teams to work in areas of high deprivation and unrest – offering teenagers specialist and positive support.

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- Action on bullying and a new Victim Support scheme for young people who have been the victims of crime.
- Young Mayors elected in every area to give teenagers representation and a say in their community.
- Free public transport and leisure for all young people under 18 to ensure access for all.

Oona King, Chair of the Review said: "Growing up can be tough and we are simply not doing enough to help the next generation to flourish. On average we spend 17p for each young person per day on youth services and this has to change. Young people need to be a part of our communities otherwise we spend billions dealing with the consequences of anti-social behaviour, crime and violence."

1. The Youth Review was carried out by _____.
 - A. the Government.
 - B. young people.
 - C. a charity, with support from the Government.
 - D. a charity, with support from a company.
2. According to Lily Allen, the main message from young people is _____.
 - A. they want more opportunities.
 - B. they don't want to get into trouble.
 - C. they don't need more things to do.
 - D. they don't agree that there is a crisis.
3. What is the main cause of anti-social behaviour, according to young people?
 - A. Boredom.
 - B. Gangs.
 - C. A lack of information.
 - D. A lack of detention centres.
4. What would the Youth Centres recommended by the report offer to young people?
 - A. Help with their problems.
 - B. A place to meet.
 - C. A place to learn.
 - D. All of A-C.
5. What would be the purpose of electing Young Mayors, according to the text?
 - A. It would help teach young people how the political system works.
 - B. It would allow laws to be passed giving young people free public transport.
 - C. It would give young people a voice in the community.

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D. It would make young people think more seriously about the issues that affect them.

6. Choose the best summary of the report's conclusions:

A. The Government needs to provide more money so that teenagers are less bored and more involved in their communities.

B. Most teenagers are valuable members of the community, but the Government needs to focus on the small minority who become involved in crime.

C. There are enough recreational facilities for young people, but more money needs to be spent on dealing with the consequences of teenage crime.

D. Although we spend a lot of money for youth development, there is still too much anti-social behaviour, crime and violence among teenagers.

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