

A DISCONTENTED PARENT

For three years, on and _1_)the teachers in Britain had been on strike or
going slow. One parent, _2_)daughter received at the end of the summer a
computer print-out telling her she had failed her school-leaving examinations (known in
England _3_)Olevel), expressed the anger of many:
" when someone I love, who has worked hard and intelligently, is reduced
4)tears by a computer print-out I start to look for reasons. I start to reflect
on her _5_)throughout the year to share textbooks with a friend. I reflect on
the number of classes she attended which the relevant teacher, in pursuit of a dispute,
6)not I reflect on the teacher who did not and does not set homework
7)he 'doesn't believe in it.' Perhaps most of all, I reflect on
8)not my daughter spent a crucial
year in her life _10_)treated like an educational football by a profession so
cosseted that faced with the threat of being assessed it walked _11_)the job.
"My wife and I cannot be the _12_)parents in this country who do not give a
damn what teachers believe in. What we believe in is the right of our children to an education
uninterrupted by disputes and untrammelled by pseudo-philosophical stances
13)homework which are at best irrelevant and at worst plain idle. It may be
that the anger and resentment I feel now is no substitute _14_)calm, rational
thought followed by constructive action. But the first member of the National Union of
Teachers who thinks of throwing that one at me had _15_)rehearse it first. In
front of a mirror."