

Einstein on the Key to Learning Anything

Albert Einstein was a much better student than conventional wisdom would have you believe. The popular myth that Einstein was a poor student belies the truth: he was a math prodigy before the age of 12.

[Records reveal](#) that young Albert was “remarkably gifted” in algebra and physics, scored high marks in Greek and Latin, and was a “brilliant” violinist. He struggled mightily in French, and one suspects this was perhaps because he simply [loathed the subject](#).

For Einstein, learning came easiest when he was passionate about a subject. Nowhere is this more evident than in a letter he sent to his 11-year-old son, Hans Albert, on Nov. 4, 1915.

My dear Albert,

Yesterday I received your dear letter and was very happy with it. I was already afraid you wouldn't write to me at all anymore. You told me when I was in Zurich, that it is awkward for you when I come to Zurich. Therefore I think it is better if we get together in a different place, where nobody will interfere with our comfort. I will in any case urge that each year we spend a whole month together, so that you see that you have a father who is fond of you and who loves you. You can also learn many good and beautiful things from me, something another cannot as easily offer you. What I have achieved through such a lot of strenuous work shall not only be there for strangers but especially for my own boys. These days I have completed one of the most beautiful works of my life, when you are bigger, I will tell you about it.

I am very pleased that you find joy with the piano. This and carpentry are in my opinion for your age the best pursuits,

*better even than school. Because those are things which fit a young person such as you very well. **Mainly play the things on the piano which please you, even if the teacher does not assign those. That is the way to learn the most, that when you are doing something with such enjoyment that you don't notice that the time passes.** I am sometimes so wrapped up in my work that I forget about the noon meal. . . .*

Be with Tete kissed by your

Papa.

Regards to Mama.

It is a lovely line and it bears repeating: "That is the way to learn the most... When you are doing something with such enjoyment that you don't notice that the time passes."

Anyone who has ever studied knows that it requires real work and effort. However, we sometimes forget the joy one experiences in learning. Few things are more exhilarating than acquiring knowledge. For Einstein, this exhilaration allowed him to unlock some of the greatest mysteries in our universe.

Is the joy of learning a concept we often overlook? Is a passion for learning one of the things often missing from our studies today?

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