

Childhood Expert: Current Education System Will Soon 'Disappear'

Professionally, Peter Gray is known for his prominent [book on psychology](#) and for his professorship at Boston College. To the general public, however, Gray is perhaps best known for his book [Free to Learn](#), which argues that the institutional nature of schooling is killing the natural learning ability of our children.

Gray's views were once viewed as non-conventional, but they appear to be growing increasingly mainstream, largely because traditional education is proving a failure in teaching students to be critical thinkers. It is for this reason that Gray believes America's education system is headed for a complete revamp very soon – from K-12 all the way through college education. Here are his [three predictions](#) as to how this change will occur.

1. K-12 Education Will Become Self-Directed

According to Gray, these childhood years are designed to give insight to a student as to what his interests are. In the institutionalized form of schooling, however, that insight does not materialize, for children are continually constricted as to what they can and cannot do. Gray implies that the rise of education alternatives, such as homeschooling and other more exploratory forms of learning, are breaking down barriers and convincing the public to move away from the traditional education system.

2. Higher Education Will Revisit Apprenticeship

In Gray's eyes, one of the biggest problems with the current education system is the fact that it fails to introduce students to the many career options they can consider. For

this reason, Gray believes that the college years will eventually transition away from the classroom and more to an exploratory process in which students can experience career options firsthand.

3. Credentialing Will Follow Apprenticeship

Gray recognizes that some fields are in need of special training and credentials, but this is not essential for all. By encouraging more career exploration before pursuing credentials, Gray believes students will be happier, more knowledgeable, and thus more successful in the path they have chosen for adulthood.

So what kind of education system can we expect if Gray's suggestions come to fruition?

"The graded K-12 schools will gradually disappear, replaced by age-mixed learning centers supporting Self-Directed Education. Universities will continue on, with public support as centers of research and scholarship. They will not enroll 'students,' as we think of them today, but, like other institutions, will bring in assistants and apprentices, some of whom may move on, through experience and desire, to become full-fledged scientists and scholars. Community colleges, which already provide useful, often hands-on training for a variety of careers at relatively low cost, may expand and become part of a growing system of apprenticeships that involve some classroom training related to potential employment."

What do you think of Gray's prediction? Is his vision reasonable, or does it still have some weak points? More importantly, do you think Gray is correct in implying that the education system is broken and needs to be entirely restructured?