

Teacher by Gabbie Stroud

Summary

In 2014, Gabrielle Stroud was a very dedicated teacher with over a decade of experience. Months later, she resigned in frustration and despair when she realised that the Naplan-test education model was stopping her from doing the very thing she was best at: teaching individual children according to their needs and talents. Her ground-breaking essay 'Teaching Australia' in the Feb 2016 *Griffith Review* outlined her experiences and provoked a huge response from former and current teachers around the world. That essay lifted the lid on a scandal that is yet to properly break - that our education system is unfair to our children and destroying their teachers.

In a powerful memoir inspired by her original essay, Gabrielle tells the full story: how she came to teaching, what makes a great teacher, what our kids need from their teachers, and what it was that finally broke her. A brilliant and heart-breaking memoir that cuts to the heart of a vital matter of national importance.

Watching children learn is a beautiful and extraordinary experience. Their bodies transform, reflecting inner changes. Teeth fall out. Knees scab. Freckles multiply. Throughout the year they grow in endless ways and I can almost see their self-esteem rising, their confidence soaring, their small bodies now empowered. Given wings.

They fall in love with learning.

It is a kind of magic, a kind of loving, a kind of art.

It is teaching.

Just teaching.

Just what I do.

What I did.

Past tense.

Questions

1. Was Gabrielle too idealistic in her dream of becoming a teacher?
2. What did Mrs Dee and Mrs Payton show 8-year-old Gabby about the student-teacher relationship?
3. Tell the group about a favourite teacher and what it was that makes you remember them.

4. What do the very different outcomes for Ryan and Ed say about the influence teachers can have on a child's life?
5. Is the current system letting our children down? In what way?
6. What are the pressures that are on our teachers? Are they too great?