

Being in Class with Young People

Ha Durno

Having young people in the same class as older adults has advantages and disadvantages.

It is hard to go back to school after dropping out and being away from school for a long time. But for the future, for our lives, we have to do it. Sometimes, when I am in class, I feel the same as my younger self back in school in the old days. But more often, my mind does not feel fresh, and that is hard. To be in class with the young people makes me feel even worse because their minds learn a lot faster than ours do. However I admire them. They are not giving up their lives yet; they still have tolerance to study to get a better life.

The advantage of having old people and young people in the same class is that sometimes we learn from each other. Young people are so

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good with technology, and they show us how it works. They help us with English because most of them are born here. They also look at us like an example for why they should stay in school. We encour-

age them to complete their homework. We are older and have families and sometimes we know more than they do, so we can support them to be

more successful.

Besides the advantages, there are also disadvantages. Some young students don't care very much about school and they have a bad attitude.

They think they know everything; they are rude and talk back to the teacher. Sometimes they do not even show up, or make a lot of noise that distracts us a lot. Some are texting or playing games before class. They do not take orders seriously. I do not know why they want to be in school if they don't want to study. They seem like they are not motivated to create a good future. They have so much ability, but they waste a lot of time and they don't even know it!

Having many ages in the same class has disadvantages and advantages. We can learn from young people, and they can learn from us. Sometimes they are distracting and make us waste time. Anyway, you can't have everything. If you gain something, you have to lose other things.



Ha Durno, 36, is from Vietnam. She lives in Wrentham and takes Adult Basic Education classes at Bristol Community College in Attleboro, MA. She is planning to get her GED and go to college.

What do You Think?

Make your own list of the advantages and disadvantages of having younger and older people together in the same classroom.

Research shows that the teen years are “the most tumultuous time of brain development” since birth, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. With such an overload of brain activity, it's no wonder teens appear to block out the world (and adults)!

Source: <www.cec.sped.org> and <www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/>