

Education in 1890

Profession, Teacher



Education in the 1890's Versus Education Today By the 1890's America was becoming an established society. Agriculture was a very important piece to society. It was the basis of the economy and many people relied on it for their livelihood. Education was becoming more efficient as time went by. But how is it compared to education of today? In 1890, many politicians and educators wanted to make it easier for people to gain an education. At first, they just wanted to make schools as a way to reduce racism. But they then realized that whites should be getting an education too, not just the blacks. In order to do this, they needed more land to build schools and more teachers. This is where the First Morrill Act came into play. This act was to give every state that had remained in the Union a grant of 30, 000 acres of public land for every member of its congressional delegation based on the 1860 census. These states were to sell this land and use the proceeds to establish colleges that would educate people in agriculture, home economics, mechanical arts and other professions. This first act still did not provide enough funds to adequately establish new colleges and it created more segregation of the blacks, so the Second Morrill Act of 1890 was established. This act states that states that maintained separate colleges for different races had to propose a just and equitable division of the funds to be received under the act. Any state that had used their 1862 funds entirely for the education of white students was forced to either open their facilities to black students or to provide separate facilities for them. This act forced the states to open their school to blacks, or they were not going to get anymore funds for the school. As schools were opening and becoming more available to children, a law was passed saying that all children between the ages of 5

and 10 were required to attend school at the local school daily. Families had to pay for their children to go to school, one penny a week. School was not a pleasant place for children at the time. The teachers were very strict and children were probably very scared of them. Lessons were in English so if a child spoke even a word of Welsh he or she would be breaking the school rules. Some schools used the Welsh Not, a piece of wood hung around the neck, as punishment for speaking Welsh. School usually took place between 8am and 4pm. But before the children could go to school, they had to do their household chores such as milking the cow, feeding the chickens and pigs, gathering eggs, carrying in wood, and bringing in water. Before the students entered the school, they lined up by two lines. One line of girls and the one line of boys. The girls would enter first, hang their coats up and stand by their desks. The boys would then enter and they and the girls would bow at the teacher as a gesture of respect. Students were seated according to their general level of ability. This usually meant that the younger students were in front and the older ones were in the back. Students were promoted to the next level when the teacher believed they were ready. The students were mainly taught reading, arithmetic and penmanship. This was usually referred to as the 3 R's. Today, education is quite different. Children, starting at the age of 5, are still required to attend school. They still are taught reading and how to write. However, it is not referred to as arithmetic anymore, simply just math. Today, school has three different levels of education; elementary, secondary (middle school), high school and college. Students are not taught in a group of all ages but in a group of children the same age. They start at one level and each year they go up one level, for a

total of 13 years of education before going off to college. Now they have public schools and private schools. Public schools are run by the government and private schools you have to pay a tuition to attend. As time went on schools have developed. They have grown in size as the population grew and they became more available to people. Children do not have to take a horse to get to school, they can have a bus pick them up right at their house and bring them to school. As the children got to school, they did not have to get into two lines by gender and then bow at the teacher. Teachers nowadays are not as harsh. They are still allowed to punish a student by giving them a detention for discipline, but they are not allowed to touch a student physically what so ever. Teachers are not allowed to discriminate a student based on what language he or she speaks. School is a pleasant place for children to go. They are not afraid to attend school because of a teacher being harsh physically. As time went on, education became more developed and available to people. Schools became bigger and more knowledge was taught to students as more information was being discovered. The way schools were taught and the information students were learning has become more efficient to fit the needs of the students. Schools today are much different than they were back in 1890, but if we hadn't started with what they started with, than we would not be where we are today with education.