

Rites of Passage

We all go through stages in our lives. Time comes and goes, and most of the times, moving on to a superior stage makes us regret the previous one, while all we have left of it are memories. It is memories that give us the strength and energy to move on, start another fight, move to another level. We have made a custom of celebrating such moments of transition, but who feels like celebrating when we know so well that it's just another stage that we went through, another period of time that passed, and will never come back.

High-school years are said to be the best years. I could agree to a certain extent, but I must say I had expected more. As a senior student, I have the feeling that it all ends much too quickly; it all ends before it even started. I think that freshmen would really need senior knowledge and mindset in order to make the most out of high school. I personally would not trade places with any of them, but I must say I would have a totally different approach to things if I were to be one again. It all comes down to experience, I guess.

Out of all aspects of high school life, the social part seems to be the most enjoyable and entertaining. It is like the glue holding everything together. The ninth grade came with whole new collective, new individuals to study, a variety of personalities that would take more than just four years in school to learn. With some of them I have come to be more than just classmates, as we now share a sum of nice memories and many common experiences. But high school social life is fortunately more than just your own class. You get to meet a whole lot of people from all over the institution; all you need is an open mind, a happy face and willingness to socialize. I have also learned the importance of getting involved in different activities. Apart from the fact that you make friends and learn new things, there is that feeling of satisfaction when a job is well done and everybody praises the crew. All these small victories build you confidence, which can later help you progressively face bigger and harder challenges.

Our relationship with teachers was a continuous fight to overstep the boundaries of human patience. It can easily be noticed that most of them are old-fashioned and their methods of teaching are obsolete, which resulted in completely unbearable boredom at classes. Few of them are willing to improve their teaching methods and make classes more interesting by including practical parts. Above all, they do not seem to

understand us; mentalities strongly differ and the generation gap is very prevalent. On the other hand, I must say I will definitely never forget my form teacher. He is, in my opinion, the friendliest teacher I have ever had. He has always tried to break this barrier that separates teachers from students with an open mind, and I am absolutely positive that this has helped me a lot.

Events such as proms, Valentine's Day, Halloween, parties and other celebrations made my school life easier and more enjoyable, and assuming responsibilities was really challenging. I especially enjoyed my participation in the "Junior Achievement" competition, which helped me discover that I have some business-oriented interests, and I learned so very many things about handling a successful company. This experience developed my group working skills and working efficiently in order to meet a certain deadline. Our work was rewarded through personal satisfaction, as well as our participation to an international business event, "Fair Trade 2007". I also took part in organizing the Valentine's Day in our high-school in the eleventh grade. My contribution was taking part in a short drama act, which was my first "on-stage" drama experience, and was really interesting.

During these four years I have really changed. Besides the many things I was taught by teachers, which helped me widen my horizons and view of the world, I noticed a change in personality. I think these four years of high-school are critical to defining one's character. Having to deal with different kinds of people, solving problems, assuming responsibility and fighting for your rights showed me a tiny bit of what life really is: definitely not a warm and welcoming place.

As far as my own class is concerned, I have to admit we were never too united. My class is made up of a staggering twenty eight girls and not more than two happy boys. I personally got along just fine with almost everybody. I guess it was kind of inevitable of girl cliques to form and this resulted in everlasting arguments, fights and animosity among them. However, I have the impression that things settled down a little bit in the twelfth grade and people started getting along with one another. Nonetheless, I will definitely miss my classmates and I would be glad to hear they will miss me too.

Generally speaking, "Unirea" high school was a peaceful, pleasant and worthy experience, a great milestone in our quest to achieving the goals we have set for the future and for the life we want to live. Although we never know where life will take us, I would be glad to return to my hometown in ten years time, meet my classmates and speak with relish the pleasant times we spent together in high-school.