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**JOURNAL 45 – Read the following blog by a 15-year old student and write a 150-200 word response below giving your thoughts of the author’s view, whether you agree or not and why, your views on education, and how you feel education can be made more vital and interesting for students.**

January 27, 2014



**Will I Ever Need To Know This In Real Life?**

Posted: 01/17/2014 9:36 am

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School. That one word sends shivers along the spines of students around America. As the alarm rings, you groan and drag yourself out of bed, hoping this day will go faster than the last. But oceans apart, there are many children who wake up excitedly to be able to go to school. Take Zeineb, a 13-year-old Syrian refugee as an example. She goes to school every day despite having to make her way past child predators before she can reach a makeshift classroom tent -- while we complain about our bus stop being one block away from our house. Why?

I think people in America and other developed countries take education for granted. Perhaps most of us have never lived a life filled with the fear of not being able to be educated. Education has always been available to us -- we have never had to fight or ask for it. So we hate school, as for most of us it means getting up early in the morning, teachers and endless assignments, hard AP classes, the stress of thinking about college, the need to be in as many extracurricular activities as possible... and the list goes on. It is quite overwhelming.

When it comes to school, most children and teens are pessimistic in the west. So much is offered to us, yet we take so little and regard it as nothing. While our teacher is lecturing about the long string of Chinese dynasties, we doodle and write our names one hundred times over and over again on the sheet of paper that was meant for note. (No mom, I have never done this myself.) But as our teacher goes on about the major trade partners of the Sui Dynasty, "When will I ever need to know this in real life?" is all we really think.

In many underdeveloped countries, knowledge is the most prized possession -- not a new Michael Kors bag or the car that you expect to be given on your 16th birthday. Some of them, like Malala Yousafzai, know that they could be killed for wanting to get an education, and they do it anyways. What motivates them? It is, I think, the dream of a better life. A life where education is freely offered rather than fought for. It is the dream of having a career, which will make a difference -- they are trying to make the world a better place. They believe that they deserve the right to education -- the right to a finer life.

Unlike students in developed countries, kids from developing worlds have a positive outlook towards school. They get up willingly and look forward to go and learn. They enjoy and relish in education. Ask these children what they want to do when they are adults and they will excitedly reply with things like "A doctor! A pilot! A teacher!" But ask students like me and you'll get a mere "Um... I don't really know." All we can think about is (rightly so, in my opinion) how ridiculous and impossible it is to

make decisions that will impact you for the rest of your life when you are not even an adult.

So why is there this difference? We all know education is worth every pencil chewing moment -- it opens eyes to more than the five-mile radius around us. Why then are we more lethargic towards education than the children in developing countries? Is it because we have our own safe cocoon where everything comes easy to us? Is it because we are so overwhelmed with tests and information and that the only reason we feel like we need to learn and get good grades is to get into a good college?

At times, it seems to me that we are not being taught about why and how education is important to us -- we are getting educated so we can score one of the precious few admission spots in a good college. Am I wrong? Am I right? I do not know -- I just know I am 16 and I don't know much about the world or what I want to do, but I do know that with education I will figure it out. For now, I guess I just have to keep drilling those pesky unit circle trigonometric functions in my head.

P.S. I do know that advanced math is not something I would want to do... future admissions officer, please don't hold this against me!