

The textbook as a teacher:

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I have seen very few students or people carrying textbook or magazines and reading one these days. We are no longer a reading nations as used to happen in the seventies when I was growing up. We also have few bookshops compared to bottle stores and in most of them you rarely see customers, despite that we are in what is called the information age. Most students just do not seem buy textbooks even though NSFAS has a book allowance. You can disagree with me on this last point if you think so.

Books are very important especially in the formative years of a child. I have observed very few homes with books. I regularly visit used books stores and one thing I have noticed is that most of their shelves are filled with fiction books. Fiction books and soapies usually satisfy a human need called escapism, people running away from real life because it can be painful. School textbooks are rare and very few in these second hand bookshops, which confirms that parents and adults only buy books when it really is necessary or when they are forced to buy them by the schools.

According to the psychology books I have read and a video I have watched by Dr Bruce Lipton, the child acquires habits in the first 7years of life and these habits are then reinforced in the next seven years. So, by the time a child reaches 14 or 15 years, most of the habits are formed. According to Dr Lipton, 95% of your life after that will be run according to those habits acquired in those formative years of your life and are stored in the subconscious. The video is available on YouTube and it is titled "**How we are programmed at Birth**" check it, it is quite good.

I understand that in most of the classrooms the event that happens is that the teacher transcribes notes on the board and may be speaking while doing that, then students just listen or take down the notes in their exercise books. This is an oral conversation which is the old way of doing things.

Students rarely bring textbooks and rarely learn from the textbooks. Most of the people do not see a textbook as someone talking to them. They want the facilitator to talk to them even if you tell them that the information you are giving is straight from a book, so just go and read it.

Sometimes they just say, please can you just repeat what you said. This is despite telling them that this rule I just told you is straight from a book.

Some textbooks written by their authors are based on the lectures they have given in the past. So reading the book is like attending the lecture again, so why do students not realise that reading a textbook is a gift of attending the lectures of the author again and again.

In the black African community where I grew up, people used to say that if you hide money in a textbook people will not find it. I had an experience of this when my home in was broken into in 2013 and appliances, clothes and two cellphones were stolen from the kitchen and bedroom, but interestingly the area where I had a stack of books was left undisturbed. These were all valuable things, the thieves never bothered to check if there could be something hiding between those books.

Let us continue this next time.