

I went to school in the dark ages, B.C. (before computer). But lessons learned back then still stick to me like paste.

Mostly we learned this stuff on the playground, in the lunchroom, or at events like football games or dances.

Here are discoveries I stumbled upon. What did you learn?

1. Bells rule our life. The last high school bell, for instance, alerts us that we need to prepare for a career. Every year when the birthday bell rings, we're reminded that time flies faster than a hummingbird on steroids.

2. Don't eat off your friend's plate until he tells you it's OK. It's better to leave the lunchroom a little hungry than a little bruised.

3. Getting picked first on someone's team means that person recognizes your skill. Getting picked last means you should explore some of your other gifts.

4. Everyone can contribute. The tallest guy may be your basketball star. The smartest girl might be the school's spelling champion. (My special gift: Teachers could point to me as a bad example.)

5. Never throw food. That's true in the elementary lunchroom, at the senior prom, and for nearly all weddings.

6. Hold your tongue. (Not literally, of course, because it gets drool on your hand.) We learn quickly that if we make a silly or unkind statement, we can't take it back.

7. You win a few, you lose a few, and you get disqualified if you forget to show up. Therefore, an alarm clock makes a great graduation gift.

8. Teachers are some of the greatest people you'll ever know.

9. Everybody needs a coach. Find an older person whose skills you admire, and ask how they acquired them.

10. Life is not high school. Move on. (That's a good thing, because if life were a geometry class I'd never figure out the angles.)

Rix Quinn wrote "Words That Stick," a book of writing ideas for people who hate to write. It's available from your local bookstore, or <http://www.tenspeed.com/catalog/all/item.php?id=1661>