

Albert Einstein at School

Question 1.

What do you understand of Einstein's nature from his conversations with his history teacher, his mathematics teacher and the head teacher?

Answer:

Coining events cast their shadow before is aptly proved in the case of Albert Einstein. His conversation with the history teacher Mr. Braun proved that neither Albert hesitated to admit his own shortcomings nor he felt reluctance in pointing out the shortcomings in the then education-system.

He preferred ideas rather than cramming dates or dates like a parrot. Moreover his conversation with Mr. Braun proved that he was not firm on his stand and quite honestly straight forward. He never cowed down unnecessarily before others even if they were his teachers.

His conversation with mathematics teacher Mr Koch proved that he was very sincere. He got well versed in school level math even before graduation. His math teacher was all praise for him. He was quite indifferent in school against Einstein.

He gave him a very glowing recommendation letter in praise of Albert's ability and skill in math. Albert finally met his head teacher while leaving school. The meeting was short. The teacher offered him to leave school rather than be expelled which Albert did willingly.

Here also he wanted to prove his rebellion and outspoken nature, but perhaps the awe for the authorities kept him tight-lipped. But as he was dismissed, he just came out of the room proudly, banging the door, avoiding the head teacher's order to shut the door behind. To conclude with, we can say that his history teacher and his head teacher failed to understand him. Neither he could be guided to respect or hate anybody. He paid due regards to the people whom he found worthy of it, like Mr Koch.

Question 2.

The school system often curbs individual talents. Discuss.

Answer:

The statement that the school system often curbs individual talents collects mixed reactions. I myself don't fully agree. Had there been so, there wouldn't have been any school, institutes or colleges. But as we see even in modern day society, when the computers are available in almost every third home, schools mushroom. Still in the case of Sachin Tendulkar, Thomas Elva Edison and Albert Einstein the said statement proves quite apt.

Our education system is such that schools have to care for the quantity. There are certain subjects which are imposed on students irrespective of their individual capability, craving or liking. No matter what or which the individual likes to do, that is regarded secondary here. In schools, every student is expected to qualify the basic subjects otherwise he will be awarded 'failed'.

So to the students like Albert Einstein schools become the most hateful place, who turn to rebel against one and all. It is their personal/individual talent which drives them to get success, name and fame. Schools leave no stone unturned to curb their talents. Every individual has his own talent.

Some may excel in Maths, others in geology and while others are fit to cram just history. But the school system imposes them to learn by heart all the subjects. That's why, some students like Albert turn rebel and simply walk out of school to harness their own talent in their own way.

Question 3.

How do you distinguish between information gathering and insight information?

Answer:

Both the terms or phrases i.e. 'information gathering' and 'insight formation' have quite different meanings. We shall deal with them elaborately and separately. First let's talk about 'information gathering'. It simply means 'collecting information' as the news reporters do to create a news, article or news story. Without going behind the screen, they just present what they see on the screen.

At Albert's German school he was also supposed just to gather information, according to the school system. His cousin Elsa also asserted that she knew many students who were more stupid than Albert, but they also got through after learning some facts. This is called really information gathering i.e. to learn the facts and dates by heart without caring to understand them.

On the other hand, 'insight information' means creating or forming insight or understanding. This is what was realized much later on by our educationists. But Albert felt the need in his early studenthood. He felt that learning facts is not important but searching for the reason is really important. Learning the dates of battles is not important but to probe into the reason so that the basis could be rooted out later on is really important.

Albert felt for the first time the importance of 'insight building', which his school system failed to understand and he had to leave school before completing his diploma. Actually, education really means the development of personality and it can't be done by imposing or inducing facts. Students are not sacks in which anything can be filled. They are the most creative beings and must be created likewise individual talent must get recognition at school level.

Question 1.

What does Albert's history teacher think about him?

Answer:

Albert was not good at learning facts and dates. Moreover, he saw no point in doing that like a parrot. The teacher regarded him as an insult to the class. He felt that he was a lazy and insolent boy who made the teaching and learning process in class a difficult thing.

Question 2.

How did Mr. Braun treat Albert?

Answer:

Albert was not in the good books of Mr Braun, the history teacher. Whenever Mr. Braun asked him dates of any important

historical event, he would plainly reply that he didn't see any point in learning them. That irritated Mr Braun. Mr. Braun would hold him back for one more period. That also didn't prove any help. He complained about it to the head teacher with the result that he was asked to leave school on his own.

Question 3.

What did Mr. Koch think about Albert?

Answer:

Mr. Koch was Albert's math teacher. Albert had already completed his school level math. He had even done a bit more. So naturally Mr. Koch had a very high opinion about Albert. He felt that he had nothing to teach him and probably Albert would be in a position soon to teach him. He also gave Albert a glowing reference which could help Albert seek admission in some Italian College for higher studies of math.

Question 4.

"The world's worst liar". Who used this phrase and for whom? Why?

Answer:

Yuri used this phrase for Albert. He called Albert 'world's worst liar' telling Albert clearly that he was not good at cheating others. He actually gave him a compliment for his straight forwardness and honesty.

Question 5.

How did Albert feel while at school?

Answer:

Albert felt miserable while at school. He had a very bad time at his German school. He had neither the tendency nor the capability to learn historical facts and dates. Hence his teacher Mr. Braun punished him every now and then.

Question 6.

How did Albert feel at his lodging?

Answer:

Albert stayed in the poor quarter of Munich, as his father had not enough money to spare him for the lodgings. Here slum violence was routine. Albert hated such an atmosphere. So he didn't feel any solace even in his lodging.

Question 7.

What provided comfort to Albert?

Answer:

Albert felt miserable at school. His lodging in the slum area also never cheered him up. Music only provided him comfort. To ease his strained nerves, he would play on his violin till his landlady yelled at him to stop. Solving math problems and studying geology also comforted him.

Question 8.

How did Dr. Ernst Weil treat Albert?

Answer:

Dr. Ernst Weil was Yuri's friend. On Yuri's recommendation, Albert had come to meet Dr. Ernst Weil. So naturally, the doctor treated him quite pleasantly. Besides that, the doctor himself had just ceased to be a student and understood Albert's problem and position. Moreover, Albert was really very nervous about his school. So he gladly gave Albert a medical certificate proving that the latter had a nervous breakdown and needed six month's rest.

Question 9.

Did the doctor believe that his certificate would help Albert a lot?

Answer:

Dr. Ernst Weil believed that his medical certificate would help Albert only to keep him away from school. When Albert told him that that way he could do without a school diploma and could seek admission in college for higher studies of math on the basis of Mr. Koch's reference letter, the doctor didn't believe these things. He appeared doubtful and told that he didn't hope that things would come off.

Question 10.

Why was Albert made to leave school?

Answer:

Albert was not good at the subjects being taught at school. He even didn't believe in learning the things his history teacher would ask him. An open rebellion. The teacher felt that his very presence in class made it difficult for the teacher to teach and for the students to learn. No serious class work could be done there in his presence. So the head teacher himself asked him to leave the school lest they should save of the blemished act of expelling him.

Question 1.

"Yuri was a great help to Albert while in Munich'. Comment on it.

Answer:

Yes. I do agree with the statement that Yuri was a great help to Albert while he was in German school. He is his great friend and guide who stands by him through thick and thin. Actually, Yuri is the only person in Munich whom Albert liked and with whom he could share his innermost feelings even his hatred for school.

When Yuri sees Albert quite sad, dejected and nervous, he realized that it was not good for the former to stay in school any longer. So on Albert's suggestion, he prepares his doctor friend Dr. Ernst Weil to give Albert a fake medical certificate proving that Albert has a nervous breakdown and he needs to stay away from school at least for six months.

It is Yuri only who guides Albert to obtain a reference from his math teacher Mr. Koch. On the basis of which he could seek admission in some Italian College or Institute for higher studies of math. After leaving school when Albert was leaving Munich for good, he gave a thank you treat to Yuri. While parting from him Yuri bade Albert a very warm farewell saying: "Goodbye—and good luck...you are going to a wonderful country, I think, I hope you will be happier there."

Question 2.

Were the teachers at Albert's school interested in understanding him and bringing out his potential?

Answer:

We read about two teachers and one head teacher in this excerpt 'Albert Einstein at School' One of them is his history teacher Mr. Braun and the second is his math teacher Mr. Koch. Albert is not at all good at History. Naturally he is not in the good books of his teacher. All the worse the teacher also fails to understand Albert's nature and badly fails in bringing out his potential. Neither does he get success in inculcating a zeal in Albert to do good in history.

He just follows the traditional ways of just imposing things on him to learn. If Albert fails he would just punish him. The punishment also shows his reactionary attitude instead of his desire to improve a lot of the word. His attitude in the classroom is quite sarcastic.

He later complained to the head teacher and suggested perhaps to expel Albert from school at all. On the other hand, Mr. Koch was unaffected by Albert's dealings with his history teacher. Moreover, Albert was good at maths, so his teacher also gave him a glowing reference letter. Actually, teachers during those days bothered about their syllabus rather than student's abilities.

Question 3.

Describe how the head teacher made it easy for Albert to leave school.

Answer:

Albert was sick of going to school. He felt miserable as he hated the place very much. He wanted to stay away from it. So he decided to obtain a medical-certificate stating that he had a nervous breakdown and he must stay away from school for some time. His friend Yuri helped him obtain this.

Next day, he went to school with the final decision of leaving school. But first went to Mr. Koch, his math teacher, to seek a reference letter from him, on the basis of which he could seek admission in some Italian College or Institute for higher studies of math. Next he was to request a meeting to see the head teacher.

For that he would have to wait for an hour or two. Just then he was called by the head teacher himself. He was so eager to see him that he didn't bother why he had been called. He just guessed that it could have been a punishment class with the head teacher. Reaching there he found things quite favourable.

The head teacher told him that his presence in the class made it impossible for the teacher to teach and students to learn. So it was better that Albert should leave school on his own accord, lest they should expel him. Albert was tempted to show the medical certificate and tell them how he hated that place. But finding the situation in his favour, he just withdrew and came out of school feeling greatly relieved. So the head teacher made his leaving of school all the more easy.