

Character analysis in school reports?



Source: letters page in the Daily Telegraph, March 2010

Page corrected for the duplication of a set of letters on 3rd March 2010

School reports: exercising the comedy of cruelty

SIR – My history teacher wrote in my report (Letters, March 25): “When the workers of the world unite it would be presumptuous of Dewhurst to include himself among their number.”

Simon Dewhurst
Malpas, Cheshire

SIR – My swimming report: “Stroke excellent – buoyancy nil.”

Chris Taylor
Hyde, Cheshire

SIR – One history teacher wrote: “For this pupil all ages are Dark.”

Rev Michael Bentley
Bracknell, Berkshire

SIR – My father’s geography report: “Leonard does well to find his way back home each day.”

Christine Davies
Worthing, West Sussex

SIR – My prep school maths report was brief and true: “Still easily baffled.”

Dominic Weston Smith
Faringdon, Oxfordshire

SIR – A Welsh doctor who was at school in Birkenhead told me his headmaster had written: “By educating this boy we are depriving some Welsh village of its idiot.”

Kevin Heneghan
St Helens, Merseyside

Juvenile character assassination in school reports

SIR – My son’s report (Letters, March 30) 25 years ago said: “David participates well in all classroom activities, but more in the capacity of executive, rather than actual workman.” He was five, and had just completed his reception-class year.

Sharon Harris
Edgware, Middlesex

SIR – My 13-year-old son’s maths teacher reported: “He is a tip-top man when one is throwing a party, but not quite so good when one is trying to start a lesson on time – he floats in a minute or two after everybody else, and not even the most sophisticated sweatometer known to the world’s top athletic experts could detect moisture on his brow.”

Isabel Bickmore
Cuxham, Oxfordshire

SIR – My geography report from 1953 said: “I do not wish to appear rude, but his answers to a simple set of examination questions were more like the ravings of a lunatic set down on paper.”

Anthony Dunn
North Ferriby, East Yorkshire

SIR – A report by one of my French teachers in the 1940s said: “Makes an efficient form librarian.” It seemed harsh at the time, but on reflection, was probably true.

Bryan Wareham
Ashover, Derbyshire

SIR – A classics report from Ampleforth in the 1960s: “Ignorant, indolent, insolent.”

Charles Halliday
Woking, Surrey