

How to prevent students from playing hooky after exams?

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WHAT is a school? It is a safe and conducive place to provide learning opportunities for students with the help of teachers and others. It nurtures values, and students grow and develop to be responsible people.

But if school is so complete, why do students skip school? Students skip school for many reasons including boredom, activities that don't excite them and rigid school rules. With the Form Three Assessment (PT3) over and other final examinations being conducted, schools, parents and the Education Ministry understand the psychological effects that students are undergoing.

Most important is the person called teacher. Teachers who are conventional in their thoughts would think that their role to educate students is complete. They would think that as long as they have finished the syllabus and submitted grades online, their work is done for the year. So what happens in schools after major examinations?

Does it mean that teaching is no longer necessary as exams are over? If there are lessons, students become bored. They will visit cybercafes, shopping complexes and take part in more exciting activities. Many schools plan after-examination activities, such as inter-class games, excursions and gotong-royong. But do these activities attract all students? There is a need to research the interests of students, especially high-risk students.

After exam time is the best space for teachers and counsellors in secondary schools to reach out to students, have talks and help them make decisions for their growth. Parents can be a part of these communal activities and non-governmental organisations can organise enjoyable activities. Teachers, without the support of the community, would find it challenging to keep students interested in school, especially if they do not apply the National Education Philosophy to their teaching vision.

I wonder how society can help teachers make school interesting and meaningful for students? When students skip school, many point their fingers at teachers, principals or schools and conclude that it's not a good school. How can that perception be changed so that students look forward to school every day?

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