

poem children learn what they live

Poem children learn what they live is a powerful piece that encapsulates the essence of childhood development and the profound impact of a child's environment on their emotional and psychological growth. Written by Dorothy Law Nolte in 1972, this poem serves as a poignant reminder that the experiences children have while growing up shape who they become as adults. This article will delve into the themes of the poem, its significance, and how it can guide parents and educators in nurturing healthier and more compassionate future generations.

Understanding the Poem: Themes and Messages

The poem "Children Learn What They Live" outlines various scenarios in which children absorb the behaviors, attitudes, and values displayed by the adults around them. Through a series of verses, Nolte illustrates how children learn from the actions of their parents and caregivers, presenting a cycle of influence that can either promote positive traits or reinforce negative ones.

Core Themes

1. **Influence of Environment:** The primary theme of the poem is the influence that a child's environment has on their development. Children are like sponges, soaking up the lessons imparted by their surroundings. Whether positive or negative, these lessons profoundly shape their character.
2. **Emotional Learning:** The poem emphasizes the emotional aspect of learning. Children do not just learn facts; they internalize feelings, attitudes, and behaviors. The emotional climate of a home can affect a child's self-esteem, empathy, and overall outlook on life.
3. **Cycle of Behavior:** Nolte's work highlights the cyclical nature of behavior. Children who learn love,

kindness, and respect are likely to pass these qualities on to future generations. Conversely, children exposed to negativity and hostility may perpetuate those cycles.

4. Responsibility of Adults: The poem serves as a call to action for adults to be mindful of their behavior. Knowing that children are always watching and learning, it urges parents and caregivers to model the traits they wish to instill in the next generation.

The Structure of the Poem

The poem is structured in a straightforward manner, with each stanza presenting a different scenario. This structure not only makes the poem accessible but also reinforces its message through repetition and variation. Here's a brief breakdown:

- Opening Lines: The poem begins with a series of declarative statements, making it clear that the lessons children learn are closely linked to the actions and words of the adults around them.
- Examples of Learning: Each stanza provides concrete examples of behaviors and attitudes children learn based on their surroundings. These examples range from love and trust to anger and fear.
- Concluding Message: The poem concludes with a reminder of the power of love and kindness, encouraging adults to foster an environment that promotes these values.

Significance in Parenting and Education

The insights offered by "Children Learn What They Live" have profound implications for both parenting and education. By understanding that children are influenced by their surroundings, adults can take conscious steps to create nurturing environments.

Practical Applications for Parents

1. **Model Positive Behavior:** Parents should strive to model the behaviors they wish to instill in their children. This means practicing kindness, patience, and respect in everyday interactions.
2. **Create a Supportive Environment:** Establishing a home where children feel safe and valued is crucial. This can be achieved through open communication, positive reinforcement, and emotional support.
3. **Encourage Empathy:** Teaching children to understand and empathize with others can be done through discussions about feelings, reading books that explore different perspectives, and engaging in community service.
4. **Address Negative Behaviors:** Recognizing and addressing negative behaviors is just as important. Parents should reflect on their actions and understand how they may be impacting their children.

Implications for Educators

Educators also play a vital role in shaping the lives of children. Here are some ways schools can implement the lessons from the poem:

1. **Foster Inclusive Classrooms:** Creating an environment that celebrates diversity and encourages collaboration can help students learn the importance of acceptance and respect.
2. **Social-Emotional Learning Programs:** Schools should incorporate social-emotional learning into their curricula, teaching students how to manage their emotions, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.
3. **Professional Development:** Educators should engage in ongoing training to ensure they understand

the impact of their behavior on students and learn strategies for fostering supportive learning environments.

4. Parental Engagement: Schools can help bridge the gap between home and school by encouraging parental involvement. Workshops and resources can guide parents in creating supportive environments at home.

The Lasting Impact of the Poem

"Children Learn What They Live" remains relevant decades after its publication. Its enduring message continues to resonate with parents, educators, and child development advocates. The poem serves not only as a reflection on the responsibilities of adults in a child's life but also as a hopeful reminder that positive change is possible.

Encouraging Reflection

To fully embrace the teachings of the poem, adults must engage in self-reflection. Here are some questions to consider:

- What behaviors do I model for my children?
- How do my actions reflect the values I want to impart?
- In what ways can I foster a more supportive environment for my children?

Community Initiatives

Communities can also play a role in reinforcing the messages from Nolte's poem. Initiatives that promote family wellness, mental health resources, and parent education can help create a culture that

prioritizes positive upbringing.

Conclusion

In conclusion, "Children Learn What They Live" is more than just a poem; it is a call to action for all adults involved in a child's life. By acknowledging the powerful influence of their actions and words, parents and educators can work together to nurture a generation that embodies love, respect, and empathy. As we continue to reflect on the lessons of this poignant piece, we should strive to create environments where children can thrive and learn the very best of what it means to be human.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of the poem 'Children Learn What They Live'?

The main theme of the poem is that children's behaviors and attitudes are shaped by the environment they grow up in, emphasizing the importance of nurturing and positive influences.

Who is the author of 'Children Learn What They Live'?

The poem 'Children Learn What They Live' was written by Dorothy Law Nolte.

How can the message of 'Children Learn What They Live' be applied in parenting?

Parents can apply the message by being mindful of their own behaviors and attitudes, creating a loving and supportive environment that encourages positive development in their children.

What role does environment play in the poem 'Children Learn What They Live'?

The environment plays a crucial role as it directly influences children's emotional and social development, highlighting how positive or negative experiences shape their futures.

Can 'Children Learn What They Live' be used in educational settings?

Yes, the poem can be used in educational settings to promote discussions about emotional intelligence, the impact of role models, and the importance of creating a supportive community for children.

What are some key phrases or lines from 'Children Learn What They Live' that resonate with readers?

Key phrases include ideas about love, respect, and kindness, which resonate deeply as they reflect the foundational values that shape a child's character and worldview.

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