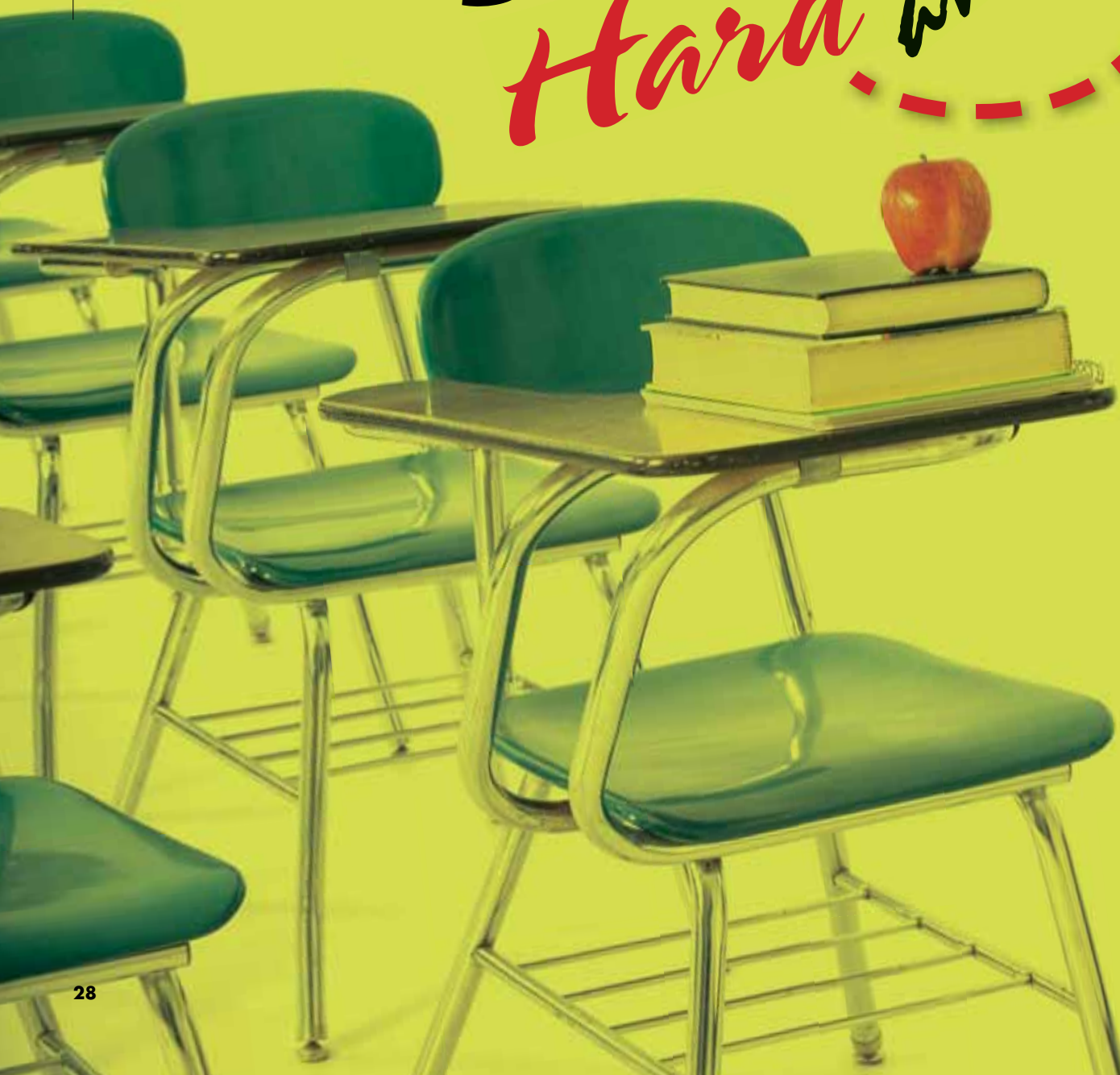


# 5 Easy Ways to Make School *Hard* and



**G**oing to school is one of the few times when we pay and then *don't* want our money's worth. We just want learning to be easy. Perhaps that's understandable, but we have to decide if it both ways. So here are five easy *now* or easy *later*. We can't have hard right now and five hard ways to make school easy in the long run.

**➔ 1. Focus on grades.**

Live for them. Build your self-esteem on them. If grades and test scores mean everything, then you will have no problem justifying a little cheating. After all, it's all part of the hoop-jumping. Don't think that school has anything to do with learning or that learning can relate to your own personal interests and talents. Just think about grades. Imagine the Savior, the Master Teacher, delivering the Sermon on the Mount. Can't you just hear one of the disciples saying, "Is this going to be on the test?"

**2. Go it alone.**

Never ask for help. Talk yourself into believing that teachers are too busy or that they don't care. It's okay to complain to them after grades are given, but don't ask for help *before* the end of the semester. See your peers as competition. Don't help them and don't ask for help in return. Especially don't ask for help from family members (unless it is on the very morning an assignment is due).

**3. Use your cell phone.**

Don't let it out of your sight. Don't turn it off or even silence it in school. You can text when you're supposed to be reading. Texting even makes it easy to cheat

during a test. Convince yourself that a cell phone is essential—a need, not a want. Make sure you have the latest and greatest options with unlimited everything. Worry more about how many texts you can send and receive than what you're actually studying in school.

**4. Play video games.**

Once you get home, don't think about cracking a book, doing homework, or getting some exercise. Relax. Sit and "veg." Let the games begin. After all, we must improve that hand-eye coordination! Link up with total strangers online, and play all night. Don't sleep. You might lose your ranking. The computer can be a wonderful educational tool, but don't actually use it as one.

**5. Blame the teacher.**

If you're not enjoying school, blame the teacher. If you're unmotivated, tell everyone it's the teacher's fault. Don't think about taking responsibility for your own learning. That's the teacher's job. That's why teachers get paid the big bucks. Whatever you do, don't thank a teacher. Never consider his or her feelings or point of view. Never write a kind note or give a thank-you gift. The above suggestions are certainly easy—at first. In the long run they actually make school hard—even miserable—for yourself and everyone around you. Try another way. Challenge yourself to do some difficult things now that will ultimately make school a breeze.

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# 5 Hard Ways to Make School Easy

BY BRAD WILCOX

## 1. Feed the need to read.

Start by making scriptures a habit. Then add the *New Era*. Discover the counsel and uplift that await you if you read beyond the joke page. Pick up other great books too. Unlike TV, which is a mentally passive activity, reading is mentally active. It stretches your mind. That's why if you have ever read a book and then seen a movie made from it, the book is almost always better.

## 2. Do the write thing.

Nothing can move you forward in your own learning more than a journal—whether or not it is an assignment. A journal provides a safe place where you can discover, think, reflect, plan, and dream. Journal keeping is a seedbed for insight and inspiration as well as the mark of a truly literate person and lifelong learner. If you think you're only making a record for your grandchildren, think again. The greatest value of a journal is what it can do for *you* right here and now.

## 3. Study another language.

Don't just take the required class, but listen to music in that language. Read the Book of Mormon in that language. Seek out those who speak it fluently, and converse often. Ask them to correct your mistakes. You live in a time in the world's history and in the Church's progress when a second language is vital. Even many of the General Authorities—as busy as they are—are learning and practicing multiple languages.

## 4. Ask questions.

We enjoy the blessings of the Restoration because a teenage boy questioned. He wasn't content to just accept the status quo. Like Joseph Smith, you too can let your questions drive your study and motivate your learning. Like Joseph, you can be patient when answers don't come easily or quickly. In your searching you'll encounter many opinions. Think critically. Just because something is on the Internet, accepted by a majority, or even made legal doesn't make it right or good.

## 5. Keep perspective.

All things are spiritual (see D&C 29:34). Don't separate Church, seminary, or institute from secular learning. Make time for all of them. The more connections you can make, the more satisfying your learning will be in all areas of your life. Does the Lord know about geology and physics? He certainly does. Does He value good art, music, and literature? Of course, and so do His living prophets. Latter-day Saint doctrine encompasses all truth. There is no truth you can learn that will not ultimately help you in your quest to become more like Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father. Education is not just about making a living. It's about making a life—now and eternally. **NE**

## FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

"Faith and knowledge require equal effort and commitment. We cannot expect to have faith at the center of our lives if all of our efforts are expended on knowledge, sports, hobbies, making money, or other pursuits."

**Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Strengthen Faith as You Seek Knowledge," *New Era*, Sept. 2008, 2.**

