


 ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΕΙΟ
 ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ
 ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ

**ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΙΚΕΣ ΕΞΕΤΑΣΕΙΣ ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΗΣ
 ΑΠΟ ΤΗΝ ΑΓΓΛΙΚΗ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΓΛΩΣΣΑ**

Το ακόλουθο κείμενο δημοσιεύτηκε στην εφημερίδα The Guardian (19.06.2012) και η ελληνική μετάφραση θα δημοσιευτεί στην alfavita.gr (εκπαιδευτική ηλεκτρονική πύλη όπου παρουσιάζονται ειδήσεις και θέματα για όλους τους χώρους της Παιδείας, για εκπαιδευτικούς, γονείς, μαθητές και φοιτητές).

Nostalgia for grammar schools is misplaced

Grammar school nostalgics are having a moment. On a BBC documentary this month, Michael Portillo described the decision to turn his old school, Harrow County, into a comprehensive as "vandalism". A forthcoming book of grammar school memoirs, *School Songs and Gymslips*, includes a piece by the home secretary, Theresa May. [...] Everyone enjoys reminiscing about their school days, and it seems plenty of those who went to grammars had a splendid time. But a rose-tinted view of the past is gaining currency, its glory days of achievement invariably contrasted with the swamp of comprehensive mediocrity that supposedly came next.

I went to Hampstead comprehensive in the 1980s, its very name encapsulating what many on the right of the education debate most despise. [...] Competitive sports were deeply unfashionable, though a games teacher badgered a friend to join a running club. There were no school teams and very little extra-curricular activity of any sort except concerts, mainly because the teachers (though not the head of music) were often on strike. Once or twice we joined in and walked out.

The atmosphere of informality, of a generalised rebelliousness, spilled beyond the classroom walls. Teachers snogged sixth-formers on ski trips and teenagers bunked off. At weekends there were drinking, smoking and soft drugs – although all these, along with some underage sex, were probably no less frequent among pupils of nearby private schools.

That I, and others from similarly fortunate backgrounds who filled up to a third of the school's places, did not all flunk out, is grist to the mill: You see! Leftie hypocrites! You worked the system and looked after yourselves but look what happened to the rest!

Comprehensives lacked rigour, did not care enough about standards, let working-class children down. This is the new orthodoxy, and there is some truth in it. Comprehensive campaigners are sometimes hamstrung by an unwillingness to admit past mistakes. GCSE results at Hampstead were not that good, though A-levels were better (today the school manages 83% with five A*-C grades at GCSE). Discipline was often feeble. Bright children from less well-off families probably needed extra help. My own best teacher then, now a deputy head, thinks mixed-ability teaching across the board was over the top.