

# ExWyZee Remedial Reading

ExWyZeeRemedialReading.com

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## TODAY'S RANT: Social Promotion

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It's about Ending Social Promotion, ESP. That silly chant was recently made by Detroit Public Schools' pro tem chief administrator, and reported with gusto in the

Detroit Free Press by a reporter who should know better.

Social Promotion is an unavoidable consequence of a 19th century innovation in a Michigan lumber mill town where now, in 2010, the only indication that the village

existed is the cement foundation of the post office. The railroad grade is now a bike

and snowmobile trail.

Picture members of the school board seated at a table in the township hall, circa 1888,

next to a wood-fired pot-bellied stove, spittoon on the floor beside the stove.

Mr. Harper is the village barber, who is impatient to get back to his shop.

Mr. Jayson is a prosperous wheat farmer who has a toothache.

Mr. Smyth is proprietor of a funeral home, who has no cosmetic work for today.

Mr. Zane, owner and editor of the local paper, has his notepad out for news.

Mr. Whitland is absent. His cows broke through the west pasture fence.

Mr. Smyth observed that the one-room school system was too unwieldy for the mass of students they'd have next Fall, what with the new paper mill coming in.

So he suggested dividing the kids into eight rooms, assigning them to the rooms by age, and passing them year-by-year (but only if they mastered all of the subject matter for their age levels). Mr. Harper said "I so move." Seconded by Mr. Zane, and passed 3 to 1.

The nay-vote was by Mr. Jayson, whose twin boys were having trouble with the times-tables and would need a lot of help in reading the school's new grade-level

geography and history books. He was afraid his boys, quite tall for their age, might not pass from grade 5 to grade 6 next year if they had to use the new Fifth Grade Reader and the new fifth grade math book with the story problems about mixing paint instead of problems about pecks and bushels.

Miss Travis, who was asked to attend the meeting, and who was retiring this Spring after teaching 28 years, pointed out, "Gentlemen, we'd just have to promote 'em after a few years in one grade-room, times tables or no times tables.

If we don't pass 'em on, the early-grade rooms will get too crowded."

Mr. Zane observed that they'd either have to adjourn or fetch more wood for the fire. Mr. Harper moved to adjourn. Seconded and passed, sine die.

Bill Swart, REIF

(Recorder Educational Idiocy Files)