

the 10 most common reasons why students drop out of school:

- *Repeated grades and consequent age difference from classmates.* Students who have been held back a grade—and are therefore older than others in their class—are up to four times more likely to drop out than those who have never been held back.
- *Poor academic performance.* This does not mean that students who drop out are necessarily less intelligent, but only that they failed to enroll in required courses or pass required tests.
- *Dislike of school.* One reason cited for dislike of school is fear. Potential dropouts often feel insecure when they enter the school building each day.
- *Detention and suspension.* These kids are "behavior problems" to their teachers.
- *Pregnancy.* Four out of five girls who become pregnant in high school drop out.
- *Welfare/single-parent situation at home.* These young people have to scramble to attain the emotional and material support they need to continue their studies.
- *The attraction of work.* The sad part is that the hopes and expectations of most of these kids will not be fulfilled. Many leave school to take entry-level jobs that offer little potential for advancement.
- *The attraction of military service.* Up to one-third of new enlistees in the military lack a high-school diploma. But many of them are unable to complete their first tour of duty, and only better-qualified recruits can expect to become career military people.
- *Undiagnosed learning disabilities and emotional problems.* Less than 3% of students with learning disabilities are diagnosed by schools.
- *Language difficulties.* Some schools confront populations that include students from more than 100 different linguistic backgrounds.

## Busy Kids



Third world children begin work early. In Indonesia, a child of eight is responsible for such tasks as caring for poultry, carrying water from the local well and caring for younger children. At nine, children take on responsibility for all farm animals and begin to cut and transplant rice. By the time they are twelve, they usually work for wages. Very few have time for much schooling.

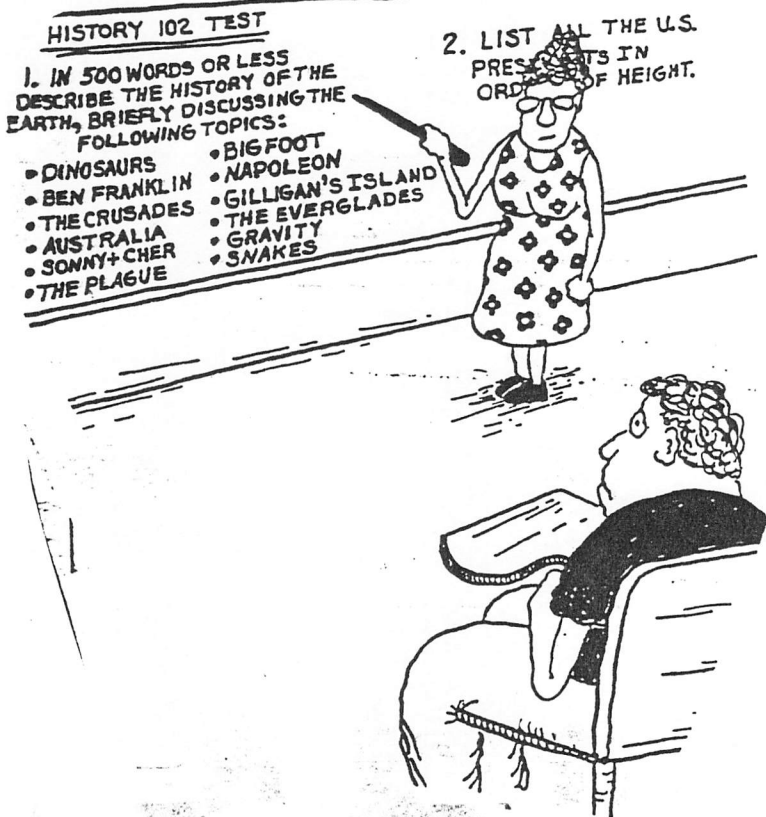
Have you ever thought how unusual you are? You will probably go to school until your late teens or early twenties. Most of the world's youth end their schooling by the time they are ten.

### AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR GRADUATES

As you accept your diploma, we remind you that you step into new relationships with your friends, your family and your community. We assure you that you will always be a part of our community of faith. We commit to God all of our past efforts to show you, by example, the life of faith and love through Christ, and all our attempts to instill within you life's true values.

With your degree, you have earned more than freedom; you have earned the right to prove that you can handle freedom responsibly; that you are trustworthy, dependable and mature enough to try your own wings. Know that the world will test your true character with fire. And remember that you are always fully accountable to God, who loves you and believes in you far beyond your comprehension.

We assure you of our continued love and promise to remember and uphold you through our prayers. We pledge to always be your 'family.' No matter where you are or in whatever circumstances you find yourself, we care about you and stand ready to rejoice with you in your accomplishments, to support you in your failures, and to grow with you in faith.



Chuck had always hated essay questions.