

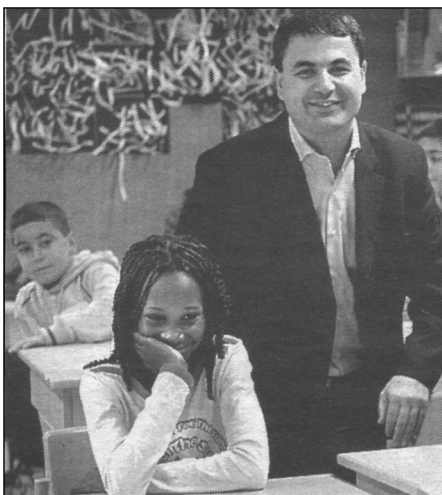
In Focus

BAKGRUND BESTÄMMER ELEVERS BETYG

S Grundskoleelevers bakgrund bestämmer vilka betyg de får och föräldrarnas utbildningsnivå är den viktigaste bakgrundsfaktorn. Dessutom har betygsspridningen bland landets niondeklassare ökat, skriver LO i en ny rapport.

Enligt det nya betygssystemet får elever numera omdömena Icke godkänd, Godkänd, Väl godkänd och Mycket Väl Godkänd. Dessa räknas sedan om till ett snittbetyg som ligger mellan 0 och 20.

Barn till föräldrar med eftergymnasial utbildning får i snitt 2 630 mer i snittbetyg än barn till föräldrar med enbart förgymnasial utbildning. När det gäller klass får barn till högre tjänstemän i snitt 1 685 högre snittbetyg än barn till arbetare utan formell yrkesutbildning. Barn från familjer där minst en förälder förvärvsarbetar har 0,737 högre snitt än barn från familjer där ingen har arbete. Ju högre disponibel inkomst föräldrarna har desto högre betyg har barnen. Utan att räkna in övriga bakgrundsfaktorer har elever med svensk bakgrund högre betyg än de med utländsk bakgrund. Kontrolleras däremot bakgrundsfaktorerna är det ingen större skillnad. De med utländsk bakgrund har då något högre betyg än infödda svenskar. De som bor i glesbygdskommuner får i snitt bäst betyg. Sämst snittbetyg har de som bor i en förortskommun. Elever i friskolor har bättre betyg än



Educational minister Ibrahim Baylan wants to make the schools more equal

elever i kommunala skolor. Elever med samma bakgrund klarar sig dock ungefär lika bra i friskolor som i kommunala skolor. Däremot har elever i friskolor i högre grad än elever i kommunala skolor en social bakgrund som är förknippad med höga betyg.

Bäst betyg får en flicka vars föräldrar har en eftergymnasial utbildning, har högre tjänstemannayrken, är född i Sverige av föräldrar med utomeuropeisk bakgrund och som bor i en glesbygdskommun.

Sämst betyg får en pojke vars föräldrar enbart har förgymnasial utbildning, är ej facklärd arbetare, är arbetslösa, har lägst disponibel inkomst, är född i Sverige av svenska föräldrar och bor i en förortskommun.

Uppgifter i den här rapporten stämmer väl överens med andra utvärderingar som gjorts av bland andra Skolverket. Skillnaderna i betyg ökar och den sociala bakgrunden spelar en avgörande roll, säger skolminister Ibrahim Baylan. Som förklaring till detta anger han besparingarna i den offentliga sektorn under 1990-talet, som bland annat fick minskad lärartäthet som följd.

För att åtgärda problemet vill Baylan ytterligare öka lärartätheten samt införa en skriftlig utvecklingsplan för alla elever från och med årskurs ett.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO ANDERS NEUMUELLER, THE NEW HONORARY CONSUL IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Bolang Family
Bellevue, Mercer Island, Tacoma, Beaux Arts

NOBEL PRIZES 2005

The controversial British playwright and poet Harold Pinter has won the 2005 Nobel Prize in literature.

According to the Swedish Academy, that awards the literature prize, Pinter "in his plays uncovers the precipice under everyday prattle and forces entry into oppression's closed rooms." Harold Pinter's juxtaposition of the brutal and the banal has resulted in an adjective that bears his name. His characters' internal fears and longings, their guilt and unruly sexual drives, are set against the neat lives they have constructed to survive, a grim game in which actions often contradict words.

The 75-year-old playwright - whose works include *The Room*, *The Birthday Party* and *The Dumb Waiter* and his breakthrough work, *The Caretaker* - has been recognized in literary circles as the author who restored the art form of writing plays. His plays have revolutionized the theatre.

The son of a Jewish dressmaker, the Londoner is also known for campaigning for human rights. He was a vocal critic of the policies of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan and more recently the invasion of Iraq.

"I think the world is going down the drain if we're not very careful," a frail but defiant Pinter, who has been treated for throat cancer in recent years, said to reporters outside his London home.

Pinter continues a long tradition of Nobel laureates who believe in taking sides and not settling for art for art's sake. Last year's winner, Austria's Elfriede Jelinek, once instructed her publishers to withhold the performance rights of her plays in Austrian theaters as long as the rightist Freedom Party was part of the government. Germany's Guenter Grass, who won in 1999, has been one of his country's leading liberals and repeatedly questioned the reunification of East and West Germany. American John Steinbeck, winner in 1962, immortalized the poverty of the Depression with his classic, *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The Swedish Academy, founded in 1786 by King Gustav III to advance the Swedish language and its literature, has handed out the literature prize since 1901. To date 102 men and women have received the prize, including France's Jean-Paul Sartre, who declined the 1964 honor because he had consistently declined all official honors.

This year's Nobel Prize in chemistry goes to Americans Robert H. Grubbs and Richard R. Schrock and Yves Chauvin of France

for discoveries that let industry create drugs and advanced plastics in a more efficient and environmentally friendly way.

Grubbs, 63, is a professor of chemistry at the California Institute of Technology, Schrock is a chemistry professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Chauvin, 74, is the honorary director of research at the Institut Francais du Petrole in Rueil-Malmaison, France.

Americans John L. Hall and Roy J. Glauber and German Theodor W. Haensch have won the 2005 Nobel Prize in physics for their work in advancing the precision of optic technology, which could improve communication worldwide and help spacecraft navigate more accurately to the stars.

The prize was given to the three for their work in applying modern quantum physics to the study of optics, a pursuit that has led to the improvement of lasers, optical clocks, GPS technology and other instruments.

Australians Barry J. Marshall and Robin Warren have won the 2005 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for proving, partly by accident, that bacterial infection - not stress - were the main cause of painful ulcers of the stomach and intestine.

"This was very much against prevailing knowledge and dogma because it was thought that peptic ulcer disease was the result of stress and lifestyle," says Staffan Normark, a member of the Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institute. The 1982 discovery transformed peptic ulcer disease from a chronic, frequently disabling condition to one that can be cured by a short regimen of antibiotics and other medicines.

Thanks to Marshall's and Warren's work, it has now been established that the *bacterium Helicobacter pylori* is the most common cause of ulcers. It colonizes the stomach in about 50 percent of all humans. In countries with high socio-economic standards infection is considerably less common than in developing countries where virtually everyone may be infected. Infection is typically contracted in early childhood, frequently by transmission from mother to child, and the bacteria may remain in the stomach for the rest of the person's life. The infection is usually asymptomatic but can cause peptic ulcer. Severe complications include bleeding and perforation.

In some individuals *Helicobacter pylori* also results in a more widespread inflammation that predisposes not only to ulcer, but also to stomach cancer. This cancer has decreased in incidence in many countries during the last half-century but still ranks



British dramatist Harold Pinter (inset) got the Nobel Prize in Literature, awarded by the Swedish Academy (above).

as number two in the world in terms of cancer deaths. After Marshall's and Warren's discovery, research has been intense. Details underlying the exact pathogenetic mechanisms are continuously being unravelled.

Many diseases in humans such as Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, rheumatoid arthritis and atherosclerosis are due to chronic inflammation. The discovery that one of the most common diseases of mankind, peptic ulcer disease, has a microbial cause, has stimulated the search for microbes as possible causes of other inflammatory conditions.

The medicine prize is awarded by the Karolinska institute in Stockholm as stated in the will of Alfred Nobel, the Swedish industrialist who founded the prestigious awards in 1895.

Israel's Robert Aumann and American Thomas Schelling have won the The Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2005 - the Nobel economics prize - for their "game-theory analysis," which can help resolve conflicts in trade and business, and even avoid war.

Their studies have found uses in "security and disarmament policies, price formation on markets, as well as economic and political negotiations," the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said in awarding the prize.

Aumann, 75, was born in Germany but is an Israeli and U.S. citizen who teaches at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Schelling, 84, teaches at the University of Maryland.

"Game theory" is a science of strategy, which attempts to determine what actions

different "players", be they trading partners, employers and unions or even crime syndicates, should take to secure the best outcome for themselves. Schelling has been applying it to global security and the arms race since the 1950s while Aumann has conducted analysis of "infinitely repeated games" to identify what outcomes can be maintained over time.

The 2005 Nobel peace prize has been awarded jointly to the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency and its Egyptian-born director, Mohamed ElBaradei.

The citation says the IAEA's director is a "fearless advocate" of curbing nuclear arms and the importance of his agency's work is "incalculable". In keeping with tradition, the Peace Prize will be awarded in the Norwegian capital while the other Nobel prizes are awarded in Stockholm.

758 individuals and 18 organizations have been awarded the Nobel Prize to date. 33 of the Nobel Prize winners are women. The youngest Nobel Prize winner so far, is Lawrence Bragg, who was 25 years old when he received the Physics Prize with his father in 1915. The oldest Nobel Prize winner to date is Raymond Davis Jr. who was nearly 88 years old when he was awarded the Physics Prize in 2002.

Linus Pauling is the only person to have been awarded two unshared Nobel Prizes - the 1954 Nobel Prize in Chemistry and the 1962 Nobel Peace Prize.