

The Paper Graded *F*

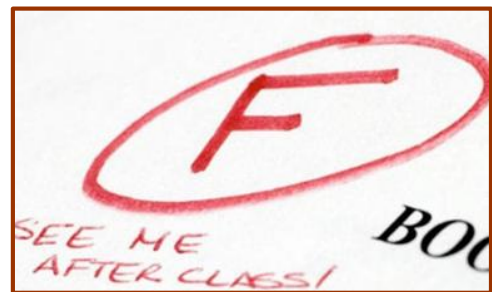
Marvin Earl (Monty) Roberts' father was a horse trainer, moving from stable to stable, ranch to ranch, as he trained horses. Consequently, the boy's school career was constantly interrupted.

On one occasion, when Monty was a senior in high school, the teacher asked him to write about what he wanted to be when he grew up.

Monty did not hesitate. He wrote a seven-page paper about his aim to be an owner of a horse ranch, and described in detail his plans for it. He even drew a location of buildings and stables, along with a house plan.

Two days later, he received his paper from the teacher with the letter F on the front page. After class, Monty came to the teacher and asked, "Why did I receive an F?"

The teacher responded: "This dream is so unrealistic for a boy like you, who has no money, no resources, and who comes from an itinerant family. There is no possibility that you will reach your great goals one day." The teacher offered Monty the opportunity to rewrite the paper with a more realistic attitude.



The boy went home and asked his father how he should react. The father answered: "This decision is very important for you. So you have to make up your mind on this."

After several days, Monty brought the same paper to his teacher. No changes were made. He told her, "Keep the F, and I will keep my dream."

Today, Monty Roberts owns a 4,000-square-foot house in the middle of a 200-acre horse ranch. He is an American horse trainer who promotes his techniques of natural horsemanship through his *Join-Up International* organization. In order to promulgate his methods, Roberts has authored a number of books, including his original best-seller, *The Man Who Listens to Horses*.



He still has that school paper, framed and on the mantel of the fireplace.

The lesson for us? Follow your heart. Never let anyone steal your dreams.

– Beecher Hunter