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# Antoine de La Garanderie: Pioneer Modeller of the Learning Process

## Part I: Background and mind management

To those committed to making  
learning less haphazard.

### *INTRODUCTION*

Despite enormous scientific and technological progress since the Industrial Revolution, there remains something profoundly dissatisfying about our education systems, even in the developed countries. We commit enormous resources to offering universal education to our young, but we have a depressingly poor return on investment. For all our efforts, only a small proportion of pupils flourish in our schools. Very few emerge with a sense of having done well within the education system, let alone having truly enjoyed their experience there. For the vast majority, the primary learning experience is one of encountering difficulties – not succeeding – and of emerging as a failure. This is the preparation we give our children for life.

Here and there pioneering educators have offered a different message: learning is natural to life, learning is enjoyable, and anyone can succeed. Framed in different ways, their messages are concordant: we need to understand and respect the world of the learner; we place too much emphasis on mastering content and not enough on how that mastery is achieved; we need to help learners become more aware of *how* they learn; complex learning activities are built on simpler ones and these need to be made available to the learner. Often these pioneers have achieved tremendous and well-documented results with their methods, but our monolithic education systems have been lamentably slow in drawing on their success and making it widely available. Many of them are hardly known at all.

Antoine de La Garanderie is one of these great pioneers in this cen-