

Creative Schools-K. Robinson

Reflection

[Ken Robinson-Do Schools Kill Creativity?](#)

[Ken Robinson-Paradigm Shift](#)

Creative Schools is my absolute favorite book on education. Period. Number one. It is easily also in my top three book of any topic.

The book does a great job of outlining the industrialized nature of education and how our system came to be. Ultimately this system has pervaded decades of school functioning and much of it is still seen in schools today. After reading through his quick recap, and viewing the paradigm shift video above, my thoughts on how school is organized shifted....drastically. Do I have the better solution? No. But should not having a perfect solution trump an irrelevant and dysfunctional system? Definitely not.

The idea that sticks out to me the most from this book is this: **much of what we do in schools is based in tradition vs. law**. Think about how schools are structured, from splitting content into subjects to bells to six periods a day to grouping students by ages and requiring them to master content in the same amount of time (13 years, K-12) or they are labeled failures. All of these systems, rituals, and thought processes are not mandated by state or federal law. They are simply a result of “what we have always done”.

One of the most difficult aspects of changing these age-old systems is they are almost rooted in culture and society. School looks the same basically anywhere you go. Somebody from 1900 could walk into a school in 2018, not knowing where they are going, and immediately recognize it as a school. Horse and buggy vs. the electric car eras...education is the same. Say it ain't so!

Notes

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-Schools serve four purposes in education: personal (enable young people to engage with the world within them as well as around them), economic (enable Ss to become economically responsible and independent), cultural (enable Ss to understand and appreciate their own cultures and respect the diversity of others), social (enable young people to become active and compassionate citizens)

-Formal EDU made of: curriculum, teaching, and assessment

-ever widening gap between what schools teach and what economy actually needs

-Industrial roots: bells, whistles, schedules, moving from here to there on time; industrial manufacturing was purposed to make identical products—those that did not conform were thrown out.

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-Schools often run the way they do because it is the way it's always been done, not because it's the way they have to be run (ex: group by age, same class length, using bells, separating subjects, etc.)

-Finnish schools have no standardized testing except for one at the end of HS.
Finland: 5.5 million people—US 314 million...30/50 US states have populations equal to or less than Finland...important b/c most EDU is organized @ state level

When your environment promotes conformity and negates creativity don't be surprised when that is exactly what you get

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-Traditional teaching is teaching facts and information through DI; progressive teaching is learning by discovery, self-expression, and small group activities

-Extraordinary Ts: engage (teach Ss, not subjects. Create conditions in which Ss want to learn), enable (Ts adapt strategies to situation of the moment. Inquiry learning=Ss creating questions and having desire to answer them), expect (Ss rise to T expectations. Ss need Ts who believe in them), empower (best Ts are mentors and guides).

-What is curriculum for? Framework for what Ss should know and be able to do. Mandatory (what is tested and assessed) and informal (optional parts).

-Curriculum should shape the schedule, too often the schedule shapes the curriculum as day is divided into times, slots, and subjects. Need to create a more flexible schedule

-Structure: usually based around discrete subjects which have a hierarchy

-Content: the material that has to be learned; usually emphasis on theory and analysis rather than practical or vocational skills

-Mode: how Ss engage with content; usually desk-based activities are favored along with individual tasks instead of group activities

-Ethos: *hidden curriculum*.

-8 Competencies (Cs)●: what should Ss know and be able to do as a result of their education (What is your profile of a graduate?)

Curiosity: ability to ask Qs & explore how the world works. Children have a natural wonder of the world to explore. Ts foster by: encourage investigation and inquiry, ask Qs instead of only giving As. Sometimes is quick and passing; sometimes can consume us and turn into life passions and career

Creativity: ability to generate new ideas and apply them in practice

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Criticism (CT): ability to analyze information and ideas and to form reasoned arguments and judgements. think clearly, consider arguments logically, weigh evidence dispassionately

Communication: ability to express thoughts and feelings clearly and confidently in a range of media and forms. Need to develop clear and confident speech (oracy). We think and can communicate in sounds, images, movement, and gestures

Collaboration: ability to work constructively with others. Collaboration is often critical for communities to flourish.

Compassion: ability to empathize with others and to act accordingly. Living embodiment of the Golden Rule. Many of our problems are rooted in lack of compassion: bullying, violence, emotional abuse, social exclusion, and prejudices.

Composure: ability to connect with the inner life of feeling and develop a sense of personal harmony and balance. We live in 2 worlds: the one around us and the one within us. Schools are all about the around us world. How we act in the world around us deeply depends on how we see and feel about ourselves.

Citizenship: ability to engage constructively with society and to participate in the processes that sustain it. Championing the need for equal rights, value of dissent, need to balance personal freedom with rights of others to live in peace.

*proposed curriculum...disciplines instead of subjects.

Arts (music, dance, visual arts, drama, etc), Humanities (history, languages, philosophy, religion, geography and social studies), Language Arts (oracy, literacy-mechanics of reading and writing, literature), Mathematics, PE

(not brains on legs, bound in diff cultural traditions and practices, develop individual and team skills and share success and failure in controlled env't), Science (natural, physics, chemistry, biology, earth sciences, and astronomy;

psychology, sociology, + economics