

American school systems and business schools have already been adopted in the UK and some UK universities have overseas campuses, so it could trigger a 'battle of the best education system'. This may force improvement in the standards of all schools as they respond to the competition. Alternatively, the variety on offer could lead to global partnerships for all. These organisations may employ 'non-specialist facilitators' rather than teachers. The ability to speak several languages will become a bigger priority so the successful tomorrow's teacher will be somebody who is well-travelled and has held managerial posts in industry. Their definition of being multi-lingual won't be demonstrated by saying loudly and slowly "Where is the beach?" in English but by the ability to converse in one other European language and an Eastern language of business.

One thing that should always remain at the centre of education is social interaction. As social animals, we have an innate need to interact with each other and regardless of how advanced our world may become, nothing can beat a nice human to human chat! Ultimately, tomorrow's teacher will be today's learner.

Judges' Comment

'A very good articulation of mentor learning and a very readable blend of different ideas. Goals will be set and classes advised according to the learner's physical, emotional and mental well-being', this focused on personalised learning taking place in a variety of settings''.

Runner Up

PETER WORLEY

Primary and Secondary Consultant Philosopher, London

Synopsis:

For my vision of a future teacher I would like to draw upon the past. Nearly two and a half thousand years ago the ancient Greek philosopher Plato wrote a dialogue called the Meno that begins with the question: can virtue be taught?, but quickly develops into an extraordinary discussion of the nature and form of teaching itself. I believe there is a great deal we can learn from Plato and others, even to this day, helping answer what might be our secondary question: what are the virtues of teaching? Although technology will no doubt play a part in how tomorrow's teacher will function I would like to deliberately draw attention to those skills which will remain the teacher's, with or without technological aids.

Tomorrow's Teacher: Learning from the Past

By Peter Worley

Plato: the virtue of teaching

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The child-centred questioner

From the perspective of my future teacher some very important principles emerge from the discussion. Socrates, Plato's protagonist in the dialogue, states that knowledge will not come from teaching but from *questioning*,

he says that the student 'will recover it for himself'. My teacher will put questioning at the heart of their teaching so that, as much as possible, the student will be able to arrive at knowledge from their own starting point: approaching new knowledge from that which is already known to them. The teacher will not only question but will develop questioning to the level of an art so that they can fashion any part of a curriculum around good questioning, and thereby fully engage the students with the learning process. Learning to put the child at the centre of the learning process is comparable to the Copernican revolution of putting the sun at the heart of the solar system in place of the Earth and, as Montaigne, the 16th century writer acknowledged, this is no easy task:

"It is good to make him [the student] trot in front of this tutor in order to judge his paces and to judge how far down the tutor needs to go to adapt himself to his ability. If we get that proportion wrong we spoil everything; knowing how to find it and to remain well-balanced within it is one of the most arduous tasks there is. It is the action of a powerful, elevated mind to know how to come down to the level of the child and to guide his footsteps. Personally, I go uphill

more firmly and surely than down."

Michel De Montaigne (1533-1592), On Educating Children

And, as Montaigne himself quoted in the same essay: "*Obest plerumque iis qui discere volunt autoritas eorum qui docent.*" [For those who want to learn, the obstacle can often be the authority of those who teach.]

Aporia

In the *Meno* Plato also discusses the importance of ignorance and perplexity (*aporia* in ancient Greek) in the learning process. For many, *not knowing* and confusion are seen in a negative light, often signifying stupidity or failure. Plato did not think so: only by going through this essential stage of the learning process can one hope to arrive at insight and clarity. The teacher of tomorrow will celebrate this state and use it to show how this signifies a proper engagement with the subject; communicate how this can be harnessed to reach deeper levels of thought and insight and use *aporia* to motivate rather than stifle a student. Tomorrow's teacher will also not be afraid of their own *aporia* and will use it to collaborate with the

students and will use *Socratic irony* (feigned ignorance about a topic) to encourage the students to think for themselves, just as Socrates did with his interlocutors in the marketplace of Athens. No longer will the teacher feel that they cannot be wrong and no longer will they feel the need to portray themselves as a fountain of all knowledge.

Aoidos

An *aoidos* (literally: 'singer') was the ancient Greek name for a teller of epic poems and Homer, of The Odyssey/Illiad fame, was an *aoidos*. The Odyssey itself was told, following an oral tradition, for hundreds of years before it was written down (probably not by Homer). There are many other examples of oral traditions of storytelling in other cultures too, but with the advent of the printed word and now DVDs, and other media this skill has been lost to all but a very few as we have learnt to relinquish these skills to technology. Tomorrow's teacher will revive this tradition with aplomb because of the unique way a story, well told, can *hold* an audience, and engages its listeners. Technology has its own spell, but one which is not weaved by the teacher, and by distancing the teacher from that which engages

the students the teacher becomes lost to them. Students do not learn communication skills from DVDs and inter-active whiteboards - they learn them from their teacher. Tomorrow's teacher will build a repertoire of stories for young and older students for all sorts of contexts from learning to speak and write, to the use of *thought experiments* to explain Newton's concept of absolute space in 'A' level physics, thereby putting learning into a narrative context - putting the 'story' back into 'history'.

Logos

Also in the *Meno* Socrates speaks of the difference between true knowledge and true opinion. In other words about knowledge supported by sound reasoning (true knowledge) and the right answer got by some other method such as being told (true opinion). He thought that getting the right answer was all well and good but if it was not arrived at by a reliable method then it was not worth much. Tomorrow's teacher will prefer a good

understanding of the processes and concepts involved in learning rather than simply getting the right answer by any means. This idea is captured in the ancient Greek word *logos*, which translates as 'reason', or, better still, 'account' as this translation captures the importance of the *process* rather than the outcome of reasoning.

Dialectic

Tomorrow's teacher will encourage *logos*, in the right sense described above, by encouraging a disposition towards *dialectic* in his or her students, first of all among the class as a group but then - perhaps more importantly - as an internal process inside the head of each student, as if they had transported the whole class into their head. *Dialectic* is sometimes described as a 'collaborative search for truth through discourse, questioning and reasoning'. The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle thought that the best character attributes were learned as habits rather than skills, which may or may not be used. If the process of dialectic is learned at an early age both as an external and internal process then the students will carry with them a naturalised disposition towards learning that will feed their natural curiosity as

young people and preserve it as older people. The students will best learn this not from books but by having these skills modelled for them by a good teacher who demonstrates these skills each time they stand before their students in the classroom.

Learning to dance

The future teacher will work towards the development of 'a well-formed rather than a well-filled brain', in the words of Montaigne. To borrow some more of his words: the future teacher will give the students an understanding but not content with that, she will then aim to make their understanding dance:

"Take Palvel and Pompeo, those excellent dancing masters when I was young: I would like to have seen them teaching us our steps just by watching them without budging from our seats, like those teachers who seek to give instruction to our understanding without making it dance..."

Judges' Comment

'Extraordinarily insightful, a brilliant exposition of why every future teacher could do well to learn the lessons of the past.'

Runner Up

KIRSTEN STEVENS-WOOD

FE Lecturer, Ystrad Mynach College, Caerphilly

Synopsis:

A snapshot of a day in the life of a teacher of the 20somethings.

Cathy's Busy Day

by Kirsten Stevens-Wood

On her way into work Cathy Maund, a realtime educator, reflects on the recent and past changes in education. She swipes her carbon card as she descends from the electrobus and walks the hundred metres to the learning environment where she will deliver a number of realtime lectures as well as uploading a new podcast on the interactive learning environment (an investigation into the banking crash of the early 2010's).

Cathy's workplace is a learning environment - Learning environments are carbon neutral community based accommodation with iris access for all registered students.

After the fiasco of the 2020's (where educators were made redundant in a major switch over to exclusively e-learning) came the realisation that learning was a much deeper

and dynamic process than the mere transmission of information and there was a return to students enrolling into learning environments with recognised time / level commitments and a programme of learning tailored to each individual. Students could now dip in and out of learning and accumulate credits according to their own set of choices. Cathy reflects on how it was interesting to see how education fell apart without the role of educators and that new technology was not able to replace the responsive and reflective knowledge base of professional educator trained humans.

On arrival Cathy logs on and checks her i-mails(a small symbol in the corner tells her who else is on line). She has an hour before the upload suite is available and so she