

E-Books, E-Kids, E-Flat!

Three trends schools will ignore at their peril

Doug Johnson
 www.doug-johnson.com
 dougj@doug-johnson.com
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Table of Contents	
E-Books, E-Learning, E-Gads!	
My <i>personal</i> e-book must have/ +. -. ?	p. 2
Is Educational Climate Change Ahead? http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/columnists/johnson/johnson018.shtml	
Turning the Page: The Impact of E-Books on Schools and Libraries http://dougjohnson.squarespace.com/dougwri/turning-the-page-e-books.html	
Letter from the Flat World Library Corporation	p. 3
Schools for the Net Generation	
Bibliography/Attributes -> Implications chart	p. 4
Libraries for the “Net Generation” http://dougjohnson.squarespace.com/dougwri/net-gen-libraries-1.html http://dougjohnson.squarespace.com/dougwri/net-gen-libraries-2.html	
Skills for the Knowledge Worker	
Building “Conceptual Age” Skills	p. 5
Johnson’s Hierarchy of “Knowledge Worker Skills”	p. 6
Skills for the Knowledge Worker http://dougjohnson.squarespace.com/dougwri/skills-for-the-knowledge-worker.html	



Synopsis for E-books, E-Kids, E-Flat!

This workshop explores three major changes being evidenced today: 1) the prevalence of ubiquitous digital information sources, 2) the defined attributes of a “Net Generation”, and 3) the rise of a global economy. Each change will be discussed along with strategies that schools and educators can use to stay relevant in their students’ lives. For warned is for armed!

My personal e-book must have:

(Edward de Bono?) Activity

Imagine a situation in which every student and teacher in your school has a practical, powerful e-book with access to nearly an unlimited number of books and other educational resources through it. Using the form below, jot down some ideas about what may be good, what may be bad, and what is interesting about this scenario. (You must have some ideas in each column.)

What's good? +	What's bad? -	What's interesting ?

Letter from the Flat World Library Corporation



Flat World Library Corporation

March 15, 2007

Superintendent Dennis Hookworm
Left Overshoe Public Schools
Left Overshoe, MN 56034

Dear Superintendent Hookworm:

We at the Flat World Library Corporation can offer you a complete library program at a *very* attractive price.

For considerably less than you currently pay for your K-12 library program, we can provide a full range of library resources AND library services – all on line.

For only pennies a day per student, FWLC will:

1. Provide a full range of reading materials (periodicals, picture books, fiction and non-fiction titles), videos and reference sources that are tailored to your state standards, your district's curriculum and your digital textbook series. These resources are being constantly updated, and are available, of course, in a wide range of lexile ranges to support your differentiated instruction efforts. You can specify the level of community tolerance for issues ranging from abortion to gay rights to evolution from "university community" to "small town Kansas."
2. Provide ready reference services, student research help, readers' advisory service, and curricular planning advice through our real-time connections (video, chat or e-mail) to our experts in Bangalore, India. These highly-qualified MLS certified professionals will be available 24/7 to both your staff and students from school *or* home. (Do you get 24/7 service from your current library staff?)
3. Allow teachers to submit student work for comment and assessment. Our staff will give each project a consistent grade, check for plagiarism, and provide a report for each child that teachers can share with parents about the research and technology skill strengths and weaknesses of every individual student. We can even help your teachers design assignments and assessments, so they are free to lecture.

Just think of the advantages:

- No musty books from the 1950's cluttering your library shelves. No more lost or missing books.
- No library facilities. Turn that old library space into those badly needed special education classrooms.
- No more pesky librarians who want more money for materials, support staff, and staff development. Our highly skilled Indian librarians are happy to have their \$5 per hour jobs!
- A single, semi-competent technician in your district can maintain your entire library program.
- You can justify your district's expensive 1:1 computer/student initiative.
- No more contentious book or curriculum "challenges."

Please read the attached study (scientifically-based and conducted by FWLC's very own research department) that empirically demonstrates that this product can dramatically improve student performance where it counts - on high stakes tests. (FWLC has been approved by for Federal Title and grant funding – unlike traditional library materials and librarians.)

Act today!

Coming soon – special pricing for regional and statewide purchases.

Sincerely,
Bill Baudrate, CEO
Flat World Library Corporation
1-800-NO-BOOKS

The penciled note at the bottom from the superintendent read simply: "Why should I *not* buy this product?"

Bibliography of readings about the Net Generation

- Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-19 Year-olds. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2005
<http://www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia030905pkg.cfm>
- Howe and Strauss, *Millenials Rising*. Vintage, 2000
- Oblinger and Oblinger, *Educating the Net Generation*, EDUCAUSE, 2005
- www.educause.edu/educatingthenetgen
- Pew Internet & American Life Project (various reports) www.pewinternet.org/
- *Tech-savvy students stuck in text-dominated schools, education evolving*, 2005
- www.educationevolving.org/studentvoices/student_opinion_papers.asp

Attributes	Implications for schools
<p>As a distinct demographic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Born 1982-2000 - AKA Millenials 2. 36% of population/31% minority 3. Racially and ethnically diverse (20% have one immigrant parent) 4. Eventually larger group than Boomers 5. Valued (Play dates, NCLB, SAT prep) and Sheltered (Helmets, Metal Detectors, V-Chips and NetNanny) 	
<p>Relationship with Technology</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fascinated by new technologies 2. Grown up with tech - immersed 3. 96% have gone online 4. Spend more time with digital media than TV 5. Access primarily through home and amount varies by race and economic level 	
<p>Relationship with Information</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ubiquitous - mobile 2. 94% have use the web for school research 3. Taggers/folksonomy users 4. Satisfice - snip-its 5. Information = conversation = authority? 	
<p>Learning Styles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers are vital - computers can't replace humans 2. Building social skills is a part of school 3. Social learners / informal learners 4. Re-mixers - Share - 57% content creators 5. Minds shaped by technology and media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hypertext minds Read visual images Inductive discovery (games?) Learn by doing Shift attention Expect fast responses Text literacy less well developed Tech understanding shallow 	
<p>Values and Views</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achievement oriented - Want rules, schedules and agendas - Believe it is cool to be smart - Focused on grades 2. Work on "things that matter" 3. Identify with parents' values 4. Busy with extra curricular activities 5. Unaware of consequences of their tech use 	

Building Conceptual Age Skills – What Should Schools Be Doing?

Daniel Pink’s book, *A Whole New Mind*, suggests some ‘Conceptual Age skills’ needed for workers in a world of Asia, Abundance and Automation. What experiences/activities should schools be offering students to help build these skills?

<p>1. Not just function, but also DESIGN. “It’s no longer sufficient to create a product, a service, an experience, or a lifestyle that’s merely functional. Today it’s economically crucial and personally rewarding to create something that is also beautiful, whimsical, or emotionally engaging.”</p>	
<p>2. Not just argument, but also STORY. “When our lives are brimming with information and data, it’s not enough to marshal an effective argument... The essence of persuasion, communication, and self-understanding has become the ability also to fashion a compelling story.”</p>	
<p>3. Not just focus, but also SYMPHONY. “What’s in greatest demand today isn’t analysis but synthesis – seeing the big picture and, crossing boundaries, being able to combine disparate pieces into an arresting new whole.”</p>	
<p>4. Not just logic, but also EMPATHY. “What will distinguish those who thrive will be their ability to understand what makes their fellow woman or man tick, to forge relationships, and to care for others.</p>	
<p>5. Not just seriousness, but also PLAY “Ample evidence points to the enormous health and professional benefits of laughter, lightheartedness, games and humor.”</p>	
<p>6. Not just accumulation, but also MEANING. “[Material plenty] has freed hundreds of millions of people from day-to-day struggles and liberated us to pursue more significant desires: purpose, transcendence, and spiritual fulfillment.”</p>	
<p>7. Not just knowledge, but also LEARNING. (Johnson) Unless a person develops both the ability and the desire to continue to learn new skills, to be open to new ideas, and to be ready to change practices in the face of new technologies, economic forces, and societal demands, he or she will not be able to successfully compete in a global economy.</p>	

Johnson's Hierarchy of "Knowledge Worker Skills"

I would posit that there is a Maslovian-type Hierarchy of Knowledge Worker Skills, skills that need be mastered prior to the acquisition and application of "higher order" skills. I will categorize these as: Basic Skills, Discipline/Profession Specific Skills, Technology Skills, Information Problem-Solving/HOT Skills, and Conceptual Skills. Each is described below.

