

School's out on testing

Education should be about inquiry-based learning and creative thinking, not standardised test results

SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

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WHAT will the future ask of our children?

What skills will be needed to navigate the changes and challenges?

Will being NAPLAN ready really provide them with the skills and knowledge they are going to need?

There are many of us who believe we need to be doing much more to cultivate creative and critical thinking skills and value children's ways of knowing and thinking about the world.

Children are born to inquire and from their first days of life they are making sense of how the world works.

We need to value and pay attention to children's theories and ideas and encourage them to share their thoughts about how things work, or why they think things are the way they are.

We need to encourage questioning and inquiry, problem solving and problem posing.

The future will present a range of social, environmental, and global challenges.

Complex problems of many kinds will face society. And perhaps already are.

How many 'fill in the correct answer worksheets' or 'multiple choice tests' has your child completed in his/her schooling life or even this year?

What might be the implications



LET THEM LEARN: Research shows that education is most effective when it asks children to think and explore.

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for children and futures if schooling only values 'correct answers' or 'predetermined standardised answers'?

The testing culture of schools wants right answers.

But, will high standardised test results save the planet?

What if what really matters are opportunities to engage in creative thinking, problem solving and in musing about possibilities and theories?

Rapid changes, new challenges, new problems and greater complexities ultimately will demand that schooling shifts from right

answers to open-ended questions.

Open-ended inquiry offers scope for advanced thinking and enables children to respond in their own way at varying levels of complexity.

This encourages the construction of knowledge rather than the consumption of knowledge to regurgitate information.

When we offer inquiry-based learning and creative thinking opportunities we actually give children a chance to make a contribution, to solve problems and to amaze us.

We also give them a chance to

engage in personally significant learning, learning that is active, engaging, relevant and personally fulfilling.

Research shows that education is most effective when it addresses something deep and personal in children's lives, when it asks children to assume a role or position and speak persuasively about issues that matter to them, and when it asks children to build, design and create.

The best education is one that encourages meaning-making, risk taking, independent judgment, intrinsic motivation and curiosity.