UNIT 1. READING

'Mind-Reading' Skills Boosted By Reading Literature, Study Suggests

By *Kelly Servick*

Fifty Shades of Grey may be a fun read, but it's not going to help you probe the minds of others the way *War and Peace* might. That's the conclusion of a new study, which finds that, compared with mainstream fiction, high-brow literary works do more to improve our ability to understand the thoughts, emotions, and motivations of those around us.

Now a Ph.D. student at the New School in New York City, David Kidd is versed in arguments from literary theorists that divide fiction into two categories. When we read a thrilling-but-predictable bestseller, "the text sort of grabs us and takes us on a roller-coaster ride," he says, "and we all sort of experience the same thing." Literature, on the other hand, gives the reader a lot more responsibility. Its imaginary worlds are full of characters with confusing or unexplained motivations. There are no reliable instructions about whom to trust or how to feel.

Kidd and his adviser, social psychologist Emanuele Castano, suspected that the skills we use to navigate these ambiguous fictional worlds serve us well in real life. In particular, the duo surmised that they enhance our so-called theory of mind. That's the ability to intuit someone else's mental state—to know, for example, that when someone raises their hand toward us, they're trying to give us a high-five rather than slap us. It's closely related to empathy, the ability to recognize and share the feelings of others. Increasing evidence supports the relationship between reading fiction and theory of mind. But much of this evidence is based on correlations: self-reported avid readers or those familiar with fiction also tend to perform better on certain tests of empathy, for example.

To measure the immediate cognitive effects of two types of fiction, Castano and Kidd designed five related experiments. In each, they asked subjects to read 10 to 15 pages of either literary or popular writing. When participants finished their excerpts, they took tests designed to measure theory of mind. In one test, they looked at a face for 2 seconds and decided whether the person appeared happy,

angry, afraid, or sad. In the more nuanced test, they saw only a small slice of a face and picked from four complex emotions such as "contemplative" and "skeptical."

On average, both groups did slightly better on these tests than control subjects who read either a nonfiction article or nothing at all. This fits with previous research showing a positive relationship between fiction and theory of mind. But among the fiction readers, those who read "literary" works scored significantly higher on the theory of mind tests than those who read popular selections. The absolute differences in scores were hardly dramatic: on average, the literary group outperformed the popular group by about two questions (out of 36) on test 2, and missed one fewer question (out of 18) on test 1. Yet, some psychologists note that even very small effects could be meaningful, provided they translate into real-world consequences—reducing the likelihood that social misunderstandings could create grudges or leave someone in tears.

Still, the "literariness" argument needs hammering out. Castano believes these results show that fiction's power doesn't hinge on exposing readers to foreign viewpoints or offering a persuasive, empathetic message. "For us, it's not about the content," he says. "It was about the process." Some may find that stories with a moral of acceptance and empathy increase their theory of mind skills, for example, while others might benefit more from the practice of filling in the emotional gaps in an ambiguous story.

An Italian cognitive neuroscientist Vittorio Gallese, who is also exploring how the brain responds to works of art, finds the new link between real and fictional worlds exciting, but is skeptical of the distinction between literary and mainstream fiction. "This is a very slippery ground," he says, because historical tastes often move the boundary between "high" and "low" art. For example, he says, Honoré de Balzac's *The Human Comedy* was released in serial form as a work of "popular" fiction, but has since attained the status of a classic.

VOCABULARY NOTES

to probe – seek to uncover information about someone or something;

mainstream – a prevailing current or direction of activity or influence;

fiction – literature in the form of prose, especially novels, that describes imaginary events and people;

mainstream fiction – Nongenre fiction, excluding literary or avant-garde fiction, that appeals to a general readership; a general term publishers and booksellers use to describe both commercial and literary works that depict a daily reality familiar to most people. These books, usually set in the 20th or present-day 21st century, have at their core a universal theme that attracts a broad audience;

high-brow – intellectual or rarefied in taste;

literary work– imaginative or creative writing;

versed – experienced or skilled in; knowledgeable about;

verse – writing arranged with a metrical rhythm, typically having a rhyme;

thrilling – very exciting or stimulating;

predictable – behaving or occurring in a way that is expected;

bestseller – a book or other product that sells in very large numbers;

confusing – causing bewilderment; difficult to follow; puzzling;

reliable – able to be trusted; predictable or dependable;

ambiguous – having more than one possible interpretation or meaning; difficult to understand or classify; obscure;

to surmise – suppose that something is true without having evidence to confirm it;

to enhance – intensify, increase, or further improve the quality, value, or extent of something;

to intuit – understand or work out by instinct;

avid – having or showing a keen interest in or enthusiasm for something;

cognitive – of, relating to, being, or involving conscious intellectual activity (as thinking, reasoning, or remembering);

excerpt – a part or passage taken from a book, speech, play, etc., and considered on its own; extract;

short story – a prose narrative of shorter length than the novel, esp one that concentrates on a single theme;

anthology– a collection of literary passages or works, esp poems, by various authors;

genre fiction – Also known as category fiction and popular fiction, plot-driven fictional works written with the intent of fitting into a specific literary genre, in order to appeal to readers and fans already familiar with that genre;

sci-fi = science fiction – fiction based on imagined future scientific or technological advances and major social or environmental changes, frequently portraying space or time travel and life on other planets;

nuanced – treated or done so as to show or display small, delicate, or subtle variations, gradations, etc., as in meaning;

contemplative – expressing or involving prolonged thought;

skeptical – not easily convinced; having doubts or reservations;

nonfiction – writing dealing with facts and events rather than imaginative narration;

meaningful – having a serious, important, or useful quality or purpose;

likelihood – the state or fact of something's being probable; probability;

misunderstanding – a disagreement or quarrel;

grudge – a persistent feeling of ill will or resentment resulting from a past insult or injury;

literariness – the quality or state of being of, relating to, concerned with, or characteristic of literature or scholarly writing; the quality or state of being versed in or knowledgeable about literature;

to hinge on – depend on;

persuasive – having the power or ability to convince someone of something;

to expose – bring to public notice; disclose; reveal;

empathetic – able to share another person's feelings or emotions as if they were their own;

viewpoint – a person's opinion or point of view;

content – the things that are held or included in something;

moral – a lesson that can be derived from a story or experience; standards of behavior; principles of right and wrong;

to benefit (from) – receive an advantage; profit;

gap – an unfilled space or interval; a break in continuity;

to explore – inquire into or discuss (a subject or issue) in detail; examine or evaluate (an option or possibility);

to respond (to) – act in reply; react;

distinction – a difference or contrast between similar things or people;

boundary – a limit of a subject or sphere of activity;

to attain – succeed in achieving (something that one desires and has worked for); reach.

EXERCISES

1. Questions

1. What is your definition of reading?

2. What in your opinion is the difference between mainstream (popular) and literary fiction?

3. How do you understand mind-reading? Do you think it to be an important ability in life? Give your reasons.

4. Why do you read? What benefits do you see in reading? How do you think reading helps you in your daily life? How does reading make you feel?

5. How does reading fiction affect our perception of the world and people around you? How does it influence your behavior in various life situations?

6. Have you ever judged a person by what he or she reads? Do you think reading preferences can tell much about a person? What can you learn about a person's tastes in reading tell you?

7. Can you think of a case in which hype ruined your reading experience? Can you dwell on why it happened?

8. Describe your ideal reading place. Do you need any must-have reading accessories? What distracts you easily when you are reading?

9. What is the worst/best reading experience that you have ever had?

10. Have you ever kept a reading diary/journal? What were the circumstances? How did you feel about the experience?

2. Panel discussion

The authors in the texts below try dispelling some myths about reading. Choose any of the following topics to discuss pros and cons of the authors' ideas based on your own knowledge of the matter and/or personal experience.

1. I have to read every word

Many of the words used in writing grammatically correct sentences actually convey no meaning. If, in reading, you exert as much effort in conceptualizing these meaningless words as you do important ones, you limit not only your reading speed but your comprehension as well.

2. Reading once is enough

Skim once as rapidly as possible to determine the main idea and to identify those parts that need careful reading. Reread more carefully to plug the gaps in your knowledge.

While there people for whom one exposure to an idea in a basic course is enough, but they either have read extensively or have an excellent background or a high degree of interest in the subject. For most people in most subjects, reading once is not enough.

Good reading is selective reading. It involves selecting those sections that are relevant to your purpose in reading. Rather than automatically rereading, take a few seconds to quiz yourself on the material you have just read and then review those sections that are still unclear or confusing to you.

3: It is sinful to skip passages in reading

Today proliferation of books and printed matter brought about by the information explosion creates a reading problem for everyone. You must, of course, make daily decisions as to what is worth spending your time on, what can be glanced at or put aside for future perusal, and what can be relegated to the wastebasket.
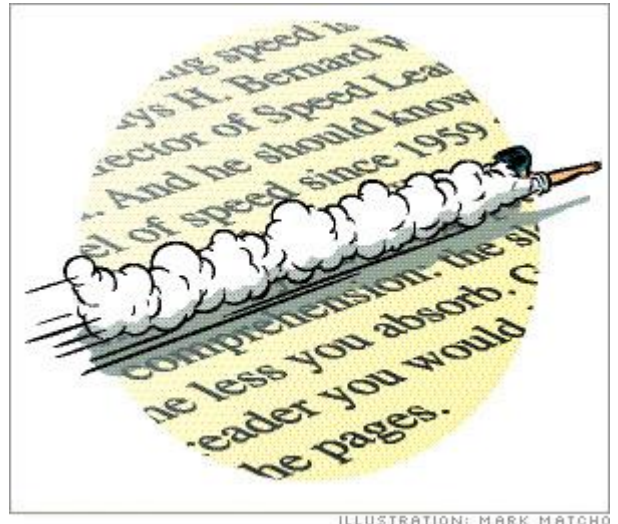
The idea that you cannot skip but have to read every page is old-fashioned. Sir Francis Bacon once said that some books are to be nibbled and tasted, some are to be swallowed whole, and a few need to be thoroughly chewed and digested no matter how trivial the content.

4. If I skim or read too rapidly my comprehension will drop

Many people refuse to push themselves faster in reading for fear that they will lose comprehension. However, research shows that there is little relationship between rate and comprehension. Some read rapidly and comprehend well, others read slowly and comprehend poorly. Whether you have good comprehension depends on whether you can extract and retain the important ideas from your reading, not on how fast you read. If you can do this, you can also increase your speed. If you "clutch up" when trying to read fast or skim and worry about your comprehension, it will drop because your mind is occupied with your fears and you are not paying attention to the ideas that you are reading.

5. I can't learn anything from fiction

If you think you can't learn anything from fiction, then you're reading the wrong fiction.

Sure, the novel can serve as an escape. But to say you can't learn anything from *1984* or *To Kill A Mockingbird* or *Harry Potter*, or thousands of other novels, just isn't true.

Jesus taught in parables — in other words, a story, a form of fiction — because it's an effective teaching method. So if Jesus thinks you can learn from a story, it's safe to say that you can learn a lot from a novel.

6. There is something about my eyes that keeps me from reading fast

This belief is nonsense too, assuming that you have good vision or wear glasses that correct your eye problems. Usually it is your brain, not your eyes, that slows you down in reading. Your eyes are capable of taking in more words than your brain is used to processing. If you sound out words as you read, you will probably read very slowly and have difficulty in skimming and scanning until you break this habit.

7. I don't have time to read

This statement will usually come from non-readers who are passive-aggressively judging you for spending so much time with your head in a book.

Truth is, everyone has time to read. It's just a matter of priorities. If you have time to play golf, then you have time to read.

If you have time to watch *American Idol*, then you have time to read. You've just given that time to something else.

8. Reading isn't an activity

Of course it is. Sometimes, readers get labeled as lazy slackers who just sit around on their couch all day and read Star Wars fan fiction. (Not true — it's actually Twilight on a rocking chair on the porch.)

In all seriousness, reading is as much an activity as taking a test or writing an article or giving a speech. Reading takes mental energy. Ideally, you're reading books that you can learn from, and you're even taking notes or writing in the margins.

9. If you're reading [insert genre], that's not really reading

The book snobs might say your love of the vampire romance genre doesn't count, or the fact that you have Snooki's biography on your shelf is embarrassing.

But you have to read what you're passionate about. If you don't like Faulkner or historical biographies, no amount of prodding by a book snob will change your mind.

Here's the truth: If you're reading anything, you're reading. And that's a lot more than many people can boast these days.
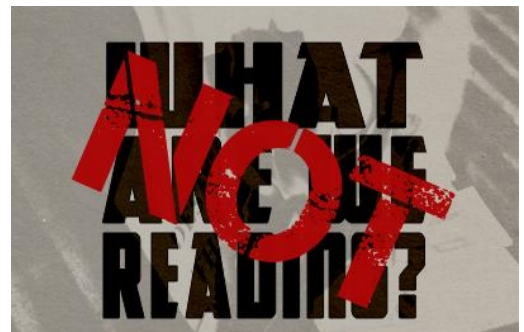
VOCABULARY NOTES

to convey – communicate (a message, information, etc.); make (an idea, impression, or feeling) known or understandable to someone;

to conceptualize – to form (a concept or concepts) out of observations, experience, data, etc.;

comprehension – the ability to understand something;

to skim (through) – read (a book) in a superficial or cursory manner; read (something) quickly or cursorily so as to note only the important points;

extensively – substantially , to a considerable degree;

background – a person's education, experience, and social circumstances;

relevant – closely connected or appropriate to the matter in hand;

purpose – the reason for which anything is done, created, or exists;

to quiz – ask (someone) questions;

to skip – to omit (intervening matter), as in passing from one part or subject to another;

proliferation – rapid growth or increase in numbers;

perusal – the action of reading or examining something;

to relegate – demote, move to a position of less authority, importance, etc.;

to nibble – take small bites out of;

trivial – of little value or importance;

to extract – derive (an idea or the evidence for it) from a body of information;

to retain – keep in one's memory;

to clutch up – become nervous and panicked;

to assume –take for granted; accept without proof; suppose

to scan – look quickly but not very thoroughly through (a document or other text) in order to identify relevant information;

parable – a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson;

slacker – a person who avoids work or effort;

snob – a person who believes that their tastes in a particular area are superior to those of other people;

passionate (about) – showing or caused by strong feelings or a strong belief;

to prod – stimulate or persuade (someone who is reluctant or slow) to do something.

III. Video Time

Watch the video *Reading & Book Buying Habits!* available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoMt4z3pvvw and speculate about your book reading and buying habits, how you decide what books to read, what types of books you prefer and why.

Watch the video about the reasons books and reading are great https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=780ywnE8Vxg think about other reasons and benefits reading can possibly have. Compare your reasons to the ones Daniel Wallen comes up with in the article below. How many of them have you guessed? Which were unexpected? Which of yours were never mentioned?

Bookworms Do It Better: 12 Compelling Reasons to Read More Books

by *Daniel Wallen*

The more books you read, the better your life will be. If you don't believe me, please consider these twelve compelling reasons to read more books.

1. You will entertain yourself for a low price.

If you're looking for entertainment on a budget, you can't beat books. Thanks to the popularity of electronic reading devices like the Kindle and re-selling websites like eBay, it's never been easier to entertain yourself for hours at a time, for the low cost of a few dollars.

2. You will immerse yourself in a new world.

Sometimes our daily life can start to feel dull, dry or depressing — I know it, you know it, we all know it. At times like this, I like to dive into a good fiction book for a much-needed escape into another world, where I can forget about whatever problems are stressing me out. Whether you want to travel to the land of the Hobbits, a galaxy far away or a tropical destination in a steamy romance novel is up to you. You'll come back refreshed after your mini-vacation to a fresh and exciting place in the world of words.

3. You will optimize your brain power.

This shouldn't come as a shock, but studies suggest reading makes you smart. Unlike watching television, which requires no thought process, reading is an active learning experience that will keep your mind sharp (even in old age).

4. You will increase your odds of success.

The more books you read, the more knowledge you will have, the more strategies and resources your brain will store, the more likely you will succeed.

5. You will improve your vocabulary.

The more words you're capable of using, the better you will become at expressing your thoughts and feelings. I couldn't imagine how I would write articles like this if I didn't actively aim to expand my vocabulary, because using the same few words to express myself would get awfully boring in a hurry (don't you agree?).

6. You will have things to talk about at parties.

Reading more books will enable you to say the sentence, "Did you know _____?" more often, making it easier to start conversations with strangers (or, as I like to say, "People who aren't my friends yet").

7. You will discover surprising new ideas that are interesting and engaging.

Reading introduced me to concepts like mindful eating, relaxation exercises, and the importance of loving yourself. If I didn't read, I wouldn't even be aware of these ideas, which have defined my entire coaching philosophy. If you don't read, you could be missing out on intriguing ideas that would likewise re-define your personal purpose or business philosophy.
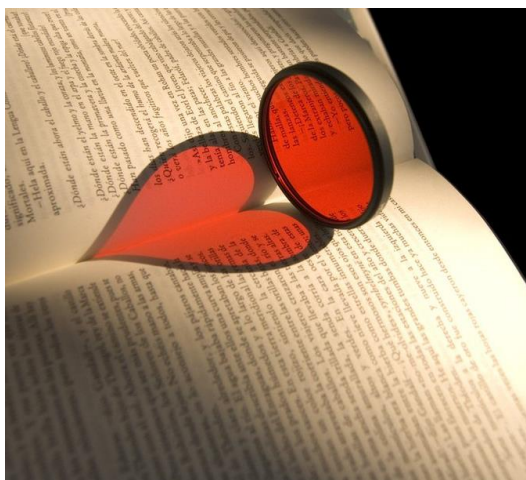
8. You will eliminate boredom during down-time.

Have you ever found yourself stuck in a waiting room, bored out of your mind, with nothing to read but gossip magazines? If so, you should know that it is wise to keep a book in your purse or car at all times, as you never know when you'll find yourself with some time to kill. Even if you just take a few minutes to read a chapter during your commute and lunch break every day, those minutes will quickly turn into hours if repeated consistently.

9. You will strengthen your patience muscles.

We live in a society that expects instant gratification, which is anything but a blessing for most people's success in life, as there is nothing "quick" or "easy" about losing weight or starting a successful business. While it might be "easier" to watch a two-hour movie, it is far more beneficial to spend forty-eight hours reading a book. Opting for the book over the TV will strengthen your patience muscles over time, resulting in more success in business and life.

10. You will become an expert in your field.

Don't you think reading academic journals, articles, and books by experts in your field might make you better at what you do? If you can't be bothered to learn more about your profession, then your lack of passion could be a sign that you're in the wrong field. The more books you read, the better off you're going to be.
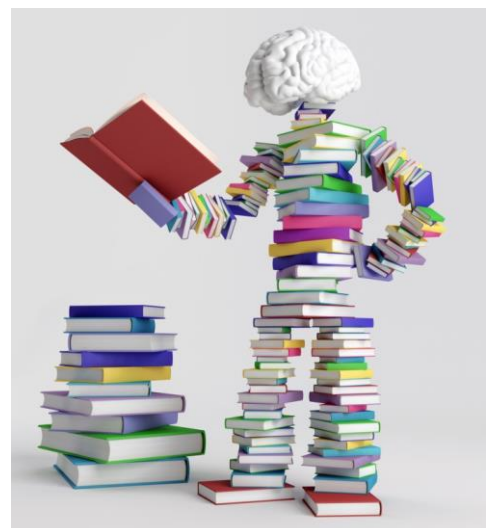
11. You will reduce stress and unwind into a good night's sleep.
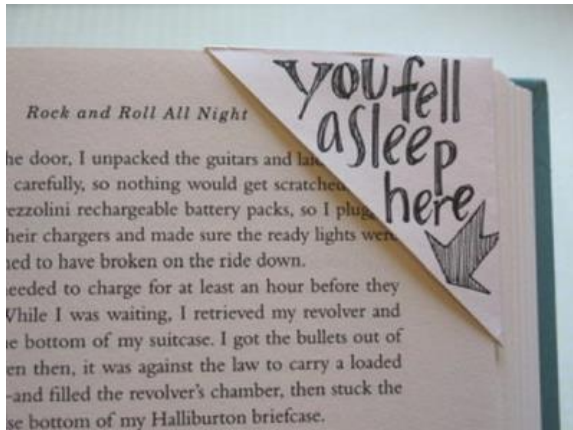
Exposing yourself to artificial light on your cellphone, TV or tablet reduces your body's production of melatonin, which can make it difficult to get a good night's sleep, if you do so late at night. You would be wise to cut off all electronics at least an hour before bed, and replace that with a good book, which is a much better sleep-friendly alternative.

12. You will change your life.

I firmly believe that if it wasn't for books, I wouldn't have achieved an awful lot in my life; nor would I have the knowledge, imagination or creativity that I depend on as a writer, business owner, and coach. I hope these reasons to read more books encourage you to unlock your potential with the power of reading.

VOCABULARY NOTES

bookworm – a person who enjoys reading;

compelling – evoking interest, attention, or admiration in a powerfully irresistible way;

to immerse – (immerse oneself or be immersed) involve oneself deeply in a particular activity;

to dive into – occupy oneself suddenly and enthusiastically with (a meal, or an engrossing subject or activity);

to stress out – be very tense and anxious because of difficulties in one's lives;

steamy – depicting or involving passionate sexual activity;

engaging – pleasing, charming, or winning;

mindful – conscious or aware of something;

down-time – time when one is not working or active;

gratification – pleasure, especially when gained from the satisfaction of a desire;

to opt (for) – make a choice from a range of possibilities.

IV. Working together

Work in pairs. Act out a dialogue where you are a parent explaining your child why it is important for him/her to read and how beneficial this activity is his/her future. The child is not very willing to, especially when his/her friends are calling him/her to join them for walk or there is an exciting computer game s/he wants to play. S/he doesn't understand how reading some books can be better than having fun with friends or killing minsters online.

V. Did you know?

- ➤ Reading can help prevent Alzheimer's.
- ➤ Being a reader means you're more likely to learn something new every day.
- ➤ People who read are more likely to vote, exercise, and be more cultural.
- ➤ Reading can be therapeutic.
- ➤ Reading enhances your memory.
- ➤ Reading actually does make you seem sexier, especially to women.

➢ Reading helps to boost your analytical thinking.

➢ Reading expands your vocabulary, so you'll sound like a genius.

➢ Fiction books increase your ability to empathize with others.

➢ People who read are more likely to get ahead when it comes to their careers, and life in general.

Choose any of the statements above as a topic for your oral presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support your claims.

VI. A story behind a common expression

Read the riot act

Meaning: Reprimand rowdy characters and warn them to stop behaving badly.

Origin: Since the early 19th century we have used 'read the riot act' as a figurative phrase to describe attempts to calm groups of rowdies - along the same lines as 'you noisy louts, don't you know there are people here trying to sleep?'. It wasn't always so. Had we been 'reading the riot act' in 1715 we would have noticed capital letters. At that date there was a real Riot Act and it used to be read in public.

In English law the control of unruly citizens has usually been the responsibility of local magistrates. Any group of twelve or more that the authorities didn't like the look of could be deemed a 'riotous and tumultuous assembly' and arrested if they didn't disperse within an hour of the Riot Act being read to them by a magistrate. This seems a little harsh, but in 18th century England the government was fearful of Jacobite mobs who threatened to rise up and overthrow the Hanoverian George I. The fear was well-founded, as supporters of the deposed Stuarts did actually invade in 1715 and again in 1745. The 'Riot Act' was passed by the British government in 1714 and came into force in 1715. The Riot Act, which was more formally called '*An act for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies, and for the more speedy and effectual punishing the rioters*' actually contained this warning:

"Our sovereign Lord the King chargeth and commandeth all persons, being assembled, immediately to disperse themselves, and peaceably to depart to their habitations, or to their lawful business, upon the pains contained in the act made in

the first year of King George, for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies. God save the King."

The punishments for ignoring the Act were severe - penal servitude for not less than three years, or imprisonment with hard labor for up to two years.

After the Hanoverians were established in power the Riot Act began to fade into disuse. It was read to a group of demonstrating mill workers at Manchester Town Hall in 1842, but was used with decreasing frequency and had become a rarity by the 20th century. Surprisingly, the Act remained on the UK statute books into modern times and wasn't formally repealed until 1973. It was eventually superseded by the 1986 Public Order Act.

The first record of the figurative use of the phrase is in William Bradford's *Letters*, December 1819:

"She has just run out to read the riot act in the Nursery."

Write an essay (300 words) on "Reading in Today's World".

UNIT 2. BOOKS

What Classics Will Our Century Produce?

By *Warren Adler*

Perhaps we must first consider how a classic becomes a classic. We apply numerous reasons for such a coronation citing artistic quality, universal relevancy, emotional integrity, critical acclaim by the author's contemporaries, literary influence, remarkable insight, imaginative style, effective use of language and a host of high praise that has been passed through time like a railroad car glides over a well-worn track pulled by the power of a locomotive.

The potential for a classic starts out in the author's mind, and is then transposed into the published work. Readers read and react with awesome praise, critics review with ecstatic abandon, academics discover, recommend and insert the book into their curriculums and libraries, bookstores stock the book, and most who discover and study the work exult in its story and style.

At times, this acclaim happens instantly, but often the discovery of a work emerges mysteriously after many years of obscurity.

So it begins, the journey to becoming a classic, influencing other writers, readers, educators and critics generation after generation, taking on heft, powered along the track by the locomotive of authority. Passing through so many agile minds, written about, recommended, interpreted, analyzed and discussed until it becomes part of the literary canon.

In the 21st century, those well-worn tracks to reaching the heights of a classic have lost much of their traction. The locomotive has sputtered and encountered hairpin curves, and faulty signals.

In bygone days, worthy works of the imagination could be discovered in a much smaller literary pool. Literacy was hardly universal.

The serious reading public had finite choices in a world where an elite education in the liberal arts was a necessary preparation for the fulfilled intellectual life. Such a culturally fine-tuned audience was a distinct minority.

There were fewer distractions also. Only the live stage offered a more public literary outlet and the delights of poetry had their small but hardy band of followers. Discoverability by that refined intellectual taste, enhanced by a comprehensive literary education, was the key for a work to become a classic. Word-of-mouth operated in a smaller privileged circle as it engaged with the world created by the novels of Dickens, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Hardy, Balzac, Twain, Richardson, Fielding and on and on to build the blocks of the western canon.

In the 21st century, with the rise of technology and literacy and the decline of the civilized glories of a liberal education, those natural candidates for the canon of immortality are drowning in an ocean so populated with offerings that discoverability is practically impossible. This is not to say that the talent is not there. It might even be in far more abundance than in earlier times.

As liberal education declines and occupational education rises, more and more people interested in finding the nuggets of literary output are frustrated by the sheer volume. Categories and subcategories abound.

Oddly, as the number of books of fiction produced each year approaches staggering numbers, and as genres multiply, readers (hungry to be tantalized by insight and inspired by wisdom by those who quest to make sense of the human condition in the kind of books that populate the classics bookshelf) must, as a consequence, find themselves frustrated in their search for the needle in the proverbial haystack.

Worse, reading literature, which has always been nourished in schools, has been severely cut back in favor of informational texts or material that is more specific to the purpose of employment. It is all part of a downsizing effort to make traditional education more attuned to the job market and less to the building of a mature mind able to cope with the moral, ethical and relationship challenges of modern life.

Out of his hodgepodge one wonders whether the classics of the 21st century will come out of the genre fiction of romance, fantasy, graphic novels, mysteries, eroticism, vampire zombie, etc. categories, where books like *Fifty Shades of Grey* will be raised on the same pedestal as, say, *War and Peace* and *Ulysses*.

Nevertheless, I do sense that I have a sea of silent allies out there who know in their gut what makes a classic, and they worship beside me in our very private and increasingly isolated pew in a currently obscure location in the literary community cathedral.

VOCABULARY NOTES

to cite – quote (a passage, book, or author) as evidence for or justification of an argument or statement; mention as an example;

relevancy – importance or significance to a particular situation or matter;

integrity – adherence to moral principles; honesty; the quality of being unimpaired; soundness; unity; wholeness

acclaim – enthusiastic and public praise;

contemporary – a person or thing living or existing at the same time as another;

remarkable – worthy of attention; striking;

insight – a penetrating and often sudden understanding, as of a complex situation or problem;

praise – the expression of approval or admiration for someone or something;

awesome – extremely impressive or daunting; inspiring great admiration, apprehension, or fear;

ecstatic – feeling or expressing overwhelming happiness or joyful excitement;

abandon – freedom from inhibitions, restraint, concern, or worry;

to exult (in) – show or feel triumphant elation or jubilation;

to emerge – become apparent or prominent;

obscurity – the state of being unknown, inconspicuous, or unimportant;

heft – ability or influence;

agile – able to think and understand quickly;

traction – the extent to which an idea, product, etc. gains popularity or acceptance;

literacy – the ability to read and write; the ability to use language proficiently;

finite – limited in size or extent;

fulfilled – satisfied or happy because of fully developing one's abilities or character;

refined – elegant and cultured in appearance, manner, or taste;

comprehensive – including or dealing with all or nearly all elements or aspects of something;

word-of-mouth – spoken communication as a means of transmitting information;

nugget – something small but valuable or excellent;

mature – fully developed;

hodgepodge – a jumbled mixture; a confused or disorderly mass or collection of things;

to worship – feel great admiration or devotion for.

EXERCISES

1. Questions

1. Have you read any of the authors/books mentioned in the article? What was your impression from reading those? What in your opinion makes a classic?

2. Have you ever re-read a book? Which? How many times? What is so special about it?

3. Can you give an example of a book(s) that has changed your life in some way or influenced your opinion about something? How and why did it happen?

4. What existing literary genres do you know? Can you describe the main features of your favorite genre?

5. Have you ever stopped reading a book halfway? What can cause you to do so?

6. How would you describe the difference between reading an e-book and a paper book? Do you think they will ever fully replace paper books?

7. Is there a book you don't like but everyone else seems to love? A book you like but no one else seems to enjoy? Can you think of any reasons why this is the case? How do you choose the books you are going to read?

8. Have you ever encountered a book you didn't expect to like but did? A book you expected to like but didn't? Dwell on the experience.

9. What is your favorite genre? Why do you like it? Do you ever read outside of your comfort zone?

10. What experiences might have inspired the following proverbs?

   ➢   *Drink nothing without seeing it; sign nothing without reading it.*

   ➢   *When all else fails, read the instructions.*

   ➢   *You can't tell a book by its cover.*

2. Panel discussion

The most common pretext for not reading is 'I don't have time for that'. And it is a myth in a way of speaking. Some of the busiest people on our planet are also avid readers. Can you think of why? Look at the ways to make time for reading offered by Eva Lantsoght and choose the ones that are applicable to your lifestyle. Elaborate on why and how these activities can be effective in your case. Can you think of any other ways to make room for reading?

11 Ways Busy People Make Time To Read

by *Eva Lantsoght*

Reading sparks your creativity, helps you grow your understanding of complex problems and grows you intellectually, while at the same time, reading is a very relaxing activity. But how do we make time to read?

**Borrow more books than you can read**

If you enjoy borrowing books from the library, borrow more than you think you'll actually read. Having physical books piled up in your house that you know need to be returned will encourage you to read more than you might initially have planned to.

If you are a digital reader, make sure you download a stockpile of books onto your e-reader, so you always have a wealth of choices right at your fingertips that you are eager to read.

Read more than one book at a time

Some people prefer to read one book at a time, but others benefit from working on several books at the same time. Some books are more suitable for reading at night (like fiction novels), while other books, such as non-fiction analyses, can be more suitable for reading during your commute.
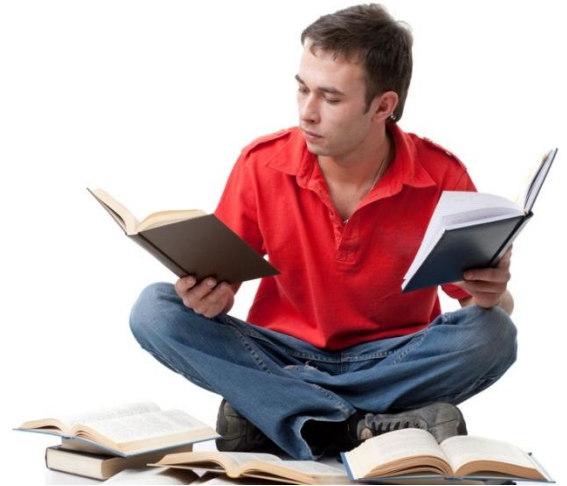
Set a goal per reading session

If you don't have the habit of reading big chunks of text at a time, set reading goals per session. For example, you can challenge yourself to read 50 pages before putting your book aside, or to finish the chapter before you move on to the next task. Set the bar a little higher each time. Reading a little bit extra every day will add up to reading more books on an annual basis than before.

Practice speed-reading

The idea is simple: if you want to read more in a short amount of time, you can teach yourself to read faster. There are different techniques for speed-reading in which you can train yourself. These techniques include grouping words instead of reading word per word, forcing your eyes to move more quickly by moving a ruler or pen across the page, or holding your breath and trying to finish a paragraph in that time (this technique suppresses sub-vocalization, our tendency to "hear" the words we read in our mind).
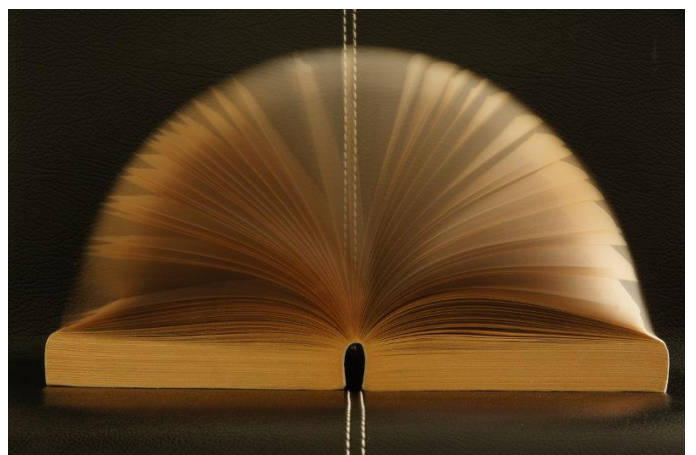
Read digitally across all your mobile devices

If you read digitally, make sure you have a reader app on all your mobile devices so that you can read whenever you have a free moment. Having a book synced across all devices (e-reader, smartphone and tablet) will help you to read a few pages here and there during the day. By doing this, when you check back on your e-reader at the end of the day, you will see that you will have easily read 20 pages just by reading in snippets of time.

Ignore what you "should" be reading

While you might find inspiration in lists of "best" books, read for yourself. Read for your own pleasure and education. Putting pressure on yourself in terms of reading what the rest of the world tells you to read only brings you so far. If you read based on your own interest and joy, you will find yourself making more time to read out of excitement for the book or topic.

Track your progress online

Several websites can be used to track your reading process throughout the year (e.g. GoodReads). An online account in which you keep an overview of the books you are currently reading, and your progress in these books, will help you focus on your reading. Moreover, you can keep track of the books that you would like to read later on, and add reviews of the books you have read. Many of these sites can also make recommendations based on the books you've read and enjoyed.

Read before going to bed

Reading fiction or enjoyable non-fiction at night before falling asleep is a proven method to relax, put the day behind ourselves, and prepare ourselves for a good night's sleep. By the same token, you can make it a habit to read a few pages first thing in the morning, or read a chapter after lunch while you are digesting food and getting ready for a productive work session in the afternoon.

10. Quit reading random news articles

If you want to make more time to read books, you will have to cut down on time from other activities to free up time for reading. One of the methods you can follow is by cutting down on the number of random articles shared on social media platforms that you read, and replace this time by reading more in-depth analyses in the books that you are working through.

Join your peers

Look for people in your community or online who are reading the same book as you are reading. Keeping up with their discussions and ideas on the reading will help you move forward with your reading. You wouldn't want to be the one who missed out on last week's chapter, would you?

11. Join a reading challenge

Similarly to point three, you can join a reading challenge and set a goal for the number of books you would like to read in a given year. To really challenge yourself, set the limit just a little above what you would think is feasible. Giving yourself a specific challenge can do a lot to hold yourself accountable and motivate yourself to reach the goal. You'd be amazed at how much reading you can do in a single year.

VOCABULARY NOTES

to spark – provide the stimulus for;

to pile up – gather or be gathered in a pile; accumulate;

digital reader – a reader using computer technologies for reading;

at one's fingertips – readily available; accessible;

eager – strongly wanting to do or have something;

chunk – a significant amount of something;

speed-reading – a technique of reading rapidly by assimilating several phrases or sentences at once;

reader app – a program or piece of software designed and written to fulfill a particular purpose of the user (in this case that purpose being reading);

snippet – a small scrap or fragment

token – a symbol or visible representation of something;

in-depth analysis – carefully worked out, detailed and thorough examination of the elements or structure of something, typically as a basis for discussion or interpretation;

reading challenge – a call to engage in reading a certain number of books as a way of testing your ability to do so;

feasible – possible to do easily or conveniently; likely; probable;

accountable – responsible.

III. Video Time

Watch the video *What do you love about books?* from the Folio Society: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRWakncrZ0w what is it that you love about books.

Watch another video from the Folio Society *What makes printed books special?* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtLdBPzsnWo and speculate about different formats books are available in nowadays, pros and cons of each of them, your personal preferences. Then look though some pros and cons offered by the author in the article below and say, which of those you agree with and witch of them seem disputable and why. Think about the question the author raises at the end of the article.

<p align="center">Pros and Cons of E-readers vs. Books</p>

<p align="right">by <i>Colleen Cancio</i></p>

When considering the question of whether e-readers are making books obsolete, it helps to take a look at what e-readers actually do. As of early 2011, there were at least a dozen different models on the market, each with its own specific features and capabilities. None are good at everything, and so choosing one over the other depends on which of those capabilities are most important to you.

Some e-readers are just that -- devices dedicated to displaying digital books, newspapers and magazines. Examples include Amazon's Kindle, the Sony Reader, Borders' Kobo, and Barnes and Noble's Nook. Some dedicated e-readers offer

Internet connectivity and other high-end functionality, but their main purpose is to display e-books, which they generally do very well.

Other e-readers are more aptly called tablets. These devices come equipped with features like Wi-Fi, MP3 support and full-color touch screens. They're a lot like laptop computers, but smaller and a bit more portable. The Apple iPad is one example of a tablet. It isn't an e-reader in the technical sense, but its size means you can certainly use it as such. Barnes and Noble's NookColor falls somewhere in between; it's a color-enhanced tablet-style device, but with fewer capabilities than the iPad.

So how do traditional books compare to these newfangled gadgets? For starters, you can enjoy a traditional book in direct sunlight. This is tricky at best with tablet-style e-readers (think of your laptop screen on the beach at high noon), though dedicated e-readers are much better in these situations because of their black-and-white or grayscale displays. Loaning books may also be an issue with e-readers. For those who are accustomed to sharing their reading material, there are a variety of lending applications for e-books -- such as the Nook's LendMe feature -- though these may have some limitations, including time constraints on lending periods.

Cost is another potential downside to e-readers. Consumers may pay anywhere between $140 and $500 for an e-reader, and many of the most popular books (i.e. bestsellers) cost about $9.99 at best. For people accustomed to shopping at secondhand book shops or borrowing the bulk of their reading material, this can be quite an investment. Only a few e-readers allow users access to library content.

Still, there's no doubt that e-readers are handy for bookworms. Each has the ability to store thousands of books in one easy-to-use device, which makes these gadgets very convenient for students, travelers and anyone who does a lot of reading on the go.

That's just a quick comparison of e-readers with old-school books in terms of usability and practicality. But what does the future hold for these formats?

VOCABULARY NOTES

e-reader – a device or application to facilitate or enhance the reading of electronic material;

obsolete – no longer produced or used; out of date;

dedicated – devoted to a task or purpose; having single-minded loyalty or integrity;

high-end – denoting the most expensive of a range of products;

aptly –correctly; judiciously; suitably;

tablet – a small portable computer that accepts input directly on to its screen rather via than a keyboard or mouse;

newfangled – newly come into existence or fashion, esp. excessively modern;

gadget – a small mechanical device or tool, especially an ingenious or novel one;

to loan – borrow;

to lend – grant to (someone) the use of (something) on the understanding that it shall be returned;

downside – the negative aspect of something otherwise regarded as good or desirable;

secondhand book –a previously owned book, not new;

bulk – volume, size, or magnitude, esp. when great;

handy – convenient to handle or use; useful;

old-school – having or adhering to old-fashioned values or ways.

IV. Working together

Work in pairs. Act out a dialogue where you are discussing a movie, which is a screen adaptation of a book you have read. One of you is arguing that the screen version is better, while the other one insists that it is the other way around. You may eventually steer the conversation into a more general direction of the benefits and shortcomings of books being turned into movies.

V. Did you know?

> Early books didn't have titles or authors or anything printed on the covers?

➤ Books used to be shelved "backwards" with the spine facing the back of the shelf and the fore-edge facing out?

➤ Books used to be chained to the bookshelves in libraries?

➤ Books were sold unbound in quires (gatherings of printed sheets or signatures). If you wanted a bound book you had to buy the quires from the publisher and take them to your favorite bookbinder for binding in your choice of material.

➤ There are over 50,000 books published each year in the US alone?

➤ There have been over 20,000 books written about the game of Chess.

➤ In the book, *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo is one sentence that is 823 words long. When Vic wrote to his editor inquiring about their opinion of the manuscript, he wrote, "?" They answered, "!"

➤ Alice in Wonderland was originally banned in China for having talking animals.

➤ The Harry Potter books are the most banned books in America.

➤ One out of every eight letters you read is the letter 'e'.

Choose any of the statements above as a topic for your oral presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support your claims.

VI. A story behind a common expression

In one's black books

Meaning: out of favor

Origin: The earliest Black Books were official documents; the adjective seems to have had no other significance than to indicate the color of the binding. For example, there were the Black Books of the Exchequer (about 1175), listing royal revenues, and the Black Books of the Admiralty, containing rules compiled in the reign of Edward III. A Black Book of the 1530s, during the reign of Henry VIII, lists abuses in the monasteries, which were subsequently dissolved, and it is from about this time that a black book became specifically associated with censure or punishment, as it still is.

...From this sense emerged blacklist, denoting people considered disloyal, untrustworthy or deserving of punishment; bad books as a fairly modern variant of black books; and its converse, good books, meaning favour. These last two may also be related to two old expressions from at least 1509: in one's book(s) (in one's opinion) and out of one's book (mistaken).

Write an essay (300 words) on "The Future of Books".

Unit 3. Writers

On Writing : a Memoir of the Craft (Abstracts)

by *Stephen King*

There is a muse, but he's not going to come fluttering down into your writing room and scatter creative fairy-dust all over your typewriter or computer station. He lives in the ground. You have to descend to his level, and once you get down there you have to furnish an apartment for him to live in. He may not be much to look at, that muse-guy, and he may not be much of a conversationalist (what I get out of mine is mostly surly grunts, unless he's on duty), but he's got the inspiration. It's right that you should do all the work and burn all the midnight oil, because the guy with the cigar and the little wings has got a bag of magic. There's stuff in there that can change your life.

If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. There's no way around these two things that I'm aware of, no shortcut.

The dictum in writing classes used to be "write what you know." Which sounds good, but what if you want to write about starships exploring other planets or a man who murders his wife and then tries to dispose of her body with a wood-chipper? How does the writer square either of these, or a thousand other fanciful ideas, with the "write-what-you know" directive?

I think you begin by interpreting "write what you know" as broadly and inclusively as possible. If you're a plumber, you know plumbing, but that is far from the extent of your knowledge; the heart also knows things, and so does the imagination. If not for heart and imagination, the world of fiction would be a pretty seedy place. It might not even exist at all.

In terms of genre, it's probably fair to assume that you will begin by writing what you love to read. If you happen to be a science fiction fan, it's natural that you

should want to write science fiction (and the more sf you've read, the less likely it is that you'll simply revisit the field's well-mined conventions, such as space opera and dystopian satire). If you're a mystery fan, you'll want to write mysteries, and if you enjoy romances, it's natural for you to want to write romances of your own. There's nothing wrong with writing any of these things. What would be very wrong, I think, is to turn away from what you know and like (or love) in favor of things you believe will impress your friends, relatives, and writing-circle colleagues. What's equally wrong is the deliberate turning toward some genre or type of fiction in order to make money. The job of fiction is to find the truth inside the story's web of lies, not to commit intellectual dishonesty in the hunt for the buck. Also, brothers and sisters, it doesn't work.

You may wonder where plot is in all this. The answer is nowhere. I distrust plot for two reasons: first, because our lives are largely plotless, even when you add in all our reasonable precautions and careful planning; and second, because I believe plotting and the spontaneity of real creation aren't compatible. It's best that I be as clear about this as I can—I want you to understand that my basic belief about the making of stories is that they pretty much make themselves. The job of the writer is to give them a place to grow (and to transcribe them, of course).

The situation comes first. The characters—always flat and unfeatured, to begin with—come next. Once these things are fixed in my mind, I begin to narrate. I often have an idea of what the outcome may be, but I have never demanded of a set of characters that they do things my way. On the contrary, I want them to do things their way. In some instances, the outcome is what I visualized. In most, however, it's something I never expected. For a suspense novelist, this is a great thing. I am, after all, not just the novel's creator but its first reader. And if I'm not able to guess with any accuracy how the thing is going to turn out, even with my inside knowledge of coming events, I can be pretty sure of keeping the reader in a state of page-turning anxiety. And why worry about the ending anyway? Sooner or later every story comes out somewhere.

Skills in description, dialogue, and character development all boil down to seeing or hearing clearly and then transcribing what you see or hear with equal clarity (and without using a lot of tiresome, unnecessary adverbs). There are lots of bells and whistles, too—onomatopoeia, incremental repetition, stream of consciousness, interior dialogue, changes of verbal tense (it has become quite fashionable to tell stories, especially shorter ones, in the present tense), the sticky question of back story (how do you get it in and how much of it belongs), theme, pacing, and a dozen other topics, all of which are covered— sometimes at exhausting length—in writing courses and standard writing texts…

Writing is magic, as much the water of life as any other creative art. The water is free. So drink.

Drink and be filled up.

VOCABULARY NOTES

to scatter – throw in various random directions;

to burn all the midnight oil – read or work late into the night;

dictum – a short statement that expresses a general truth or principle;

to square (with) – be compatible with;

fanciful – made or designed in a curious, intricate, or imaginative way; overimaginative and unrealistic;

seedy – shabby or unseemly in appearance;

genre – a style or category of art, music, or literature;

fan – a person who has a strong interest in or admiration for a particular sport, art form, or famous person;

well-mined – thoroughly explored and studied;

space opera – a novel, movie, or television program set in outer space, typically of a simplistic and melodramatic nature;

dystopian – describing an imaginary society that is as dehumanizing and as unpleasant as possible;

satire – the use of ridicule, irony, etc., to create such an effect;

mystery – a novel, play, or film dealing with a puzzling crime, especially a murder;

romance – a genre of fiction dealing with love in a sentimental or idealized way;

to deliberate – engage in long and careful consideration;

plot – the main events of a play, novel, film, or similar work, devised and presented by the writer as an interrelated sequence;

plotless – having no discernible plot;

spontaneity – the exhibiting of actions, impulses, or behavior that are stimulated by internal processes;

compatible – capable of living together harmoniously or getting along well together;

character – a person in a novel, play, or film;

flat – lacking interest or emotion; dull and lifeless;

unfeatured – lacking special prominence as a main attraction;

to narrate – to tell (a story); relate;

outcome – the way a thing turns out; a consequence;

suspense –genre of fiction that arouses excited expectation or uncertainty about what may happen;

novelist – a person who writes novels;

novel – an extended work in prose, either fictitious or partly so, dealing with character, action, thought, etc., esp. in the form of a story;

accuracy – the quality or state of being correct or precise;

to turn out – prove to be the case;

anxiety – a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome;

bells and whistles – attractive additional features or trimmings;

onomatopoeia – the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named;

incremental – increasing or adding on, especially in a regular series;

stream of consciousness – a literary technique that reveals the flow of thoughts and feelings of characters through long passages of soliloquy;

interior dialogue – the unspoken words of the characters;

back story – a history or background created for a fictional character.

EXERCISES

1. Questions

1. What would you write, if any, should you be asked to "write what you know"?

2. What do you think about writing something you've read a lot already?

3. What type of writing do you believe could impress about 7 billion people?

4. How do you understand the "intellectual dishonesty" in writing?

5. What is your opinion about the author's conception of "plotless lives"?

6. What do you believe the author's views on "spontaneity of real creation" and "stories making themselves" have in common with world's philosophical and religious doctrines such as Plato's "world of ideas", Christ's "being like children" or Lao-Tzu's "non-action"?

2. Panel discussion

Below are some strange stories behind the nom de plumes of famous authors. Discuss what can motivate an author to use one. If you were to become an author, would you write under your name or use a pseudonym?

10 Odd Stories Behind Famous Authors' Nom de Plumes

Pen names speckle literary history and our modern bookshelves. If you own anything by George Orwell, Anthony Burgess, or George Eliot, you own a piece of the epic chronicle of pseudonyms. Authors change their names for many reasons, but historically, one of the strongest reasons to use a pen name was to hide your lady bits. Back in the day, women writers were forced to use male pseudonyms. Despite much more equality between the sexes in present day, the tradition remains in the use of initials instead of first names. But gender isn't the only guiding force when picking your pen name.

After he threw a raging party, breaking Dartmouth and federal law during Prohibition, **Dr. Seuss**, born Theodor Geisel, was fired from his job as editor-in-chief of the college's Jack-O-Lantern magazine. However, Theodor, that rapscallion, kept writing for the humor mag by signing his work under his middle name — Seuss. Years later, when his first book was published, Suess added the "Dr." as a joke at the expense of his father, who always wanted him to pursue a medical career.

Stephen King, the epitome of prolific (sorry, James Franco), created the nom de plume "Richard Bachmann" to publish more frequently than a single name would allow. After the connection was made public, in 1985, way before being self-aware was hip, King declared Bachmann dead of "cancer of the pseudonym, a rare form of schizonomia."

A lot of writers choose to represent themselves with initials instead of given names. E.E. Cummings. T.S. Eliot. **J.K. Rowling.** In the case of the Potter scribe, however, the "K" doesn't really stand for anything. Joanna Rowling has no middle name, but her publisher thought Harry Potter would sell better if she disguised her gender. Thus, the mysterious "K" was born, which Rowling attributes to "Kathleen," her grandmother.

Jonathan Swift used the pseudonym "Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq." to essentially punk/War of the Worlds John Partridge, who was a then-famous astrologist and Almanac-maker. Swift loved April Fool's Day, so "Bickerstaff" published "Predictions for the Year 1708," prophesying the astrologist's death by "raging fever." Two months later, Swift used a different pen name to proclaim that Partridge did, in fact, die—an event so many people believed that it pestered Partridge until his actual death. His mourning followers cried outside his window at night, disrupting his sleep. After an undertaker arrived, an elegy was published, and a gravestone was inscribed, Partridge finally published a statement declaring himself alive.

Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë wrote under many names, but the ones that stuck were Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell — each pseudonym sharing the same first

and last initial as the real writer. When their writing gained fame, some critics and publishers mistakenly thought Wuthering Heights, Agnes Grey, and Jane Eyre were all penned by the same author. Charlotte and Anne were so upset by this that they traveled through a snowstorm to Smith, Elder, & Co. in London. The publishers had never met their author, "Currer Bell," in person, and were startled to find Charlotte instead! Afterward, the truth spread, and the three sisters became famous.

Ricardo Neftalí Reyes Basoalto started writing young, and his poetry was published by the tender age of fourteen! Although most parents would be proud, Ricardo's father literally lit his son's poetry on fire when he found out. After that, Ricardo used the pseudonym "Pablo Neruda," Pablo for Paul Verlaine and Neruda for Jan Neruda, both writers. Later in life, Pablo Neruda became his legal name.

William Makepeace Thackeray, whose hilarious satire still rings true today, wrote under many silly pen names, such as George Savage Fitz-Boodle, Michael Angelo Titmarsh, Théophile Wagstaff, and C.J. Yellowplush, Esq, each one chosen only for its abject ridiculousness.

When **Charles Dickens** started writing, he used the pen name of Boz, one word, which simultaneously reminds us of the Muppets and Madonna. He once explained, writing that 'Boz' was "the nickname of a pet child, a younger brother, whom I had dubbed Moses, in honour of Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield, which, being pronounced Bozes, got shortened into Boz." Fair enough. His early writing was so popular that Sketches by Boz was actually published in 1836.

From the age of sixteen, **Benjamin Franklin** didn't just use pen names: he created entire personas, often quite different from himself. For example, his first nom de plume, Silence Dogood, was a widowed woman several decades older than then-teenage Ben. He used these characters to many ends, from the frivolous to the serious. Through names like Anthony Afterwit and Alice Addertongue, Franklin humorously examined society, spread gossip, or exposed the flaws in conventional thought. Polly Baker, for example, was an alter-ego Franklin used to show that women were discriminated against by the law. Baker was the former mistress of

several important men, raised their illegitimate children, and was punished while the fathers got off, scot-free.

William Sydney Porter may have immortalized an Ohio State Penitentiary guard with his famous nom de plume, O. Henry. While in jail for embezzlement, Porter published his first story under that pseudonym, though why he'd want to celebrate his guard, we don't know. The guard's name was reportedly Orrin Henry.

VOCABULARY NOTES

nom de plume – an assumed name used by a writer instead of their real name; a pen-name;

editor-in-chief – the controlling editor of a publication;

mag – a magazine (periodical);

epitome – a person or thing that is a perfect example of a particular quality or type;

prolific – producing many works; present in large numbers or quantities; plentiful; scribe – a writer;

to disguise – give (someone or oneself) a different appearance in order to conceal one's identity;

to attribute – regard a quality or feature as characteristic of or possessed by (someone or something);

almanac – a handbook, typically published annually, containing information of general interest or on a sport or pastime;

to prophesy – say that (a specified thing) will happen in the future;

to proclaim – say something emphatically; declare;

to pester – trouble or annoy (someone) with frequent or persistent requests or interruptions;

to disrupt – interrupt (an event, activity, or process) by causing a disturbance or problem;

elegy – a poem of serious reflection, typically a lament for the dead;

to inscribe – write an informal dedication to someone;

to pen – write or compose;

startled –feeling sudden shock or alarm;

hilarious – extremely amusing

to ring true – to give the impression of being true;

abject – completely without pride or dignity; self-abasing;

ridiculousness – content at variance with reason;

nickname – a familiar or humorous name given to a person or thing instead of or as well as the real name;

sketch – a brief written or spoken account or description, giving only basic details;

persona – the aspect of someone's character that is presented to or perceived by others;

frivolous – not having any serious purpose or value;

conventional – based on or in accordance with what is generally done or believed

scot-free – without suffering any punishment or injury;

to immortalize – give everlasting fame;

embezzlement – theft or misappropriation of funds placed in one's trust or belonging to one's employer.

III. Video Time

Watch the video where an American playwright and screenwriter, Neil Simon, is talking about his writing habits (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6GEuOOm6hA)

Famous Geniuses With Truly Weird Secret Habits

by *Steffani Jacoby*

Jack Kerouac saw alcoholism as a means of spiritual exploration. Ben Franklin started his days with an air bath—half an hour each day in his birthday suit in front of an open window—to read, write, and get his mental juices flowing. T.S. Eliot wore green-tinted face powder and lipstick, while fellow poet Friedrich von Schiller sought inspiration from the scent of rotting apples.

Was their genius a result of their odd personality quirks, or did these strange behaviors stem from their previously eccentric minds? If you feel like your creativity could use a boost, try these tips—at your own risk.

Edgar Allan Poe

Granted, authors in the 1800s didn't have the quick word-processing tools we have today, making handwriting often the more efficient choice. But Edgar Allan Poe went a step further, writing his works in a scroll fashion—on continuous strips of paper, attached with sealing wax. The habit set his editors on edge.

Poe's short stories are not for the faint of heart; they were so gory and morbid that many of his contemporaries found them almost unreadable. It wasn't until well after his death that Poe's work was admitted to the respected literary canon. Poe's cat also played a significant role in his creative process. Poe called his beloved tabby, Catterina, his "literary guardian."

Agatha Christie

She wrote 66 detective novels and 14 collections of short stories, but Agatha Christie didn't write at a desk. As a matter of fact, she never even had an office— she wrote *Murder on the Orient Express*, for example, in the hotel room pictured above. She did use a typewriter, though; for Christie, typing itself was part of the writing process.

This writing process of Christie's was often disjointed. She wrote wherever the mood struck, sometimes at a kitchen table or in her bedroom. Christie sometimes started writing long before she even had a plot for her stories, and she generally started with the details of the murder scene itself before moving on.

Honore de Balzac

Think you're addicted to coffee? Chances are your caffeine problem doesn't even come close to that of French novelist Honore de Balzac. This historical writer consumed as many as 50 cups of coffee each day, barely sleeping at all while composing his magnum opus, *La Comedie Humaine*.

In "The Pleasures and Pains of Coffee," an article published in a French magazine in the 1830s, Balzac treated the drink with flamboyant, poetic prose. "This coffee falls into your stomach, and straightway there is a general commotion," he wrote. "Ideas begin to move like the battalions of the Grand Army of the battlefield, and

the battle takes place. Things remembered arrive at full gallop, ensuing to the wind."

Sigmund Freud

A pioneer in the field we now call neuroscience, Freud offered insight into the subconscious, changing the way psychologists approach the human mind. Freud's quirk? Nicotine — and cocaine.

Freud tried to quit, but just couldn't bring himself to kick the habit—even after 33 surgeries on his mouth and jaw to remove the cancer it caused.

The man also experimented with self-medicating with large doses of cocaine. His ultimate product from this abuse was his *Cocaine Papers*, a "song of praise to this magical substance."

3 Stephen King

Writers and teachers are known for their almost religious positions about punctuation and parts of speech—ever heard two grammar Nazis get into a heated argument about the Oxford comma? Stephen King has some firm views on grammar, to the point of drafting 2,000 adverb-free words every day.

In his book *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*, King says, "I believe the road to hell is paved by adverbs, and I will shout it from the rooftops." King makes a solid case (that you'll only appreciate if you're a lexophile) for powerful writing that's completely devoid of adverbs. Adverbs, claims King, rob details and specificity from the rest of the sentence. "Adverbs were created with the timid writer in mind," he says.

King is also among the most prolific contemporary writers whose works regularly hit the *New York Times* Best Seller list. He says that writing 2,000 (adverb-free) words every single day—even on holidays—is one of the keys to his success.

Charles Dickens

One of the greatest social reformers of Victorian London, Charles Dickens was an incredibly prolific author—but he was also a bit obsessive on some points. An employee reported that Dickens couldn't stand to have a hair out of place, so the writer kept his comb nearby and ran it through his hair hundreds of times a day.

Dickens was also obsessively specific in his requirements for the arrangement of his study. Experts who have analyzed Dickens's life and works have blamed a mild form of obsessive-compulsive disorder and even epilepsy.

His other creative secret? He paced while composing text and dictated his work to an assistant who did much of the physical writing for him. They'd sometimes work through each sentence multiple times, substituting words and changing their order before moving on.

VOCABULARY NOTES

quirk – a peculiar aspect of a person's character or behavior;

to boost – help or encourage (something) to increase or improve;

to set smb on edge – make smb feel nervous or irritable;

faint of heart – lacking courage or resolution;

gory – involving or showing violence and bloodshed;

morbid – characterized by an abnormal and unhealthy interest in disturbing and unpleasant subjects, especially death and disease;

contemporary – belonging to or occurring in the present;

addicted – physically and mentally dependent on a particular substance;

magnum opus (pl. magna opera) – a work of art, music, or literature that is regarded as the most important or best work that an artist, composer, or writer has produced

flamboyant – tending to attract attention because of their exuberance, confidence, and stylishness;

to draft – prepare a preliminary version of (a document);

timid – showing a lack of courage or confidence; easily frightened.

IV. Working together

Work in pairs. Act out a dialogue where one of you is a writer giving an interview to a journalist or a literary critic.

V. Did you know?

- Edgar Allan Poe originally wanted a parrot to repeat the word "nevermore."
- Charles Dickens believed in the supernatural, and he belonged to something called The Ghost Club.
- Gabriel García Márquez refuses to allow One Hundred Years of Solitude to be made into a film.
- Ernest Hemingway hated the original cover of Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby.
- Ray Bradbury, author of Fahrenheit 451, was a descendant of one of the Salem witches.
- Sting wrote the song 'Every Breath You Take' at the same desk which Ian Fleming used to write his James Bond novels.
- Before The Da Vinci Code, Dan Brown was a pop singer and song writer. His second solo album was titled, Angels and Demons.
- J.K. Rowling had difficulty getting published. Finally, Bloomsburry Press agreed to publish it but only published 500 copies for fear they wouldn't sell. They also requested she use initials so she wouldn't be recognized as a female writer. She has no middle name, so she chose the letter K for Kathleen.

VI. A story behind a common expression

Why is mincing around a subject called beating around the bush?

Medieval men may not have had the thrill of flinging Frisbees, but they had a worthy counterpart, the challenging sport of batfowling. A rare nocturnal sport, batfowling consisted of going into a forest or shrub-laden area and beating birds senseless with a bat. Batfowlers sought sleeping birds for their prey, but being true sportsmen, they didn't want to kill a defenseless bird. So before whacking it with the bat, they were kind enough to wake the bird up first, by stunning it with a harsh light, rendering the bird blind and temporarily helpless. 'Sensitive' batfowlers caught the birds in nets rather than using the Darryl Strawberry approach.

Sometimes, though, the birds proved to be uncooperative, selfishly sleeping in bushes where they were invisible, instead of marching forward and offering

themselves as ritual sacrifices. So batfowlers engaged servants or boys, known as beaters, to literally beat adjacent bushes to rouse flocks of sleeping birds. As the stunned birds awakened and fled in panic, they would be attracted to the torch or lantern and be socked into unconsciousness by the batfowler.

Although the person today who beats around the bush might not have violence on his mind, he similarly conceals or avoids the real thing that concerns him. While he might pretend to be interested in the bush, he might be more interested in the bird, or worm, lurking inside.

more of your writing.

UNIT 4. ART

Technology and art: Engineering the future

by *Eyal Gever*

Think art. What comes to mind? Maybe Picasso, Rodin, Dali.

Now think technology - and you'll probably imagine a smartphone or a computer.

Throughout history, technology has provided artists with new tools for expression.

Today, these two seemingly distinct disciplines are interlinked more than ever, with technology being a fundamental force in the development and evolution of art.

All over the world, people are engineering our future. The internet, digital fabrication, nanotech, biotech, self-modification, augmented reality, virtual reality, "the singularity" - you name it, all of this is altering our lives and our view of the world and ourselves.

Scientists, software developers, inventors, entrepreneurs - but also musicians, visual artists, film-makers and designers - are busy creating new human experiences.

Thanks to them, not only is original art being made everywhere, but entirely new art forms are evolving as well.

More and more artists are pushing the boundaries of art, looking outside of what's perceived as "traditional" to incorporate other aspects into their work.

Art is becoming less and less static, taking up many new different shapes, from printing digitally created sculptures in 3D to flash-mobs to photographers lining up hundreds of naked volunteers on the beach.

Power of the web

And the rules of the game are changing, too.

Since the beginning of the postmodern art era, roughly from the 1860s, the most influential players - renowned artists, museum curators, art critics, art fair promoters and, especially, powerful gallery owners - have been dictating the behaviour of the whole art world.

But modern ways in which art is created, produced, distributed, marketed, preserved and supported have shifted as a direct reaction of the world's transition to a socially connected, digital society - to the age of the internet.

Traditionally, artists have been going to a gallery with their portfolio, and the gallery decides whether the work is good enough to expose.

Now, they turn to the web - to exhibit their work and to sell it, too.

With new services such as crowdfunding, for the first time artists are able to raise money online to pursue their ideas.

In 2011 alone, crowdfunding website Kickstarter raised almost $100m in pledges with more than 27,000 art-related projects.

Artists use social media as a powerful tool to change the relationship between collectors and the public, effectively spotting people looking for specific artworks.

Possibly, the traditional art market - collectors, gallery owners, critics, curators and even other artists - may question whether the artist who uses the web for promotion is a true professional.

But whatever the reaction may be, the change is already happening, and it is too important. The art market will grow on it and get used to it - it always does.

True art?

Throughout history and up until very recently, mostly the elite participated in the development and creation of art, while the rest of the society was left to enjoy viewing masterpieces.

The public was merely a passive observer.

Today, in our connected world, almost everyone creates. Almost everyone participates.

With the internet and new technologies of fabrication, remixing, editing, manipulating and distributing, it is becoming easier to create things - and share them with the world.

What is changing and probably - arguably - for the worse is that it is now easier to create "art", and we see a lot of "bad" art being created and exposed.

A huge concern is that, as a result of so many new tools and techniques, we may lose our sense and ability to evaluate what is great art.

In art, what becomes popular is not necessarily great, and vice-versa. Many new art ideas and artworks were hard to digest when they first came out.

I do see a challenge for artists to be simultaneously more open to new technologies that lead to novel forms of expression, and also staying truly creative and imaginative.

But still, the boundaries are limitless. And as technology, and especially computer technology, continues to progress, there will always be those who will experiment, pushing the envelope of what has been done before - and who will excel at it.

Curator Hans Ulrich Obrist, co-director of the Serpentine Gallery, once said: "I don't think we can predict nor prescribe the future of art. It is the famous 'etonnez-moi' [astonish me] of Diaghilev and Cocteau'- great art always surprises us, takes us where we expect it least."

Bold directions

So what do artists focused on creating new art by using technology really need to think about?

One graphic software developer, Rama Hoetzlein, says that "new media" artists of today have to think not merely about the tools of the present, but also to engage in a dialogue with the artists of the past, who both haunt us and challenge us to rise above the mundane.

I believe that any modern artist needs to remember about pushing the art forward, inventing, defining new paradigms of expression with powerful meanings.

It is about the experience the artist delivers to the public – whether it is provocative, whether it changes how the viewer thinks, feels and views the world.

This is what really counts, and it has nothing to do with the techniques that the artist chooses to use.

So the goal of a contemporary artist who is choosing to create art with new technologies should not be to "extract" meaning from the technological platform, but to use it as a base for new bold directions.

And in my opinion, it is the art that pushes the limits and defines new meanings that will change how we think and feel - today and in the future.

VOCABULARY NOTES

digital fabrication – invention involving the use of computer technology;

nanotech (short for **nanotechnology**) - the science of making or working with things that are so small that they can only be seen using a powerful microscope;

biotech (short for **biotechnology**) - the use of living parts such as cells or bacteria in industry and technology;

self-modification – changes made to one's own body (tattoos, body piercings, surgical deformations of body parts);

augmented reality – an artificial environment created through the combination of real-world and computer-generated data;

the singularity, or **technological singularity** – an event or phase that will radically change human civilization, and perhaps even human nature itself;

alter – change;

musician – a person who plays a musical instrument, especially as a profession, or is musically talented;

visual artist – an artist creating such art forms as ceramics, drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, design, crafts, photography, video, filmmaking or architecture;

film-maker – a person who directs or produces films for the cinema or television;

designer – a person who plans the look or workings of something prior to it being made, by preparing drawings or plans;

push the boundaries/limits of smth, or **push the envelope** – to go further (in any field) than anyone or any group has done before; to do something that wasn't previously thought possible; to move beyond the limit of what has usually been done or was the accepted standard;

perceive – become aware of (something) by the use of one of the senses, esp. that of sight;

incorporate – to include; take in or contain (something) as part of a whole;

take up new shapes – to change in form, to adopt new forms,

sculpture – here: a work of art that is produced by carving or shaping stone, wood, clay, or other materials;

flash-mob – a group of people coordinated by email to meet to perform some predetermined action at a particular place and time and then disperse quickly

photographer – a person who takes photographs, especially as a job;

postmodern – characteristic of a style and school of thought that rejects the dogma and practices of any form of modernism; in architecture, contrasting with international modernism and featuring elements from several periods, esp the Classical, often with ironic use of decoration;

art era – a long and distinct period in the history of art;

renowned artist – famous artist;

museum curator – a keeper or custodian of a museum;

art critic – a person who is specialized in analyzing, interpreting and evaluating art;

art fair promoter – a person involved in setting up an art exposition;

gallery owner – the person to whom the gallery belongs;

expose – make public;

exhibit – publicly display;

crowdfunding – the practice of funding a project or venture by raising monetary contributions from a large number of people, typically via the internet;

pursue an idea – continue to investigate or explore an idea;

collector – a person who collects things of a specified type, professionally or as a hobby;

spot – here: to find, to place here and there;

view – here: to look at;

masterpiece – a work of outstanding artistry, skill, or workmanship;

merely - just; only

passive observer - a person who watches smth without active response;

evaluate - to judge or assess the worth of; appraise;

imaginative – having or showing creativity or inventiveness;

excel at – be exceptionally good at or proficient in an activity or subject;

astonish – surprise or impress (someone) greatly;

haunt – here: be persistently and disturbingly present in (the mind);

rise above the mundane – detach oneself form the ordinary, to ignore earthly world matters and do what one is meant to do in spite;

provocative – causing annoyance, anger, or another strong reaction, esp. deliberately;

contemporary – following modern ideas in style or design;

bold direction – a conspicuous, daring trend or tendency.

EXERCISES

I. Questions

1. How important is aesthetics in art if opposed to meaning/message? Is beauty ever practical/universal? Does art need to have a message in it? Can creating art be therapeutic? Do you believe self-modification is an art?

2. Have you ever been impressed by a work of art? What is the purpose of art? Do you think the main purpose of art is for the artist to create it or for the viewer to appreciate it?

3. What unconventional forms of contemporary art do find good/bad art? If you were to become an artist what would you be creating and why?

4. As a rule children are more creative than adults. Why do you think people lose their ability to be creative as they grow up? When was the last time you succumbed to a creative impulse? Can you describe how you felt then?

5. Do you think art can be taught? If yes, do you believe it to be a critical/compulsory component of a child's education?

6. What role does art play in your life, everyday activities? What forms of art do you use/create to embellish yourself or your whereabouts? Do you use technology for that? Can you give examples?

7. To what extent and how do you think art is affected by advancing technology? Do you think the increasing amount of art produced on the computer is beneficial to the art world as a whole?

8. What do you know about crowdfunding? How does it work? Would you consider raising money to pursue your ideas through this service? Why would you choose to do so?

9. How do you understand Rama Hoetzlein's statement that the artists of the past "haunt us and challenge us to rise above the mundane"? Why do you think the "new media" artists of today have to engage in a dialogue with the artists of the past?

10. Do you (dis)agree that life imitates art more than art imitates life? Explain your point.

II. Panel discussion

The author of the text below attempts to debunk some myths and misconceptions about art. Choose any of the following to discuss pros and cons of the author's ideas based on your own knowledge of the matter and/or personal experience.

'Anyone could paint that' and 7 other myths about art

by *Paddy Johnson*

Our reticence to discuss art maintains the popular misconceptions that keep us from effectively engaging it.

Art enriches our lives when we allow it to do so. But reflection, judgment, and participating in the struggle to articulate what art actually communicates isn't easy for anyone, and sometimes we let that thwart our experience.

That contemporary art seems to be anything an artist wants it to be can lead to a lot of confusion, most notably, the willy-nilly application of the term to anything with a creative impulse.

It also tends to inspire inaccurate comments such as "art is subjective," a frequent euphemism for "don't ask me to explain it."

This reticence to discuss art maintains the popular misconceptions that keep us from effectively engaging it. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Here are eight common contemporary art myths that disrupt the viewing experience.

1. Viewing work online or in reproduction gives an accurate account of the artwork.

At some point, many of us have made the mistake of thinking that replicas capture enough information to understand art we haven't seen in person. In truth, no amount of detail replaces the gallery experience. Space, texture, and light affect how we perceive the work. Viewing the work in person is essential. It weighs the aesthetic value of the object equally with the artist's intent. Conceptual art still typically requires a nod to the visual. There might not be a lot to see in [Robert Rauchenberg](#)'s Erased De Kooning Drawing, for example (a piece in which the title describes the work), but only the act of looking at it in person illuminates it. De Kooning was the most prominent painter at the time that piece was executed, so much so that his legacy intimidated other artists. The actual erasure of one of his works was meant to break that down, thereby freeing artists to pursue other paths. Seeing the remnants of the drawing in person speaks both to the foundation upon which De Kooning's legacy was built and its mutability.

2. This work generated so much discussion, it must be good!

A lot of people talk about [Lindsay Lohan](#), but this doesn't lead people to conclude that she is an excellent actress. The same rationale needs to be applied to art. Media starlets [Damien Hirst](#), [Banksy](#), and [Vanessa Beecroft](#) generate media spectacle around their personality and art designed to elicit a response. But the power of a media story is not the same as great art and shouldn't be mistaken as such.

3. Anything can be art!

French artist [Marcel Duchamp](#) didn't make every shovel art, just the one he labeled. In other words, while context and intentionality can earn a work the title of "art," an object that randomly evokes an artistic reference does not. If it's in a gallery, or if an artist says it's art, it is (even if you don't like it).

4. Value is completely subjective.

No, it's not. There are methods of evaluating art, and just because gallerygoers respond differently doesn't mean these methods don't exist. Assessing value, however, isn't always easy.

More than anything else, frequent viewing and discussion develop a skilled eye. Experience tells a viewer what to look for. Avid gallerygoers are far more likely to distinguish a knowing nod to a cliché painting from a poorly executed work because they've seen enough of both to know the difference.

Similarly difficult, distinguishing an attractive Flickr photograph from a fine-art print is likely to make the head spin for anyone who is an expert on one but not both of those. Only knowing the conventions of both gives a viewer enough knowledge to make those distinctions.

5. I don't know enough about art to talk about it.

Anyone can discuss art well; few of us, however, look at it long enough to be able to do so. Trust your instincts, talk about what you see – don't be afraid to be wrong. The beauty of an opinion is that you can change it as your response evolves.

6. Anyone could do that.

This sentiment is typically refuted with the argument, "But *you* didn't." A more common version of the myth circulating art circles, "It's too easy," completes itself with "to take a compelling photograph," or "to make a good collage." In each case, the viewer is actually complaining that it's too hard to separate the good from the bad. There's no easy answer to this dilemma, except to look at enough art to develop a mature eye.

7. Elitism rules the art world.

Actually, this one is true, but the unspoken fallacy here is that it doesn't also rule every other field. If it's not a barrier to your participation in other pastimes, don't let it affect you here.

8. Most artists are "ahead of their time."

The idea that the art world understands something regular folk do not is false. Artists don't have any special vision into the future and there is no such thing as an art visionary. It does no one any good to mythologize artists. They are just human. Even Leonardo da Vinci made the basic mistake of mixing oil and water. As a result, his 15th-century mural of the Last Supper is now peeling off the back wall of the dining hall at Santa Maria delle Grazie.

VOCABULARY NOTES

enrich – here: to make more beautiful; adorn; decorate;

articulate – express (an idea or feeling) fluently and coherently;

communicate – here: impart or pass on (information, news, or ideas);

thwart – here: frustrate;

willy-nilly – occurring or taking place whether desired or not;

creative impulse – a sudden strong feeling urging you to bring (something) into existence;

euphemism – a mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing;

reticence – Being careful about what you say;

artwork –an aesthetic physical item or artistic creation;

replica – an exact copy or model of something, especially one on a smaller scale;

capture – to succeed in representing or describing;

aesthetic value – a judgment of value based on the appearance of an object and the emotional responses it causes;

artist's intent – artist's intention, aim, design;

conceptual art – art in which the idea or concept presented by the artist is considered more important than the finished product, if any such exists;

nod to the visual – a gesture of acknowledgment of or concession to what is seen

prominent painter – famous painter;

execute – produce (a work of art);

legacy – something handed down or received from an ancestor or predecessor;

intimidate – frighten or overawe (someone),

erasure – the removal of all traces of something; obliteration;

mutability – changeability;

rationale - a set of reasons or a logical basis for a course of action or belief;

starlet – a young and inexperienced actress who is projected as a potential star;

spectacle – a public display or performance, esp a showy or ceremonial one;

elicit a response – draw out a reaction from someone;

evoke – to bring or recall to the conscious mind;

gallerygoer – a person who visits art galleries, especially often or regularly;

convention – an accepted rule, usage, etc.;

compelling photograph – a camera-made picture evoking interest, attention, or admiration in a powerfully irresistible way;

collage – an art form in which compositions are made out of pieces of paper, cloth, photographs, and other miscellaneous objects, placed and pasted on a dry ground;

fallacy – an idea which many people believe to be true, but which is in fact false because it is based on incorrect information or reasoning;

ahead of one's time - innovative and radical by the standards of the time;

mythologize – to create or promote an exaggerated or idealized image of someone/something.

III. Video Time

Watch the following videos on art:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkY3uNK9SIc

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVlQOytFCRI

Try giving your own definition of art based on what you have seen and your personal understanding of the matter. Dwell on the purposes art can serve and the function it can perform.

Watch the video about the difference between modern and contemporary art:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjhXohLgJ6M

Can you tell the difference between modern and contemporary art? Have you ever seen works representing modern/contemporary art? How do you feel about modern/contemporary art?

What unconventional trends and movements in the 21st century art do you know? Look through a few of the most famous representatives of such movements below. Do you like these artists' works? What makes them unconventional?

10 Cutting-Edge Artists of the 21st Century

by *Alice Yoo*

When you think of the word cutting-edge what comes to mind? How about innovative, boundary-pushing, and risk-taking? The dictionary defines cutting-edge as "the leading position in any field" or at the "forefront." Today, we take a look at 10 artists who are all of these qualities and more. These inspiring individuals can take everyday materials, like a book or a bicycle chain, and spin it on its head. They can elevate an old art form, or they can magically conjure up modern masterpieces. While each uses a different material, they are all bound by a burning desire to test their own creative limits - changing, refining and shifting their technique any chance they get.

1. Kumi Yamashita: Shadow Art
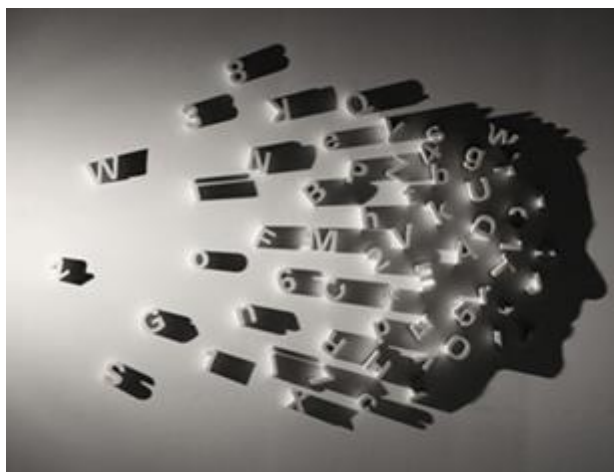
Though there are many skilled artists who work with light and shadows, such as British artists Tim Noble and Sue Webster or Dutch artist Diet Wiegman, Japanese artist Kumi Yamashita is the only one whose complete artwork is comprised of both the material she uses and the immaterial she creates. Solid objects like carved wood

or aluminum numbers are hit by a single light source to reveal an inner being, a person patiently waiting to be revealed on the other side. Yamashita is also skilled at creating portraits using a single, unbroken piece of thread or by utilizing unexpected materials like a credit card or a shoe. A master of light and dark, this New York-based artist has exhibited all over the world, no doubt casting her magical spell on everyone who comes across her work.

2. Guy Laramee: Carved Book Landscapes

Like Brian Dettmer, Guy Laramee has a fascination with books. Using a sandblaster, the Montreal-based artist carefully carves out huge chunks of both covers and pages until he creates undulating landscapes. Mountains, caves and waves slowly emerge as old books, like dictionaries and encyclopedias, take on new lives. Always one to push his own creative boundaries, Laramee's sculptural works always excite, as the viewer is left wondering just what type of natural landscape he'll take on next.

3. Cornelia Konrads: Land Art

As far as contemporary land artists go, there seems to be one who stands out from all the rest. German-based Cornelia Konrads creates gravity-defying works using natural materials surrounding her like rocks and branches. Whether she's suspending a pile of stones in front of a cave in Korea or creating a passageway of floating branches in Germany, Konrads can conjure up magic all around her. Amongst a series of work she calls *Piles*, Konrads created *Pile of Wishes*, a conical accumulation of stones that lift up, break free from the group and fly high in the air.
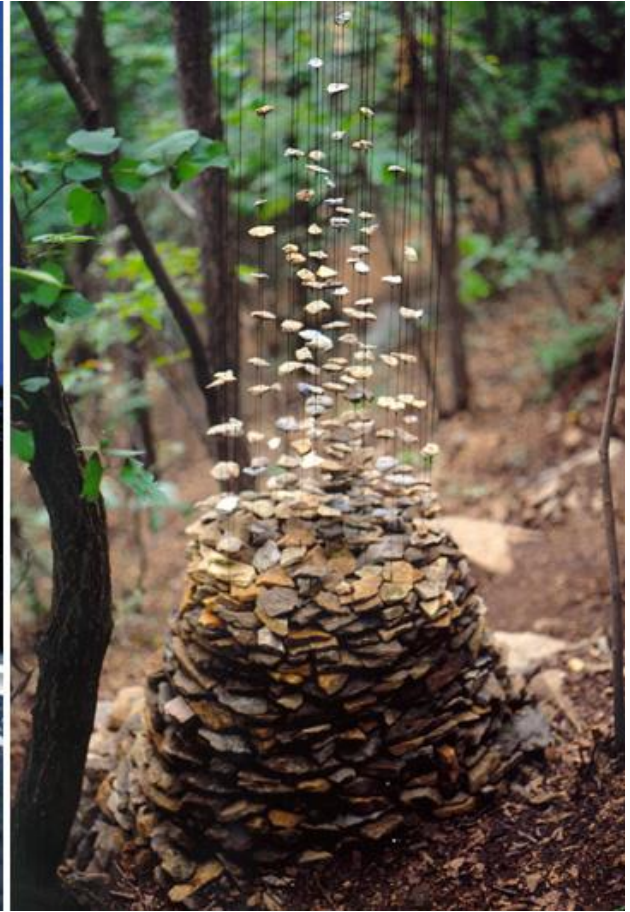
4. Riusuke Fukahori: 3D Illusion Sculptures

Japanese artist Riusuke Fukahori creates art that you would swear was actually alive. He first caught the attention of the art world with his acrylic paint and resin works that are built up, layer by layer, until what looks like goldfish are swimming in a bowl. The technique begins with just a container and clear resin that gets poured in thin layers. As each layer dries, the next horizontal slice of the creature is painted and then dried before another layer is added on top. Other artists like Singaporean Keng

Lye has already started to build on this technique, adding 3D materials to enhance the already incredible illusion.

5. Felice Varini: Anamorphic Illusions
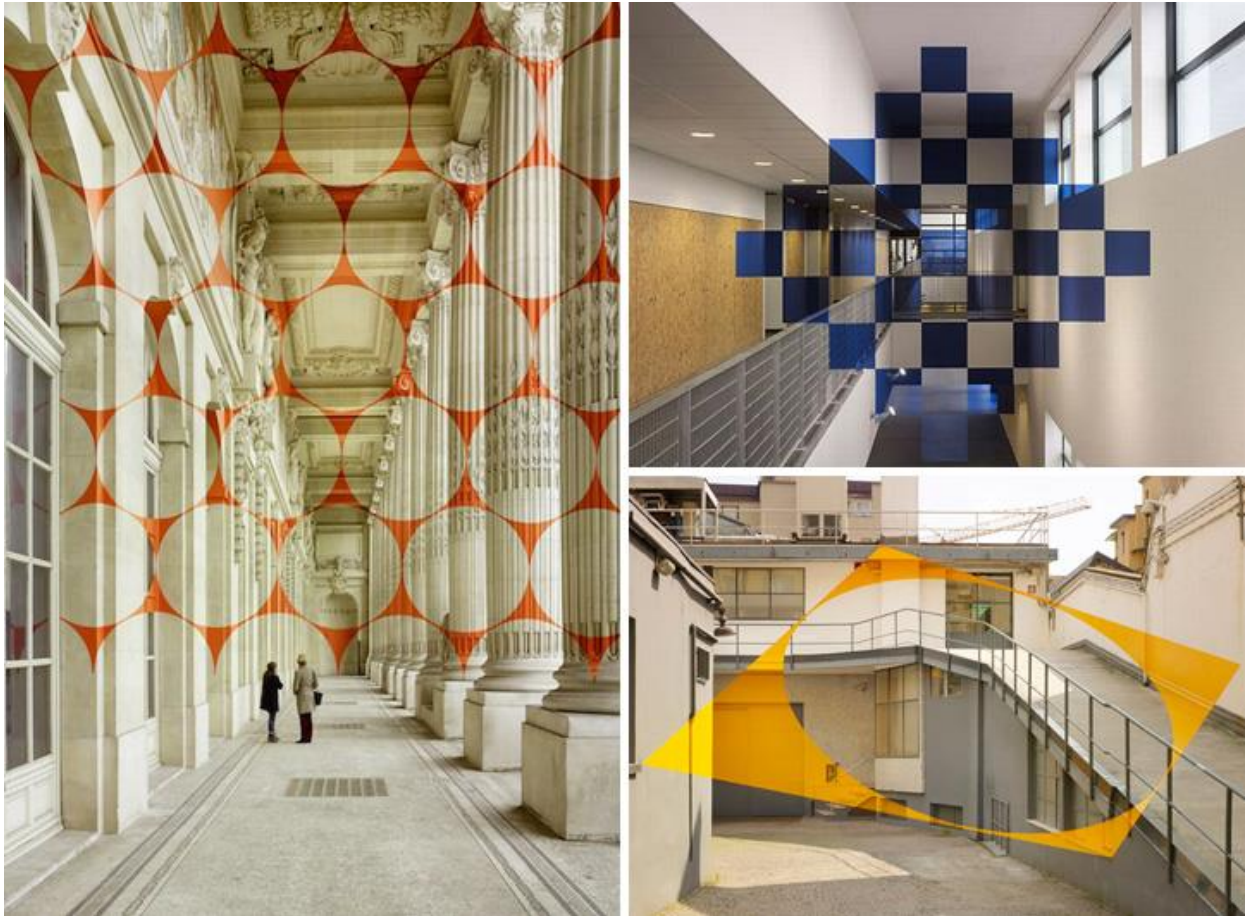
Swiss artist Felice Varini disrupts environments with his anamorphic art. His large geometric perspective paintings take up huge architectural spaces like sides of buildings, walls and streets challenging the viewer to find the exact spot to stand in order to see his works snap into place. Most recently, Varini took over the historic Gran Palais in Paris, where he added an orange polka dot pattern to its classical facade. Created by a combination of stencils and projectors, the monumental work was entitled *Dynamo*.

6. Daniel Arsham: Architecture Installations

Cleveland-born contemporary artist Daniel Arsham creates works that blur the line between art, architecture and performance. Though he's best known for Snarkitecture, a collaborative practice between Arsham and architect Alex Mustonen where they take existing architecture and "make it perform the unexpected," Arsham is a cutting-

edge artist in and of himself who isn't afraid to work in different dimensions. His 3D sculptures are particularly provocative in that he uses unexpected materials, like shattered glass, or creates mysterious figures that appear wrapped underneath a wall's surface.

7. Bruce Munro: Light Art
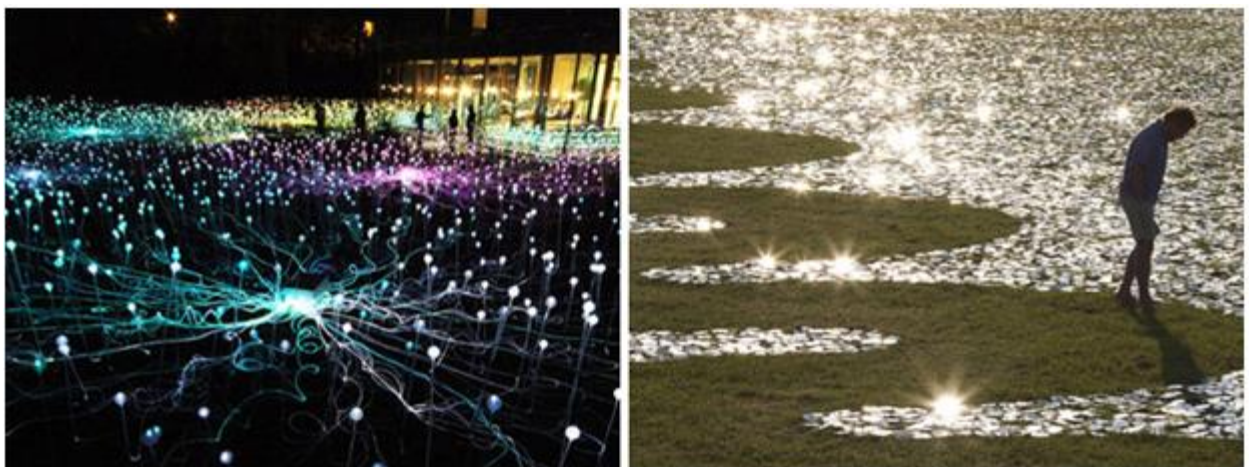
Bruce Munro is an installation artist that's crazy about light. Though he's skilled at creating sparkling chandeliers, it's his large-scale installations that set him apart from the rest. For the last 29 years, he's been illuminating the world, overtaking gardens or

creating fields that illuminate at night. For his latest exhibit, at the Cheekwood Botanical Gardens in Nashville, Tennessee, Munro presents *Light*, the 2012 show he first debuted at Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania that drew nearly 300,000 visitors. At Cheekwood, Munro presents seven large-scale outdoor installations including one that consists of 40 monumental towers made from over 10,000 recycled water bottles that change colors to the sound of music. This exhibition will be at the Cheekwood location from now untill November 10, 2013.

8. Yulia Brodskaya: Paper Illustrations

UK-based artist Yulia Brodskaya uses an old technique called quilling, modernizes it and and takes it to the next level. Using strips of paper, she rolls, shapes and then glues them to a background to create highly detailed designs. These three dimensional works offer multiple views depending on the angle of perception and the intensity of light. This is particularly apparent in her colorful, portrait-style works.

9. Young-Deok Seo: Bicycle Chain Sculptures

Though Korean artist Young-Deok Seo mainly works with one material, what he can do with it is highly impressive. He creates figurative sculptures using miles and miles of old bicycle chains. The Seoul-based artist takes the cold, hard metal material and transforms it into shapes of the human face or rather their complex emotions. Woven stitch by stitch, Seo's sculptures wrap bodies with fragments of chains until they appear like skin. Though they are smooth on the surface, they are empty inside.

10. Yayoi Kusama: Polka Dot Installations

How could we create a list of cutting-edge artists and not include Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama? The eccentric artist started painting using polka dots when she was just ten and has since made a name for herself using the fun pattern. Though she works in a wide variety of mediums, Kusama is currently known for her pop art installations or for her partnership with French fashion house Louis Vuitton. Now considered the most important living Japanese artist, Kusama also holds the record for the most expensive work sold by a living female artist, auctioned for $5.1 million dollars by Christie's.

VOCABULARY NOTES

cutting-edge – highly advanced; innovative or pioneering;

at the forefront – leading;

elevate - raise to a more important or impressive level;

conjure up – here: create;

technique – here: skill or ability in a particular field;

shadow art – a unique form of sculptural art where the 2D shadows cast by a 3D sculpture are essential for the artistic effect;

carved book landscape – a unique form of sculptural art where sculptures are created in and out of books;

land art – a style of art which uses elements found in nature to build a sculpture that works in harmony with a given location;

3D illusion sculpture – a unique form of sculptural art where the sculptures seem alive;

acrylic paint – a type of paint used by artists.;

anamorphic art – a distorted projection or perspective requiring the viewer to use special devices or occupy a specific vantage point to reconstitute the image;

stencil - a thin sheet of cardboard, plastic, or metal with a pattern or letters cut out of it, used to produce the cut design on the surface below by the application of ink or paint through the holes;

installation art - an artistic genre of three-dimensional works that are often site-specific and designed to transform the perception of a space;

light art - a form of visual art where the main medium of expression is light;

quilling - decorative craftwork in which a material such as glass, fabric, or paper is formed into small bands or rolls that form the basis of a design;

paper illustration – an art of using paper to create highly detailed dimensional designs;

eccentric – unconventional and slightly strange.

IV. Working together

1. Work in pars/groups. Act out a dialogue where you are at an art gallery or an art event. You can be the artist exhibiting his works here, a journalist eager to have a few questions answered for a spotlight article, a guest at the gathering impressed by the works, the host of the event, gallery owner, art fair promoter, art critic, etc. Consider using the words and words combinations given below.

a fashionable/mature/self-taught artist, a museum curator, a renowned artist, accentuate something, an exquisite piece, an unsurpassed masterpiece, astonish, be in advance of his/her time, break with the tradition, conform to the taste of the time, creative, excel at, execute, exhibit, expose the dark sides of life, expose, imaginative, incorporate something into the work, a portfolio, push the boundaries.

2. Work in pars/groups. Act out a dialogue where you are a parent who has found out that his/her teenage son/daughter is dreaming of becoming an artist. You are having a conversation about the future an artist in this particular genre can have in today's world, how important such art can be for people, the purpose of it in life in general.

The teen is trying to explain his/her point of view, while the parent is trying to prove that without a decent profession and career he/she will die forgotten and penniless. Consider using the words and word combinations given below.

3D street art, art for its own sake, body art, challenge, conform to the taste of the time, crowdfunding, cyber art, distract, elicit a response, entertain, impart a message, incorporate something into the work, paper art, pursue an ideal, sand art, serve beauty, to amuse, urge a moral point.

V. Did you know?

➢ Learning art correlates strongly with higher achievement in math and reading.

➢ Oil paint revolutionized art.

➢ Leonardo da Vinci was a vegetarian and animal rights activist, he would buy caged birds and set them free.

➢ Salvador Dali believed he was his dead brother's reincarnation.

➢ Paul Gauguin once worked on the Panama Canal.

➢ The first color photograph was made in 1861 by James Maxwell.

➢ Oil paint can be transparent, translucent, or opaque.

➢ Claude Monet had a father who disapproved of his painting, as he wanted him to be a grocer.

➢ The Statue of Liberty is the largest hammered copper statue in the world.

➢ Picasso could draw before he could walk, and his first word was 'pencil'.

➢ Auguste Rodin's work, Age of BronzeThe Age of Bronze, was so realistic people though he sacrificed a real person inside the cast.

Choose any of the sentences above as a topic for your oral presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support or refute the information in the statements above.

VI. A story behind a common expression

Push the envelope

Meaning: To attempt to extend the current limits of performance. To innovate, or go beyond commonly accepted boundaries.
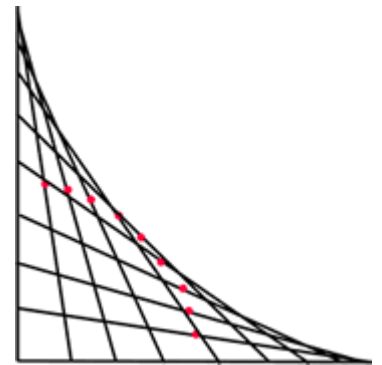
Origin:

This phrase came into general use following the publication Tom Wolfe's book about the space programme - *The Right Stuff*, 1979:

"One of the phrases that kept running through the conversation was 'pushing the outside of the envelope'... [That] seemed to be the great challenge and satisfaction of flight test."

Wolfe didn't originate the term, although it's appropriate that he used it in a technical and engineering context, as it was first used in the field of mathematics.

The envelope here isn't the container for letters, but the mathematical envelope, which is defined as 'the locus of the ultimate intersections of consecutive curves'. In a two-dimensional example, the set of lines described by the various positions of a ladder sliding down a wall forms an envelope - in this case an arc, gently curving away from the intersection of the wall and floor. Inside that envelope you will be hit by the ladder; outside you won't.

(Note for the mathematically inclined: it might seem intuitive that the centre point of the ladder would follow that same arc. In fact it describes a circle centred around the origin).

That's enough mathematics. The point is that an envelope is that which envelops. The phrase has something in common with an earlier one - 'beyond the pale'. Inside the pale you were safe; outside, at risk.

In aviation and aeronautics the term 'flight envelope' had been in use since WWII, as here from the *Journal of the Royal Aeronautical Society*, 1944:

"The best known of the envelope cases is the 'flight envelope', which is in general use in this country and in the United States... The 'flight envelope' covers all probable conditions of symmetrical manoeuvring flight."

That envelope is the description of the upper and lower limits of the various factors that it is safe to fly at, that is, speed, engine power, manoeuvrability, wind speed, altitude etc. By 'pushing the envelope', that is, testing those limits, test pilots were able to determine just how far it was safe to go. By 1978 the phrase was in use in print. In July that year, *Aviation Week & Space Technology* magazine had:

"The aircraft's altitude envelope must be expanded to permit a ferry flight across the nation. NASA pilots were to push the envelope to 10,000 ft."

The following year, Wolfe picked up the phrase and it went from a piece of specialist technical jargon into the general language.
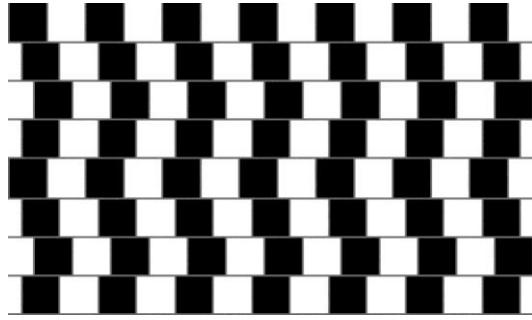
Write an essay (300 words) on the topic: Art in Everyday Life.
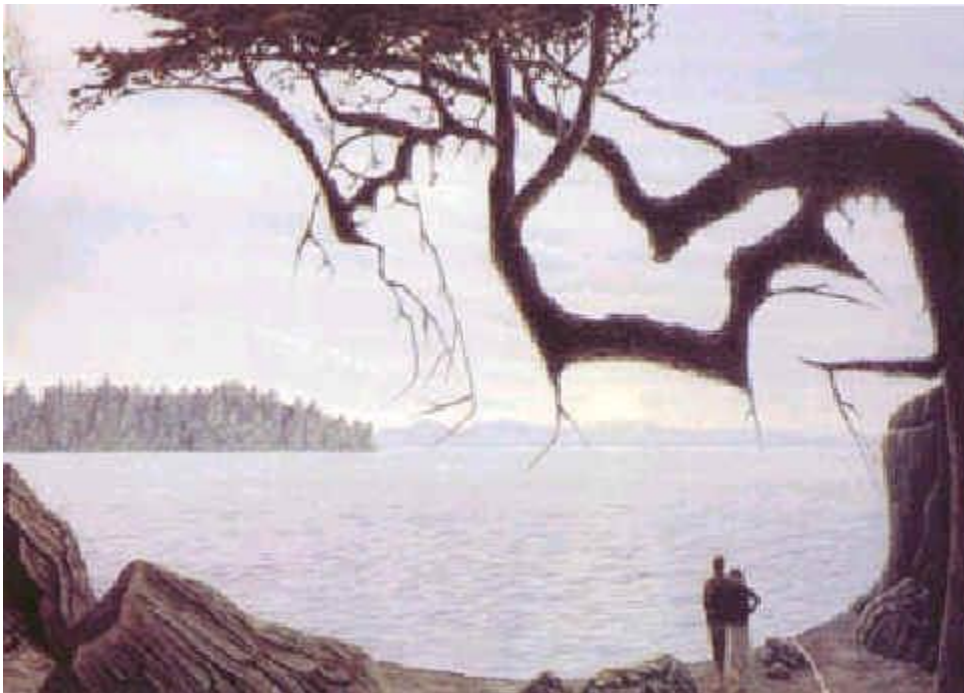
VII. Puzzles & Riddles

1.   How many faces can you see in the picture below?
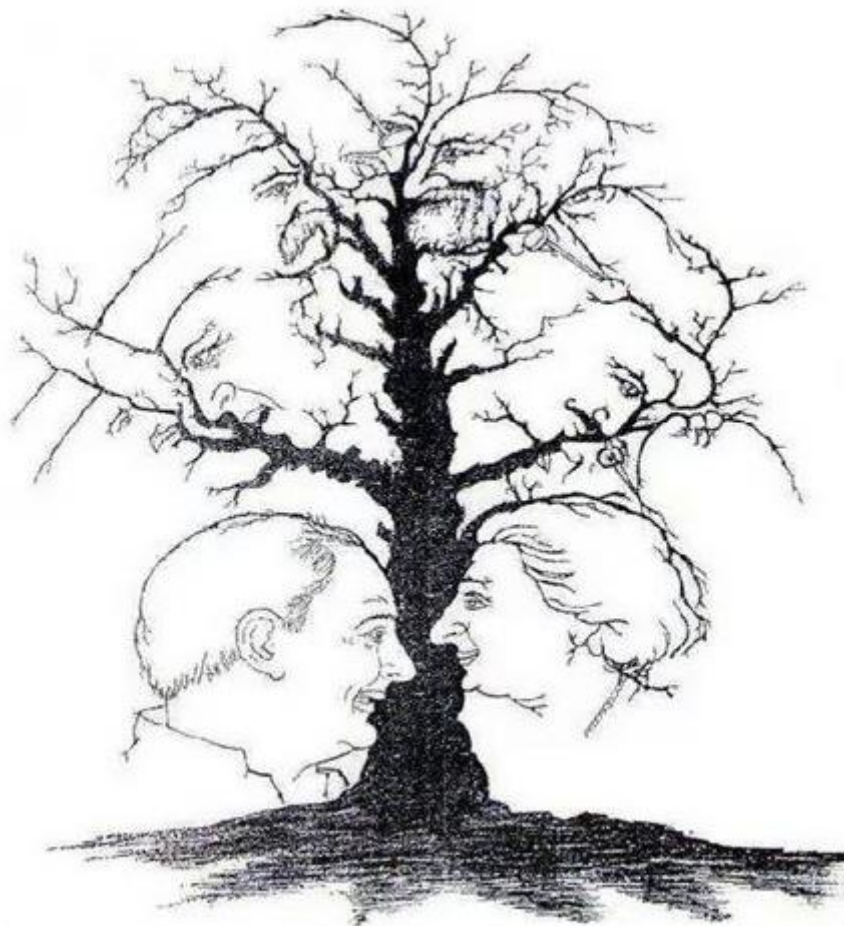
2. Are the horizontal lines straight or crooked?

3. Can you find the baby in this picture?

4. A man condemned to death has the option of picking one of the mentioned three rooms. The first room is a furnace filled with feeding flames, the second has armed men with loaded guns while the third has lions starving for years. Which one should the man choose?

5. A boy is walking down the road with a doctor. While the boy is the doctor's son, the doctor isn't the boy's father. Then who is the doctor?

6. What is broken every time it's spoken?

7. Before Mount Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain on Earth?

8. Which month has 28 days?

9. If an electric train is traveling south, which way is the smoke going?

Unit 5. Creativity

Is creativity on the decline?

by *Heather Skyler*

When my son was 4, he told me that when he grew up, he wanted to be an artist. At the time, he was drawing about five to 10 renderings of The Magic School Bus daily and, apparently, finding it fulfilling. I remember saying something like, "That's great!" but thinking, "As long as you're a stockbroker on the side."

Creative careers can be difficult. I know this firsthand from writing novels since I was 19 (and before that, bad teenage poetry) and only publishing one book so far. Even when I did finally get my big break, the influx of money only lasted a year or so, while I'd toiled over those pages for much longer.

But creative pursuits aren't truly about money. If you feel the need to express yourself through some artistic form, it's not because you have dreams of great wealth. It's because something in the art fuels you, fulfills an inexplicable need that can't be fulfilled in any other way.

My son no longer wants to be an artist. Now he's thinking about video game design, a creative career with more potential security.

My daughter wants to be an actress and has performed in every school play for the past three years, but she explains that if this career doesn't work out, she might consider teaching or becoming a doctor.

So while I never made the stockbroker comment aloud, some practical view of art and the world has infiltrated my kids' psyches, and I can't decide if this is good or bad. To succeed in the arts requires a certain amount of hubris, the absolute certainty that your work is deserving of recognition. Is it possible to possess this confidence and also have a backup plan?

Whether or not my children pursue creative careers, creativity is a highly valuable trait for any profession. A recent IBM poll of 15,000 CEOs identified creativity as the No. 1 trait for "leadership competency," above rigor, management discipline, integrity or even vision!

Creative thinking is an essential skill across many disciplines, which is why a recent study revealing that kids' creativity levels are dropping was disturbing.

You might wonder how exactly "creativity levels" can be measured in the first place. Well, it turns out there's a respected test called the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) developed by American psychologist Ellis Paul Torrance in the late 1950s. The test measures divergent thinking and other problem-solving skills, and was originally scored on four scales: fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration.

In 2010, Dr. Kyung-Hee Kim, an associate professor of Creativity & Innovation at The College of William & Mary, analyzed 300,000 of these TTCT scores and discovered that creativity scores had risen steadily for several decades, then in 1990, began to drop. Kim described the decrease as significant and said the trait declined most seriously in kids between kindergarten and sixth grade.

There are not yet definitive answers as to why creativity is diminishing, though the typical villains have been trotted out: TV, video games and the education system.

Whatever the cause, solutions are in progress. Creative studies is popping up on course lists and as a credential across the country. Buffalo State, part of the State University of New York, plans a Ph.D. and already offers a master's degree and undergraduate minor in creative studies. Saybrook University in San Francisco has a master's and a certificate, and added a specialization to its psychology Ph.D. in 2011. Drexel University in Philadelphia offers an online master's program.

So if all the creativity is drained from your kid in kindergarten through 12th grade, they can revive this skill in college and hopefully get a secure and creative job after graduation.

VOCABULARY NOTES

creativity – the use of imagination or original ideas to create something; inventiveness;

on the decline – gradually decreasing in importance, quality, or power;

rendering – an artistic depiction of something;

fulfilling – making someone satisfied or happy because of fully developing their character or abilities;

on the side – in addition to one's regular job or as a subsidiary source of income;

influx – the arrival or entry of many people or things;

toil over – work extremely hard or incessantly;

pursuit – here: an activity of a specified kind, especially a recreational or sporting one;

hubris – excessive pride or self-confidence;

trait – a distinguishing quality or characteristic, typically one belonging to a person;

rigor – the quality of being extremely thorough, exhaustive, or accurate

integrity – the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles

vision – here: the ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom;

divergent thinking – thinking in an unusual and unstereotyped way, e.g. to generate several possible solutions to a problem;

fluency – the ability to express oneself easily and articulately;

flexibility – willingness to change or compromise;

originality – the ability to think independently and creatively;

elaboration – the ability to apply more details and enhance an idea;

diminish – make or become less;

trot out – here: bring to the attention of; introduce; submit;

credential – a document or certificate proving a person's identity or qualifications.

EXERCISES

I. Questions

1. What are the benefits/disadvantages of creativity? Do you think creativity should always be encouraged? Can you think of ways to do so?
2. If you could create something with an unlimited budget, what would it be? How would you accomplish that?
3. How does the environment affect creativity?

4. Are people with a creative/artistic personality better teachers? Explain your point, give examples.

5. Is it really true that there is no such thing as new ideas?

6. If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?

7. Do you agree that creativity the number 1 skill for the 21st century? What jobs do you think require creativity today?

8. What are your strengths and weaknesses for creativity? How are you developing your creativity to prepare for the modern world of work?

9. Of your creative accomplishments, big or small, at work or home, what gave you the most satisfaction? How often do you try to create something? What was the last time you did? What was it? How did it feel?

10. If you lived in a black and white world, what one thing would you color?

II. Panel discussion

The author of the text below attempts to debunk some myths and misconceptions about creativity. Choose any of the following to discuss pros and cons of the author's ideas based on your own knowledge of the matter and/or personal experience.

6 Myths About Creativity

by *Anna Davies*

Made lunch out of the leftovers found in the fridge. Talked your co-workers into agreeing on a solution to a client problem. Tweeted a wry observation about last night's episode of "Nashville." While it may sound like any other day, all of these instances are examples where you've flexed your creative muscle. And, like any other muscle, the more you use it, the stronger it gets, giving you an edge at home, at work and in social situations.

A lot of people have misconceptions about what "being creative" means, which makes it hard for them to tap into their full potential. Here are six major myths about what creativity is – and how to bust them to let your imagination break free.

Myth #1: I'm not creative.

Hear the word "creativity" and feel a shiver of dread up your spine instead of a spark of inspiration deep in your belly? It doesn't mean you lack imagination, only that it's been hidden somewhere along the way. "Everyone has the capacity for creativity," explains David Goldstein, an artist, creativity consultant and co-author of *Creative You,* a book that explores the connections between creativity and personality. "But what usually happens is that their imagination gets shut down in early childhood. For example, a 5-year-old will paint the sky purple because she thinks it looks pretty, but if someone criticizes it or laughs at it, she'll quickly learn to stop following or trusting her creative impulses."

Luckily, for those of us still scarred by awful art class memories, creativity doesn't require a paintbrush – or an A+ from an art teacher.

Myth #2: Creativity = Art

"Recognizing your natural creativity is the first step in enhancing it," says Goldstein. Just because you're not a poet or a painter doesn't mean you aren't creative. Are you a pro at putting good conversation partners together at dinner parties? Do you always seem to know the right thing to say at occasions where the people around you are tongue-tied? Then your creativity manifests itself in relationships. Maybe you're as good as any trainer at the gym at putting together a fun and rigorous workout routine. That's creativity, too. Swept up by 3-D films? Starting a blog about the subject can give your imagination a chance to soar.

Myth #3 Creativity is frivolous.

When you're swamped, you've got to keep your head in the game, not in the clouds, right? Not exactly. Taking a mental break from a particularly pressing problem by indulging in creative play can help you come up with more solutions when you finally do get back to work, says Goldstein. Not only that, but studies have found creative expression is linked to stress relief, better physical and emotional health, higher self-esteem and even better sleep.

Myth #4: Some people are "the creative type" – and some aren't.

It's like the old adage says: different strokes for different folks. Goldstein divides creativity into different types based on personality in his book. "One of the big factors affecting creativity is introversion versus extroversion," explains Goldstein. "Extroverts innovate best by interaction, whereas introverts may innovate best by quiet reflection."

If you're highly extroverted, for example, you're likely to find your bursts of creativity while talking with friends, instead of reflecting solo in your car. Meanwhile, if you're more introverted, you may find yourself overwhelmed during an office brainstorming session, but then figure out an awesome solution in the shower the next morning. "Knowing when creativity is likely to strike for you wards off discouragement and keeps your mind open," says Goldstein.

Myth #5: I don't have time for creative stuff.

You may find yourself inspired by various artists, writers or directors, only to feel completely paralyzed to even attempt to do your own thing when you hear your creative idol writes five hours a day, or spent 10 years working on their directorial debut. The image

of an artist devoting every waking hour to his craft makes "creating" seem overwhelming for ordinary people, warns Goldstein, but you can boost your creative side in just a few minutes. That, in turn, amplifies your capacity for self-expression and joy, says Lee Crutchley, illustrator, designer and author of *The Art of Getting Started,* a workbook designed to jumpstart creativity. "Doodling while you're on the phone, taking one photo a day, or writing a page of a story every week all count. The trick is not to worry about whether or not it's good, but just enjoy the process."

If it works for you to sit and write five pages every morning, by all means, do it. But if you prefer to jot a few notes in your journal only when you feel inspired, it doesn't mean you're lacking in dedication.

Myth #6: Creativity means *doing* something.

Watching movies, reading books or finally watching "Breaking Bad" from the beginning may seem passive, but each can actually be incredibly creative – if it's done with intention. Instead of just vegging out, think about the why behind whatever you're seeing, explains Crutchley. Why did the director use that shot, or what did the character mean when he quoted a line from Shakespeare? "The aim of any creative project is to say something," he continues, "so questioning what a creative project is trying to tell you helps you figure out what you have to say yourself."

VOCABULARY NOTES

flex one's muscles – give a show of strength or power;

occasion – a special or noteworthy event, ceremony, or celebration;

tongue-tied – too shy or embarrassed to speak;

manifest itself – here: become apparent (of a quality or a feeling);

frivolous – not having any serious purpose or value;

swamped (with) – overwhelmed with an excessive amount of something;

adage – a proverb or short statement expressing a general truth;

different strokes for different folks – different things appeal to different people;

doodle – scribble absent-mindedly;

veg out – to relax in an inert passive way; vegetate.

III. Video Time

Watch the following videos on creativity: What is Creativity? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FFQI3ESs9E) and WHERE GOOD IDEAS COME FROM (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NugRZGDbPFU). Give a definition of creativity as you understand it. Think of ways to boost creativity in yourself. Look through the twelve ways to do so offered by Jennifer Smith below. Which of those things do you practice? Which of them do you think are the most appropriate for you and why? Which of them do you feel like trying?

12 Ways To Unleash Your Creativity

by *Jennifer Smith*

 Is creativity something that can be tapped? If you are anything like me, creativity can seem elusive; something that comes in waves or that is unpredictable. But we

can learn to be creative – like anything it is a process. There are things we can do to harness this power and unleash it:

Release perfectionism

Perfectionism is the biggest killer of creativity. Notice when you are approaching a task and have 'am I doing it right' or 'will it be good enough' thoughts and do it anyway! Start practicing doing things even when you don't know if you can do them perfectly or how they will turn out.

Have fun

In our society we are often taught that we should have a goal or an aim and an outcome to an activity in order for it to be successful. Creativity isn't linear. Start doing purely things for the enjoyment factor.

Practice

Practice being creative often! You don't necessarily have to show others your creations, but the act of making creativity a ritual will help your brain get used to being creative and keep the flow going.

Be present

Being present and living in the moment helps us to get in touch with our creative side. We need time and space to let our creativity pour forth. Try and be aware of how present you are being every day.

Relax

Creativity thrives in a relaxed mind. The more stressed or contracted we are, the less creativity can come forward. Find ways to relax and wind down. A massage, long walk or watching a good movie are great ways to do this. Find what works for you and do that.

Daydream

The lost art of day dreaming is a powerful tool for evoking creativity. Take time out to day dream and let your mind wander. You can even say that it is in the name of creativity!

We all have different ways and times that we get inspired. Start noticing yours. Are you a morning creative or a night owl? We are all different. Find your way. Take notes if necessary to track your most creative times.

Catch the wave

When inspiration hits, catch the wave! We all have ebbs and flows in creativity. When I am inspired I feel like I am on fire! Nothing can stop me. Use these times to your advantage and go with the creative flow.

Catch your ideas

Sometimes inspiration hits when we just can't follow the flow immediately, for example when we are about to go into an important meeting or when we are driving! Carry a notebook or Dictaphone to catch your ideas and come back to them as soon as you can.

Brainstorming

Brainstorm often! Whatever your creative 'niche' is get in the habit of brainstorming and letting your ideas and visions flow forward without censoring them. Let your imagination soar and don't hold back!

Be in nature

Being in nature has the power to help us be present, unleash our creativity and get us in touch with a different aspect of ourselves. When you are stuck go for a walk in a park or by the sea … whatever is available to you. Take in your surroundings and let nature work its magic on you – it is after all, the supreme source of all things creative.

Feed the well

We need to 'feed the well' of inspiration. Make sure you are spending time regularly 'feeding' your inspiration. Start keeping track of what inspires you and taking time regularly to participate in this. You should even set a time aside each week to do this.

VOCABULARY NOTES

unleash – cause (a strong or violent force) to be released or become unrestrained;

elusive – difficult to find, catch, or achieve;

harness – control and make use of;

perfectionism – the demand for the highest standard of excellence;

purely – entirely; exclusively;

thrive – grow or develop well or vigorously; flourish;

daydream – think about pleasant things for a period of time, usually about things that you would like to happen;

wander – walk or move in a leisurely or aimless way;

ebb and flow – a recurrent pattern of coming and going or decline and regrowth;

brainstorm – hold a group discussion to produce ideas.

IV. Working together

1. Work in pairs/groups. Act out a dialogue where you are university instructors discussing ways to make your lessons more creativity encouraging for your students. Come up with ideas for in-class and home projects. Explain how your suggested idea is intended to help the students in their professional career after graduation, and what particular skill(s) it is supposed to develop.

Consider using the words and words combinations given below.

Creativity, brainstorming, unleash, occasion, tongue-tied, different strokes for different folks, veg out, originality, flexibility, divergent thinking, fluency, vision, trait, toil over, fulfilling, rendering, rigor, integrity, elaboration, diminish, flex one's muscles, frivolous, daydream, wander, perfectionism.

2. Work in pairs/groups. Act out a dialogue where you are university students discussing what activities would you like to engage in during your studies that you think would help boost your creativity. Come up with ideas for in-class and home projects you'd like to try. Explain how your suggested idea is intended to help you in your professional career after graduation, and what particular skill(s) it is supposed to develop.

Consider using the words and words combinations given below.

Creativity, brainstorming, unleash, occasion, tongue-tied, different strokes for different folks, veg out, originality, flexibility, divergent thinking, fluency, vision, trait, toil over, fulfilling, rendering, rigor, integrity, elaboration, diminish, flex one's muscles, frivolous, daydream, wander, perfectionism.

V. Did you know?

- ➢ Your brain does creative work better when you're tired.
- ➢ Stress can change the size of your brain.
- ➢ It is literally impossible for our brains to multi-task.
- ➢ Naps improve your brain's day to day performance.
- ➢ Your vision trumps all other senses.

> ➢ We tend to like people who make mistakes more.
> ➢ Exercise can reorganize the brain and boost your willpower.
> ➢ Improvisation stimulates the brain's language centers.
> ➢ Creative people are more likely to be dishonest.

Choose any of the sentences above as a topic for your oral presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support or refute the information in the statements above.

VI. A story behind a common expression

My mind's eye

Meaning:

One's visual memory or imagination.

Origin:

The concept of us having an 'eye in our mind' is ancient and dates back to at least the 14th century, when Chaucer used it in The Man of Law's Tale, circa 1390:

> "It were with thilke eyen of his mynde, With whiche men seen, after that they been blynde."

The first actual mention of mind's eye comes in 1577 when Hubert Languet used it in a letter. This was subsequently printed in The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet, 1845:

> "What will not these golden mountains effect ... which I dare say stand before your mind's eye day and night?"

The term probably became known through the work of Shakespeare. He uses it in the best-known of all plays - Hamlet, 1602, in a scene where Hamlet is recalling his father:

> HAMLET:

> Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!

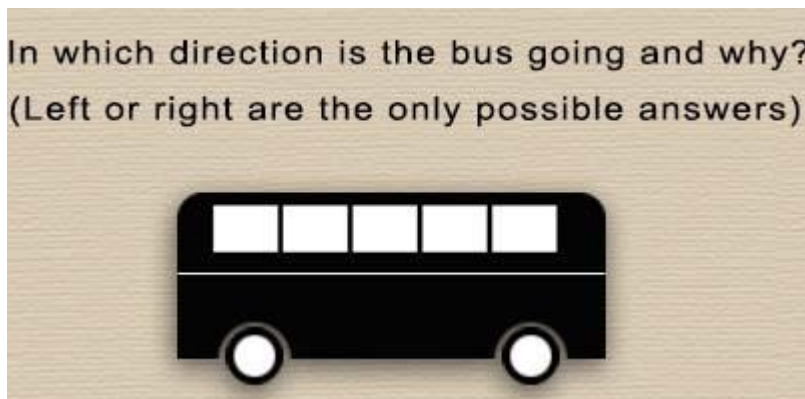My father! - methinks I see my father.

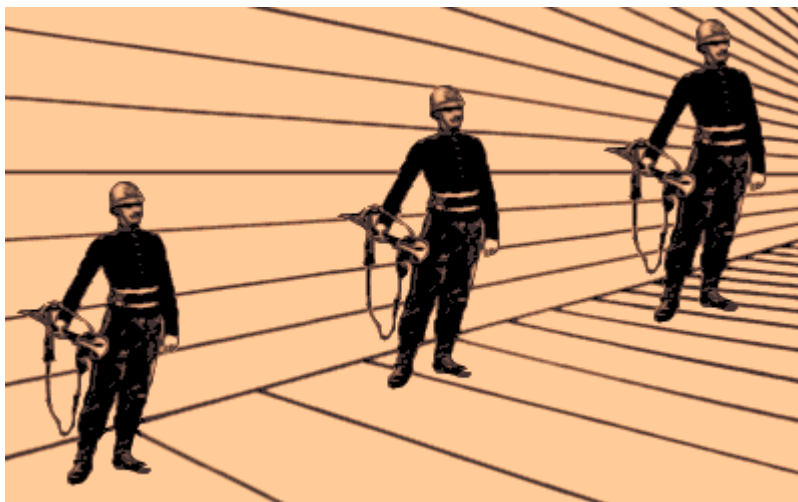HORATIO:

Where, my lord?

HAMLET:

In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Write an essay (300 words) on the topic: Creativity and your Chosen Profession.
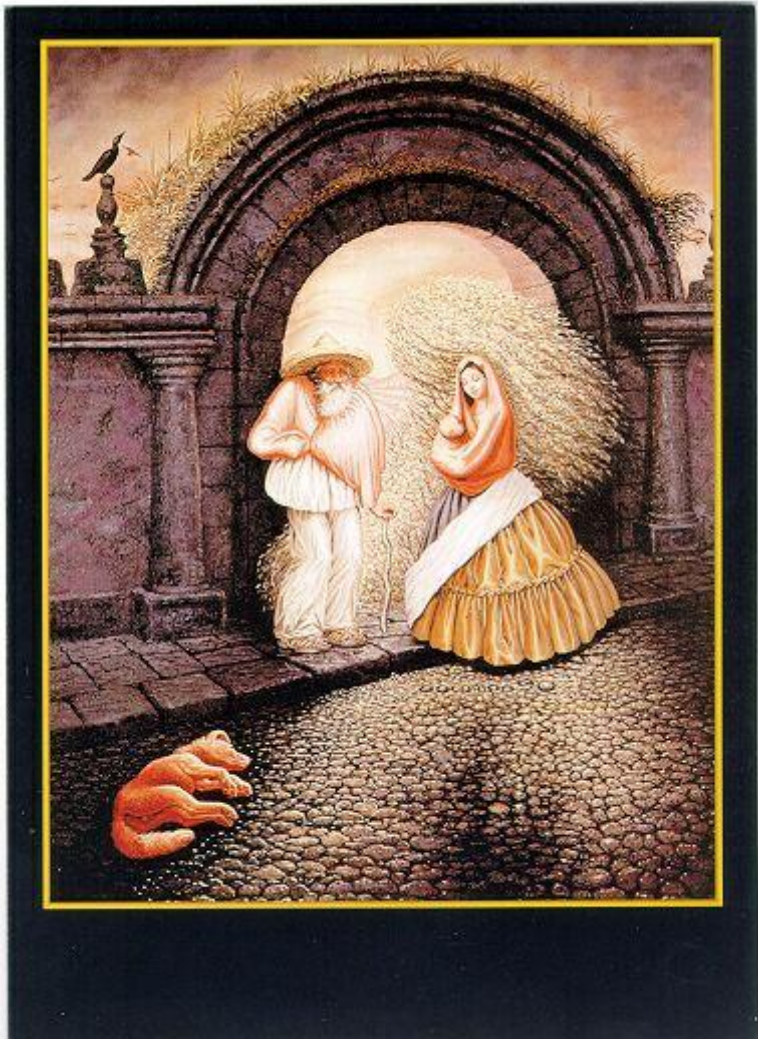
VII. Puzzles & Riddles

1. In which direction is the bus going and why? Left or right are the only possible answers.

2. Which soldier is taller?

3. How Many Faces Can You Find In This Picture?

4. You're stranded in a deserted place when you discover an old cabin. It's freezing outside and you only have one match, a candle, a newspaper, and some hay and twigs. What do you light first?

5. What is as big as an elephant but weighs nothing at all?

6. What are two things you cannot have for breakfast?

7. What object has keys that open no locks, space but no room, and you can enter but not go in?

8. In British Columbia you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not?

Unit 7. School Education

Creating Tomorrow's Schools Today: Education - Our Children - Their Futures (Abstract)

By *Richard Gerver*

Civilization, as H. G. Wells memorably said, is a race between education and catastrophe. If education is to win, we need urgently to pick up the pace of change in our schools. Most education systems around the world are being reformed. But reform is not enough. The truth is that we need a complete transformation in the principles and processes of public education. Educational transformation is what my own work has been about and it's what this book by Richard Gerver is about.

As a species and as a planet we are facing challenges that have no precedent in human history. They come in part from rapid population growth and the massive strains that our apparently insatiable appetites are putting on the world's natural resources. They come too from the unpredictable interplay with human cultures of accelerating innovations in science and technology. Many of these challenges are the direct result of the global convulsions of the Industrial Revolution, which are still reverberating around the earth. Our generation and the ones we're educating have to deal with these challenges, right now. The problem is that the dominant systems of education through which we're trying to do this are rooted in the values and methods of industrialism that created many of these challenges in the first place. Making these systems more efficient simply won't do. In the proper sense of the word, we need a new paradigm for education.

Industrial systems of education are essentially impersonal. They emphasize conformity in the curriculum and in teaching methods and

standardization in assessment. And, too often, national systems of accountability treat students as raw materials and statistics as outcomes. A high degree of wastage is taken for granted. I know I'm simplifying here, but not much. You can get some idea of how wasteful these systems are by looking at the high rates of drop out and truancy among students and of turnover among teachers, especially from secondary

schools, and at the precipitous rise in prescription drug use to keep students of all ages with the programme.

What these impersonal systems overlook is that education is always, essentially and inevitably, personal. I can't imagine there's a child anywhere who jumps out of bed in the morning wondering what he or she can do to raise the school district's reading scores. Students learn best if they're engaged, interested and motivated personally and, if they're not, they tune out and turn off. This was always true. It's even more important to understand this now. Young people are living in the most connected, information-driven period in human history. Their facility with technology and the appetite for networking show how eager they are to learn if the conditions are right. Creating these conditions means customizing education to each school, to each community of students, teachers, staff and parents, here and now. Thinking creatively about how to personalize and customize education is what this book is really about.

These days, education has four main roles. The first is individual. All children are born with immense, natural powers of imagination and curiosity. These come as standard in human beings. In addition to what they have in common, all children have their own particular aptitudes, dispositions and potential passions. One purpose of education has to be to help realize, in both senses of the word, the unique abilities of every student. The second role is cultural. Education should help our children understand the achievements and traditions of their own, and other communities, in an ethos of empathy and tolerance. The third is economic: to enable all students to achieve financial independence and contribute to wealth creation in ways that are ethical and sustainable. And the fourth is social. Effective schools sit at the heart of strong communities. Through outreach programmes, work with adults and partnerships with parents and families, schools must foster the spirit and practice of community life and responsibilities.

VOCABULARY NOTES

1. **public education** – is education universally available, with control and funding coming from the state, local, and federal government;

2. **insatiable** – (of an appetite or desire) impossible to satisfy;

3. **challenge** – a task or situation that tests someone's abilities;

4. **interplay** – the way in which two or more things have an effect on each other;

5. **to educate** – give intellectual, moral, and social instruction to (someone), typically at a school or university;

6. **values** – principles or standards of behaviour; one's judgement of what is important in life;

7. **efficient** – achieving maximum productivity with minimum wasted effort or expense;

8. **in the proper sense of the word** – literally;

9. **paradigm** – a model for something which explains it or shows how it can be produced;

10. **impersonal** – large, featureless, and anonymous;

11. **conformity** – compliance with standards, rules, or laws;

12. **curriculum** – the subjects comprising a course of study in a school or college;

13. **teaching methods** – comprise the principles and methods used for instruction. Commonly used teaching methods may include **class participation, demonstration, recitation, memorization**, or combinations of these.

14. **standardization** – the process of developing and implementing technical standards;

15. **assessment** – the evaluation or estimation of the nature, quality, or ability of someone or something;

16. **accountability** – responsibility;

17. **outcome** – something that follows from an action, dispute, situation, etc.; result; consequence;

18. **wastage** – the number of people who leave a company, college, or other organization, especially before they have completed their education or training;

19. **to take for granted** – assume that something is true without questioning it;

20. **to simplify** – make (something) simpler or easier to do or understand;

21. **dropout** – a person who has abandoned a course of study or who has rejected conventional society to pursue an alternative lifestyle;

22. **truancy** - the action of staying away from school without good reason; absenteeism;

23. **secondary school** - a school for young people, usually between the ages of 11 and 18;

24. **precipitous rise** – dangerously high or sudden and dramatic increase in number, size, amount, or degree

25. **to overlook** – ignore or disregard (something, especially a fault or offence);

26. **score** – a rating or grade, such as a mark achieved in a test;

27. **engaged** – busy; occupied;

28. **motivated** – interested in or enthusiastic about doing something;

29. **to tune out** – stop listening or paying attention;

30. **information-driven** – motivated or determined by information;

31. **to customize** – modify (something) to suit a particular individual or task;

32. **aptitude** – painting;

33. **disposition** – an inclination or tendency;

34. **achievement** – something that has been accomplished, esp by hard work, ability;

35. **tolerance** – the ability or willingness to tolerate something, in particular the existence of opinions or behavior that one does not necessarily agree with;

36. **sustainable** – able to be upheld or defended;

37. **outreach programmes** and schemes try to find people who need help or advice rather than waiting for those people to come and ask for help;

38. **foster** – encourage the development of (something, especially something desirable).

EXERCISES

1. Questions

1. Please describe the unique abilities you have as a student.

2. What is your attitude to individual or personal education?

3. What could motivate you personally to learn best?

4. How can you envision the perfect educational system for you?

5. What is your idea about the rapid population growth?

6. How can you perceive the gap technology creates between generations?

7. What do you think about truancy?

8. Please describe a funny incident at your secondary school.

9. How would you customize a typical school teacher?

10. How do innovations in science and technology help you to learn?

2. Panel discussion

Below is an infographic the 18 widely-shared myths and misconceptions people believe about education. Read the crossheadings that follow and agree with or refute the statements they contain. Skim the reasoning under each heading and compare it to your own opinions.

18 Myths People Believe About Education

1. More Homework Means More Learning

2. More Money Means Better Schools

3. The Myth of Insurmountable Problems

4. Test Scores Are Related To Economic Competitiveness

5. Schools Alone Can Close The Achievement Gap

6. Private and Charter Schools Are Educating Kids Better

7. Teachers Are Clueless About The Content They Are Teaching

8. The "Teacher-Proof Myth"

9. Our Teachers Work Less And Get Paid More

10. Unions Defend Poor Teachers

11. Student Achievement Has Been Deteriorating For Decades

12. Teachers Are Solely Responsible For Learning

13. The Disadvantaged Don't Have The Same Capacity To Learn

14. Schools Don't Matter

15. Small Classes Would Produce Big Improvements

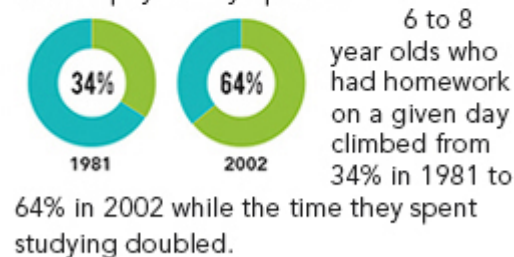16. Teacher Preparation Matters Little For Student Achievement

17. Most Teachers Don't Care

18. Credentials And Experience Don't Matter. Only Content Knowledge Does

1

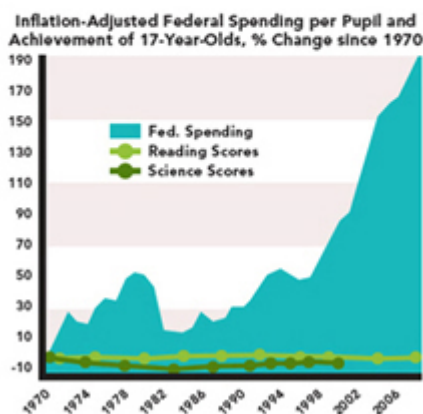**MORE HOMEWORK MEANS MORE LEARNING.**

An additional hour of homework in Science, English and History has little to no impact. Students who spent the most hours on homework experienced more stress-related physical symptoms.

34% 1981

64% 2002

6 to 8 year olds who had homework on a given day climbed from 34% in 1981 to 64% in 2002 while the time they spent studying doubled.

2

MORE MONEY MEANS BETTER SCHOOLS.

Since 1970, the National Assessment of Educational Progress has been administered yearly to a sample of US students and the scores have no positive correlation to the rise in expenditure.

Inflation-Adjusted Federal Spending per Pupil and Achievement of 17-Year-Olds, % Change since 1970

- Fed. Spending
- Reading Scores
- Science Scores

9

OUR TEACHERS WORK LESS, GET PAID MORE.

According to an OECD report, US teachers spend up to 1,100 hours per year teaching - much more than in almost every country. Argentina and Chile are also high on the list.

10

UNIONS DEFEND BAD TEACHERS.

Between 2006 and 2010. 245 teachers resigned or had to be dismissed. Unions require new teachers and those flagged as "under performing" to be observed by a specialist for over a year.

11

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT HAS BEEN DETERIORATING FOR DECADES.

Today's students perform about as well as their parents in terms of standardized tests and graduation rates.

Scores of American 4th Graders in Math (PIRLS and TIMSS Exams)

*The 2011 PIRLS and TIMSS exams showed that American 4th graders scored 556 - higher than the international average. Scores in Math also increased.

3

SOCIAL PROBLEMS LIKE POVERTY OR BAD PARENTING MEAN EDUCATION IS DOOMED TO FAIL.

Reforms that focus on the incentives of public schools lead to educational gains, and accountability and choice have often been shown to deflate the significance of social problems.

TEXAS
4th

*In Texas, their raw test scores place it 32nd among the states, yet it ranks 4th after its outcomes are adjusted for the Teachability Index.

4

TEST SCORES ARE RELATED TO ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS.

B+

Consider Japan, whose current economy flags while its students continue to ace tests. Or Finland, New Zealand and Sweden, each of which produces at least as many research engineers as the US per 1,000 full time employees.

5

SCHOOLS ALONE CAN CLOSE THE GAP.

The achievement gap is due to factors like educational or economic background, nutritional intake, genetics and parental guidance. Teachers also can't afford to give their students music lessons if the school doesn't provide them.
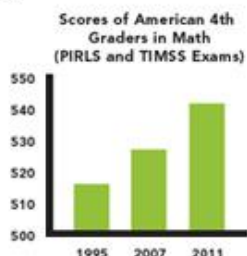
70% of homes have internet access

The government has provided funding for low-income school districts but the fact that 30% of homes don't have online access is still a main issue.

11

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT HAS BEEN DETERIORATING FOR DECADES.

F

Today's students perform about as well as their parents in terms of standardized tests and graduation rates.

Scores of American 4th Graders in Math (PIRLS and TIMSS Exams)

	1995	2007	2011
550			
540			
530			
520			
510			
500			

*The 2011 PIRLS and TIMSS exams showed that American 4th graders scored 556 - higher than the international average. Scores in Math also increased.

12

TEACHERS ARE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR LEARNING.

Learning is an interactive process. Teachers are not the only people in the classroom who have valuable knowledge to share. Students can teach and benefit from each other too.

13

THE DISADVANTAGED DON'T HAVE THE SAME CAPACITY TO LEARN.

$ $

Economically challenged students may perform worse on assessments, experience anxiety and lack of control, have a bad reaction to authority, and abandon formal learning altogether - but none of this is due to a lower education capacity.

14

SCHOOLS DO NOT MATTER.

Since the implementation of acts like No Child Left Behind, schools have been instrumental in giving underprivileged students a chance to escape poverty. It allows students to transfer to better schools or receive free tutoring. A study in 2006 stated that low income students are more likely to be taught by inexperienced teachers. NCLB ensures that students receive education from the most qualified.

6

PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE EDUCATING KIDS BETTER.

Studies suggest that private schools may amount to nothing more than the exposure to other students with educated parents and affluent backgrounds.

37%

Charter schools with learning gains that were significantly below those of public schools

46%

Charter schools with learning gains that were no different than those of public schools

*It was also discovered that bad charter schools out numbered good ones by a ratio of 2 to 1.

7

TEACHERS HAVE LITTLE TO NO KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WHAT THEY'RE TEACHING.

28 states require teachers to have majored in the subject they plan to teach. All candidates must pass content exams before completing their program or being certified. 12 states require elementary school teachers to have earned a content degree, and 19 require middle school teachers to do the same.

75%

*A higher proportion of secondary school teachers hold at least a degree.

8

TEACHER-PROOF TEACHING AIDS WILL PROVIDE NECESSARY LEARNING.

There are no teacher-proof solutions. None to be legislated, none to be bought, and none to be accessed virtually. The human task of helping a student can't be replaced by automated learning models,nor by one all-purpose instructional method arising from trial and error.

A study done by the International Association for Statistical Education found that students experienced difficulties with computer-supported data analysis, deeming it "confusing" and feeling uncomfortable with it.

15

SMALL CLASSES PRODUCE BIG IMPROVEMENTS.

In a study by Erik Hanushek, he compiled 276 estimates on class size effects from 59 studies and found that only 11% of them indicated positive effects on student performance. While Caroline Hoxby found that no relationship exists between class size and achievement.

16

TEACHER PREPARATION MATTERS LITTLE FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.

The National Bureau of Economic Research has shown that beginning teachers with more extensive clinical training (like internships or certification programs) produce higher student achievement gains and retain their positions longer.

It has also been observed that a child who was taught by a decidedly effective teacher experienced academic benefits up to 2 years later.

17

MOST TEACHERS DO NOT CARE.

If performance is low, it doesn't mean that teachers do not care. Teachers become teachers because they do care. They do their best to help students succeed despite difficulties.

77%

Students who feel their teachers expect them to be successful.

65%

Students who think their teacher is a positive role model.

70%

Students who think their teachers think they can be successful.

CREDENTIALS AND EXPERIENCE DON'T MATTER. When educators teach the same subjects and grade levels consistently, especially during their first 5 years of teaching, it befits them to not only be experts in their field but to have experience relating their subject to others.

*An analysis of high schools in California found that schools whose dropout rates were in the top 10% had 50% more new teachers than schools in the lowest 10%.

DROP OUT RATE
NUMBER OF NEW TEACHERS

VOCABULARY NOTES

competitiveness – the ability to compete successfully;

grader – a pupil of a specified grade in a school;

underprivileged student – lacking the rights and advantages of other students;

tutoring – teaching and supervision of assigned students by a teacher at school;

to ace a test – achieve high marks in a test or exam;

to transfer – enroll in a different school or college;

parental guidance – parents' counselling or advice on educational, vocational, or psychological matters;

academic benefits – advantages in studies;

performance – any accomplishment;

**educator** - a person who provides instruction or education; a teacher.

III. Video Time

Watch the video "Changing Education Paradigms" and tell what according to the speaker is wrong with the existing education paradigms? How can they be improved? What is divergent thinking? How important is it for education and why? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U

Below are [10 quotes](#) that will have you reconsidering everything you thought you knew about school. Which of them do you agree/disagree with? Give you reasoning. Which of them could be best applicable to describe your personal school experience and why?

1. "I have never let schooling interfere with my education" – Mark Twain

This popular Twain-ism refers to "education" more as your lifelong process of figuring out how to navigate the world. School is a small part of that, and in many ways can interfere with learning: imposing strict boundaries, oversimplifying otherwise interesting and complex topics, and more generally making "education" into regimented work rather than creative discovery.
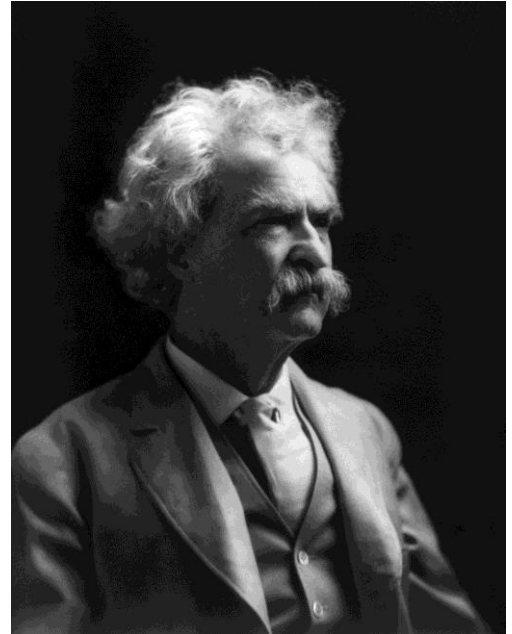
Action: Think about your coursework in the context of your life's learning arc: how does it fit in and how can you take control and select what you want or need to learn along the way?

2. "The one real object of education is to leave a person in the condition of continually asking questions." – Bishop Mandell Creighton

The point isn't to get the answer, the point is to develop understanding. Unlike what most formal learning institutions preach, the best way to do that is – you guessed it – to find the right questions to ask. (This is what Socrates knew 2,000+ years ago.) Only then should you pursue an answer.

Action: Stop thinking, "How do I find the answer?" and start thinking "What questions should I be asking?"

3. "In my whole life, I have known no wise people (over a broad subject matter area) who didn't read all the time – none, zero." – Charlie Munger

Munger attributes much of his (and Berkshire Hathaway's) investing success to accumulating as many "mental models" as possible in diverse fields, by reading widely and continuously. And like Twain believed, he thoroughly embodies learning as a life-long journey. The classroom is just society's overly-formalized attempt at capturing that process.
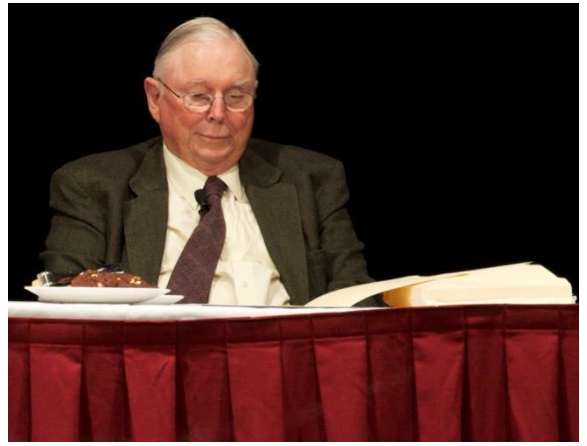
Action: Don't limit yourself to what you're learning in class. Read widely and often, and it will pay off across the board.

4. "You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him discover it in himself." – Galileo

No one can insert knowledge into your brain, they can only guide and point you in the right direction. In this sense, teachers aren't really "teaching" you anything, they're only there to attempt to facilitate your own self-discovery.

Action: Don't rely on someone else to spoon-feed you the answer and put the knowledge in your head; only you can do that. *Side benefit:* most teachers actually have no clue what they're doing, so the more you take control of your own learning future, the further ahead you'll jump.

5. "Slow down and remember this: Most things make no difference. Being busy is a form of mental laziness — lazy thinking and indiscriminate action." – Tim Ferriss

Your textbook is only important if it gives you insights that help you score well on the test.

Your homework is only important if it solidifies your knowledge.

Highlighting printouts of lecture slides is *never* important.

So take it from the master of effective learning, and stop fooling yourself into thinking you're being productive, when really you're just filling your time with "studying" because that's what everyone says you should do.

Action: Question what you spend your study time on – and make sure it lines up with what will get you to understand the material and maximize your grade in the course. *Hint:* past exams and the grading breakdown on the syllabus should be the first place to start.

6. "I'm skeptical of a lot of what falls under the rubric of education…. People are on these tracks. They are getting these credentials and it's very unclear how viable they are in many cases." – Peter Thiel

Thiel, famous for funding promising high-schoolers and early college students *not* to go to college with his Thiel Fellowship program, invites you to step back and think about why you're in school. Despite your parents' insistence, don't get a degree just because you think you like the subject or think you need it to "get a job."

Action: Consider the usefulness and applicability of your degree program. And, after careful reflection, if it doesn't make sense, don't be afraid to get out or switch to something better.

7. "Some people will never learn anything for this reason: because they understood everything too soon." – Alexander Pope

It's uncomfortable to hold an un-answered question in your head for too long, but it's a critical skill for learning.

A typical student will try to grab onto whatever they can grasp early, and then pat themselves on the back and move on.

A smart student will allow themselves to be confused,

and work over-time to integrate a new concept with their previous knowledge, eventually developing a much deeper and nuanced understanding of the topic.

Action: When you hear something new, wait 24 hours to form an opinion about it – let it simmer and mix with everything else you know first.

8. "If something makes logical sense, if it's connected to what you already know, you'll rarely have to memorize it…" – Adam Robinson


By continually building a framework for understanding the material and consolidating your notes, the information becomes cemented in your long-term memory, with the added benefit of being able to handle novel or complex test questions.

How much better does that sound than slogging through a 1,000+ page textbook trying to re-read the same explanation, hoping it sinks in?

Action: Put away the flash cards, and start making connections to the mental frameworks you already have by practicing active learning and solving problems from scratch.

9. "The shrewd guess, the fertile hypothesis, the courageous leap to a tentative conclusion – these are the most valuable coin of the thinker at work. But in most schools guessing is heavily penalized and is somehow associated with laziness." – Jerome Seymour Bruner

Guessing is actually a sophisticated art that activates your brain and helps to solidify new information. It provides the initial point for a feedback loop that allows you to see if your final solution makes sense,

and adjust your intuition to better fit the answer if your guess was off.
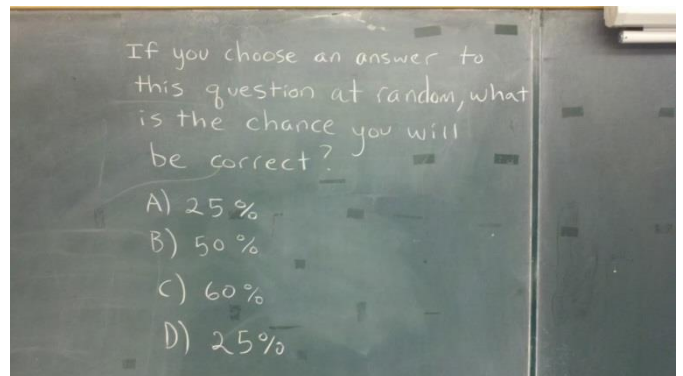
Action: On your next homework assignment, go through and write down a guess for each question before you go through and try to solve it – then check that guess against your final answers.

10. "Study hard what interests you the most in the most undisciplined, irreverent and original manner possible." – Richard P. Feynman

If you have passion for something, and make time to focus on it, you'll find it almost effortless to learn it deeply. Learning in your own unique way also personalizes the information, and makes it easier to pull it out of your memory when you really need it.

Action: Ask yourself "what am I most interested in" and write down 10 different ways you could learn about it more deeply.

VOCABULARY NOTES

schooling – education that children receive at school;

lifelong – lasting or remaining in a particular state throughout a person's life;

coursework – written or practical work done by a student during a course of study, usually assessed in order to count towards a final mark or grade;

to pursue – continue to investigate or explore (an idea or argument);

subject matter – the topic dealt with or the subject represented in a debate, exposition, or work of art;

to accumulate – gather; build up;

diverse – very different;

classroom – a room in which a class of pupils or students is taught;

to facilitate – make (an action or process) easy or easier;

to spoon-feed – provide (someone) with so much help or information that they do not need to think for themselves;

textbook – a book used as a standard work for the study of a particular subject;

homework – schoolwork that a pupil is required to do at home;

to solidify knowledge – make stronger, reinforce what is known;

to line up with – agree with, fit into;

syllabus (syllabi) – an outline of a course of studies;

credentials – previous achievements, training, and general background, which indicate that they are qualified to do something;

viable – capable of working successfully; feasible;

subject – a branch of knowledge studied or taught in a school, college, or university;

slogging – working hard over a period of time;

from scratch – from the very beginning, especially without making use of or relying on any previous work for assistance;

shrewd – having or showing sharp powers of judgment; astute;

fertile – producing many new and inventive ideas

tentative – done without confidence; hesitant

sophisticated – aware of and able to interpret complex issues; subtle;

feedback – information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc., used as a basis for improvement;

assignment – a task or piece of work allocated to someone as part of a job or course of study

undisciplined – lacking in discipline; uncontrolled in behavior or manner.

IV. Working together

Work in groups. Act out a dialogue discussing the most acute problems and challenges of present-day schools and possible solutions to them. You can take up the role of a teacher, an expert in education, a parent, a pupil, or anyone else.

V. Did you know?

➢ A fair number of kids switch schools at some point in their life not counting the normal progression from elementary to middle school and middle to highschool. In fact from age 6-11, over 26% switch schools, and ages 12-17 42% switch school.

➢ 67% of kids like school.

➢ In Chile, summer vacation lasts from mid-December to early March, meaning Chilean children are off for about 12 weeks. And in Ethiopia, vacation is 12 to 15 weeks, depending on the school.

➢ Didaskaleinophobia is the fear of going to school. Yes, it actually exists, and 2.4% of school-aged children are considered to have it, on an international level.

➢ The average classroom pencil can write approximately 45,000 words (or draw a line that is 56 kilometers long).

➢ Approximately 480,000 yellow school buses carry 25 million US children to and from school every weekday.

Choose any of the statements above as a topic for an oral mini-presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support your claims.

Unit 8. Students

Gen Z & What does it mean in your classroom?

by *Sarah Fudin*

Generation Z, the Internet Generation, Digital Natives — these are a few of the names used to describe children born between the mid 1990s and the present. They grew up with computers and the World Wide Web, and they're comfortable with all kinds of technology, from smart phones to MP3 players to iPads. Most of them conduct their social lives via texting and social media, and spend more time watching YouTube then network television.

The oldest members of Gen Z are now in high school and college. Being part of the most technologically advanced generation in history has provided them with some distinct advantages. They have a positive attitude towards technology and are not afraid to try new things. Because they're comfortable exploring the Internet, they're more connected to the world than previous generations. When they're curious about a subject, they'll often research it online. They know more about other cultures and are often more tolerant of cultural differences.

One of the most striking characteristics of Gen Z is their ability to multitask. In 2006, TIME called them genM, recognizing their ability to simultaneously talk, listen to music, text, browse the Internet and (sometimes) do homework. They believe they can do it all at the same time, but many mental health experts disagree. The California Teachers Association reports that John Raley of Harvard Medical School has coined the term "acquired attention deficit disorder" to describe the changes to the brain that are being induced by Gen Z's use of technology, and there does seem to be some consensus among teachers that the attention span of this generation is more limited compared to previous ones.

In addition to attention issues, an over-dependence on technology has brought some other disadvantages to the digital natives of Gen Z. Many teachers find that they expect instant results and constant feedback. They have access to more information than at any other time in history, but they often don't know how to judge the reliability of information (as evidenced by the popularity of Wikipedia as a research tool). They put too much value on opinion and not enough on facts.

A side effect of technology for many members of Gen Z is that it has caused them to spend more time indoors than previous generations. Parents who want to protect their children often encourage this behavior, but it can lead to troubling results. Currently, one-third of American children are overweight and one-fifth are obese due in part to technology usage replacing physical activity.

Given the opportunities and challenges associated with technology, it may seem daunting to adapt the classroom for Gen Z. Here are a few suggestions for leveraging this generation's affinity for technology and helping them to overcome its setbacks:

- Use technology's immediate feedback to motivate students and increase their learning confidence. Computer-based educational games and independent projects can give a broad range of students feelings of empowerment and accomplishment.

- Engage students by planning projects and activities that allow them to collaborate online. Blogging, podcasting and digital media are some of the new tools that allow students to connect with each other and with other students around the world.

- Take advantage of Gen Z's increased visual learning ability by enhancing lectures with film, PowerPoint presentations and digital images.

- Help students develop critical thinking and problem solving skills, especially in their use of technology. Provide instruction on how to find reliable and reputable sources when searching online.

- Train students to focus their attention on a single task that has depth and complexity. Present challenges that require concentrated effort for success.

- Encourage students to set aside time for outdoor physical activity. Instead of just talking about nature and looking at pictures, plan field trips that allow students to experience nature firsthand.

VOCABULARY NOTES

Gen Z (Generation Z, the Internet Generation, Digital Natives) – a name used for people born after the Millennial Generation;

high school – a secondary school from grade 7 to grade 12;

distinct – recognizably different in nature from something else of a similar type;

attitude – a settled way of thinking or feeling about something;

curious (about) – eager to know or learn something;

tolerant (of) – showing willingness to allow the existence of opinions or behaviour that one does not necessarily agree with

to multitask – deal with more than one task at the same time;

simultaneously – at the same time;

to acquire – learn or develop (a skill, habit, or quality);

attention deficit disorder – any of a range of behavioral disorders occurring primarily in children, including such symptoms as poor concentration, hyperactivity, and learning difficulties;

consensus – a general agreement;

attention span – the length of time for which a person is able to concentrate on a particular activity or subject;

feedback – information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc., used as a basis for improvement;

to encourage – give support and advice to (someone) so that they will do or continue to do something;

daunting – seeming difficult to deal with in prospect; intimidating;

to adapt – become adjusted to new conditions;

to leverage – use (something) to maximum advantage;

affinity – a natural liking for and understanding of someone or something

setback – an event that delays your progress or reverses some of the progress that you have made;

empowerment – the giving of an ability; enablement or permission;

accomplishment – something that has been achieved successfully;

to collaborate – work jointly on an activity or project

blogging – adding new material to or regularly updating a personal website or web page on which an individual records opinions, links to other sites, etc. on a regular basis;

podcasting – making (a multimedia digital file) available on the Internet for downloading to a portable media player, computer, etc. to enhance;

critical thinking – the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment;

problem solving – the process of finding solutions to difficult or complex issues.

instruction – teaching; education;

to focus (on) – pay particular attention to;

to set aside –to reserve for a special purpose; put to one side; to discard, dismiss, or quash;

field trip – a trip made by students or research workers to study something at first hand;

to experience – encounter or undergo (an event or occurrence);

firsthand – from the original source or personal experience; direct.

EXERCISES

1. Questions

1. How does your real life correlate with your virtual one(s) on the Web?

2. How much do you feel a Gen Z in view of the characteristics they allegedly have?

3. What is your opinion about multitasking and related attention deficit and their association with the Gen Z?

4. What is your attitude to people who make their voluntary donations to various popular, useful, free and ad-free resources such as Wikipedia or freeware developers?

5. When considering an item to buy, how much do you rely upon customers' feedback and comments?

6. What is your opinion about overweight and obesity as presumed side effects of technology?

7. What kind of outdoor physical activity do you believe you excel in as a translator/teacher?

8. Could you provide your (grand) parents with instructions on how to find reliable sources when searching online?

9. What do you think about translating movies or articles for online audience?

10. How does your affinity for technology contribute to your success as a student?

2. Panel discussion

Below are some myths people believe to be true about gifted kids. Read the crossheadings that follow and refute the statements by providing some reasoning and evidence. Skim the reasoning under each heading to compare it to your own. How many of these myths have hindered you, your child, and/or your school in the pursuit of a challenging education for advanced students?

Myth:	**Gifted Students Don't Need Help; They'll Do Fine On Their Own**
Truth:	Would you send a star athlete to train for the Olympics without a coach? Gifted students need guidance from well-trained teachers who challenge and support them in order to fully develop their abilities. Many gifted students may be so far ahead of their same-age peers that they know more than half of the grade-level curriculum before the school year begins. Their resulting boredom and frustration can lead to low achievement, despondency, or unhealthy work habits. The role of the teacher is crucial for spotting and nurturing talents in school.

Myth:	**Teachers Challenge All The Students, So Gifted Kids Will Be Fine In The Regular Classroom**
Truth:	Although teachers try to challenge all students they are frequently unfamiliar with the needs of gifted children and do not know how to best serve them in the classroom. A national study conducted by the Fordham Institute found that 58% of teachers have received no professional development focused on teaching academically advanced students in the past few years and 73% of teachers agreed that "Too often, the brightest students are bored and under-challenged in school – we're not giving them a sufficient chance to thrive. This report confirms what many families have known: not all teachers are able to recognize and support gifted learners.
Myth:	**Gifted Students Make Everyone Else In The Class Smarter By Providing A Role Model Or A Challenge**
Truth:	Average or below-average students do not look to the gifted students in the class as role models. Watching or relying on someone who is expected to succeed does little to increase a struggling student's sense of self-confidence. Similarly, gifted students benefit from classroom interactions with peers at similar performance levels and become bored, frustrated, and unmotivated when placed in classrooms with low or average-ability students.
Myth:	**All Children Are Gifted**
Truth:	All children have strengths and positive attributes, but not all children are gifted in the educational sense of the word. The label "gifted" in a school setting means that when compared to others his or her age or grade, a child has an advanced capacity to learn and apply what is learned in one or more subject areas, or in the performing or fine arts. This advanced capacity requires modifications to the regular curriculum to ensure these children are challenged and learn new material. Gifted does not connote good or better; it is a term that allows students to be identified for services that meet their unique learning needs.

Myth:	**Acceleration Placement Options Are Socially Harmful For Gifted Students**
Truth:	Academically gifted students often feel bored or out of place with their age peers and naturally gravitate towards older students who are more similar as "intellectual peers." Studies have shown that many students are happier with older students who share their interest than they are with children the same age. Therefore, acceleration placement options such as early entrance to Kindergarten, grade skipping, or early exit should be considered for these students.
Myth:	**Gifted Education Programs Are Elitist**
Truth:	Gifted education programs are meant to help all high-ability students. Gifted learners are found in all cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic groups. However, many of these students are denied the opportunity to maximize their potential because of the way in which programs and services are funded, and/or flawed identification practices. For example, reliance on a single test score for gifted education services may exclude selection of students with different cultural experiences and opportunities. Additionally, with no federal money and few states providing an adequate funding stream, most gifted education programs and services are dependent solely on local funds and parent demand. This means that in spite of the need, often only higher-income school districts are able to provide services, giving the appearance of elitism.
Myth:	**That Student Can't Be Gifted, He Is Receiving Poor Grades**
Truth:	Underachievement describes a discrepancy between a student's performance and his actual ability. The roots of this problem differ, based on each child's experiences. Gifted students may become bored or frustrated in an unchallenging classroom situation causing them to lose interest, learn bad study habits, or distrust the school environment. Other students may mask their abilities to try to fit in socially with their same-

	age peers and still others may have a learning disability that masks their giftedness. No matter the cause, it is imperative that a caring and perceptive adult help gifted learners break the cycle of underachievement in order to achieve their full potential.
Myth:	**Gifted Students Are Happy, Popular, And Well Adjusted In School**
Truth:	Many gifted students flourish in their community and school environment. However, some gifted children differ in terms of their emotional and moral intensity, sensitivity to expectations and feelings, perfectionism, and deep concerns about societal problems. Others do not share interests with their classmates, resulting in isolation or being labeled unfavorably as a "nerd." Because of these difficulties, the school experience is one to be endured rather than celebrated.
Myth:	**This Child Can't Be Gifted, He Has A Disability**
Truth:	Truth: Some gifted students also have learning or other disabilities. These "twice-exceptional" students often go undetected in regular classrooms because their disability and gifts mask each other, making them appear "average." Other twice-exceptional students are identified as having a learning disability and as a result, are not considered for gifted services. In both cases, it is important to focus on the students' abilities and allow them to have challenging curricula in addition to receiving help for their learning disability.
Myth:	**Our District Has A Gifted And Talented Program: We Have AP Courses**
Truth:	Truth: While AP classes offer rigorous, advanced coursework, they are not a gifted education program. The AP program is designed as college-level classes taught by high school teachers for students willing to work hard. The program is limited in its service to gifted and talented students in two major areas: First AP is limited by the subjects offered, which in most districts is only a small handful. Second it is limited in that, typically, it is offered only in high school and is generally available only for 11th and

	12th grade students. The College Board acknowledges that AP courses are for any student who is academically prepared and motivated to take a college-level course.
Myth:	**Gifted Education Requires An Abundance Of Resources**
Truth:	Offering gifted education services does not need to break the bank. A fully developed gifted education program can look overwhelming in its scope and complexity. However, beginning a program requires little more than an acknowledgement by district and community personnel that gifted students need something different, a commitment to provide appropriate curriculum and instruction, and teacher training in identification and gifted education strategies.

VOCABULARY NOTES

guidance – help and advice;

peer – a person of the same age, status, or ability as another specified person;

grade – those students in a school or school system who are grouped by age or ability for teaching at a particular level for a year;

despondency – low spirits from loss of hope or courage; dejection;

crucial – of great importance;

to spot and nurture talents – recognize that (someone) has a particular talent and help or encourage the development thereof;

academically advanced – far on or ahead in one's studies;

under-challenged – presented with insufficient motivation and having to cope with monotonous and unstimulating conditions that do not provide the necessary satisfaction;

to thrive – grow or develop well or vigorously;

average-ability student – a student with standard skills and no exceptional talents.

underachievement – less-than-expected performance, especially in schoolwork;

giftedness – exceptional talent or natural ability.

III. Video Time

Watch the video the *21st Century Learner* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWsgbiqLOOM) and give your own definition of a learner in the 21st century. Read about the things you need as a learner to succeed. Think about how they are applicable in a classroom. Which of those features do you think you have/would like to have? Are there any other skills/traits you think are important for being a successful learner in the 21st century?

<center>

7 Things Smart Learners Do Differently

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<div align="right">

by *Piotr Nabielec*

</div>

All people were born with great gifts, talents and potential, including you. What makes a real difference in reaching your potential is the ability to be a smart learner. See what smart learners do differently and what they can teach us.

They always learn.

People often divide their time between learning and non-learning. Learning is usually much more focused, dedicated time. Even our education systems are built around that concept — first we learn for several years, and then we work. Smart learners do it differently. They use every occasion to learn something new — about the food they eat, the way things work, different cultures, different roles in the

same organization, history, and the people around them. The world is a great source of knowledge and skills, available 24/7, so they ask tons of questions and connect the dots.

They are good observers.

Walking or driving the same route hundreds of times does not guarantee that you will learn about all the buildings and other interesting things on the way. To do it, you have to look at the world with curiosity. Smart learners focus on the here and now, ready to observe the changes and the world surrounding them. They don't have to talk much; they will instead ask questions.

They make mistakes.

Most people have a great fear of failure. It seems better not to do something rather than make a mistake. Smart learners exchange the word "mistake" with "lesson." There is no better way to learn something than simply trying it, so experiment and observe. If one way didn't work, try another one. Of course, sometimes many lessons have to be taken before something is mastered. As Thomas Edison said, *"I have not failed 700 times. I have not failed once. I have succeeded in proving that those 700 ways will not work. When I have eliminated the ways that will not work, I will find the way that will work."*

They don't give up too early.

With great fear of failure comes giving up too early. Today, we are tempted to try new things just a few times and then resign. When we can't master something quickly, why bother? However, turn back time and imagine yourself as a child learning how to walk. How many times did you fall down in that process? Probably hundreds! Now you possess that great skill without thinking about it, but what would have happened if you had given up too early? Learning takes time and falling down often — smart learners understand that.

They connect with smart people.

The world is a big network of connections. Some of them are better quality than others, and your time on this planet is limited. Smart learners understand that they need high quality connections — people around them who will inspire them, shake

their worlds, and ask good and deep questions. We learn best when we are relaxed and have a real friend and mentor around.

They try new things.

To be able to learn, our brain needs stimulation and then a good rest. Just look at how a small child explores the world, looks at everything with curiosity, then tries to put the pieces together and checks the taste. Later, the child "sleeps like a baby!" Smart learners possess that spark of curiosity and often try something new. Take part in some workshops or online courses, watch TED, and meet new people. They do some things differently and it keeps them from being bored.

They don't think they are smart.

Smart learners don't talk much. The knowledge and skills they have are not merely to impress others, but comes from their inner passion. They are humble enough to acknowledge how much they don't know, and at the same time they feel good about and are energized by that. When they don't know they don't pretend to; they simply ask questions.

We all waste so much of our potential by not learning smart enough. Let us take the right lesson from smart learners. Your life will definitely be more creative, happy, relaxed and full of passion.

VOCABULARY NOTES

dedicated – devoted to a task or purpose;

concept – an idea or abstract principle;

curiosity – a strong desire to know or learn something;

to master – acquire complete knowledge or skill in (a subject, technique, or art);

mentor – an experienced and trusted adviser;

merely – just; only;

humble – having or showing a modest or low estimate of one's importance;

to acknowledge – accept or admit the existence or truth of something.

IV. Working together

Work in groups. Act out a dialogue discussing the most effective learning patters. You have recently discovered a new method of learning more efficiently and now

you are sharing your experience in it. It can be delivered in the format of a friendly chit-chat, a conference, an interview, etc.

V. Did you know?

- ➢ Our ability to learn by experience diminishes in direct proportion to the amount of time we spend sitting.
- ➢ We learn and remember 80 to 90 percent of what we do and say. In order to learn anything well, we need to talk about it with each other and do it a number of times.
- ➢ We learn and remember best when we are engaged and enjoying what we're doing.
- ➢ Gardening improves children's desire to learn and boosts their confidence.
- ➢ Young children learn about prejudice by instruction, older children by experience.
- ➢ Children who participate in laughing activities experience increase in memory retention.
- ➢ Daydreaming boosts brains.

Choose any of the statements above as a topic for an oral mini-presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support your claims.

VI. Write an op-ed about the challenges of being a school student today? Use the guidelines from Duke University's Office of News and Communications (http://newsoffice.duke.edu/duke_resources/oped) and Oregon State University (http://extension.oregonstate.edu/eesc/how-to/write-killer-op-ed-piece).

ХАРКІВСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ

імені В. Н. КАРАЗІНА

ФАКУЛЬТЕТ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ

Варенко Т. К.

WORLD AROUND US

навчально-методичний посібник
для студентів ІІІ курсу
факультету іноземних мов

Харків-2013

УДК 811.111(076)
ББК 81.2 Англ. – 923
В 18

Рецензенти:

Сергеєва Т. В. – доктор психологічних наук, професор, завідувач кафедри іноземних мов Харківського національного університету будівництва та архітектури;

Дудоладова В. О. – кандидат філологічних наук, доцент кафедри методики та практики викладання іноземної мови факультету іноземних мов Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна.

Рекомендовано до друку Вченою радою факультету іноземних мов Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна (протокол № 6 від «21» червня 2013 р.)

Варенко Т. К.
В 18   **«World Around Us»** :   навчально-методичний   посібник / Т. К. Варенко. – Х. : ХНУ імені В. Н. Каразіна, 2013. – 60 с.

Посібник розкриває такі аспекти суспільного життя як політика, економіка та технології і рекомендується для викладання усної практики при вивченні теми «Світ навколо нас» в межах дисципліни «Англійська мова» для студентів ІІІ курсу факультету іноземних мов Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна.

Мета посібника – вдосконалити комунікативні вміння студентів факультету іноземних мов, збагатити їх словниковий запас у межах зазначеної теми, сприяти розвитку їх кругозору та привчити критично мислити й оцінювати інформацію.

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ЗМІСТ

ВСТУП

Цей навчально-методичний посібник представляє собою комплекс завдань для формування та розвиток навичок усного мовлення англійською мовою при вивченні теми «Світ навколо нас», передбаченої програмою підготовки студентів III курсу факультету іноземних мов Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна у межах викладання аспекту усної практики. Традиційно тема «Світ навколо нас» охоплює такі аспекти суспільного життя, як політика, економіка і технології.

Матеріалами для формування завдань слугували автентичні англомовні тексти політичної, економічної і технічної тематичної спрямованості, запозичені з літературних творів сучасних авторів та експертних статей профільних фахівців у відповідних галузях, опублікованих у зарубіжних виданнях або доступних в електронних версіях авторитетних іноземних періодичних видань (див. список використаних джерел).

Головною відзнакою посібника є те, що при його складанні були критично переосмислені критерії відбору мовного матеріалу для змістовного наповнення комплексів вправ з формування і розвитку умінь і навичок усного мовлення з урахуванням актуальних тенденцій нинішньої епохи та сучасного стану наукової думки в предметній області нашого дослідження з метою створення комплексу вправ, відповідних сучасним умовам викладання іноземної мови на мовних факультетах вищих навчальних закладів. Також слід зазначити, що всі матеріали, використані при підготовці посібника, датовані в межах п'ятирічної давності, що в поєднанні з їх специфічної тематичною спрямованістю дозволяє їм відображати проблеми, питання та явища, актуальні для сучасного етапу розвитку суспільства. Крім того, комплекс вправ, що пропонується у цьому навчально-методичному посібнику, функціонально не обмежується формуванням і розвитком у студентів навичок і вмінь усного мовлення, але також всебічно сприяє розвитку їх кругозору, критичного мислення та бачення, переважно завдяки використанню у складі вправ пізнавальних спеціалізованих текстів, що мають практичну значущість, на відміну від розповсюдженої практики використання в навчальних цілях художніх текстів, які за своїм змістом практично не несуть у собі пізнавальної складової і в кращому випадку обмежуються лише естетичним задоволенням літературного смаку читача.

Запропонований комплекс складається з вправ на розвиток навичок і вмінь читання, говоріння, аудіювання та письма. Також у вправи включені тематичні аудіовізуальні записи мовлення англійською мовою у виконанні носіїв мови. Отже, запропонований комплекс вправ всебічно розвиває у студентів вміння та навички письма, говоріння, читання та аудіювання англійською мовою в рамках вивчення теми «Світ навколо нас».

UNIT 1. BUSINESS

Why people believe the best wins

By *Scott Berkun*

Fairy tales and hero stories follow similar patterns: good guys win, bad guys lose, and people who do the right thing get nice prizes. These rules are pleasant, easy to remember, and have been with us as long as we've had stories to tell. In some cultures, including America, these stories of "goodness wins" extend to intellectual goodness and the making of good things. Americans hold ingenuity to be one of the best kinds of goodness, spotlighting it and projecting it into our local history: Benjamin Franklin's political inventiveness; the innovative tactics of Minutemen in the Revolutionary War (which weren't that innovative); and the industrial genius of Whitney, Fulton, Edison, Ford, Carnegie, and Steve Jobs. By the simplest definition, heroes are the best at what they do.

Meritocracy – the ideal that the best do or should win – is a deeply held belief among Americans, and in part comprises the American Dream. Combined with the hero model (good guys win), there's a natural tendency to nudge the telling of history toward stories that fit both ideals and to whitewash, or ignore, those that don't. Whenever we don't know the full story of why someone or something won, the default assumptions are:

1. The victory was deserved: "Edison made the first light bulb."

2. The victory was heroic: "Gutenberg paved the way for the Internet."

Certainly most know that the best doesn't always win, but we don't go out of our way to uncover counterexamples either. We accept stories that fit the patterns we know, as they provide happy feelings and encourage hope for how life *should be*. Victors of the past who won with dubious ethics or for questionable reasons – like Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Achilles – are remembered not for their flaws or unpopularity in their own time, but as heroes of achievement. Their victories and benevolent contributions, truths that fit the mythology, are the most popular stories we tell about their lives. And should bad decisions be made, given enough time, the reasons for those judgments often fade, leaving only traditions of respect. Consider that the Liberty Bell, which cracked in half when first struck in 1753 and again

decades later – clearly not well made or heroic in any way – is now a worshiped artifact of American history. Or that Alfred Nobel, best known for founding the Nobel Peace Prize, made his fortune by inventing dynamite.

The American pantheon of fictional legends includes MacGyver, James Bond, Indiana Jones, John McClane (from the film *Die Hard*), and Captain Kirk, invincible heroes who defeat evil at overwhelming odds by using good ideas, guile, and a healthy serving of gratuitous violence. They have better ideas, so they win.

Applied to business, the myth that goodness wins is best captured in the famous saying, "If you build a better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to your door." It's sometimes paraphrased as "If you build it, they will come." Unfortunately, the quote is a misattribution to Ralph Waldo Emerson, a leading 19th-century intellectual. What he actually said was "If a man has good corn or wood, or boards, or pigs, to sell, or can make better chairs or knives, crucibles or church organs, than anybody else, you will find a broad hard-beaten road to his house, though it be in the woods." In 1889, seven years after Emerson's death, came the invention of the current standard of mousetraps. That same year Emerson was quoted as saying "If a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mousetrap than his neighbor..." The phrase has turned into a metaphor about the power of innovation, and is frequently taken literally, with more than 4,400 patents issued by the United States Patent and Trademark Office for new mousetraps, with thousands more unsuccessful applicants, making them the "most frequently invented device in U.S. history". Emerson had something other in mind than rallying would-be entrepreneurs to get in the innovation game. The phrase was meant to be poetic, not instructional, and he'd be disappointed at how many people have taken his words literally.

The phrase has been used as the entrepreneur's motto, misguiding millions into entertaining the notion that a sufficiently good idea will sell itself. Even the (false) proverbial mousetrap, as historian John H. Lienhard notes, has about 400 patents for new designs filed annually in the U.S., and we can be certain that no one is beating down their doors. More than 4,000 mousetrap patents exist, yet only around 20 ever became profitable products. These days, the best equivalent to the metaphoric mousetrap is "to build a better

web site," proven by 30,000 software patents and 1 million web sites created annually. Certainly not all of these efforts are motivated by wealth or wishful thinking, but many inventors still hope that the "If you build it, they will come" sentiment is alive and strong.

Lienhard, based on his study of innovations throughout history, challenges that faith:

Rarely if ever are the networks that surround an innovation in its earliest stages given the credit they are due... a better mousetrap, like anything else, will succeed only when those who envision the idea convince others to join in their new venture – as investors, suppliers, employees, retailers, customers, and even competitors.

The goodness or newness of an idea is only part of the system that determines which ideas win or lose. When we bemoan our favorite restaurant going out of business ("but they make the best cannelloni!") or why our favorite band can't sell albums ("they have the best lyrics!"), we're focusing on the small part of the picture that affects us personally, which is only one factor in the environment determining its fate. These environmental, or secondary, factors have as much influence as the quality of the idea, the talent, or the innovation itself.

VOCABULARY NOTES

ingenuity – the quality of being clever, original, and inventive;

to spotlight – direct attention to, focus attention on;

inventiveness – the quality of being inventive; creativity;

minuteman – a member of a class of militiamen of the American revolutionary period who volunteered to be ready for service at a minute's notice;

to nudge – touch or push (something) gently or gradually;

mousetrap – a trap for catching and usually killing mice;

to pave the way for – create the circumstances to enable (something) to happen or be done;

counterexample – an example or fact that is inconsistent with a hypothesis and may be used in argument against it;

dubious – not to be relied upon; suspect; not completely honest, safe, or reliable;

flaw – (*here*) a fault or weakness in a person's character;

benevolent – doing good or giving aid to others, rather than making profit;

pantheon – (*here*) a group of particularly respected, famous, or important people;

guile – the quality of being good at deceiving people in a clever way;

gratuitous – (*here*) without cause; unjustified;

to beat a path to someone's door – (of a large number of people) hasten to make contact with someone regarded as interesting or inspiring, or in association with whom one stands to profit;

crucible – a ceramic or metal container in which metals or other substances may be melted or subjected to very high temperatures;

motto – a short sentence or phrase chosen as encapsulating the beliefs or ideals guiding an individual, family, or institution;

wishful thinking – an erroneous belief that one's wishes are in accordance with reality;

sentiment – (*here*) general feeling or opinion;

envision – imagine as a future possibility; visualize;

venture – a project or activity which is new, exciting, and difficult because it involves the risk of failure; a business enterprise involving considerable risk;

investor – a person or organization that allocates capital with the expectation of a financial return;

supplier – a person or organization that sells or supplies something such as goods or equipment to customers;

employee – a person who is paid to work for an organization or for another person;

retailer – a person or business that sells goods to the public;

customer – a person or organization that buys goods or services from a store or business;

competitor – (*here*) an organization or country that is engaged in commercial or economic competition with others;

to bemoan – express discontent or sorrow over (something);

cannelloni – an Italian dish, rolls of pasta stuffed with a meat or vegetable mixture and cooked in a cheese sauce.

EXERCISES

I. Questions

1. What is your national pantheon of fictional legends and heroes?
2. Can you cite any examples or counterexamples of ingenuity from your history?
3. In your opinion, which qualities are held for the best kinds of goodness in your country?
4. What is the motto of your university? What is or could be your personal one?
5. Have you ever envisioned creating your own "better mousetrap" or giving the world something original that would make you part of the pantheon?
6. Are you interested in running your own business or do you prefer to be an employee? Explain your choice setting forth your pros and cons.
7. Based on your personal experience, do you believe the most commercially successful products are the best of a kind or it is all about good marketing?
8. Are you aware of tricks retailers use to make you spend money?
9. In your opinion, what qualities should define and distinguish the best product?
10. If it is the best, why it is so ephemeral?

II. Panel discussion

The authors of the texts below try to unveil some business tricks and practices manufacturers and retailers use to make consumers spend more and buy more often, but we know that to err is human and so is to exaggerate. Choose any of the following topics to discuss pros and cons of the authors' ideas based on your own knowledge of the matter and/or personal experience.

The Ways Supermarkets Trick You into Spending More Money

By *Gus Lubin*

There's a reason why your mother told you to make a grocery list and stick to it. Every part of the supermarket from parking lot to checkout counter is designed to make you spend more money and buy more food than you need. Customers may go to the store for milk and come away with a pint of ice cream (it was on sale), a fresh baguette (it smelled so good), a bag of chips

and sauce (for fun), a few cans of soup (while you're here) and a magazine (Jennifer is dating who?!). Altogether the supermarket is retail nirvana.

1. We'll start with the shopping cart. This 1938 invention was designed to let customers make larger purchases more easily.

2. Most supermarkets put high margin departments like floral and fresh baked goods near the front door, so you encounter them when your cart is empty and your spirits are high.

3. Another reason to start with flowers and baked goods is the smell, which activates your salivary glands and makes you more likely to make impulse purchases. Likewise these pleasant departments put you in a good mood and make you more willing to spend.

4. Supermarkets hide dairy products and other essentials on the back wall so that you have to go through the whole store to get to them.

5. Once customers start walking through the 'racetrack' aisles, they are conditioned to walk up and down each aisle without deviating.

6. Most stores move customers from right to left. Due to this flow and the practice of driving on the right side of the road, the items you are most likely to buy tend to be on the right hand of the aisle.

7. The items the store really wants you to buy are at eye level. In the cereal aisle, for instance, bulk cereal is placed at the bottom. Healthy cereal is placed at the top. Expensive brand name cereal goes right at eye level. Favored items are also placed at the end of aisles.

8. And then there's kid eye level. This is where you'll find sugary cereal and other items a kid will grab and beg his parents to buy.

9. Sample stations and other displays slow you down while exposing you to new products.

10. Size matters. In crowded stores people spend less time shopping, do less impulse shopping, purchase fewer items, are less social and more nervous. Notably Asians are more tolerant of crowding, while the British are the least tolerant.

11. Warm colors attract people to a store. Cool colors encourage more contemplation and higher sales. We suggest brick exterior and cool blue interior.

12. Hear that music? Studies have shown that slow music makes people take their time and spend more money. Loud music makes them move through the store quickly without affecting sales. And classical music leads people to buy more expensive merchandise.

13. The most profitable area of the store is the checkout line. This is where after a few minutes in line you'll succumb to the temptation of the candy rack and a magazine you've been leafing through.

14. Time to present your Valued Shopper Card. While giving you the occasional deal, this card keeps you as a regular customer for the store. It also provides valuable tracking data.

VOCABULARY NOTES

grocery list – a shopping list of purchases to be made in a grocery store;

parking lot – an area or building reserved for parking cars;

checkout counter – a point at which goods are paid for in a supermarket;

on sale – (*N. Amer.*) offered for purchase at a reduced price;

nirvana – (*here*) a state of complete happiness and peace;

margin – (*here*) a profit margin, the difference between the selling price of a product and the cost of producing and marketing it;

salivary glands – the glands that produce saliva in the mouth;

dairy products – milk products;

aisle – a passage between cabinets and shelves of goods in a supermarket;

checkout line – a queue of people waiting to pay for purchases;

deal – (*here*) an attractive price on a commodity for a purchaser; a bargain.

III. Video Time

Watch the video "Don't Fall for These Supermarket Tricks!" at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oldtrx8XqxI).
Have you ever fallen for any of the supermarket tricks? Share your impressions from the experience.

Watch the following videos on obsolescence:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2KLyYKJGk0
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69YgDoJocZk
Dwell on the matter tackled in the videos. Have you ever fallen prey to perceived or planned obsolescence? Give examples from your personal experience. Decide if obsolescence is a good/bad thing in your opinion? Why?

Look through the information below on "The Ways Products Are Designed To Fail". Have you ever become victim to one or more of them? Share the experience.

# The Ways Products Are Designed To Fail

By *Elias Chaves*

The consumer electronics market changes tremendously fast. New gadgets are introduced every week and the producers need to make sure their customers buy them accordingly.

Marketers have found ways to convince us to buy a new gadget even though our old gadget is fully or mostly functional. Profit is their motivation: shorter times between sales equal more sales overall. Selling a phone to a single customer every 18 months is more profitable than only selling him one every ten years. Therefore, producers are interested in shortening the time between sales.

The process of becoming out of use, discarded, obsolete is called obsolescence. To sell more, producers are interested in speeding up this process. It's called planned obsolescence when products are deliberately designed to fail after a certain time.

Planned obsolescence happens where engineering meets capitalism. Products aren't designed to last; they're designed for the dump. In this situation, engineers don't aim to create the best possible machine. They aim for maximum profit through steady sales.

1. Broken display glass
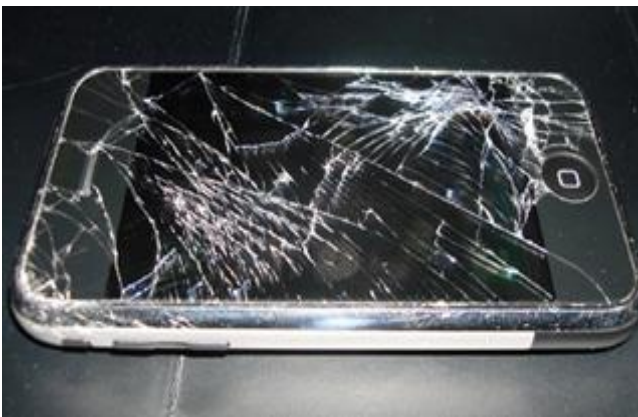
Mobile phones fall down easily. But broken display glass and all damages from improper handling are not covered by the manufacturer's warranty. The dropper is reminded of his clumsiness every time he looks at the display (often the screen still works and only the glass is damaged). Manufacturers also use glass on the backside of their phones, doubling the chances of fracture. A consumer will replace his gadget much sooner when the glass is broken than when it's not.

2. Unavailable spare parts

Imagine that after serving you a long time, a minor but crucial part of your device has broken, but the rest of the device works fine. The customer service kindly tells you that the required spare part isn't available anymore and that the service for that device has been discontinued. What can you do? Buy a new one!

The producer generally makes more profit selling new devices than spare parts. Producers have found a solution to this dilemma: totally overprice spare parts. See next item.

3. Massive repair costs

Repair costs of electronics are so high that often it isn't worth getting them repaired. The best option is replacement. Repair companies also generally charge fees for cost estimates. That adds to the notion that customers don't even consider repairing their electronic gadgets.

You can try to repair the gadget yourself; however, many consumer electronics nowadays are very difficult to service, more difficult than a decade ago. Some gadgets have tamper-proof screws that require special screwdrivers just to open them, which add to the repair costs.

Once opened, you might find out that the required spare part is no longer available.

4. Planned life span

Some gadgets have a preset life time. When the time's up, they're out of use.

The digital wine thermometer has a built-in battery that can't be replaced. According to the manual, the battery is good for about 2000 hours. The manual did not explicitly instruct the user to trash the device once the battery has died – but that's implied.

5. Wear and tear

Our valued gadgets will never look as good as when they came out of the box. Over time, scratches appear, colors fade, abrasions occur, plating falls off… sooner or later they're worn-out.

The customer will replace his old and shabby gadgets sooner than those which look good. Therefore producers try to design electronic gadgets in a way that they look brand new for a short time only – the first scratch appears very soon. Not including protective cases also helps the process.

6. Incompatibility

The new thing doesn't work with the old thing. I'll replace the old thing! Marketers expect that kind of customer reaction when incompatibility is used.

Incompatibilities open a variety of sales opportunities like adapters, upgrades or full replacements. They make your life harder. Incompatibilities come in the form of incompatible device drivers, incompatible plugs, incompatible file formats and file systems, incompatible operating systems, incompatible hardware – you get the picture.

7. Popularity / Style Obsolescence

Style obsolescence happens when the gadget works totally fine and the only flaw is that it isn't popular anymore. The customer who doesn't want to be unpopular will buy a stylish new gadget. That's because having popular gadgets will make a customer feel popular.

Marketers employing style obsolescence are able to set new trends (so customers can buy more popular gadgets) and kill old trends (so customers notice that their gadget is outmoded and therefore consider getting a newer one).

8. Warranty procedure

The receipt is the most important element in case of a malfunction. Without it, your defective gadget is most likely e-waste. One must keep the receipt and find it when needed.

Even with a valid receipt it is time-consuming and bothersome to get to the store to claim the warranty.

The less value a gadget has, the less likely a customer will claim the warranty for it when it malfunctions; it's so much easier to dump it. Customers just buy a new gadget and leave out the warranty procedure. Many don't even bother to keep the receipt in the first place. After all, the newest gadget is waiting in the shelves, ready for sale.

VOCABULARY NOTES

gadget – a small mechanical device or tool, esp. an ingenious or novel one;
producer – a person, company, or country that makes, grows, or supplies goods or commodities for sale;
marketer – a person employed in marketing;
obsolete – out of date; unfashionable or outmoded;

obsolescence – loss of value of equipment due to changes in techniques or tastes;

deliberately – consciously and intentionally; on purpose;

dump – a site for depositing garbage;

spare parts – parts that you can buy separately to replace old or broken parts in a piece of equipment;

to discontinue – cease doing or providing (something), typically something provided on a regular basis;

to overprice – charge too high a price for;

cost estimate – an approximation of the probable cost of a product, program, operation or project, computed on the basis of available information;

tamper-proof – made so that it cannot be interfered with or changed;

life span – the period of time during which a human being, animal, machine, etc., may be expected to live or function under normal conditions;

wear and tear – damage, depreciation, or loss resulting from ordinary use;

abrasion – (*here*) an area damaged by scraping or wearing away;

plating – (*here*) a thin coating of gold, silver, or other metal;

shabby – in poor condition through long or hard use or lack of care;

therefore – for that reason; consequently;

brand new – completely new;

incompatibility – (*here*) impossibility of being used or functioning in combination;

adapter – a device for connecting pieces of equipment that cannot be connected directly;

to upgrade – raise (something) to a higher standard, in particular improve (equipment or machinery) by adding or replacing components;

hardware – (*here*) the electronic and mechanical parts of a computer system;

to get the picture – (*informal*) understand a situation;

warranty – a written guarantee, issued to the purchaser of an article by its manufacturer, promising to repair or replace it if necessary within a specified period of time;

receipt – a piece of paper that you are given when you buy something in a shop, which shows when you bought it and how much you paid;

in the first place – (*informal*) (not) at all.

IV. Working together

1. Work in pairs. Act out a dialogue where you own a local supermarket chain in strong competition with other retailers in your city and your partner is a marketer you have hired to promote your sales. The marketer is trying to do so through elaborating an optimum bonus plan for shopper discount cards your stores offer to your customers and suggesting various options, in particular, regarding birthday bonuses. For example, a customer born on September 29, 1999 may be offered (0+9+2+9+1+9+9+9) 48 free items you consider appropriate for a birthday or a 48% discount for every purchase made at your supermarket once a year on the same date. If the marketer is unable to suggest any valuable idea, he or she is fired. Otherwise, you write down every suggested idea you like. When finished, compare and discuss the bonus plans created and choose the winner. Consider using the words and word combinations given below.

customer loyalty, social engagement, marketing solution, supermarket theft, bonus points, accumulation of bonuses, discount percentage, discount price, on sale, at reduced price, foods and goods, beauty products, free delivery, participate, attract, bonus program, complete a form, terms and conditions, happy birthday, customer satisfaction, profit on sales, publicity, positive word of mouth, reputation.

2. Work in pairs. Act out a dialogue where you are a parent and your partner is your kid who is strongly brainwashed into getting "the best phone" advertised everywhere and making proud some of your kid's schoolmates who already have it. You are trying to explain to your kid that no one has the best phone and it is just a marketing myth because technology products get obsolete and are developed every day. And even though "the best phone" is five times more expensive than your kid's mobile phone, it does not necessarily imply that it is five times better.

Compare the key features of the devices: making phone calls, sending messages and battery life. Cite your granny as an example of a reasonable consumer's behavior for she has been using her "granny phone" for seven years and is still happy with it. Or the rich people of the United Arab

Emirates whose greatest concern is just potable water that can cost more than gasoline there. When finished, compare and discuss the results of your conversations and summarize the conclusions you came to. Consider using the words and word combinations given below.

consumerism, behavior manipulation, natural resources, environmental issues, family budget, unneeded features, obsolescence, individual tastes, fashion/style, attempt to follow the fashion, power consumption, long/short battery life, mobile viruses, internet threats, money theft, privacy risks, malicious apps, durability, fragility, reliability, simple/sophisticated design, overpriced goods, marketing.

V. Did you know?

➢ The highest publicly reported amount of money paid for a domain name is $7.5 million. Paid for **business.com**

➢ In Hong Kong, delivery times are primarily influenced by traffic conditions on elevators. It often takes drivers longer to travel vertically than horizontally, as access to elevators is so congested during "high peak" hours. This is due to the number of people residing in high rises.

➢ The original name of Bank of America was Bank of Italy.

➢ It takes 12 bees their entire lifetime to make one tablespoon of honey.

➢ If the entire population of earth was reduced to exactly 100 people, 50% of the world's currency would be held by 6 people.

➢ Less than 1% of women in the world will ever wear a diamond that is one carat or more.

➢ McDonald's restaurant has over 1.5 million employees all over the world.

➢ More Monopoly money is printed yearly than real money throughout the world.

➢ Oil tycoon, John D. Rockefeller, was the world's first billionaire.

➢ The top 8 most developed countries all speak Germanic languages. Every such country is in the top 20.

➢ In most advertisements, including newspapers, the time displayed on a watch is 10:10.

➢ Every year some 50 million cars are added to the world's roads.

> ➢ If Wal-Mart was classified as a country, it would be the 24th most productive country in the world.

Choose any of the sentences above as a topic for your oral presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support or refute the information in the statements above.

VI. A story behind a common expression

Why do we say that someone who is fired gets the sack?

The ancient Romans didn't believe in mollycoddling convicted felons. Rehabilitation wasn't their style. Those convicted of parricide or other heinous murders were tied in a sack and dumped into the Tiber River, instantly solving any potential recidivism problem. The practice spread throughout many other European countries, and, as late as the nineteenth century, murderers in Turkey were tossed into the Bosporus in a sack. To get the sack, then, probably was used figuratively as a threat of any sort of punishment, such as losing one's job.

Another theory to explain how get the sack was recorded – as early as 1611 in France – is that it referred to craftsmen of the Middle Ages. Artisans carried their tools in sacks; while they worked, they handed the sacks to their employers. When a craftsman got the sack, it meant that his services no longer were required. He was left, literally, holding the bag.

And where does the phrase to get fired originate?

Clans of long ago that wanted to get rid of their unwanted people without killing them used to burn their houses down – hence the expression "to get fired."

Write an essay (300 words) on "Business and Etiquette".

VII. Puzzles & Riddles

1. Paul's height is six feet, he's an assistant at a butcher's shop, and wears size 9 shoes. What does he weigh?

2. If you have me, you want to share me. If you share me, you haven't got me. What am I?

3. A man is pushing his car along the road when he comes to a hotel. He shouts, "I'm bankrupt!" Why?

4. An Arab sheikh tells his two sons to race their camels to a distant city to see who will inherit his fortune. The one whose camel is slower wins. After wandering aimlessly for days, the brothers ask a wise man for guidance. Upon receiving the advice, they jump on the camels and race to the city as fast as they can. What did the wise man say to them?

5. A basket contains 5 apples. Do you know how to divide them among 5 kids so that each one has an apple and one apple stays in the basket?

6. Three people check into a hotel. They pay $30 to the manager and go to their room. The manager finds out that the room rate is $25 and gives the bellboy $5 to return to the guests. On the way to the room the bellboy reasons that $5 would be difficult to split among three people so he pockets $2 and gives $1 to each person. Now each person paid $10 and got back $1. So they paid $9 each, totaling $27. The bellboy has another $2, adding up to $29. Where is the remaining dollar?

7. What occurs once in every minute, twice in every moment, yet never in a thousand years?

8. Brothers and sisters I have none but this man's father is my father's son. Who is the man?

UNIT 2. POLITICS

Space, metrics, and Thomas Jefferson

By *Scott Berkun*

Politics: who benefits? There's often little malice in political workings – people are simply acting in self-interest. In any situation, just ask: who benefits if we choose X, and who benefits if we choose Y? You can predict how people in power will respond to any new idea if you first calculate its impact on them. The interests of those in power influenced the adoption, or rejection, of every innovation in history. Hunger, war, and poverty are tough problems, but it's in someone's interest for those problems to continue. Any innovation aimed at solving those problems must consider politics for it to succeed.

On September 23, 1999, NASA's $300 million Mars *Orbiter* fired its engines to slow it into orbit around Mars. Its 10-month journey complete, the craft flew silently above the Martian sky. It followed all its programmed instructions and was, as planned, turning behind Mars' dark side, disappearing for the first time. The command staff waited expectantly for the *Orbiter*, 10 years in the making, to reappear on the other side. Ten minutes later, well past its expected timeline, it had not arrived. Mission control searched the Mars atmosphere but there was nothing: the *Orbiter* was gone.

They'd learn later that the spacecraft entered the wrong orbit, flying too low. Instead of a trip around the planet, it approached at a deadly angle and was destroyed in the atmosphere. What took longer to understand was the cause. Somehow, somewhere, an equation failed to convert units from metric to English, and the $300 million *Orbiter* was sent on a path of certain destruction.

As is always the case, this failure had many causes. But one link in the chain of failures is the metric system itself: why does the world, and particularly the U.S., still use two different systems of measurement?

The metric system has been in use for over 200 years. It's used by 190 of the 193 nations on this planet, and it has many advantages over the English system. Cans of soda, like Coke or Pepsi, still list both English and Metric measurements (12 oz/354 ml) as an odd testament to a token compromise of

policy and a good idea ignored. Even the United Kingdom, the home of the English (foot/gallon/mile) system, moved on to metrics decades ago.

The American story of metrics, a tale of proposed and denied innovation, begins with Thomas Jefferson. While serving as Secretary of State, he innocently proposed to the U.S. Government that they replace the English measurement system. It's an odd mess of ad-hoc measurements from the Babylonian, Roman, and Saxon royalty, and it wasn't a system so much as a pile of half-baked traditions and blindly followed rules. The yard, for example, was defined by the length of the belts worn by kings. Endorsed by English monarchs through the ages, the system was adopted without question by the American colonies. But Jefferson was smart and a free thinker. He knew it wouldn't be hard to design a better system, and that it would be a great value to the new nation. He got to work and soon had a plan similar to what would be called metrics by France years later, and proposed this plan to Congress in 1789.

Congress didn't so much reject his plan as starve it to death: the idea was ignored, and time went on. Across the Atlantic, the metric system was ratified in France in 1793 and spread over the decades into Europe's dominant system. The opportunity for metrics to become dominant had much to do with the French Revolution, which ended just before metrics were ratified.

In 1866, the U.S. had no choice but to respond despite passing on the same idea 50 years earlier. Congress took action, but it was far from decisive. They drafted an act stating it was now legal – not required or encouraged, but legal – for people to use the metric system if they *chose*. Few Americans were moved, and the English measurements remained. There was little motivation for individual business owners to convert their equipment, no matter how much better Jefferson – or any objective thinker on the subject of measurement – thought of the matter. Several more anemic attempts were made to promote metrics, including the requirement for foods to be dual-labeled with metric and English measures, but to this day, no further effort has been made.

While metrics had advantages, no one convinced the American politicians or people why the costs of making the changes were worth the effort. Thinking

politically, what interests would be served by a businessman or a politician making the switch? And after Jefferson left office, why wasn't anyone willing to lead the charge for his proposal? The minority of those who benefited were set free after the 1866 act, but anyone on the fence never received incentive for change.

VOCABULARY NOTES

metrics – (*informal*) the metric system, the system of measures based on the meter, liter, and gram as units of length, capacity, and weight or mass;

workings – (*here*) the way in which a machine, organization, or system operates;

self-interest – one's personal interest or advantage, especially when pursued without regard for others;

(people) in power – (the class of people) exerting power or authority;

NASA – (*abbr.*) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (*in the US*);

to fire (an engine) – start, activate (an engine);

craft – (*here*) a spaceship;

timeline – a time frame during which something is scheduled to happen;

mission control – the group of people on Earth who are in charge of a flight by a spacecraft, or the place where these people work;

oz – (*abbr.*) ounce, a unit of weight equal to 28.349 grams;

testament – a proof, attestation, or tribute;

token – (*modifier*) as a matter of form only; nominal;

Secretary of State – (*in the US*) the head of the State Department, responsible for foreign affairs;

ad hoc – (*Latin, literally "for this"*) created or done for a particular purpose as necessary; lacking generality or justification;

to endorse – (*here*) give approval or sanction to;

to starve to death – (*here*) cause to die from hunger;

to ratify – give formal approval or consent to;

dominant – having primary control, authority, or influence; governing; ruling;

to pass on – (*here*) decline, politely refuse (an invitation, opportunity or offer);

decisive – settling an issue; producing a definite result;

to take action – do something official or concerted to achieve an aim or deal with a problem;

to draft – prepare a preliminary version of (a document);

to convert – change the form, character, or function of something;

anemic – lacking power, vigor, vitality, or colorfulness; weak;

to promote – support or actively encourage;

to leave office – give up or retire from a position;

to lead the charge – to make a strong effort to do something;

(sitting) on the fence – unable or unwilling to commit oneself; wavering between different opinions or actions; irresolute;

incentive – a thing that motivates or encourages someone to do something.

EXERCISES

I. Questions

1. Since when has the metric system been used in your country?

2. Which units of measure were used in your country before the metric ones?

3. Is it logical that people in power must serve instead of being served?

4. What is common between aeronautics and politics?

5. Are you interested in politics? Why?

6. Which forms of government do you know? Describe their pros and cons. Which of them seem(s) most appealing to you and why?

7. In your opinion, what is the role of personal charisma compared to other skills and competences of a politician?

8. What is your idea or example of qualities you would like to see in your leader?

9. Are you aware of the concept of e-government? What do you think about it? Would you want to have it realized in your country? Why?

10. If your President asked you what to do, what would your answer be?

II. Panel discussion

The authors of the texts below try to debunk some political myths. Choose any of the following topics to discuss pros and cons of the authors' ideas based on your own knowledge of the matter and/or personal experience.

Three Big Myths of Executive Public Speaking

By *Nick Morgan*

In my two decades of work with executives on their communications, I've seen some myths come up over and over again about how best to succeed at speaking in public. The three most common are: "I want to begin with a joke"; "Too much rehearsal is bad for me"; and "It's better to go right to Q and A." Let me debunk each one in turn, in the hope I may save executives and their audiences from future mishap.

1. I want to begin with a joke.

There's nothing wrong with humor; of course it's a great thing when done right. The problem is that most executives lack both the skill and the practice to put a good joke across, although they're infected with plenty of inclination to try. Add to that the initial nerves that afflict most speakers at the beginning of a talk, and you have a surefire flop. What happens is the executive delivers the joke tensely, the audience responds to the tension and not the joke, the executive thinks, *I'm going down in flames here* and radiates more nervousness, and the audience begins to smell disaster. It's a vicious communications circle, and it's hard to stop.

My advice: Don't put that kind of pressure on yourself, at least initially. One-liners are very hard to deliver well. Just ask any stand-up comic; comics get many of their laughs from their follow-ups to failed jokes. Instead, allow yourself to have fun with the material – if the topic makes it appropriate – once you've gotten through those crucial opening moments.

Also you probably should avoid a certain kind of humor that executives are particularly prone to: self-deprecation. Self-deprecation is fine if you're already firmly established on a pedestal above the crowd; the act brings you down to crowd level, which can be very humanizing. But most executives aren't as elevated in their audiences' minds as they think. If you're not speaking from a height, self-deprecation merely puts you lower than the audience, and you have to spend the rest of your talk climbing back up.

2. Too much rehearsal is bad for me.

Executives often try to avoid rehearsing. They're busy, and they like to appear in control. Rehearsal eats up time and involves not being completely in control, so they put it off, using the excuse of not wanting to go stale. Then when it comes time to deliver the speech, they look like they're learning as they go, an appearance incommensurate with authority. Their bodies unconsciously give away their unease, and the audience is very quick to pick up that unconscious behavior. Worst of all, the audience reads the unease as inauthenticity.

The truth is you can't go stale even with copious rehearsal, as long as you show up for the speech itself up with energy and focus. That's the key. And you can't be fully energized and focused if you don't know what you're doing.

So rehearse. I've seen many under-rehearsed performances, but I can count the number of over-rehearsed speeches I've experienced on the fingers of one hand, and still have digits left over.

3. It's better to go right to Q and A.

This myth is at least consistent with the preceding one. If you don't rehearse, you'll be uncomfortable with a script. So it makes sense to ditch the script and go right to questions and answers. Many executives have told me that they feel better responding to questions than speaking outright.

That's only natural, but here's the problem with dumping the speech and taking questions. You can't (entirely) control what's asked. You can't control the order in which it's asked. And most important, you can't control the question that's asked last.

What usually happens is that the more obvious and important questions are asked first, so there's a tendency to end on the obscure, the unimportant or the merely idiotic. And people tend to remember the last thing they hear.

Above all it's the shapelessness and anarchy of Q and A that makes it a not very effective communication vehicle for an executive trying to get specific messages across to specific audiences.

Why take a chance on anarchy? Of course, you can be trained to bridge to certain answers no matter the question, but doing that will probably be even less satisfactory than simply giving a speech.

If you're going to take questions, the best way is to take them toward the end of your speech but save a few minutes for final comments, so you can end on a high note, saying something clear and clearly appropriate. Don't wing it. There's too much at stake for you to be gambling on audiences and their off-the-cuff questions.

VOCABULARY NOTES

executive – the person or branch of a government responsible for putting policies or laws into effect;

rehearsal – a session of practicing a play, concert, speech etc., in preparation for public performance;

Q and A – short for "question and answer", a situation in which a person or group of people asks questions and another person or group of people answers them;

to debunk – expose the falseness or hollowness of (a myth, idea, or belief);

mishap – an unfortunate but not very serious event that happens to someone;

to put across – to communicate in a comprehensible way;

surefire – (*informal*) certain to succeed or meet expectations; assured;

flop – (*informal*) a total failure;

to go down in flames – (*informal*) to fail spectacularly;

vicious circle – a sequence of reciprocal cause and effect in which two or more elements intensify and aggravate each other, leading inexorably to a worsening of the situation;

one-liner – (*informal*) a short joke or witty remark;

stand-up comic – a comedian who performs by standing in front of an audience and telling jokes;

follow-up – something that is done to continue or add to something done previously;

prone – having an inclination to do something;

self-deprecation – the act of belittling or undervaluing oneself;

to humanize – if you *humanize* a situation or condition, you improve it by changing it in a way which makes it more suitable and pleasant for people;

in control – able to direct a situation, person, or activity;

stale – (*here*) no longer able to perform well or creatively because of having done something for too long;

(to do something) as one goes (alone) – improvise continuously;

incommensurate (with) – out of keeping or proportion (with);

copious – abundant; extensive in quantity;

to ditch – (*informal*) get rid of or give up;

outright – directly or openly;

to dump – (*informal*) abandon;

brouhaha – a noisy and overexcited reaction or response to something;

to get across – to be or cause to be readily understood;

high note – a successful point in an event or period of time;

to wing it – (*informal*) to accomplish or perform something without full preparation or knowledge; improvise;

at stake – to be won or lost; at risk;

to gamble (on) – to run a risk by choosing or depending on someone or something;

off-the-cuff – (*informal*) improvised; extemporary.

III. Video Time

Watch the following videos on public speaking:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tShavGuo0_E
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3BRCU3B8QA

Describe your own experience in public speaking. Give examples of successful and disastrous public speeches you have ever witnessed/made. What made them that way, in your opinion?

Six Reasons Why Politicians Believe They Can Lie (And Not Get Caught)

By Dr. *Jim Taylor*, adjunct professor, University of San Francisco

I'm constantly amazed by how often politicians lie and then, of course, their unwillingness to admit that they lied. The euphemisms that politicians use for what are, in many cases, bald-faced lies are legend. Politicians misspoke. The biased media misinterpreted what they meant. Politicians' words were distorted, misrepresented, twisted, exaggerated, or taken out of context. They overstated, understated, or misstated. But, of course, politicians never lie, at least that's what they say.

The $64,000 question that is constantly asked is: Why do politicians believe they can lie and not get caught? Particularly in this age of the Internet, the chances of lies standing up under the glare of the inevitable cyber-scrutiny are slim to none. Of course, some politicians don't even try to adhere to "honesty is always the best policy" (thanks George Washington).

So, why do politicians believe they can lie when their untruths are so easily uncovered? Here are six reasons.

1. Many politicians are narcissists.

Though research on politicians is limited, it isn't difficult to see the connection. Narcissists are arrogant, self-important, see themselves as special, require excessive admiration, have a sense of entitlement, and are exploitative. If it looks like a duck and sounds like a duck, it's probably a duck. This constellation of narcissistic attributes causes them to believe that they are right and, even if they are not, they're too smart to be caught or suffer the consequences.

2. Politicians know their followers will believe them, even in the face of irrefutable evidence to the contrary.

Politicians and their adherents live in an echo chamber in which everyone watches the same news channel, listens to the same talk radio, reads the same newspapers and web sites, and hangs out with the same like-minded people. There exists an impermeable membrane that prevents conflicting information from entering. The content of the lies is also usually red meat for the politicians' ravenous base who are only too happy to chew on it for days on end.

3. People don't want to hear the truth.
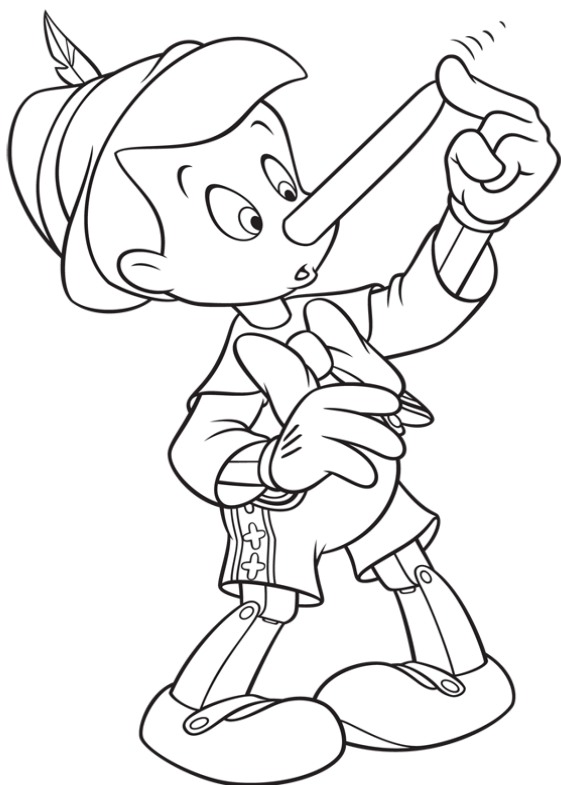
Truth, as the saying goes, hurts and no one wants to hear things that threaten their existence, their beliefs, or that will make them uncomfortable. It is decidedly better for politicians to tell people what makes them feel comfortable. Why should politicians be the purveyors of bad news (and decrease the likelihood of getting people's votes) when they can tell fairy tales with happy endings (which, of course, everyone wants) and come out the victor.

4. The Internet never forgets.

One of the unintended consequences of the Internet is that information, true or not, lives on forever and it is likely to continue to be believed even in the face of contradictory evidence. Research has shown, for example, that people are more likely to believe unsubstantiated rumors about a political candidate they oppose when read in emails.

5. Cognitive biases.

Daniel Kahneman and others have demonstrated that the human mind engages in many cognitive tricks to help people be more efficient, reduce confusion and anxiety, and keep life simple and coherent. Examples include the confirmation bias which involves the inclination to seek out information that supports our own preconceived notions; the Semmelweis reflex which is the predisposition to deny new information that challenges our established views; and the overconfidence effect which involves unwarranted confidence in one's own knowledge, just to name a few.

6. If a lie is told enough times, people will assume it is true.

It is not a stretch to understand why people would believe something if they hear it enough. People expect that lies will be disproved and fade away. So if the lies continue to be heard, people assume, then they must be true.

Ultimately, politicians lie because, due to the six reasons above, the cost/benefit ratio for lying is in their favor. Politicians run this calculation when they create or shift a damaging narrative, attack an opponent, or respond to indefensible claims against them. I'm going to assume that most politicians know when they are lying (if not, we not only have a bunch of narcissists in government, but also a whole lot of sociopaths). So, politicians lie when they believe that dishonesty is the best policy for getting elected.

VOCABULARY NOTES

to misspeak – express oneself insufficiently clearly or accurately;

to misstate – make wrong or inaccurate statements about;

the $64,000 question – a question that is the most important and most difficult to answer concerning a particular problem or situation;

slim to none – if your chances of succeeding are slim to none, it means you have little or no chance of succeeding;

narcissism – extreme selfishness, with a grandiose view of one's own talents and a craving for admiration, as characterizing a personality type;

sense of entitlement – a sense that one deserves more and is entitled to more than others; the expectation of special favors without assuming reciprocal responsibilities;

exploitative – making use of a situation or treating others unfairly in order to gain an advantage or benefit;

constellation – (*here*) a group of associated or similar people or things;

irrefutable – impossible to deny or disprove;

adherent – someone who supports a particular party, person, or set of ideas;

echo chamber – a room with walls that reflect sound;

to hang out (with somebody) – (*informal*) to frequent the company (of someone);

impermeable – not able to be penetrated, as by water;

red meat – something substantial that can satisfy a basic need or appetite;

to chew on – (*informal*) think about;

for days on end – for many days without interruption, continuously;

purveyor – provider or supplier; a person who spreads, repeats, or sells (information, lies, etc.);

likelihood – probability;

cognitive biases – common tendency to acquire and process information by filtering it through one's own likes, dislikes, and experiences;

preconceived – (of an idea or opinion) formed before having the evidence for its truth or usefulness;

unwarranted – not justified or authorized;

to name a few – giving only these as examples, even though more could be cited;

stretch – (*informal*) a difficult or demanding task;

cost/benefit ratio – a ratio of whether or not and how much profit will result from an investment;

to shift – (*informal*) sell (something);

indefensible – (*here*) not able to be proved;

bunch – (*informal*) a large number or quantity; a lot;

sociopath – a person with a personality disorder manifesting itself in extreme antisocial attitudes and behavior and a lack of conscience.

Watch a video on "How To Give a Speech Without Saying Anything":
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scSSELy0aZc

Any comment? Do you agree with the ideas expressed in it? What do you disagree with? What would you like to add?

IV. Working together

1. Work in pairs. Act out a dialogue where you are the President and your partner is your Special Adviser on Social Development. Your state, like most other developed countries, faces demographic issues such as population ageing and population decline, which has a negative effect on the economy, labor market, consumer goods market, health care, social security systems. Therefore, you have to closely discuss the matter and to formulate a set of measures to ensure a steady population growth and a shift in the distribution of your country's population towards younger ages. When finished, compare and discuss the outcomes of your policy-making and choose the most constructive suggestion. Consider using the words and word combinations given below.

birth / fertility rate, death rate, working-age population, retirement age, senior citizens, pension fund, budget deficit, unemployment benefit, to cause / create / eliminate / reduce unemployment, childfree, voluntary childlessness, abortion, fertility control, fertility regulation techniques, parental leave, child benefit payment, financial / moral / tax incentives, replacement migration, guest / immigrant workers, ethnic contradictions / conflicts / assimilation / balance / composition / discontent, popular / unpopular measures / reforms / government.

2. Work in pairs. Act out a dialogue where you are the President and your partner is the Minister of Internal Affairs. The matters you are discussing are your national gun politics and gun control. Gun politics deals with rules, regulations, and restrictions on the use, ownership and distribution of firearms. Gun control laws vary greatly around the globe. There are many areas of debate into what kinds of firearms, if any, should be allowed to be privately owned, and how, where and when they may be used. The idea of making gun ownership legal for private citizens has its adherents and opponents, benefits and disadvantages. You are expected to make your deliberate decision upon weighing all pros and cons. When finished, compare and discuss all together the results of your policy-making and choose the most constructive suggestion. Consider using the words and word combinations given below.

public security, personal security, gun manufacturers, gun shops, economic effect, law and order, self-defense, means of self-defense, crime rate, criminal situation, criminal record, mental competence, medical certificate, age qualification, permission, registration, licensing, training, human rights, world experience, arms trafficking, street violence, homicide, accidents, misuse, civil disorders, non-lethal firearms, public response.

V. Did you know?

➢ The term "First Lady" was used first in 1849 when President Zachary Taylor called Dolley Madison "First Lady" at her state funeral. It gained popularity in 1877 when used in reference to Lucy Ware Webb Hayes. Most First Ladies, including Jackie Kennedy, are said to have hated the label.

➢ The Queen of England, who once enjoyed extensive powers and authority over almost the whole world, and despite all her present majesty and glory, is not allowed to enter the House of Commons simply because she is not its member!

➢ New Zealand was first country to allow women to vote.

➢ Eight presidents never attended college: Washington, Jackson, Van Buren, Taylor, Fillmore, Lincoln, A. Johnson, and Cleveland.

➢ The college that has the most presidents as alumni (seven in total) is Harvard: J. Adams, J. Q. Adams, T. Roosevelt, F. Roosevelt, Rutherford B. Hayes, J. F. Kennedy, and George W. Bush.

➢ When George Washington was elected President, there was a king in France, an emperor in China, and a shogun in Japan. Only the office of President remains today.

➢ George Washington had to borrow money to go to his own inauguration.

➢ Andrew Johnson, the 17th president of the US, was the only self-educated tailor. He is the only president to make his own clothes as well as his cabinet's.

➢ Ronald Reagan was the only President who studied economics in college.

➢ Harry Truman's middle name was just "S." It isn't short for anything. His parents could not decide between two different names beginning with S.

➢ Croatia was the first country to recognize the United States in 1776.

➢ Calvin Coolidge (30th US President – 1872-1933) was a man of few words. He found himself sitting next to a young lady at a dinner. She said, "Mr. President, I have made a bet with my friends that I can make you say at least three words to me during dinner". "You lose" replied Coolidge and remained silent for the rest of the meal.

➢ Abraham Lincoln got the idea to grow a beard from an 11-year-old girl.

Choose any of the sentences above as a topic for your oral presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support or refute the information in the statements above.

VI. A story behind a common expression

Spill the Beans

Meaning: To divulge a secret, especially to do so inadvertently or maliciously.

History: The derivation of this expression is sometimes said to be a voting system used in ancient Greece. The story goes that white beans indicated positive votes and black beans negative. Votes had to be unanimous, so if the collector "spilled the beans" before the vote was complete and a black bean was seen, the vote was halted.

Write an essay (300 words) on "Politics and Magnetism".

VII. Puzzles & Riddles

1. How can you throw a ball as hard as you can and have it come back to you, even if it doesn't bounce off anything? There is nothing attached to it, and no one else catches or throws it back to you.

2. What is greater than God, more evil than the devil, the poor have it, the rich need it, and if you eat it, you'll die?

3. Who makes it, has no need of it. Who buys it, has no use for it. Who uses it can neither see, nor feel it. What is it?

4. What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries?

5. What kind of room has no doors or windows?

6. Which word in the dictionary is spelled incorrectly?

7. What gets broken without being held?

8. Forward I am heavy, but backward I am not. What am I?

9. He has married many women, but has never been married. Who is he?

10. Imagine you are in a dark room. How do you get out?

11. What invention lets you look right through a wall?

12. Why can't a man living in the USA be buried in Canada?

13. What word describes a woman who does not have all her fingers on one hand?

UNIT 3. TECHNOLOGY

The goodness/adoption paradox

By *Scott Berkun*

Another excellent example of the tenuous relationship between an idea's goodness and its success is the technology behind the World Wide Web. When Tim Berners-Lee invented the Web, he didn't have the future of technological development in mind. His tool of choice for making web sites, called HTML, reflected simple notions for what documents would be like in the future. He didn't imagine the Web would have its own economy with bookstores and banks, nor was he thinking about the billions of personal and professional web sites that would become our primary way to communicate. Instead, he thought about scientific research papers, text-heavy one-way communication, because that's what the organization he worked for worried about.

His passion for simplicity was so great that he initially downplayed the role of images and media, focusing instead on text. For his purposes, HTML was lightweight, simple, and easy to learn. Why weigh it down with the unnecessary features of other programming languages? He explicitly wanted something easier than the complex tools used for making software programs so that people could easily make web pages. In 1991, the first web server was up and running, and Berners-Lee's colleagues soon made their own web sites and web pages.

In 1993, there were 130 web sites, but within six months, that number more than quadrupled. By 1995, there were over 23,000; the number would continue to double annually. The simplest word processor was all anyone needed to participate, so participate they did – much to Tim Berners-Lee's and the entire world's dismay.

At the time, many computer science experts lamented how slow, un-secure, and immature the technology was behind the World Wide Web. And many still do today. They believe they know better, and that if they could go back in time and tell Berners-Lee or the folks at Netscape – makers of the first commercial web browser – what to do, all those problems would be solved. The fallacy is that if they had their wish, they'd end up with an entirely

different, and possibly not so successful, World Wide Web. Although the Web is struggling to retrofit privacy, security, and other good things, had they been in place in 1993, they may have raised barriers to entry, slowing or preventing the growth of the Internet we know today.

The factors that spread innovations are largely about ease of adoption. The reason why Internet and cell phone usage climbed faster than previous technologies isn't because things happen faster today, nor is it because these technologies are bigger leaps forward than previous ones. It's simply because the barriers of entry were low. People already had PCs and phone lines, making Internet use cheap and easy (economics). For cellular phones, the population already had daily experience with personal telephone usage and cordless phones, and their frequent use was accepted social behavior (culture). If you think about it, the cell phone isn't more than a cordless phone with unlimited (well, sometimes) range. The Internet and World Wide Web, for all their wonders, were an extension of the PCs and modems already in use – AOL had trained millions to use email, and word processors were popular applications on those computers.

Figure 1. Goodness competing with ease of adoption
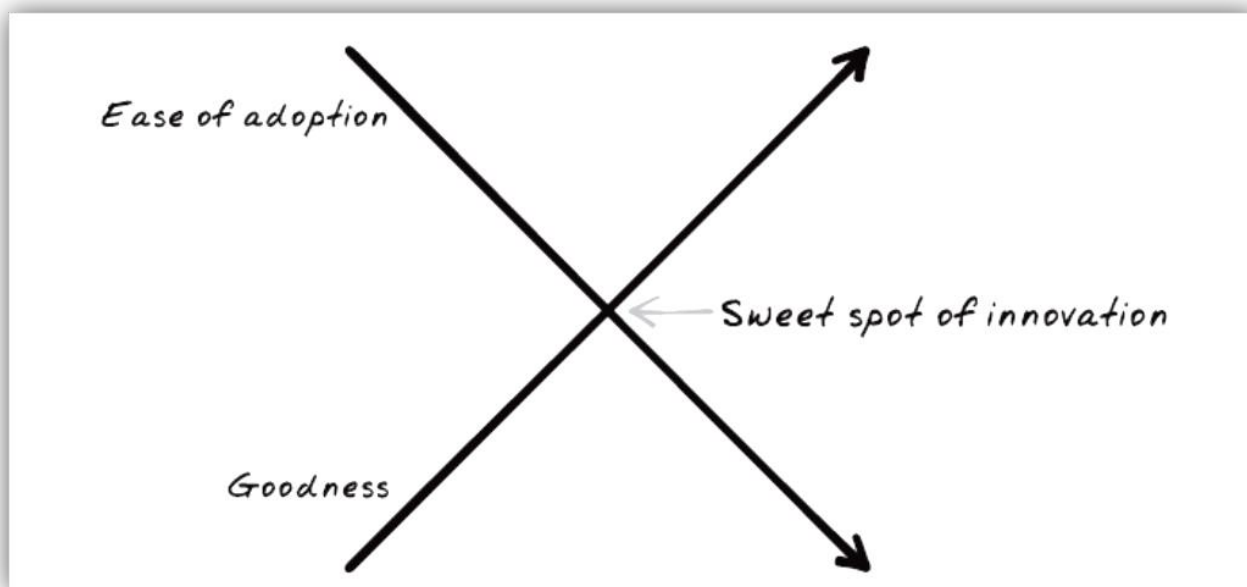
The goodness/adoption paradox surfaces if, for fun, we separate goodness (from the expert's point of view) from the factors that drive adoption (see Figure 1). From the expert view of goodness, better technologies existed for publishing and networking than Berners-Lee's Web. Ted Nelson and Doug Engelbart had talked about and demoed them for decades. But those "better"

ideas were demanding in ways that would have raised barriers to adoption in 1991. At best, they would have cost more to build and taken more time to engineer. We can't know whether those additional barriers would have prevented the Web from succeeding or merely have changed its ascension. It's also possible these alternative web designs might have had advantages that Berners-Lee's Web didn't have, that would have positively impacted ease of adoption.

This suggests that the most successful innovations are not the most valuable or the best ideas, but the ones that appear on the sweet spot between what's good from the expert's perspective, and what can be easily adopted, given the uncertainties of all the secondary factors combined. The idealism of goodness and the notion that goodness wins is tempered by the limits and irrationalities of people's willingness to try new things, the culture of the era, and the events of the time. This explains why the first innovators – driven by the complete faith in their ideas – are so often beaten in the market, and in public perception, by latecomers willing to compromise.

VOCABULARY NOTES

goodness – the quality of being good;

adoption – the action or fact of adopting or being adopted;

tenuous – very weak or slight; very slender or fine; insubstantial; if you describe something such as a connection, a reason, or someone's position as tenuous, you mean that it is very uncertain or weak;

World Wide Web – a widely used information system on the Internet, which provides facilities for documents to be connected to other documents by hypertext links, enabling the user to search for information by moving from one document to another;

HTML – Hypertext Markup Language, a standardized system for tagging text files to achieve font, color, graphic, and hyperlink effects on World Wide Web pages;

to downplay – make (something) appear less important than it really is; if you downplay a fact or feature, you try to make people think that it is less important or serious than it really is;

media – (=multimedia) an extension of hypertext allowing the provision of audio and video material cross-referenced to a computer text; the integration of text, graphics, pictures, and sound in the storing and presentation of information by computers;

to focus (on) – pay particular attention to, concentrate; if you focus on a particular topic or if your attention is focused on it, you concentrate on it and think about it, discuss it, or deal with it, rather than dealing with other topics;

to weigh down – to burden;

feature – a distinctive attribute or aspect of something;

programming language – a language system designed to facilitate the writing of computer programs;

explicitly – openly, clearly, precisely;

software – the programs that can be used with a particular computer system;

web page – a hypertext document connected to the World Wide Web; a set of data or information which is designed to be viewed as part of a website;

web site – a location connected to the Internet that maintains one or more web pages; the location and identity of a website is indicated by its web address;

web server – a store of web pages that can be accessed by a web browser; a computer or computer program which manages access to a centralized resource or service in a network;

to be up and running – in operation; functioning properly;

to quadruple – increase or be increased fourfold;

word processor – a program or machine for storing, manipulating, and formatting text entered from a keyboard and providing a printout;

dismay – a strong feeling of fear, worry, concern, distress or sadness that is caused by something unpleasant and unexpected;

web browser – A computer program with a graphical user interface for displaying HTML files, used to navigate the World Wide Web, that provides an easy method of accessing and viewing information stored as HTML web documents on different web servers;

fallacy – a mistaken belief, especially one based on unsound arguments; an idea which many people believe to be true, but which is in fact false because it is based on incorrect information or reasoning;

to retrofit – add (a component or accessory) to something that did not have it when manufactured, especially to improve its safety or make it work better;

largely – to a great extent; on the whole; mostly;

Internet – the computer network which allows computer users to connect with computers all over the world, it offers facilities for accessing remote databases, transfer of data between computers;

cell phone, cellular phone, mobile phone – a telephone with access to a cellular radio system so it can be used over a wide area, without a physical connection to a network;

cordless phone – a portable battery-powered telephone with a short-range radio link to a fixed base station connected to a fixed telephone line;

entry barriers, barriers to entry –factors making entry difficult;

range – (*here*) the maximum distance at which a radio transmission can be effectively received;

extension – (*here*) an extension of something else is a development of it that includes or affects more people, things, or activities;

PC – a computer that is used by one person at a time in a business, a school, or at home; PC is an abbreviation for "personal computer";

modem – a combined device for modulation and demodulation, for example, between the digital data of a computer and the analog signal of a telephone line, which uses a telephone line to connect computers or computer systems;

AOL – America Online**,** a multinational mass media corporation based in New York;

email – a system of sending written messages electronically from one computer to another; e-mail is an abbreviation of "electronic mail";

application – (*here*) a program or piece of software designed to fulfill a particular purpose;

to surface – (*here*) come to people's attention; become apparent;

networking – things associated with a computer system or the process of establishing such a system;

to demo (demos; demoing; demoed) – demonstrate the capabilities of (software or equipment);

sweet spot – something that embodies the best or most effective of a thing, usually the most productive spot and the one that is striven for, because of a

combination of qualities, the term being often used to describe the spot of optimum performance;

to compromise – expediently accept standards that are lower than is desirable.

EXERCISES

I. Answer the questions below:

1. According to Voltaire, "the better is the enemy of the good". How do you understand the quoted expression? To your mind, is it true?

2. Describe your university web site. What do you think about its content and design? Do you believe it needs any improvement or additional features?

3. What web browsers do you know and which of them do you prefer? Explain your choice in terms of aesthetics, performance, security and usability.

4. Are you aware of the security risks on the Internet? Do you take any precautions to protect your data and privacy? What are they?

5. Do you believe your antivirus software keeps you safe enough? Do you keep it up to date? Why did you choose the software?

6. Have you ever realized that there could be somebody surreptitiously watching you through your webcam? What do you know about so-called "RATters"?

7. Do you have your personal web page or web site or are you otherwise presented in the Web? Are you easily accessible to those who might need to get in touch with you online?

8. Which is the difference for you between you virtual friends and the real ones?

9. Describe the conveniences and disadvantages of online shops as compared to regular ones. Which do you prefer and why?

10. Why is your new phone better than the previous one(s)?

II. Panel discussion

The author of the text below tries to clear some expensive misconceptions, offering cheap or free solutions instead, but there may be a catch in it, for there's no such thing as a free lunch. Choose any of the following topics to

discuss pros and cons of the author's ideas based on your own knowledge of the matter and/or personal experience.

7 Myths That Tech Companies Want You To Believe

by *Adrian Kingsley-Hughes*

After more than two decades in the tech industry, I've seen countless myths come and go, but some myths are far more pervasive than others. Here are seven of the most pervasive myths that tech companies want you to believe. Don't believe them!

1. Expensive cables are better than cheap cables.

What's the difference between a $100 HDMI cable and one that you can pick up for under $2? About $98!

Seriously, that's it. Sure, the company selling you an expensive cable might try to impress you with their 24k gold contacts or bamboozle you with signal timings and other specifications, but at the end of the day if the cable works, it works. It's as simple as that.

If you've got an extra $100 burning a hole in your pocket that you must spend, then spend that on something that's actually going to make a difference in your life.

2. Smartphone and tablet storage is expensive
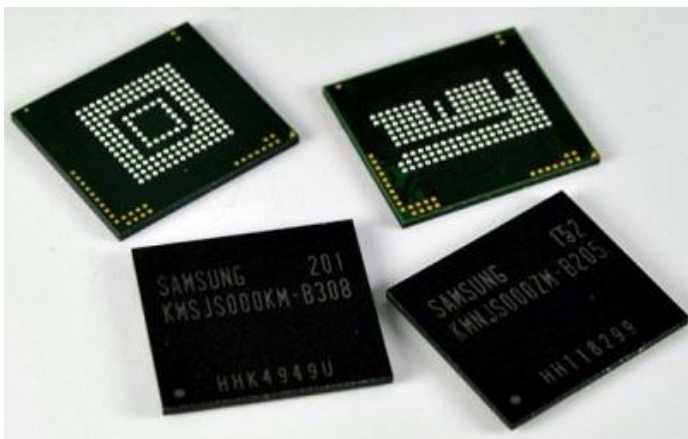
Take a look at the pricing for the iPhone 5. The 16GB model costs (without a contract) $649, while the 32GB model is $100 more and the 64GB version a whopping $200 more.

Do you know how much 16GB or storage costs Apple? About $10.

Apple might be selling the 32GB and 64GB models as a premium product, but apart from a few dollars' worth of storage, they're no different to the cheaper model.

And this practice is not confined to Apple either. For example, Google does the same thing with its Nexus smartphone and tablet. These companies are attaching huge price tags to a few bucks worth of additional memory, which is good for their bottom lines, but bad for your pocket.

Think carefully before shelling out for the high capacity version of a smartphone or tablet. Is it actually worth $100 – or more – to you just to be able to carry our all your photos with you?

3. X is better than Y, Mac is better than Windows, iOS is better than Android, Xbox is better than PlayStation (or vice versa)

Take it from someone who has used countless different devices, it's ultimately all down to personal preference.

Some people want to transform consumer electronics brands into a religion. Don't fall for it. Apple or Windows, Google or Samsung, Canon or Nikon, X or Y, at the end of the day they're all much the same.

4. There's software/a tweak/line of code that will make your PC go faster

Oh boy, this is one that I've been coming across for several decades now.

I've lost count of the times that I've read about some magic bit of software – registry cleaner, RAM optimizer, or something with an equally impressive sounding name – or a tweak or line of code that will transform a sluggish old mule of a PC into a stallion.

There's only a handful of ways to make your PC noticeably faster:

- Buy a new PC
- Upgrade some **hardware*** – such as the RAM or CPU or hard disk
- Wipe the system and reload the operating system and programs
- Upgrading graphics card drivers (only applicable to gaming)

Everything else falls into the voodoo category, and is not worth wasting your time – or money – on.

5. You need to buy an antivirus package

No, you don't.
Here is a handful for Windows:
AVG Free, ClamWin, Avira, Avast! Free, Microsoft Security Essentials
And here are a few for OS X:
Sophos Antivirus for Mac, Avast! Free for Mac, ClamXav

6. If you work with Office documents (Word, Excel, etc.), you need Microsoft Office

No, you don't.
Google Docs
OpenOffice
LibreOffice

7. CD music is better quality than downloaded tracks

If you can tell the difference and you've got high quality audio hardware, then paying more for CDs may be worth it, but for most people a track downloaded from iTunes or another online music store is more than adequate.

VOCABULARY NOTES

24k gold – *karat* (k) is a measure of the purity of gold, pure gold being 24 karats;

bamboozle (*informal*) - to *bamboozle* someone means to confuse them greatly and often trick them; cheat or fool;

at the end of the day (*informal*) – when everything is taken into consideration; in the final reckoning;

storage – (*here*) computer memory, data storage device;

whopping (*informal*) – if you describe an amount as whopping, you are emphasizing that it is very large;

bottom line (*informal*) – the total amount of money that a company has made or lost over a particular period of time; the final total of an account, balance sheet, or other financial document;

shell out (*informal*) – if you shell out for something, you spend a lot of money on it;

tweak (*informal*) - a fine adjustment to a mechanism or system so to improve it;

upgrade - raise (something) to a higher standard, in particular improve (equipment or machinery) by adding or replacing components;

driver – (*here*) a computer program that controls a device.

III. Video Time

Let's explore the inside a computer case. Watch the video "Computer Basics: Inside a Desktop Computer":

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=4eNTlwnnhss

Describe the parts a computer has inside its case in terms of their functions. You may use the picture and explanations below to better understand the insides of a computer case and how your computer works.

Power supply

CD & DVD drives

Case fan

CPU fan

Graphics card

Memory (RAM)

Hard drive(s)
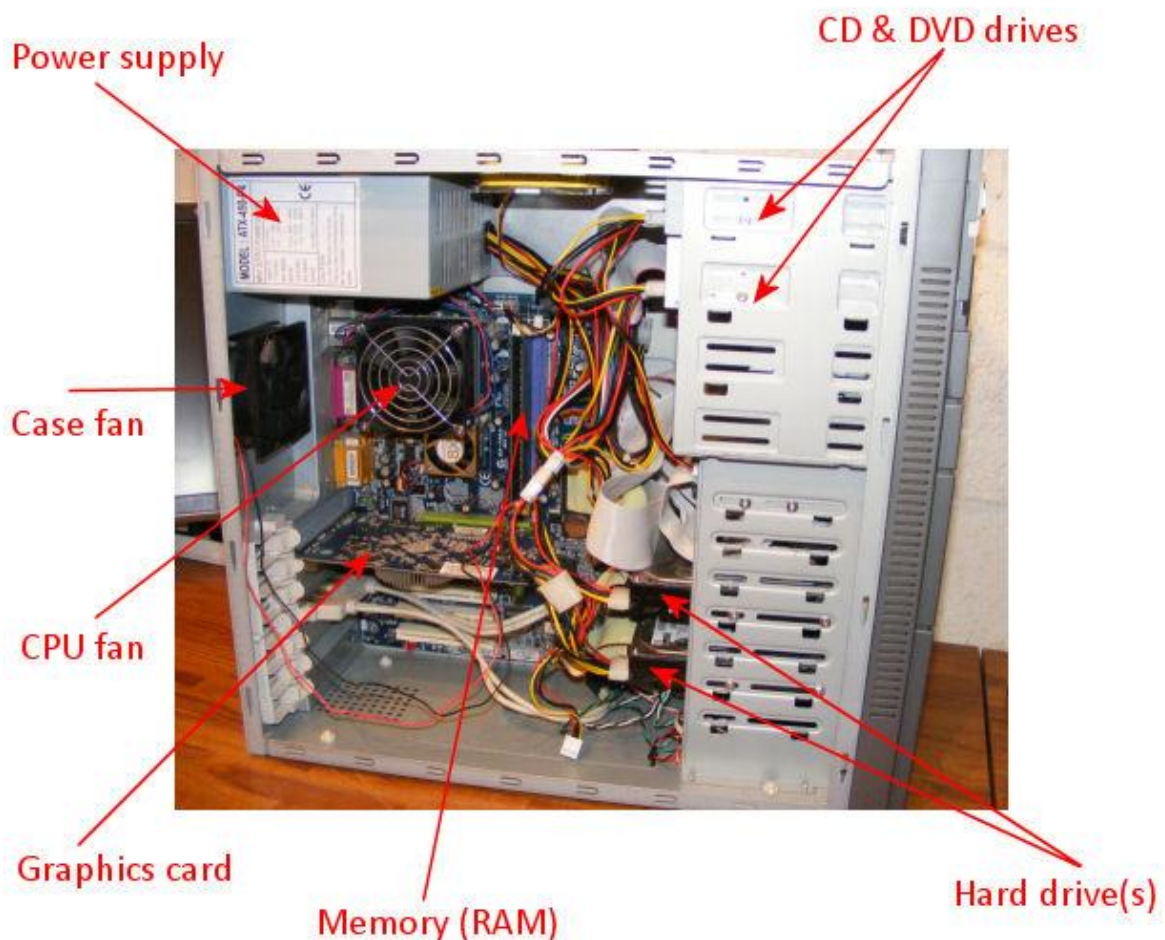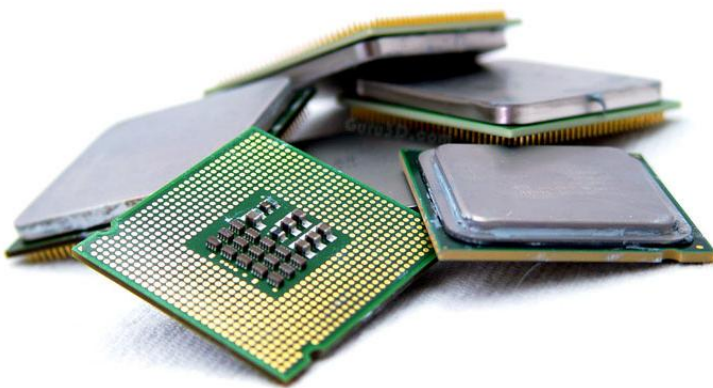
CPU/Processor

The Central Processing Unit (CPU), also called a processor, is located inside the computer case on the motherboard. It is sometimes called the brain of the computer, and its job is to carry out commands. Whenever you press a key, click the mouse, or start an application, you're sending instructions to the CPU.

The CPU fits into the motherboard and is covered by the heat sink, an object that absorbs heat from the CPU.

A processor's speed is measured in megahertz (MHz), or millions of instructions per second, and gigahertz (GHz), or billions of instructions per second. A faster processor can execute instructions more quickly.

The most well-known processor manufacturers for PCs are *Intel* and *AMD*.

Motherboard

The motherboard is the computer's main circuit board. It's a thin plate that holds the CPU, memory, connectors for the hard drive and optical drives, expansion cards to control the video and audio, as well as connections to your computer's ports (such as the USB ports). The motherboard connects directly or indirectly to every part of the computer.

Power Supply Unit

The power supply unit (PSU) in a computer converts the power from the wall outlet to the type of power needed by the computer. It sends power through the cables to the motherboard and other components.

If you decide to open the computer case and take a look, make sure to unplug the computer first.

RAM (Random Access Memory)

RAM is your system's short-term memory. Whenever your computer performs calculations, it temporarily stores the data in the RAM until it is needed.

This short-term memory disappears when the computer is turned off. If you're working on a document, spreadsheet, or other type of file, you'll need to save it to avoid losing it. When you save a file, the data is written to the hard drive, which acts as long-term storage.

RAM is measured in megabytes (MB) or gigabytes (GB). The more RAM you have, the more things your computer can do at the same time. If you don't have enough RAM, you may notice that your computer is sluggish when you have several programs open. Because of this, many people add extra RAM to their computers to improve performance.

Hard Drive

The hard drive is the data center of the computer. This is where the software is installed, and it's also where your documents and other files are stored. The hard drive is long-term storage, which means the data is still saved even if you turn the computer off or unplug it.

When you run a program or open a file, the computer copies some of the data from the hard drive onto the RAM so that it can access the data more easily. When you save a file, the data is copied back to the hard drive. The faster the hard drive is, the faster your computer can start up and load programs.

Most hard drives are hard disk drives (HDD), which store data on a magnetic platter. Some computers now use solid-state drives (SSD), also called flash hard drives. These are faster and more durable than hard disk drives, but they are also more expensive.

A **USB flash drive** is basically a small, removable flash hard drive that plugs into a USB port. These are a convenient way to bring your files with you and open them on a different computer.

Video card

The video card is responsible for what you see on the monitor. Most computers have a GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) built into the motherboard, instead of having a separate video card. If you like playing graphics-intense games on the computer, you can add a faster video card to get better performance.

Sound Card

The sound card, also called an audio card, is responsible for what you hear in the speakers or headphones. Most motherboards have integrated sound, but you can upgrade to a dedicated sound card for higher quality sound.

Network Card

The network card allows your computer to communicate over a network and access the internet. It can either connect with an Ethernet cable or through a wireless connection (often called Wi-Fi). Many motherboards have built-in network connections, and a network card can also be added.

Watch the video "Computer Basics: Getting to Know Laptop Computers": http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LIv2ocJXRk

Dwell on advantages and disadvantages of a laptop and a desktop. Do you have a desktop or a laptop or both? Why did you choose to have that particular device?

IV. Working together

1. Work in pairs/groups. You want to buy a new device/gadget (e.g., phone, tablet, notebook, etc.) and come to a shop where it is sold. Your partner will play the role of the shop assistant advising you, the customer, on your prospective purchase. Don't forget the assistant may try to bamboozle you. Act out a dialogue using as many words and word combinations given below as possible. Everybody willing to join your conversation as customer, assistant or expert is welcome.

production year, screen resolution, touchscreen, short/extended battery life, office use, enjoyable gaming experience, integrated/dedicated graphics card, noise level, number of CPU cores, CPU manufacturer, CPU/RAM frequency, silent cooling, glossy/matt display, HDMI port, USB 2.0/3.0 ports, optical drive, HDD/SSD capacity, amount of RAM, preinstalled OS/software, Microsoft Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, DOS, Intel, AMD, NVidia GeForce, AMD Radeon, Android, dead/stuck pixels, built-in Wi-Fi module, warranty period.

2. You've bought your granny a notebook/tablet so that she isn't bored and has fun. Granny is quite likely to be a newbie, so she is somewhat scared of that strange device, but admires its glossy look, though has no inkling what it is for. Your task is to explain and show your granny the wide range of opportunities the device provides once connected to the Internet, teach her to operate the device and answer all her questions in this regard. Act out a dialogue using as many words and word combinations given below as possible. Everybody willing is welcome to join in as a relative, a friend or an expert.

power button, touchpad, power indicator, application, torrent tracker, torrent client, upload, download, (double) click, multi-touch, browser, email, Skype, media player, register an account, social networks, login, password, content, online shops, reader, viewer, ad, banner, search engine, link, entertainment, file, recycle bin, cookies, post comments, shortcut, folder, codecs, site, type, keyboard layout, antivirus program, update, webcam, battery charger, message, USB flash drive.

V. Did you know?

➢ No matter its size or thickness, no piece of paper can be folded in half more than 7 times.

➢ There are approx. 6,000 new computer viruses released every month

➢ There are 100 million internet users in China. Some of the sites they can't access are BBC news, Amnesty International and Dalailama.com.

➢ Those stars and colors you see when you rub your eyes are called phosphenes.

➢ More than 50% of the people in the world have never made or received a telephone call.

➢ Every 5 seconds a computer gets infected with a virus.

➢ Electricity doesn't move through a wire but through a field around the wire.

➢ Lightning strikes about 6,000 times per minute on this planet.

➢ The electric chair was invented by a dentist.

➢ Venus is the only planet in the solar system to spin backwards.

➢ The planet Saturn has a density lower than water. So, if placed in water it would float.

➢ You share your birthday with at least 9 million other people in the world.

➢ The plastic tips on shoelaces are called "aglets"

Choose any of the sentences above as a topic for your oral presentation. Provide arguments or statistical data to support or refute the information in the statements above.

VI. A story behind a common expression

Why do we say that someone who has appropriated someone else's ideas has stolen thunder from the victim?

John Dennis, an English poet and playwright, wrote a tragedy called *Appius and Virginia*, which was produced in 1709 to less than rousing commercial success. Only one element of the production stirred the audience: thunder sound effects more realistic than any heard before on the stage, effects that Dennis himself created.

The play failed, but the theater's next production didn't. Dennis went to check out a successful production of Macbeth and was more than a little upset to discover that his sound effects were used in the storm scenes of

Shakespeare's tragedy.

Different sources vary slightly in describing what Dennis exclaimed upon hearing "his" thunder help promote the new production, but they are all variations of Stuart Berg Flexner's quote: "See how the rascals use me! They will not let my play run, and yet they steal my thunder!"

Write an essay (300 words) on the topic: Technology and Art.

VII. Puzzles & Riddles

1. There are three switches downstairs. Each corresponds to one of the three light bulbs in the attic. You can turn the switches on and off and leave them in any position. How would you identify which switch corresponds to which light bulb, if you are only allowed one trip upstairs?

2. Your last good Ping-Pong ball fell down into a narrow metal pipe imbedded in concrete one foot deep. How can you get it out undamaged, if all the tools you have are your tennis paddle, your shoe-laces, and your plastic water bottle, which does not fit into the pipe?

3. What can travel around the world while staying in a corner?

4. A girl who was just learning to drive went down a one-way street in the wrong direction, but didn't break the law. How come?

5. A ladder hangs over the side of a ship anchored in a port. The bottom rung touches the water. The distance between rungs is 20 cm and the length of the ladder is 180 cm. The tide is rising at the rate of 15 cm each hour. When will the water reach the seventh rung from the top?

6. The captain of a ship was telling this interesting story: "We traveled the sea far and wide. At one time, two of my sailors were standing on opposite sides of the ship. One was looking west and the other one east. And at the same time, they could see each other clearly." How can that be possible?

7. What can you catch but not throw?

8. A man who lives on the 10th floor takes the elevator down to the 1st floor every morning and goes to work. In the evening, when he comes back; on a rainy day, or if there are other people in the elevator, he goes to his floor directly. Otherwise, he goes to the 7th floor and walks up three flights of stairs to his apartment. Can you explain why?

KEYS

Answers to Task VI (Puzzles & Riddles) of Unit 1:
1. Meat.
2. Secret.
3. He was playing Monopoly.
4. The wise man told them to switch camels.
5. 4 kids get an apple (one apple for each one of them) and the fifth kid gets an apple with the basket still containing the apple.
6. This is a nice nonsense. Each guest paid $9 because they gave $30 and they were given back $3. The manager got $25 and the difference ($2) has the bellboy. So it is nonsense to add the $2 to the $27, since the bellboy kept the $2.
7. What occurs once in every minute, twice in every moment, yet never in a thousand years? The letter m.
8. The man is my son.

Answers to Task VI (Puzzles & Riddles) of Unit 2:
1. Throw the ball straight up in the air.
2. Nothing.
3. A coffin.
4. A towel.
5. A mushroom.
6. Incorrectly.
7. A promise.
8. Forward I am ton, backwards I am not.
9. A preacher.
10. Stop imagining.
11. A window.
12. Why should a living man be buried?
13. Normal – I wouldn't be very happy if I had all my fingers (10) on one hand.

Answers to Task VI (Puzzles & Riddles) of Unit 3:
1. Keep the first bulb switched on for a few minutes. It gets warm, right? So all you have to do then is switch it off, switch another one on, walk into the room with bulbs, touch them and tell which one was switched on as the first one (the warm one) and the others can be easily identified.
2. All the tools are random things that are not going to help you. All you have to do is pour some water into the pipe so that the ball swims up on the surface.
3. A stamp.
4. She was walking.
5. If the tide is raising water, then it is raising the ship on water, too. So water will reach still the first rung.
6. The marines were standing back against the sides of the ship so they were looking at each other. It does not matter where the ship is (of course it does not apply to the North and South Pole).
7. A cold.
8. The man is of short stature. He can't reach the upper elevator buttons, but he can ask people to push them for him. He can also push them with his umbrella.

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MAN AND THE MOVIES

Topical Vocabulary

1. **Cinema:** cinema (house), open-air theatre, cinema with continuous performance, drive-in-theatre, film, movie, (motion) picture, to go to the cinema (a movie, movies, pictures), normal screen, wide (large, broad) screen, the first (second) showing, entrance (exit), showing (performance, programme) begins at ... (ends at ...), colour poster, the box office, to book tickets.

2. **Films:** documentary, educational, popular scientific (or science) film, feature film, science fiction film, animated cartoon, adventure film, musical, puppet film, thriller, comedy, horror film, crime film, Western, children's film, theatrical film, wide-screen, colour (black-and-white, mute, sound, dubbed, full-length, short-length) film, short, two (three) part film, wartime epic, newsreel, serial, "X" film,[1] star-studded film, the screen version (adaptation) of the novel.

3. **Parts of films:** scene, outdoor (indoor) scene, the opening scene, the final scene, crowd scene, an episode, still, shot, long shot, close-up, caption, subtitle, flash-back(s).

4. **Cinema work:** to shoot (produce, make) a film, to make a screen version (adaptation) of a novel, to screen a novel (play, story), to adapt a novel for the screen, to film a novel, to play (act) on the screen, to release a picture, to come out (about a film), to go into production, to remake a film, to reissue a film, to be dubbed in Ukrainian, to present a film in Ukrainian, co-production (joint production), directed by ..., scenery and costumes by ..., the songs set to music by ....

5. **Cinema workers:** producer, film director, art director, camera-man, script-writer, animator, costume designer.

6. **Cinema-goers:** film goers, audience, film fans, to watch the film (screen), to watch smb. acting on the screen, to see a film.

7. **Actors and acting:** the cast, comedian, an actor of great promise, leading actor, star, to play the main (leading, title, key) or small (supporting, minor) role, to co-star, to portray a character, to give a convincing (memorable, captivating, warm, brilliant, superb) portrayal o f... , to give a magnificent performance as ... (in), to take (gain) the best actress (actor) award (title), to create a true-

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[1] An "X" film — a film which may be seen by adults only.   '

to-life image, to make the most of the role, to bring to life on the screen, to come alive on the screen, a typical N role, to outshine everybody else, a new N film, to star in a role, to be miscast (ill-chosen), to be cast to advantage.

8. **Effect. Impression:** the film deals with (depicts, presents, tells of); the message of the film; to win universal acclaim; to praise unreservedly; to leave a deep and lasting impression on; to appeal so much to the audience; to be (make) a hit with the public; a delightful, amusing comedy; entertaining (powerful, gripping, absorbing, vividly dramatic, technically brilliant, sad, depressing, slow-moving, dragged-out) film; to mar a film; to leave smb. cold; empty of serious content; a flop; a good film, not without flaws; a run-of-the-mill film; not a film to everyone's taste; not an easy film to watch; obscure and complex ideas.