

**VALUES-THEMED ARTICLE: Spring 2018**

**Pathways Being Opened By Exploratory Educators**



It's in the DNA of educators to work towards bettering the quality of life for future generations and today there are an abundance of initiatives to ensure the education experiences of young citizens-in-the-making secure improvements for all living things.

To help identify some of the exciting avenues that are opening up, here is a table with nine facets of education and some critical thinking prompts that could typify what forward thinkers have been endeavouring to bring to fruition.

	History	Children	Learning	Teaching	Curriculum	Schools	Policy	Culture	Personal
Purpose	What are the goals, objectives, functions, motives, intentions, scope of education ?								
Issues	What are the problems, issues, obstacles; is it fit for purpose ?								
Information	Where do the facts, data, evidence, experiences and research point ?								
Inferences	What conclusions can be drawn from interpretations and inferences ?								
Concepts	Which are the most influential ideas, theories, laws, principles and hypotheses ?								
Assumptions	Are assumptions justified by sound evidence ?								
Implications	What are the likely implications from current thinking and the consequences of actions ?								
Perspectives	Which points of view and voices are being considered and which other viewpoints are relevant ?								

## (1) History

The education landscape has been in a state of flux for decades but in line with our rapidly changing world, the sector has recently been experiencing significant turbulence with what some might consider 'permanent white water'. While the 'talk and chalk' days are over, there is still an eagerness to deliver an excellent, all-round education. Throughout the world there are movements to explore and implement contemporary educational ideas that will benefit all young people, whatever their innate abilities and social backgrounds.

Sir Ken Robinson: [Changing Education Paradigms](#)

## (2) Children

Many young children and adolescents see a world of opportunity and choice ahead of them. They have voices and expect their schools and teachers not to fulfil dreams of generations past but rather to help them be future-ready. They are calling for relevant, expansive educational approaches that take into account their own styles, paces and preferences so that they will be able to use their energy and talents to lead fulfilling lives and, if they so choose, compete in the global economy.

[One Young World](#): The annual summit gathers from all nations, bright young leaders aged between 18 and 30 to debate, formulate and share innovative solutions for the pressing issues the world faces.

## (3) Learning

As ever, young people have complex and diverse needs that present challenges to educators. Many are struggling with modern pressures, including establishing their own identities, stress associated with achievement expectations, seemingly often emphasised via social media, isolation and behaviour issues. Indicators suggest that their vision of education is for:

- more of a focus on relevance
- being supported by learning mentors
- having the capacity to form positive relationships
- having a sense of belonging, and
- being part of a community.

They appreciate the change in direction towards a more rounded, holistic education that some educational institutions now offer. Such courses provide a blend of rigorous academic challenges and content balanced with the space to develop holistically, including social and emotional skills, morality and values literacy needed for achieving and enjoying worthwhile, fulfilling lives.

CASEL (The Collaborative of Academic, Social and Emotional Learning) - [Educating Hearts & Inspiring Minds](#)

#### (4) Teaching

It can be hard for teachers and those involved in their initial training and continuing professional development, to keep pace with the scale of challenges facing them. It's often difficult to embrace universally available digital tools and resources, not to mention the very different expectations of the emerging generation compared with previous generations. Many former headteachers are taking on consultancy roles, sharing their passion, wisdom and experience. As coaches, they are promoting and helping teachers to cultivate and operate in supportive environments, and raising awareness of the significance of what it is to be a role model. In addition to their subject expertise, teachers - who are clear about their core values and who prioritise their own wellbeing - are demonstrating to learners, who are constantly watching them, how to master a range of key skills so as to thrive in the modern world.

World Economic Forum - [What are the 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills every student needs?](#)

(5) Curriculum

What are the essential skills for life in the 21st century? What does the emerging generation really need to know? What do school-aged learners need to understand? Is the current system meeting expectations or too narrow? Alongside literacy and numeracy competencies, are young citizens gaining mindsets, knowledge and skillsets that make them feel well informed? Can they flourish, achieve and grow into healthy, happy, productive adults in a constantly evolving world?

World Economic Forum: [The new vision for education](#)

(6) Schools

Education today comprises an eclectic offering of schools, each with its own characteristics and mission to deliver a quality education that meets the needs of its learners. Those working in them are all, in their own ways, passionate about nurturing balanced, integrated and healthy young citizens. They want to enable their students to feel happy, achieve and delight in mastering life skills, all the while gaining knowledge that allows them to mix well socially at school, at home and in wider communities.

Six Seconds, an Emotional Intelligence (EI) network: [Supporting kids to thrive](#)

(7) Policy

Many stakeholders sense that young people benefit enormously when their academic instruction is integrated with fostering their character strengths and wellbeing. A belief in educating learners both for life satisfaction and happiness led to the formation of the International Network of Positive Education (IPEN), a growing movement that brings together people from around the world, providing a forum for collaboration in changing education policy so that 'positive education' best practices and research can be shared.

[What is Positive Education?](#)

**(8) Culture**

A school's culture generally refers to how it functions. It evolves and is influenced not only by its history and location but also by its current practices. The entire school community contributes to and influences its culture, with input from both teaching and non-teaching staff, the students, their parents and carers, as well as external stakeholders.

Many quality British schools both in the UK and overseas have attractive cultures that provide opportunities for a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, strong welfare support, and promote an understanding of global perspectives and modern British society: [The Council of British International Schools \(COBIS\)](#)

**(9) Personal**

Actively building on personal character strengths has a lasting effect on happiness and wellbeing. Those striving to advance the quality and effectiveness of education are being inspired and driven by their own values to help bring out the very best in young people so that they in turn can lead meaningful, successful, happy lives.

The VIA Institute: [The Science of Character](#)