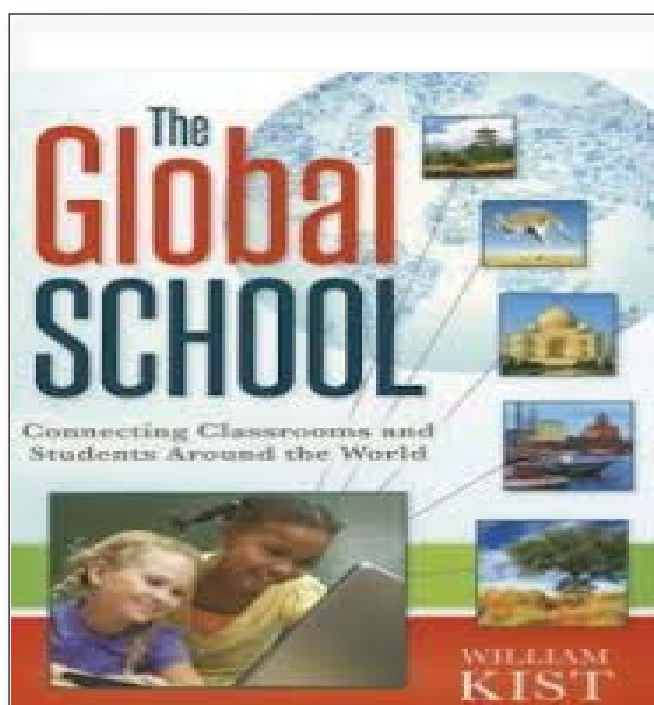


The Leader Reader



The introductory chapters of this book both enlightened and irritated me in equal measure. The book is clearly rooted in an American perspective of losing global dominance in influence and trade but the author's background is very solidly rooted in improving literacy in the widest and truest educational sense.

Having 'gotten over' the Americanisms I began to find the book interesting and very relevant to our current educational discourse around literacy, collaborative learning, critical thinking and multimedia, communication, globalisation and, of course, our new junior cycle.

The Author William Kist is an Associate Professor at Kent State University. He teaches literacy methods to trainee teachers and he has been active at state and national levels as a literacy educator.

While the book is entitled *The Global School* and his aspiration is that the book is intended to help teachers envision ways to help their students thrive in this internationalised world, he also states that he wants to help those educators who want to tap into the power and excitement of new forms of communicating.

As I continued to read the book I began to see a double message

which adds to the value of the book. This is what I found most interesting: that by opening our classrooms to knowledge from around the world and evaluating and critiquing that knowledge we would in fact be improving students' collaborative and communication skills, language and literary skills as well as fulfilling many of the 24 statements of learning and 6 key skills of the new junior cycle. This, for me, is where the real value of the book lies.

After the chapter, *What is Global Education?* in which he includes a section on Mixing Critical Literacy with Global Education, Kist divides the book into three distinct chapters:

- The world within your classroom
- The world across classrooms
- The classroom in the world

Each has a different flavour and emphasis and each has detailed ideas on how to get started. He also includes a good reference section on international texts that could be bought for the school library or found in the local library.

However the whole book is predicated on good broadband and internet connectivity

My favourite section was on *The world within your classroom*, as I felt it was accessible to a range of subject teachers, regardless of their technology skills, and there were some exciting ideas for cross-curricular work for Transition Year classes, or short courses in the new Junior Cycle.

He gives detailed lesson plans which revolve around the acquisition of different skills: One example is what he calls *Creating Travelling Trunks*, which revolves around students collecting various artefacts related to a given culture and giving a rationale for their inclusion. This can be done as a combination of real and or virtual artefacts. While working in groups and having made the decision which country or area to collect from the students build up knowledge of history, geography, language, arts, maths and science as well as learning to research.

Another example he gives is about comparing and contrasting news stories around the world by checking different media sources. This is a good starting point for exploring stereotyping and the use of social media across different cultures.

A further idea, which has very practical applications in the classroom,

was using Google Earth to “visit” other countries and explore their culture, buildings, history and geography, and compare and contrast them with your own.

There are other well-thought-out examples of cross-curricular approaches to global education in this section of the book which I could see having great appeal in Irish classrooms.

The chapter, *The World Across Classrooms*, requires teachers to have a little more expertise in technology. It concerns reaching out to classroom across your country or the world and sharing experiences.

He gives a very detailed example of how it can help in developing language skills by virtual role playing different scenarios. The example he gives is a visit to an avatar doctor who will only answer your health issues if you speak to him in Spanish. This would meet the need for staying well, communicating, managing information and technology under the key skills in the new Junior Cycle.

Built into the lesson plans is a project on reflection and self-critique. In this chapter he also talks about how to join The Global Education Collaborative and join up with classrooms around the world. He calls this *The Flat Classroom Project*. He provides a plan for beginners right up to experts on how to manage this as well as a checklist and examples of the experiences in classrooms where it has been tried.

Kisk argues that this type of cultural exchange makes students and teachers effective collaborators “who appreciate and internalise the essential interdependence of all human endeavours”. He says, “global collaboration requires effective communication, social and cultural awareness and flexibility”.

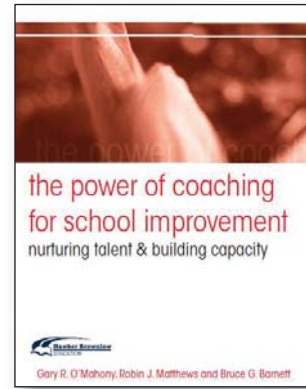
In *The Classroom in the World* he speaks about students achieving a global Citizen award. The programme would consist of 3 levels of certification: certificate, diploma and diploma with distinction. He gives an outline of the structure of each stage which is not unlike our own Gaisce Award System. Much of this would be done on digital portfolio and monitored by tutors and teachers.

Kisk also talks a little about schools using the International Baccalaureate as an international standard. There is also a small section on home schooling and how global education and online learning could blur the differences between that and traditional schools.

This book is worth having in your school and discussing with your staff. Many will not be interested because the technology involved may be a little beyond them and others will feel that they have enough to do within their own 4 walls without inviting the whole world in.

But every school will have a number of teachers who will be excited by the ideas presented. The lesson plans are well presented and realistic to implement. Many of them would be very suitable as a module in TY or as a cross-curricular short course in the new Junior Cycle.

Title:	<i>The Global School</i>
Author	William Kist
Publisher	Solution tree Press
Year	2013
ISBN	9781743306079
Reviewer	Patricia McDonagh mcdonagh@malahidecs.ie



According to the authors, the main purpose of this book according to the authors is to provide a resource to help leaders and teachers develop a culture of coaching in their own schools. Coaching is now widely recognised as far and away the most effective way of enabling learners to transfer a new skill into practice. According to Joyce and Showers (2002), whom the authors quote, 90% of learners will transfer a new skill into use with theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and coaching, as against 25% with theory, demonstration, practice and feedback but without the coaching element.

The book is arranged in five chapters, the first of which is aimed at helping the reader to understand the concept of coaching as it applies in education. Unlike in certain other spheres coaching in education is far from a passive process. On the contrary it is seen as a trusting partnership in which both the coach and the coachee contribute in significant ways. It is an active reciprocal process based solidly on adult learning theory – which always takes into account the knowledge and experience of the learner - helping people “to empower themselves, change and reach their potential”, to help them to learn rather than to teach them, and with a huge emphasis on the importance of personal reflection.

The first chapter ends with what they describe as the five principles that underlie coaching, the scaffolding around which the discussion in the subsequent chapters, save the last one, is built. The five principles are as follows:

- Coaching is a process that focuses on improved performance through personal development
- Coaching is about change and is goal and – results – oriented
- Coaching is essentially a series of learning conversations
- Coaching is a development process that occurs in stages
- The role of the coach is to facilitate, encourage and empower others

Chapter 2 deals with how coaching can be used as a resource to build leadership capacity, Chapter 3 describes how coaching can be applied to enhance the development of teams and individuals within them and Chapter 4 explains how to use instructional coaching with teachers. Each chapter begins with the rationale for coaching in the particular context and very many practical and useful examples are provided for the reader. Throughout each of these chapters there is a very strong emphasis on the importance of personal reflection, of individualised coaching which takes account of context and culture, of building individual capacity and personal learning in a culture of trust.

The authors put great stress on this individualised coaching for leadership development because as they put it “Pre-packaged leadership development programmes are unlikely to help create the types of leaders necessary for effective school leadership for future schools.”