

GULF TIMES
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EDUCATION

— LEARN • INNOVATE • COLLABORATE • LEAD —

September, 2026





EVERY BLOCK BUILDS SOMETHING BIGGER

*From first discoveries to future possibilities,
growing on strong foundations at ASD.*



A STRONG BEGINNING FOR A LIFELONG JOURNEY

At the American School of Doha, a child's first classroom is the beginning of a journey that stretches all the way to graduation.

In a Kindergarten classroom, a small group of students is working together to build a block tower. They study the precariously balanced structure and attempt to add the final pieces. Each time they place another block, the tower falls. After several attempts, they pause to consider what might be causing the problem and what they could change.

Then they try again.



One child offers a suggestion and explains his thinking. Another responds with an idea of his own, and together they test a new approach. The most important outcome is not the finished tower but the learning taking place through the process. They are developing learner agency, metacognitive regulation, collaborative problem-solving, and the capacity to engage in productive struggle. They are learning that their ideas have value, that others' perspectives can extend their thinking, and that mistakes provide useful information about what to try next.

These are not incidental lessons. At ASD, teachers intentionally design learning experiences that invite children to reflect, revise, collaborate, and make decisions about their learning, helping them become increasingly capable and strategic learners.

These lessons will not remain in Kindergarten. Years later, the challenge before these students may be a complex mathematical problem, a scientific investigation, or a piece of writing that requires revision. Although the work becomes more sophisticated, they draw on the same dispositions they began strengthening while working with blocks: curiosity, collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and perseverance.



This is why beginning at ASD in Pre-K3, Pre-K4, or Kindergarten offers families far more than a strong start. It places children on a coherent Pre-K–Grade 12 learning trajectory, where knowledge, skills, dispositions, and habits of mind are intentionally revisited, extended, and deepened over time.

In Pre-K3 and Pre-K4, children learn through purposeful play, guided inquiry, relationships, and

hands-on exploration. Kindergarten builds on these foundations with explicit, research-based literacy and mathematics instruction while continuing to nurture curiosity and independence. As students develop essential academic skills, they also deepen their understanding of who they are as learners.



As students move through Upper Elementary, Middle School, and High School, early curiosity develops into disciplined inquiry, and the ability to explain an idea grows into confident communication. Students take increasing ownership of their learning by setting goals, making choices, reflecting on progress, seeking feedback, and applying what they know in increasingly complex contexts.

This progression reflects ASD's Mission to nurture each learner's unique academic and personal identity through Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Character, and Citizenship.

As students move into the upper grades, they have greater opportunities to identify their strengths, explore their interests, and challenge themselves. By High School, this includes rigorous academic pathways such as Advanced Placement (AP) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, as well as opportunities to grow through the arts, athletics, activities, leadership, and service.

These experiences are not disconnected. Together, they contribute to one educational journey.

A confident sixteen-year-old communicator was once a five-year-old learning to share an idea and listen to others. A creative High School student was once a young child given time to wonder, explore, and experiment. A responsible student leader may have taken an early step by helping a classmate in Kindergarten. It is through all these small experiences that values begin to take root.

ASD's values of Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Kindness provide a strong foundation for this journey. Students bring these values to life through everyday choices: listening to different perspectives, following



through on commitments, welcoming others, and making things right when mistakes happen.

These experiences also shape a student's sense of belonging. Children are more likely to engage, take risks, and persist when they feel known and supported. Beginning at ASD early gives teachers time to build a fuller understanding of each child's strengths, interests, identity, and approaches to learning. It also gives children and families time to build relationships within the One ASD Family, creating greater continuity as students move from one stage of learning to the next.

ASD's Vision is to empower learners to discover their passions, develop their talents, and make a positive impact on the world. That begins with helping students discover who they are. They need adults who recognize their potential, opportunities that extend their thinking, and a community that provides both encouragement and challenge.

No school can predict exactly what the future will require of today's children. We can prepare them to think independently, communicate clearly, solve problems with confidence, and work thoughtfully with others. Knowledge will always matter. So will judgment, empathy, adaptability, and the ability to build strong relationships.

When children begin at ASD, they begin a purposeful journey in which curiosity, collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and perseverance are strengthened over time. Much of that development happens gradually, often before children can name it themselves. Through intentional learning experiences, reflection, collaboration, and challenge, ASD educators create the conditions for students to become increasingly independent, self-aware, and strategic learners.

From the first block tower to the challenges they will encounter years later, the work changes. The dispositions endure.



Qatar eyes building a future-ready education system

MoEHE outlines wide-ranging reforms focused on quality, innovation, inclusion, technology and student achievement

Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) Maha Zayed al-Qaqaa al-Ruwalli affirmed that the ministry is leading a comprehensive development trajectory aimed at enhancing the quality of education, improving the efficiency of educational practices, and building a more inclusive, innovative, and future-responsive educational system.

noticeable rise in the percentage of government schools that achieved performance levels exceeding 70% across all subjects. As an additional effort to promote inclusive education, a package of projects to support non-Arabic-speaking students at the primary stage was implemented in 12 schools, benefiting 476 students.

Regarding teaching faculty, 412 professional development sessions were delivered for teachers

the importance of the School Readiness Scale to assess children's developmental readiness for school.

She also highlighted the ministry's program aimed at enhancing early childhood education, launched under the strategic Sunrise program, which included a major awareness event titled "From Here... the Story Begins" to raise community and parental awareness of the importance of this stage.

Regarding digital transformation, al-Ruwalli revealed that the ministry's official educational platforms benefit more than 129,000 students, 15,000 teachers, and 92,000 parents, in addition to the launch of 110 digital innovation clubs and the implementation of specialised cybersecurity programs across 140 schools at various educational levels.

She also noted the launch of a digital citizenship classroom as a pilot project in 10 primary schools, the publication of 7,700 model lessons on official educational platforms, and the development of question banks comprising 1,575 questions. In addition, eight new policies governing e-learning were adopted, including policies on AI integration, digital safety, and digital equity.

In regard to special education, services for inclusive education were expanded to cover 81 government schools and 18 schools in outlying areas. Al-Ruwalli also mentioned plans to integrate students from the Audio Education Complex into government schools, beginning with the fifth and sixth grade students during the 2026/2027 academic year at Umm Al Qura School and Zekreet School.

She also announced the opening of new specialised schools, including Al-Hidaya Special Needs School for Boys (Mebaireek), as well as plans to open Al-Hidaya School (Abu Sidra). In addition, Al-Jiwan Kindergarten for Early Intervention was opened in September 2025 in partnership with Hamad Medical Corporation, and the WARIF Academy was launched for students with severe functional limitations.

She further highlighted the ministry's future vision of establishing a unified services centre combining 3 ministries to streamline assessment, diagnosis, and assistive technology support services, thereby easing the burden on parents.

Al-Ruwalli also touched on the development of Qatar's national curriculum framework and the integration of financial literacy, genomics, and STEM programmes into the curriculum. She noted that learning resources received special attention as part of curriculum modernisation efforts, with support provided for the development of modern educational resources aligned with the updated curriculum framework, as well as the use of digital technologies to enrich educational content.

She also highlighted the role of reading initiatives, such as the Reading Olympics and the Mobile



Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), al-Ruwalli said that, with the start of the new academic year, these efforts stem from a vision centred on placing students at the heart of the educational process, empowering national cadres, utilising technology, and building effective partnerships. She noted that these efforts reflect Qatar National Vision 2030 and the country's direction toward establishing a world-class education system.

Regarding the quality of education system and academic achievements, al-Ruwalli revealed that the year 2026 witnessed a tangible increase in students' overall academic achievement rates, ranging from 80-96% depending on the subject, along with a

in the academic year 2025/2026, alongside 112 lesson observation sessions aimed at exchanging expertise and utilising a comprehensive database to tailor training needs, rather than offering a uniform training approach for all teaching and non-teaching staff.

With regard to early education, the state of Qatar expanded opportunities by offering enrolment in government kindergartens for children from the age of 3 within the formal education system, with "Kindergarten 1" introduced in 12 government schools, and 3 new nurseries opening during the 2025/2026 academic year. She also emphasised

Library project, which benefited 25,549 students, alongside projects aimed at integrating Qatari values, arts, and culture into the educational system to enhance reading skills, promote self-directed learning, and reinforce national identity.

Regarding innovation and academic guidance, al-Ruwaili pointed to the remarkable success of the 17th National Scientific Research and Innovation Exhibition, which saw the participation of 2,383 students who presented 1,222 research projects. The exhibition was further highlighted by the international achievements of Qatari students at the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in the United States and the International Invention, Innovation and Technology Exhibition (ITEX) in Malaysia.

In the area of academic guidance, al-Ruwaili stated that the first Annual University Fair was organised with the participation of 53 universities and attracted 3,000 students. These efforts contributed to increasing the proportion of students enrolled in the scientific track to 57.41% of the total number of students enrolled in Grade 11 during the 2025/2026 academic year, marking an increase of 17.4% compared to the 2020/2021 academic year. The percentage of Qataris recruited into the teaching profession also increased to 67%, while scholarship sponsorship was provided to 2,100 students.

She also noted that the teaching of foreign languages was expanded to include French, German, and Japanese, as well as the organisation of language, cultural, and scientific camps for students in countries such as France, Germany, Japan, China, and the United Kingdom during the period from 2023-2026.

In addition, she announced a major milestone in technical education with the opening of the Qatar Technical Secondary School for Girls in Al Shamal during the 2025/2026 academic year, as well

as the opening of two new Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) schools

Key areas of Reform



Quality & Achievement

Higher academic achievement rates (80-96% in 2026) and more government schools exceeding 70% performance across all subjects.



Early Education

Kindergarten 1 in 12 government schools, 3 new nurseries, and the School Readiness Scale. Sunrise program launched to raise awareness of early childhood education.



Teachers & Learning

412 professional development sessions and 112 lesson observations in 2025/2026. Data-driven training tailored to needs.



Digital Transformation

129,000+ students, 15,000 students, 92,000 parents on official platforms. 110 innovation clubs and cybersecurity programs in 140 schools..



Inclusion & Special Education

Services expanded to 81 government schools and 18 outlying schools. New specialised schools and integration plans for more students.

for the 2026/2027 academic year, located in Al Sakhama for boys and Rawdat Al Hamama for girls.

In a related context, she affirmed the ministry's commitment to easing the burden on families by issuing official circulars regulating expenditure on school activities and prohibiting the imposition of any financial obligations or in-kind requests on students, parents, or staff as a condition for participating in events.

In concluding her remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), the Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs stressed that educational development is a continuous process founded on long-term planning and evidence-based management, ensuring that generations are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete globally and participate effectively in achieving national development. (QNA)

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QC unveils Education Campaign

Qatar Charity (QC) has launched the Education Campaign 2026, pursuing the motto "Science as Stewardship", marking the approaching academic year and back-to-school initiative.

The move underscores its commitment to supporting the right to education and enabling children and young people to continue their educational path, as one of the foremost development tools, in addition to building people and charting a more stabilised future for individuals and societies.

The campaign intends to reach out to benefactors to pitch in and give help to as many as 123,000 students in need at home and abroad, with the objective of providing them with the opportunity to chart their future and contribute to developing their communities.

The projects abroad include providing school backpacks, uniforms and educational supplies, supporting school feeding programmes, sponsoring students in need, and improving the learning environment by constructing and rehabilitating schools and furnishing them with the necessary educational facilities.

Executive Director of Communications and Community Impact at QC Abdulaziz Jassim Hejji appealed to benefactors, individuals and companies to magnanimously pitch in to support this campaign so as to help create an indelible humanitarian footprint that would literally change the lives of those targeted segments and their communities.

Donating for educational ventures isn't merely a support for a class or school backpack, Hejji underlined, but rather a contribution to building people who are capable of maintaining self-dependence and serving their community and nation.

Hejji noted that education is one of the greatest avenues for doing good and a lasting charitable contribution, as its benefits endure for years and extend to students, their families and their communities, ensuring that the reward of giving continues.

He affirmed that education would remain a key pillar of QC's humanitarian and development programmes, given that it fulfils a fundamental right of children, serves as a cornerstone for strengthening communities and mitigating

the effects of poverty and crises, and helps build a brighter future for students and their communities.

Overall, the campaign intends to strengthen awareness of education as a fundamental right for all and support education in areas that are plagued by humanitarian crises, disasters and conflicts. This would thus help provide secure educational opportunities for children, to be able to return to school, pursue their education and prevent school drop-off.

The campaign will be fairly implemented in a number of countries facing humanitarian and development challenges, including Palestine, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Syria, Lebanon, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Mali, Burkina Faso, Albania, and Nepal, ensuring that support reaches the students most in need.

While inside Qatar, it aims to support children from low-income families and orphans by helping cover their school and university tuition and fees, sponsoring students in need, and providing school backpacks, uniforms, sportswear, and other educational resources, including tablets and laptops.

HOW PE SHAPES YOUNG LIVES

When children hear the words “physical education”, many may immediately think of football, basketball, races or other competitive sports. But the role of PE in education goes far beyond competition.

A well-designed physical education programme can help children understand movement, fitness, health and wellbeing. It gives them opportunities to develop coordination, balance, strength, flexibility and endurance while learning how their bodies work and why staying active matters.

This is particularly important in a world where children are spending more time sitting. Schoolwork, computers, smartphones, gaming and other digital activities can mean that young people have fewer opportunities for natural movement during the day. PE provides a structured opportunity to get active, interact with classmates and develop healthy habits that can continue into adulthood.

One of the most valuable aspects of physical education is that it can teach lessons that extend far beyond the sports field. Team games encourage children to communicate, cooperate and respect others. They learn that success often depends on working together rather than simply being the most talented individual. Students also learn how to follow rules, take responsibility and understand the importance of fairness.

Individual activities offer different lessons. When a student tries to improve a personal running time, learn a new swimming technique or master a gymnastics movement, they learn about patience and persistence. Progress may not happen immediately, but regular practice can produce results.

These experiences can help children develop resilience. Losing a match or struggling to learn a particular skill can be disappointing. But PE provides an opportunity to teach children that mistakes and setbacks are part of learning. They can reflect on what went wrong, try again and gradually improve.

Physical education can also help children develop confidence.

Not every student is naturally athletic. Some may feel uncomfortable participating in competitive sports because they believe they are not fast, strong or skilful enough. If PE focuses too heavily on competition,

these students may begin to associate physical activity with embarrassment or failure. A broader approach can make PE more inclusive.

Students can be introduced to different activities, including swimming, dance, athletics, cycling, yoga, martial arts, fitness exercises and recreational games. This gives children opportunities to discover activities that suit their interests and abilities.

The objective should not be to turn every child into a competitive athlete. It should be to help every child find some form of movement they can enjoy.

This distinction matters because the habits developed during childhood can influence attitudes towards physical activity later in life. A child who learns that exercise is only about winning may lose interest when they stop competing. A child who learns that movement can be enjoyable, social and beneficial may be more likely to remain active as an adult.

PE can also complement academic learning. Physical activity requires concentration, decision-making and problem-solving. Team sports involve strategy and communication, while activities such as dance combine movement with memory,

rhythm and creativity. For teachers, this creates an opportunity to make physical education part of a wider approach to student wellbeing rather than treating it as a break from “real” learning.

Parents also have an important role. Children are more likely to develop positive attitudes towards physical activity when they see it as a normal part of family life. Walking together, cycling, swimming, playing outdoors or simply spending time away from screens can reinforce what children learn at school.

Schools can support this by ensuring that PE is accessible to students with different abilities and interests. Success should not be measured only by athletic performance. Effort, improvement, participation, teamwork and personal achievement are also meaningful outcomes.

Ultimately, physical education is about much more than sport. It is about helping children understand their bodies, develop confidence, learn how to work with others and discover healthy ways to manage energy and stress. It teaches discipline without demanding perfection, competition without making winning everything and movement without making athletic ability the measure of a child's worth.

ACS DOHA Opens New Student Support Hub

ACS International School Doha has opened a new Student Support Hub, a dedicated space that brings together specialist expertise to support every learner's academic, social, emotional and developmental needs.



The Hub reflects the school's belief that students flourish when these needs are considered together, not separately. By housing a multidisciplinary team in one collaborative environment, ACS Doha is making specialist support more connected, accessible and responsive for students and their families.

The team includes learning support teachers, language acquisition teachers, an occupational therapist, counsellors and support assistants. Working alongside classroom teachers and families, they can share

expertise, coordinate support and build approaches adapted to individual students, rather than working in isolation.



Dr Robert Jackson, Head of School at ACS Doha, stated that the Hub represents a significant advancement in the school's support for its community. "Every student who walks through our doors deserves to be known, understood and given what they need to flourish, not just academically, but as a whole person," said Dr Jackson. "This Hub is a physical expression of that commitment. It means our specialists are working together, in real time, around



each child, rather than in separate corners of the school. That's what a modern, caring education should look like."

Mr Benjamin Burgess, Director of Student Support Services at ACS Doha, emphasized that the Hub enables staff to address the comprehensive needs of students by uniting a team of dedicated professionals within a single space. "We're delighted to be able to work with families to make sure that every one of our learners has the ability to thrive," said Mr Burgess.



The Hub represents a significant investment in fostering an inclusive school community, where each pupil is recognized, supported, and empowered to succeed. For ACS Doha, this development signals a broader transformation in which student wellbeing is central to the school's strategic planning.



ACS Doha is part of Artemis Education, which operates two other schools in Doha, including Northview International School and Queen's International School Qatar.

Admissions are currently open for families seeking a high-quality international education in Qatar. Families interested in ACS Doha, including its expanded student support services, can contact the Admissions Team at: admissions@acsdoha.school



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PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

Why strong communication between home and school can make a lasting difference to a child's academic success, confidence and personal development



A child's education does not begin and end at the school gates. While teachers guide children through their academic journey and help them develop knowledge, skills and social confidence, parents remain the most influential figures in a child's life outside the classroom.

When these two worlds work together, children benefit from a consistent support system that can influence not only their academic performance but also their confidence, behaviour, emotional wellbeing and attitude towards learning.

This makes the relationship between parents and teachers more than an administrative necessity. It is a partnership.

At its best, the parent-teacher relationship creates an environment in which everyone is working towards the same goal: helping the child learn, grow and become increasingly independent.



Two perspectives, one child

Parents and teachers see different sides of the same child.

A teacher may observe how a student behaves in a classroom, interacts with classmates, approaches assignments and responds to academic challenges. Parents, meanwhile, know the child's personality, interests, routines, family circumstances and behaviour at home.

Neither perspective is complete on its own.

A child who appears quiet or distracted at school may be dealing with a temporary issue that parents are aware of. Conversely, a child who seems confident and enthusiastic at home may be struggling academically or socially in the classroom.

Regular communication allows these observations to come together.

When parents share relevant information with teachers and teachers provide meaningful feedback to parents, it becomes easier to understand what may be behind a child's behaviour or changes in performance.

The result is a more complete picture of the learner.

Communication before there is a problem

One of the most effective ways to build a healthy parent-teacher relationship is to establish communication before difficulties arise.

If the only time parents hear from a teacher is when their child has received a poor grade, misbehaved or fallen behind, communication can quickly become associated with problems.



A stronger approach is to maintain an ongoing dialogue.

A short message recognising a child's improvement, a conversation about a new interest or a positive comment about classroom participation can help establish trust.

This also makes difficult conversations easier when they eventually become necessary.

Parents are more likely to receive constructive criticism positively when they know that a teacher's primary concern is the child's development rather than simply pointing out mistakes.

Academic progress

Parents naturally want to know how their children are performing academically. Grades, test results and assignments provide useful information, but they do not always tell the complete story.

A teacher can provide insights into how a child learns.

Does the student participate in discussions? Do they ask questions? Can they work independently? Do they collaborate effectively? Are they struggling with a particular concept? Have they become more confident?

These observations can be more valuable than a single examination score.

Similarly, parents can help teachers understand what happens beyond the classroom. They may notice that their child has developed a particular interest, is spending more time reading or has suddenly lost motivation.

When these observations are shared, both sides can respond earlier and more effectively.



Consistency matters

Children benefit when expectations at home and school are reasonably consistent.

This does not mean that parents and teachers must agree on every detail. Nor should home become an extension of the classroom.

But basic expectations around responsibility, respect, punctuality, completing assignments and treating others appropriately can be reinforced in both environments.

Consistency gives children clearer boundaries.

If a teacher encourages a child to take responsibility

for completing work while parents regularly complete tasks on the child's behalf, for example, the child receives conflicting messages.

A partnership allows adults to reinforce the same broader values while respecting the different roles of home and school.

Supporting the whole child

Academic performance is only one part of education.

Children also need to develop confidence, resilience, empathy, communication skills and the ability to manage relationships and challenges.



Teachers are often among the first adults outside the family to notice changes in a child's social behaviour or emotional state.

A student who was once enthusiastic but has become withdrawn may need additional attention. A child who suddenly stops participating may be experiencing difficulties that are not immediately visible.

Parents can provide valuable context, while teachers can share observations from the classroom.

This does not mean teachers or parents should attempt to diagnose every change in behaviour. Rather, open communication can help adults recognise when a child may need additional support and determine the appropriate next step.

Technology has changed the conversation

Digital communication has made it easier for parents and teachers to stay connected.

School portals, email, messaging systems, digital report cards and virtual meetings allow information to be shared quickly.

But convenience does not necessarily mean better communication.

A constant stream of messages can become overwhelming for teachers and parents alike. Not every minor classroom issue requires an immediate message, and not every question needs to be resolved through a long chain of texts.

Schools can help by establishing clear communication channels and expectations — including when parents should use email, when they should contact a teacher directly and when a meeting is more appropriate.

Good communication is not about communicating constantly.

It is about communicating clearly, respectfully and at the right time.

When conversations become difficult

Even the strongest partnerships will sometimes involve disagreement.

A parent may question a grade. A teacher may be concerned about a child's behaviour. Parents may feel that their child has been misunderstood, while teachers may feel that their professional judgement is being questioned.

The way these situations are handled can have a lasting impact.



The first step is to focus on the child rather than on winning an argument.

Instead of asking, "Who is responsible?", the more productive question is, "What can we do to help?"

Parents can ask teachers to explain the situation and provide specific examples. Teachers can listen to parents' concerns without immediately becoming defensive.

Both sides should distinguish between facts, observations and assumptions.

A respectful conversation does not guarantee agreement, but it can create understanding.

Being involved in a child's education does not mean controlling every aspect of it.

Parents can support learning by creating routines, encouraging reading, discussing school experiences and helping children organise their time.

But there is an important difference between supporting a child and doing the work for them.

Children need opportunities to make mistakes, solve problems and take responsibility.

If parents constantly intervene — correcting every assignment, contacting teachers over every setback or managing every school responsibility — children may become dependent on adults to solve problems for them.

The ultimate objective of parental involvement should be greater independence, not greater dependence.

Teachers need support too

The partnership also requires schools to recognise the pressures faced by teachers.

Teachers manage classrooms, prepare lessons, assess work, communicate with families and respond to the individual needs of students.

Constructive parental engagement can make this work easier.

Parents can show appreciation for teachers' efforts, provide relevant information about their children and approach concerns respectfully.

At the same time, schools have a responsibility to make parents feel welcome and ensure that communication is accessible and inclusive.

A partnership cannot be one-sided.

Cultural and social differences matter

In increasingly diverse school communities, parents and teachers may come from different cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds.

They may have different expectations about discipline, homework, classroom participation, communication or academic success.

Recognising these differences is important.

Teachers should avoid making assumptions about families, while parents can take time to understand the school's educational philosophy and expectations.

Schools can support this process through orientation sessions, parent workshops, multilingual communication where appropriate and opportunities for families to engage with the wider school community.

Respect is the foundation of meaningful collaboration.



Encouraging children to become part of the conversation

As children grow older, the parent-teacher partnership should gradually become a three-way relationship involving the student.

Young children naturally require greater adult direction. Older students, however, should increasingly participate in discussions about their progress, goals and challenges.

Asking a student, "What do you think you need to improve?" can be more powerful than simply telling them what they have done wrong.

This encourages self-awareness and ownership.

The goal is to gradually shift responsibility from adults to the learner.

Small actions can make a big difference

A strong parent-teacher relationship does not require elaborate programmes or constant meetings.

Sometimes small actions have the greatest impact.

A parent asking a child about something interesting they learned that day can reinforce curiosity. A teacher recognising a student's effort can strengthen confidence. A parent informing a teacher about a significant change at home can help the teacher understand a change in behaviour.



These individual moments can collectively create a powerful support network.

Building trust takes time

Trust cannot be created through a single parent meeting.

It develops through consistency.

Parents need to know that teachers care about their children's development. Teachers need to know that parents are willing to listen, cooperate and provide relevant information.

Both sides also need to accept that children are works in progress.

A child may perform exceptionally in one area and struggle in another. They may be highly motivated one semester and lose focus the next. They will make mistakes.

The role of adults is not to expect perfection but to provide guidance, encouragement and appropriate boundaries.

Stronger Partnerships Brighter Future

DECODING THE PERSPECTIVE
Understand the "Why" behind demands
Lead with Empathy
See Parents as Partners

PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION
Consistent updates build trust
Reduce friction before it starts
Establish clear communication channels

CONFIDENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION
Use proven "Scripts" for difficult conversations
Focus on shared goals for the student
Set professional boundaries respectfully

The shared goal

Ultimately, parents and teachers occupy different positions, but they share a common responsibility.

Teachers bring professional knowledge, educational expertise and classroom experience. Parents bring intimate knowledge of their child's personality, interests, experiences and needs.

When these perspectives are combined, children receive something neither side can provide alone: a more complete and consistent support system.

The strongest parent-teacher partnerships are therefore not built around grades alone. They are built around conversations, trust and a shared belief in a child's potential.

Because education is not simply about helping children achieve better marks.

It is about helping them become curious learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and increasingly independent human beings.

And when home and school work together towards that goal, the child is the ultimate beneficiary.

NORTHVIEW INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

AMERICAN EXCELLENCE, NORTH OF DOHA

Northview International School delivers the American curriculum through a structured, inquiry-based approach combining high academic standards with strong emphasis on critical thinking and character development. Since opening in Umm Qarn in 2022, the school has grown to more than 700 students representing over 60 nationalities and this year took its oldest cohort into Grade 10 for the first time.



The curriculum follows internationally recognized standards, including the Common Core State Standards for English, mathematics, and AERO (American Education Reaches Out to meet international standards) standards for social studies, alongside the Next Generation Science Standards for science instruction. In Early Childhood, learning focuses on play-based development, foundational literacy, and numeracy. In Elementary and Middle School, students build critical thinking and analytical skills through



multidisciplinary, technology-integrated instruction. In High School, the focus shifts to communication, research and analytical skills, with College and Career Readiness skills integrated into the curriculum to help prepare students for future academic and professional pathways. All programmes are aligned with international admission standards.

Experienced teachers with American curriculum expertise and international backgrounds lead teaching at Northview. Every classroom from Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 2 has a dedicated teacher's aide alongside the lead teacher.

That sense of individual attention extends to how the school approaches community. The Northview Parent Association acts as a bridge between families and school leadership. It organizes landmark events such as International Day and Qatar National Day celebrations, plans engagement initiatives that strengthen bonds across the school. It also serves as

a constructive channel for parent feedback, helping shape the school's continuous improvement.

Northview's own Student Development Goals guide this whole approach, asking every student to grow not just academically but in how they collaborate, think, and respond to challenges. Pastoral care and safeguarding are shared responsibilities across staff, students, and families, with dedicated support in place for students navigating the social and academic demands of school life.

Beyond the classroom, students take part in a co-curricular programme spanning sports, music, and drama through Artemex, the school's activity partnership with sister Artemis Education schools, alongside opportunities in community outreach and leadership.

Northview is currently a candidate school for accreditation with WASC (the Western Association of Schools and Colleges), reflecting its commitment to meeting internationally benchmarked standards of teaching, learning, and continuous school improvement.

Families interested in an American education at Northview are invited to contact the Admissions Team at: admissions@northview.school



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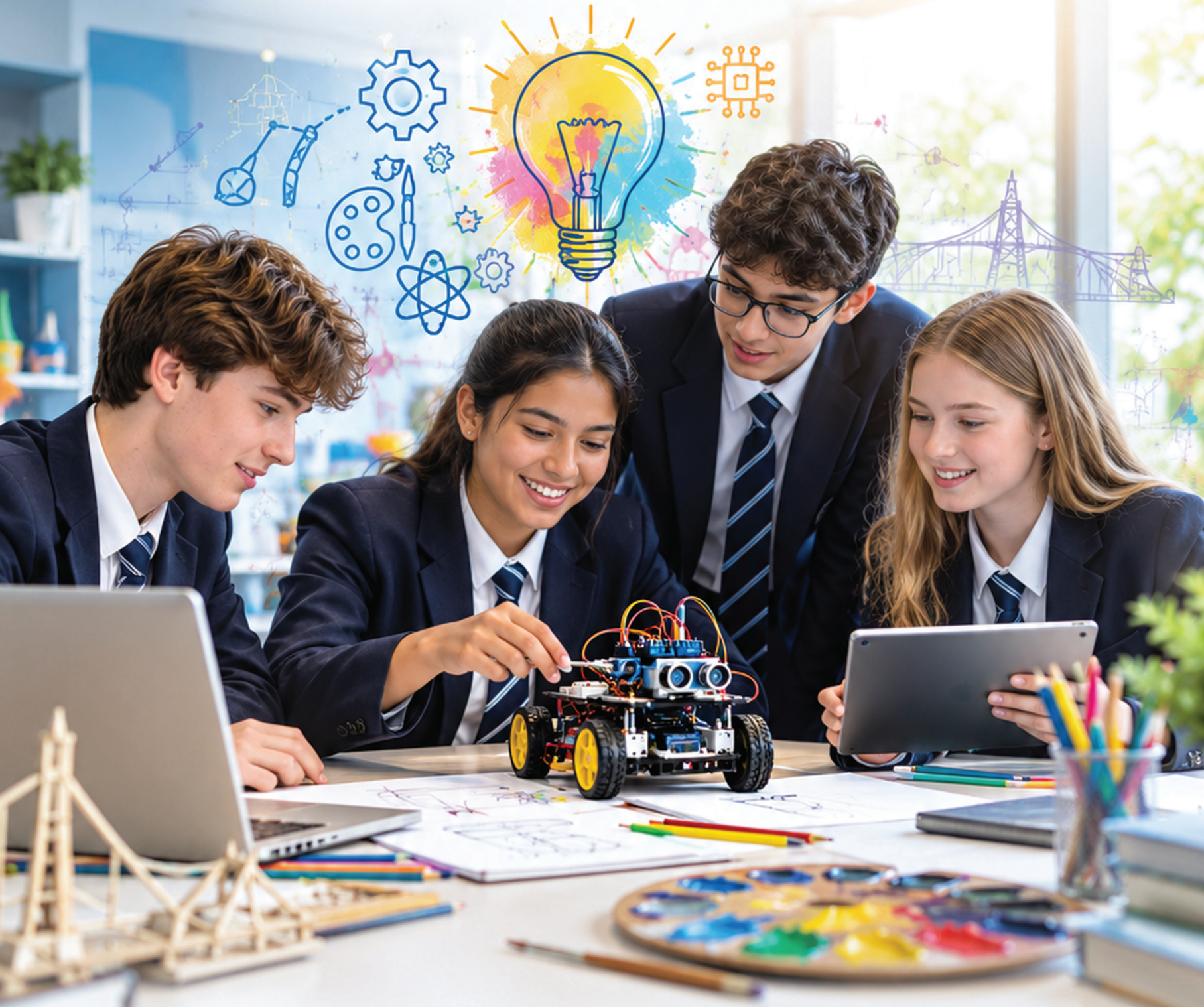
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From STEM to STEAM

As schools prepare students for an increasingly technology-driven world, STEAM is placing creativity alongside science and technology to nurture more innovative, adaptable and well-rounded learners.



SCIENCE



TECHNOLOGY



ENGINEERING



ARTS



MATHEMATICS

For decades, science, technology, engineering and mathematics — collectively known as STEM — have been at the centre of conversations about the future of education. As technology has transformed industries and created entirely new professions, schools and universities have understandably placed greater emphasis on analytical thinking, scientific knowledge, coding, engineering and mathematics.

But there is another question increasingly shaping the conversation: What happens when we add creativity to STEM?

This is the thinking behind STEAM — Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. More than simply adding an arts class to a science curriculum, STEAM represents a broader approach to learning in which technical knowledge and creative thinking work together.

The objective is not to choose between science and the arts, but to show students that the two can complement one another. A successful engineer needs imagination. A technology developer needs an understanding of human behaviour and design. An architect needs mathematics as well as creativity. Even scientific discovery often begins with the ability to imagine possibilities that do not yet exist.

In a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, automation and rapidly changing technologies, that combination may become more important than ever.

Beyond memorising the answer

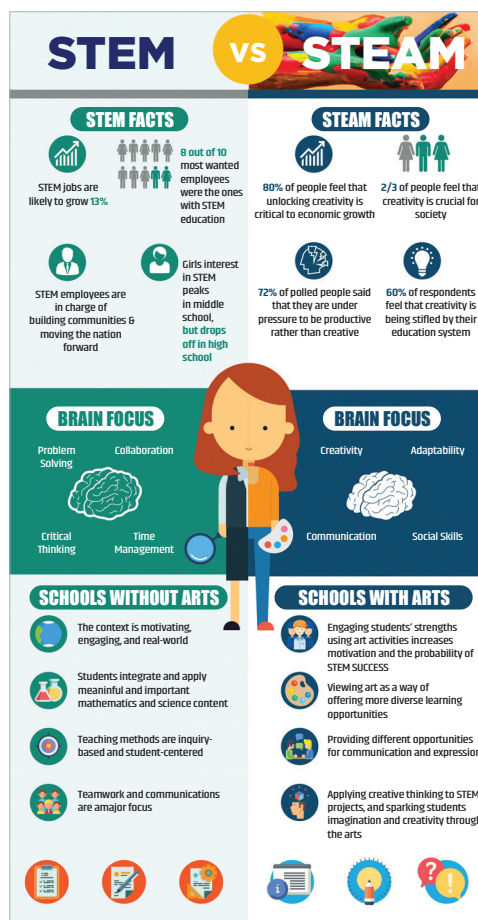
Traditional education has often placed considerable emphasis on finding the correct answer. Students learn formulas, facts, theories and procedures and are assessed on how accurately they can reproduce or apply that knowledge.

These foundations remain essential. However, the challenges facing today's students are rarely limited to questions with a single predetermined answer.



How can a city reduce energy consumption? How should a hospital use technology while preserving the human connection between doctors and patients? How can a product be made more sustainable without becoming unaffordable? How can an app be designed so that it is useful and accessible to people of different ages and abilities?

Questions such as these require more than technical knowledge.



They require students to identify problems, ask questions, generate ideas, experiment, accept failure, rethink their approach and communicate their solutions. In other words, they require creativity alongside analytical thinking.

This is where STEAM education can make a difference.

Creativity is not limited to artists

One of the misconceptions surrounding creativity is that it belongs primarily to musicians, writers, artists and designers.

In reality, creativity is also fundamental to scientific and technological progress.

Scientists develop hypotheses by considering possibilities. Engineers design solutions to problems. Mathematicians approach problems from different perspectives. Entrepreneurs imagine products and services that do not yet exist.

The arts can strengthen many of these abilities by encouraging observation, imagination, communication, interpretation and experimentation.

When students are exposed to music, visual arts, theatre, storytelling, design or creative writing alongside technical subjects, they are encouraged to look at problems from different perspectives. This can help them become more comfortable with ambiguity and more willing to explore ideas rather than immediately searching for one correct answer.



What does STEAM look like in the classroom?

STEAM does not necessarily require schools to completely redesign their curriculum.

It can begin with relatively simple interdisciplinary projects.

Imagine, for example, that students are asked to design an environmentally friendly model house.

The science component could involve understanding energy, insulation and renewable resources. Mathematics could be used to calculate dimensions, costs and energy consumption. Engineering would involve constructing and testing the model. Technology could introduce digital modelling or sensors.



The arts and design component could then ask students to consider the appearance of the house, how people would interact with the space and how the design could make sustainable living attractive and practical.

The final project becomes more than a science experiment. It becomes an exercise in problem-solving, design, communication and innovation.

Similarly, students learning about water conservation could develop a digital campaign to encourage responsible water use. Mathematics could help them analyse consumption data, technology could support the development of digital content, science could explain water systems, while art and design could determine how the message is communicated visually.

The lesson is no longer confined to a single subject.



Design thinking meets technical knowledge

One of the strengths of STEAM education is its connection with design thinking — an approach that places the problem and the people affected by it at the centre of the creative process.

Students can be encouraged to ask:

Who are we designing this for?

What problem are we trying to solve?

What could we do differently?

What happens if our first idea fails?

How can we improve the solution?

This approach changes the classroom dynamic.

Instead of simply completing an assignment designed by someone else, students become creators. They investigate a problem, develop ideas, build prototypes, test them and make improvements.

Failure therefore becomes part of learning rather than something to be avoided.

A prototype that does not work can be valuable because it gives students information about what needs to change.



The human side of technology

As artificial intelligence and automation become increasingly capable of performing technical and repetitive tasks, uniquely human capabilities are receiving greater attention.

Creativity is one of them.

So are empathy, communication, collaboration, judgement and the ability to understand human needs.

This does not mean that technical skills are becoming less important. Quite the opposite. Students will need strong digital and scientific literacy to understand and work with emerging technologies.

But technical expertise alone may not be enough.

Consider the development of an artificial intelligence-powered healthcare application. Computer scientists may build the underlying technology, data specialists may develop the models, and engineers may create the infrastructure. But designers, psychologists, communication specialists and healthcare professionals also need to consider whether the technology is understandable, accessible, ethical and genuinely useful to patients.

The best solutions emerge when different forms of knowledge meet.



Preparing students for careers that are still emerging

The workplace students enter tomorrow may look very different from the one their parents entered.

Artificial intelligence, robotics, biotechnology, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, space technology and other rapidly developing fields are creating new combinations of expertise.

The boundaries between professions are also becoming less rigid.

A modern technology company may need engineers who understand design. A healthcare organisation may require specialists who can work with data. An architect may use artificial intelligence and advanced modelling. A marketing professional may need strong data-analysis skills. A scientist may need to communicate complex findings through visual storytelling.

STEAM education reflects this increasingly interconnected professional landscape.

Rather than asking students to think of themselves exclusively as “science people” or “arts people”, it encourages them to develop a broader intellectual toolkit.



Collaboration is part of the lesson

STEAM projects can also strengthen collaboration.

A complex project may require students to divide responsibilities, communicate ideas, negotiate disagreements and combine different strengths.

One student may be comfortable with coding. Another may excel at drawing and visual design. A third may be good at research and data analysis, while another may be confident presenting ideas.

Instead of treating these differences as separate abilities, STEAM projects can bring them together.

Students learn that successful teamwork does not require everyone to have identical skills. It requires people with different strengths to contribute towards a shared objective.

That is a lesson with value far beyond the classroom.

The role of teachers is changing too

A successful STEAM environment also requires teachers to move beyond the traditional role of simply delivering information.

Teachers become facilitators, mentors and guides.

Instead of telling students exactly how to complete a project, they can create an environment in which students investigate, experiment and develop their own solutions.

This can require professional development and collaboration between teachers from different disciplines.



A science teacher and an art teacher, for example, might jointly develop a project. A mathematics teacher could work with a technology specialist to introduce data visualisation. A design teacher could collaborate with an engineering department.

Such collaboration can benefit educators as well as students by creating opportunities to exchange ideas and teaching methods.

Creativity should not become another box to tick

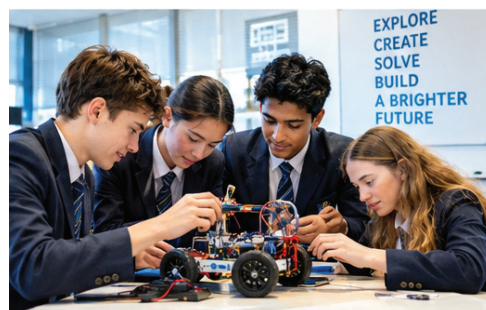
There is, however, an important distinction between genuine STEAM education and simply adding an artistic activity to an otherwise conventional lesson.

Putting a decorative drawing exercise at the end of a science project does not automatically make it STEAM.

The arts and creative disciplines should contribute meaningfully to the learning process.

Students should be encouraged to use design to improve functionality, storytelling to communicate scientific ideas, visual thinking to understand complex information or creative experimentation to develop new solutions.

The objective is integration rather than decoration.



STEAM starts with curiosity

Perhaps the greatest value of STEAM education is that it encourages students to remain curious.

A child who asks why something works, whether it could work differently or how it could be improved is already beginning to think like a scientist, engineer, designer or inventor.

Schools can nurture that curiosity by creating opportunities to build, draw, code, experiment, perform, investigate and question.

The result is not simply a student who knows more facts.

It is a learner who understands how to use knowledge.

Building the learner of the future

Education should prepare young people not only to pass examinations but also to navigate a world that is changing continuously.

STEM provides essential foundations in scientific and technical thinking. STEAM builds on those foundations by recognising that innovation also requires imagination, design, communication and human understanding.

The most successful learners of the future may not be those who fit neatly into one academic category. They may be those who can move comfortably between disciplines — analysing a problem like a scientist, building a solution like an engineer, calculating its impact like a mathematician, using technology intelligently and communicating the result like an artist or designer.

That is ultimately the promise of STEAM.

ARAB INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY: PREPARING TODAY'S STUDENTS FOR TOMORROW'S WORLD

At the beginning of every academic year, parents and students naturally focus on new classes, teachers, schedules, and activities. Yet behind these details lies a bigger question: What kind of education do our children need today to prepare them for a world we cannot fully predict?

Artificial intelligence is reshaping how knowledge is accessed and created, technology is transforming work and communication, and universities and employers increasingly value capabilities beyond traditional academic knowledge. Schools must therefore prepare students not simply to acquire information, but to think,



At Doha Campus

learn, adapt, make decisions, and use their knowledge to make a positive impact.

At Arab International Academy, the educational experience centres on inquiry, conceptual learning, critical thinking, and connecting learning to real life. Students ask questions, investigate, experiment, collaborate, solve problems, and reflect on their learning. The program emphasizes thinking, research, communication, collaboration, and self-management skills—helping students learn not only what to learn, but how to learn.

Technology and artificial intelligence are approached as tools for learning rather than ends in themselves. Students are encouraged to use them thoughtfully and responsibly, while developing the ability to ask meaningful questions, evaluate sources, verify information, and form evidence-based perspectives.

Preparing students for the future also means ensuring that they remain firmly connected to their identity. Arabic and English are central to the Academy's educational experience, alongside opportunities to learn French or Spanish. The aim is to develop global citizens who are open to different cultures while remaining proud of their own language, culture, and identity.

Sustainability is similarly integrated into learning, encouraging students to understand environmental, social, and economic challenges and move from awareness to action. Students are encouraged to



At Lusail Campus

recognize that the choices they make today help shape tomorrow's world.

The Academy also recognizes that there is no single pathway to success. Its range of the IB Diploma Programme, IB Career-Related Programme, and the High School Diploma/ American Diploma provides different pathways that respond to students' abilities, interests, and future aspirations.

Achieving these ambitions requires highly competent teachers. Continuous professional development is therefore a cornerstone of the Academy's work, enabling teachers to continually strengthen their knowledge and practices and create meaningful learning experiences.

Above all, the Academy recognizes that learning depends on wellbeing, belonging, inclusion, and positive relationships. Students need to feel safe, respected, and heard in order to thrive.

As the 2026–2027 academic year begins, Arab International Academy continues to prepare students to learn with curiosity, think independently, adapt confidently, remain rooted in their identity, and use their knowledge, skills, and values to make a positive impact on an ever-changing world.

▶ A holistic growth journey

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When AI decides what 'good English' means

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English

AI may be transforming how students write, but its understanding of 'good English' raises important questions about linguistic diversity, bias and whose voices are being heard

By Sameera Ahmad

My English

I am very happy to be here in Qatar. I am learning many new things and it is a great experience for me.

AI Suggestion

I am very happy to be here in Qatar. I am learning many new things and it is a great experience for me.

- ✗ I am → I'm
- ✗ and → and
- ✗ is → it is
- ✓ experience → experience

More than 61% of essays written by non-native English speakers are identified as AI-generated by popular detection tools, while similar texts written by native English speakers are accepted as human-written with near-zero variance.

This is not simply a technical flaw; it is a design choice with far-reaching implications for the way an entire generation of students writes.

I see this play out every day in my classroom in Qatar, where Arabic, Urdu, Malayalam and English jostle for dominance before the bell rings. My students are truly multilingual. They have developed a fluency in switching between languages that has taken years to cultivate. This is reflected in their English writing, which often has a distinctive texture that can be lost when it is run

through an AI tool designed to detect signs of non-native writing.

This pattern repeats itself over and over again, not merely as a random occurrence, but as a systematic issue embedded in the design of these tools.

An estimated 90% of the data used to train current generative AI systems consists of English, predominantly the English of mainstream America, embedded within the tools and platforms developed in Silicon Valley.

As researcher Celeste Rodriguez Louro of the University of Western Australia has written, this can create AI models that produce a monolithic form of English, systematically excluding, misinterpreting or outright correcting variations in grammar, syntax

and vocabulary found in other varieties of the language.

This is not a new argument. For decades, linguists such as Braj Kachru have written about how Indian English, Nigerian English, Gulf English and other varieties of the language are not errors waiting to be corrected, but valid, living forms of English, each with its own internal logic and beauty.

The idea that there is only one correct form of English is an artefact of a particular linguistic viewpoint — one that has now been encoded into tools used by millions of people every day.

This technology has the potential to automate a particular kind of linguistic judgement against non-native English speakers on a massive scale.

English Language
for Global Citizens

English Language
for Global Citizens



The Stanford study that produced the 61% figure found something even more revealing about how these differences manifest themselves. When essays written by non-native English speakers were rewritten to sound more like American English, the false-positive rate dropped by nearly 50%. The algorithm was less likely to flag the essays because they sounded more like the form of English it had been trained to recognise.

The International AI Safety Report published in 2026 demonstrated this pattern more broadly, finding that the performance of AI models can reflect biases present in their predominantly Western training data. These are not necessarily random outliers; they point to broader challenges embedded in the way these systems are developed and trained.

I think about this every time I see a student accept an AI suggestion over their own writing without question, trusting the tool to understand something they themselves cannot. Gradually, they may begin to believe that their instincts are wrong, that their natural writing style needs to be corrected simply because a machine says so.

Something inside them can begin to change over time as some of their natural expressions, structures and ways of bending language towards a particular purpose are gradually removed.

It is not that these students are necessarily wrong to accept the suggestions. Rather, the concern is that the machine has convinced them that their own way of expressing themselves is wrong.

What is lost in this process is evidence of a mind that has existed across multiple languages – a mind that has had to adapt and evolve its understanding of meaning, context and intent from an early age.

That is not a weakness.

It is a form of intelligence that an English-trained algorithm has never had to develop.

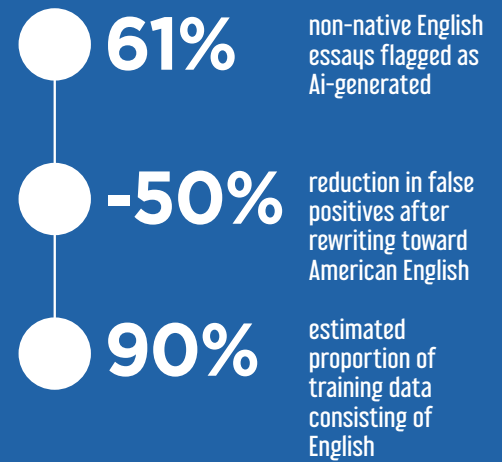
The question we should be asking is not simply, how do we fix students' English?

We should be asking: Whose English is the model trying to learn? What is it excluding? And whose voices are being lost in the process?

Because perhaps my students were not making errors at all.

Perhaps they were simply being corrected into someone else.

WHEN THE ALGORITHM HEARS 'NON-NATIVE'



THE LANGUAGE FILTER

VARIETIES OF ENGLISH
(WHAT STUDENTS BRING)

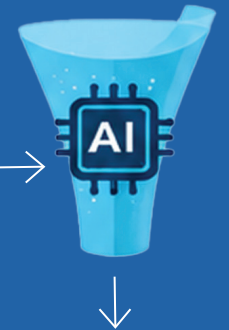
Indian English

Nigerian English

Gulf English

Non-native English

Mixed/Multilingual



Standard
American
English

Different voices. One narrow filter.





TNG
The Next Generation
School
Quality Education

INVESTING IN EDUCATORS, STRENGTHENING LEARNING

The quality of student learning is shaped by the quality of learning among the educators who make it possible.

When we consider how schools improve student attainment, engagement and readiness for the future, educators are at the centre of that process. Curriculum, assessment, technology and resources all have an important role to play, but it is educators who bring these elements together in the classroom, making professional judgements about what learners need, how they learn best and how teaching should respond.

At The Next Generation School (TNG), professional development is a central part of its philosophy of “quality education” and an established part of school life across its seven campuses.

The impact of an established culture

The outcome of this culture can be seen across a range of student achievements.

TNG’s IGCSE results provide one measure, with almost 70% of grades awarded this year at A or A*. Cambridge Checkpoint results have also remained consistently above international averages.

The impact extends beyond examination results. TNG students have been national and regional winners in the British Council’s Your World Competition for five consecutive years. Last year, 10 student research projects reached the final stage of the National Scientific Research Competition, with two securing positions.



While these outcomes reflect the combined contribution of strong teaching, student effort,



curriculum, leadership, parental support and a culture of continuous improvement, they also demonstrate what becomes possible when educators have strong pedagogical knowledge and professional judgement. This enables them to create learning environments where students are encouraged to think critically, investigate, collaborate, solve problems and apply their knowledge.

With these student outcomes and a strong culture of professional learning already in place, TNG’s focus is increasingly on making professional development more purposeful, relevant and closely connected to teaching and learning.

The Culture of Professional Development

Across TNG, professional development is embedded in school life, with dedicated time and opportunities for teachers and leaders to develop through their roles, teams and subject areas. For a multi-campus organisation, this creates a professional learning culture that extends across key stages and leadership, allowing knowledge and practice to be shared across campuses.

But an established culture does not mean a static one.

The school continually examines how professional development can evolve in response to evidence and research.

From professional development to professional enquiry

One area TNG has been strengthening is teachers’ engagement with educational enquiry and research.

Last year, TNG placed greater emphasis on action research, creating opportunities for teachers to investigate aspects of their own practice, examine evidence and consider how changes in approach could influence learning.

This represented an important step in TNG’s professional learning journey. Educators were encouraged not simply to engage with research produced elsewhere, but to investigate questions arising from their own classrooms, generate insights from their practice and share their learning with others, hence contributing to the knowledge of the wider professional community.

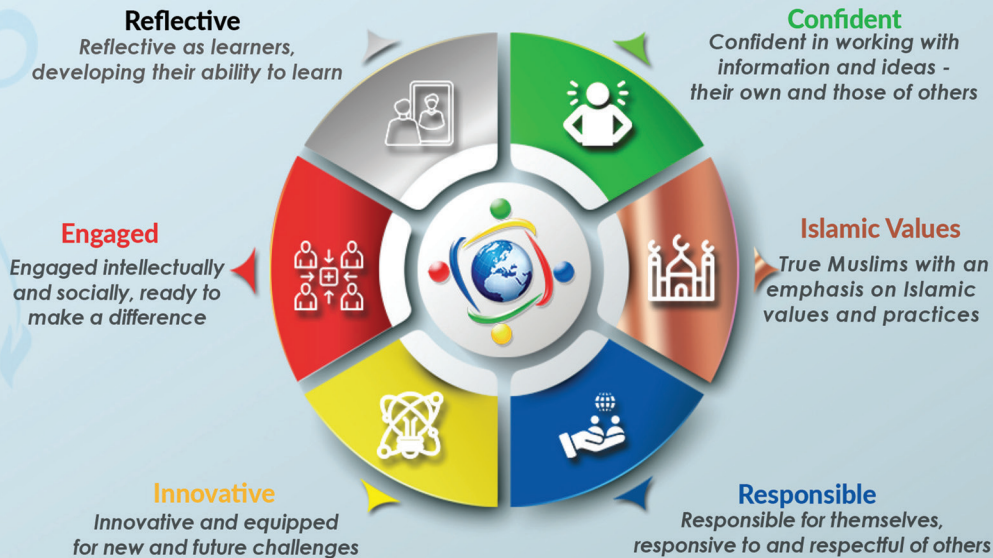




The Next Generation School

Quality Education

TNG School promotes the skills of analysis, problem-solving, critical reasoning, creativity and encourages deeper thinking in its learners.



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Primary & Secondary

Al-Wukair
Primary

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www.tngqatar.com

This is the culture TNG aims to deepen further.

Taking pedagogical development to the next level

TNG's recent partnership with ILM Education Consultants represents the next stage in this development.



Through the diploma-style professional development programme in pedagogy, teachers across all seven TNG campuses have an opportunity to deepen their understanding of pedagogy, engage with educational research, examine their own practice and consider how new learning can translate into classroom impact.

The significance of this investment lies not simply in the qualification itself, but in what it represents.

TNG is investing in the depth of pedagogical knowledge within its teaching community. The programme provides educators with an opportunity to explore why particular approaches work, when they are appropriate, how they can be adapted for different learners and how their impact can be evaluated.

This depth matters because effective teaching involves understanding the thinking behind an approach and making informed professional decisions about when, how and why it should be used.

For TNG, the partnership with ILM is therefore a deliberate effort to deepen an established professional development culture.

Looking ahead

For TNG, investing in professional learning is an ongoing commitment. The aim is to continue sharpening the purpose, depth and impact of its professional development.

The progression from an established professional development culture, to greater engagement with action research, and now to deeper pedagogical development through its partnership with ILM reflects this commitment.

Ultimately, the measure of professional learning is what it makes possible in the classroom.

When educators deepen their knowledge, examine

their practice, engage with evidence and continue to learn, they are better positioned to make informed professional decisions, respond to the needs of their learners and create richer opportunities for students.

Investing in educators therefore strengthens more than individual practice. It strengthens the professional culture of the school, builds its capacity to learn and improve from within, and ultimately contributes to the learning and growth of every child.



HOMEWORK: HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Homework has long been considered an essential part of education. But as children juggle school, activities, family commitments and increasingly demanding academic schedules, the question is no longer simply how much homework they can complete, but how much actually helps them learn

At the end of a school day, the learning does not always stop when the final bell rings.

For millions of children, the school day is followed by another routine: mathematics exercises, reading assignments, science projects, worksheets, essays and preparation for the next day's lessons.

Homework has become such a familiar part of education that it can sometimes seem impossible to imagine school without it.

But a simple question deserves more attention: Does more homework necessarily mean more learning?

The answer is not straightforward.

Homework can reinforce concepts, develop independent study habits and help students practise skills. But too much can also lead to fatigue, frustration, reduced family time and a growing dislike of learning.

The challenge for schools and families is therefore not to decide whether homework is good or bad. It is to understand when homework is useful, how much is appropriate and what kind of homework produces meaningful learning.

Homework serves several purposes. For younger students, it can provide opportunities to practise basic skills learned in class. Reading at home, practising multiplication or completing a short writing exercise can reinforce learning.

For older students, homework can become more complex. Students may research topics, prepare presentations, complete assignments or revise for examinations.

Homework can also teach children how to manage their time and take responsibility for their own work. These skills matter. A student who learns to organise a project, meet a deadline and work independently is developing habits that can be useful well beyond school.

The problem begins when the amount of work becomes more important than the quality of the learning.

Completing 30 repetitive questions may take longer than completing five carefully designed problems, but that does not necessarily mean the student has learned more.



At some point, homework can become an exercise in completion rather than learning. The student begins asking, "How quickly can I finish this?" rather than, "What am I learning from this?"

That distinction matters.

Good homework should have a clear educational purpose. A short reading assignment followed by a thoughtful question may generate more learning than several pages of repetitive exercises.

A mathematics teacher might ask students to solve three challenging problems and





explain their reasoning rather than assigning 30 similar questions. A science teacher might ask students to observe something at home and record their findings. A language teacher might ask a student to interview a family member and use the conversation to develop a piece of writing.

These assignments connect learning with thinking.

The goal is not simply to keep students busy. It is to give them something worth thinking about.

The appropriate amount of homework also varies considerably according to a child's age, development and circumstances. A six-year-old and a 16-year-old should not be expected to approach homework in the same way.

Young children generally benefit from opportunities to read, play, explore and develop social skills rather than spending long periods completing formal written assignments. As students get older, independent study becomes increasingly important, particularly as they prepare for examinations and higher education.

But older students also have demanding schedules. They may participate in sports, music, clubs, volunteering or other activities. They may have family responsibilities or long journeys between school and home.

The same amount of homework can therefore have very different effects on different students.

Homework does not affect only students. It affects families. Parents may spend evenings helping children understand instructions, checking assignments, searching for materials or attempting to resolve disagreements about unfinished work.

For some families, homework becomes a daily source of tension.

"Have you finished your homework?"

"Not yet."

"When are you going to do it?"

"I'll do it later."

The cycle repeats.

Homework can also become particularly challenging when parents are expected to provide substantial academic support. Not every parent has the time, confidence or subject knowledge to help with advanced mathematics, science or language assignments.

This can create an unintended inequality.

A child whose family has more time, resources or access to private tutoring may receive significantly more assistance than another child completing the same assignment. Homework should ideally measure what a student has learned, not how much academic support is available at home.

Children also need time outside school.

Family conversations, meals, play, hobbies, reading for pleasure, exercise and simply having time to relax are all part of a healthy childhood.

An evening does not have to be productive in an academic sense to be valuable.

A child helping a parent cook may be learning about measurement and planning. Playing football can teach teamwork and persistence. Reading a novel for pleasure can develop vocabulary and imagination without being assigned by a teacher. Talking to grandparents can teach history in a way no worksheet can reproduce.

Education happens in many places.

The home should not become an extension of the classroom every evening.

One of the most important considerations when discussing homework is sleep.

Children and teenagers need sufficient sleep for their physical health, emotional wellbeing, attention and learning.

When homework regularly pushes bedtime later, the consequences can extend into the following school day.

A tired student may struggle to concentrate, remember information or regulate emotions.

This creates a counterproductive cycle. More homework leads to less sleep. Less sleep leads to poorer concentration. Poorer concentration can make homework take even longer.

The solution is not necessarily to eliminate homework, but to ensure that assignments are realistic enough to fit within a student's overall day.

Homework can also expose inequalities that exist outside school.

Some students have quiet study spaces, reliable internet, laptops, books and parents who can help them. Others may share bedrooms, have limited access to devices, have caring responsibilities or face other challenges at home.

Digital homework can create additional problems when students do not have reliable access to technology or connectivity.

Schools therefore need to consider whether an assignment can realistically be completed by every student, not just the student with the most supportive circumstances.

Where technology is required, schools may need to provide appropriate access and alternatives.

There is, of course, a place for sustained academic practice.

Students preparing for important examinations may need to revise extensively. Older students may also need to develop the ability to study independently for longer periods.

The question is whether that preparation is structured effectively.

Revision does not have to mean endless hours at a desk. Students can use practice questions, spaced revision, self-testing, discussion and targeted review of difficult topics.

The objective should be to identify what students do not understand and address those gaps.

Simply increasing the number of hours spent studying does not guarantee better preparation.

There is another important distinction between productive homework and punitive homework.

Homework should not be used simply because a class was noisy, because students finished early or because a teacher feels that children need to be kept busy.

When students associate homework with punishment, it can damage their relationship with learning.

The same is true when homework is assigned without a clear purpose. Students quickly recognise the difference between an assignment that helps them understand something and an assignment that exists simply because there is space left in the evening schedule.

The rise of digital tools and artificial intelligence has made homework more complicated.

Students can now use AI to explain concepts, generate ideas, translate text, summarise material and, in some cases, complete entire assignments.

This presents a challenge for teachers.

If homework can easily be outsourced to an AI system, simply assigning more written work may not achieve the intended learning objective.

It may be more useful to design assignments that require students to explain their reasoning, reflect on their process, connect learning with personal experience or demonstrate their understanding in class.

For example, instead of asking students to write a generic essay that an AI system could generate, a teacher might ask them to develop an argument, document their research process and then discuss their conclusions.

AI therefore gives schools another reason to reconsider not only how much homework students receive but what kind of homework they receive.

One of the strongest arguments for homework is that it can gradually teach students to work without constant supervision.

A well-designed assignment can encourage a child to plan, research, solve problems and manage time.

But independence cannot be created simply by increasing workload.

Students need guidance.

A teacher might show younger students how to break an assignment into smaller tasks. Older students can be taught how to prioritise, estimate how long work will take and build revision schedules.

The objective is to move gradually from teacher-directed learning to student-directed learning.

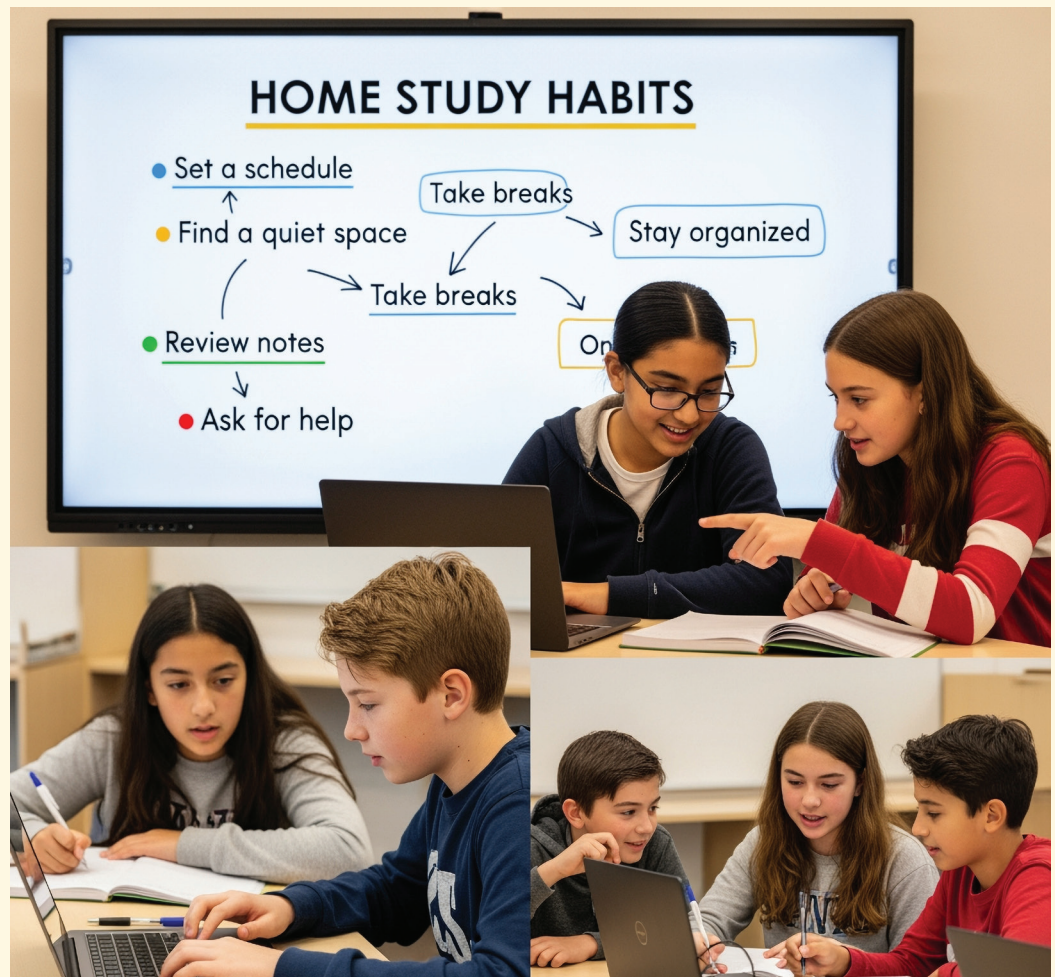
Homework can play a role in that transition.

Not every form of home learning should be measured in worksheets.

One of the most valuable things schools can encourage is regular reading for pleasure.

Reading a novel, comic, magazine or non-fiction book at home can help develop vocabulary, comprehension, imagination and general knowledge.

It also gives children an opportunity to choose.



A student who spends 20 minutes voluntarily reading a book they love may be engaging more deeply with language than a student spending an hour reluctantly completing a worksheet.

Schools can therefore consider making reading a regular part of home learning while allowing students meaningful choice over what they read.

Parents do not need to become teachers at home.

Their role can be to create conditions that support learning.

A regular time and suitable place for homework can help. So can removing unnecessary distractions and encouraging children to organise their own materials.

Parents can ask questions rather than immediately providing answers.

“What do you think the question is asking?”

“What have you learned in class?”

“Which part is difficult?”

“What could you try next?”

These questions encourage children to think independently.

Parents can also communicate with teachers when homework consistently takes far longer than expected.

If a 20-minute assignment regularly takes a child two hours, that is useful information for the teacher.

Schools, meanwhile, can take a broader view of the student's day. Instead of teachers independently assigning homework without considering the total workload, schools can coordinate assignments across subjects.

A student should not discover on Tuesday evening that mathematics, science, English and social studies teachers have all assigned major projects for the same deadline.

Schools can also monitor whether homework is actually contributing to learning.

If an assignment is repeatedly completed poorly, ignored or outsourced, the response should not automatically be to assign more.

It may be time to reconsider the assignment itself.

Perhaps the most useful question is not, “How much homework should we give?”

It is, “What is the purpose of this homework?”

If the answer is clear, the next questions become easier.

Does the student need more practice? Do they need to prepare for the next lesson? Are they developing independent study skills? Are they reading for pleasure? Are they preparing for an examination?

Or are they simply being given work because homework is expected?

That last reason deserves particular scrutiny.

Homework is neither inherently good nor inherently harmful. Its value depends on its purpose, quality, quantity, timing and the needs of the student.

Some students may benefit from additional practice. Others may need more time to rest, read, play or participate in activities outside school.

The goal should not be to eliminate homework. Nor should it be to maximise it. The goal should be to make the time students spend learning at home meaningful.

A child who finishes homework and still has time to have dinner with the family, read a book, play outside, talk to friends and get enough sleep is experiencing something important too.

Education is not measured only by the number of questions answered before bedtime.

Sometimes, knowing when to close the notebook is also part of learning.

WHAT WILL LEARNING LOOK LIKE IN 2030?

Imagine walking into a classroom in 2030. There may still be desks, books, teachers and students. There may still be examinations, homework and school uniforms. But many of the assumptions surrounding learning could look very different.

A student struggling with algebra might receive a personalised explanation generated around their specific misunderstanding. Another student could explore ancient Rome through an immersive virtual environment rather than simply reading about it in a textbook. A science class might use digital simulations to recreate environments that

would otherwise be impossible to visit.

A teacher may spend less time delivering the same explanation to every student and more time mentoring individuals, leading discussions, designing projects and helping students evaluate information.

And the most important question about a student's education may increasingly become not simply, "What do you know?", but "What can you do with what you know?"

This is not science fiction. Many of the technologies and approaches that could shape education by 2030 already exist.



Artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, adaptive learning platforms and digital collaboration tools are developing rapidly. At the same time, the workplace is changing the skills employers expect from young people.

The OECD's Trends Shaping Education 2025 notes that AI, the Internet of Things and virtual reality are already changing how people work, learn and communicate, while rapid labour-market transitions are increasing the need for both specialised skills and broader competencies that allow people to continue learning throughout life.

The classroom of 2030, therefore, may not be defined by technology alone.

It may be defined by how intelligently technology is combined with human teaching.

AI becomes a learning companion

The most obvious change is likely to come from artificial intelligence.

Today's students can already use AI systems to ask questions, generate explanations, practise languages, solve mathematical problems, brainstorm ideas and receive feedback.

By 2030, these systems could become much more integrated into everyday learning.

Instead of one textbook providing one

explanation for an entire class, an AI system could potentially present the same concept at different levels of complexity depending on each student's needs.

One student might receive a visual explanation. Another might receive additional examples. A third might be asked increasingly challenging questions.

The objective would not necessarily be to replace the teacher but to provide additional support between teacher-led interactions.

The OECD notes that AI has the potential to provide personalised learning experiences, help teachers identify students' needs and automate some administrative tasks.

But this also creates a new responsibility.

Students will need to understand that an AI-generated answer is not automatically a correct answer.

The ability to question, verify and evaluate AI output could become as important as the ability to use the technology itself.

A new generation of students may therefore need to learn not only digital literacy, but AI literacy.

The OECD and European Commission's

2026 AI Literacy Framework for primary and secondary education emphasises the need for learners to understand AI, critically evaluate its outputs and use it responsibly, ethically and creatively.

The end of one-size-fits-all learning?

For much of the history of mass education, students in the same classroom have broadly followed the same curriculum at the same pace.

The teacher explains a concept, students complete an exercise and the class moves forward.

But children do not learn at identical speeds.

One student may understand fractions immediately. Another may need several additional explanations. A third may already be ready for more advanced work.

Personalised learning technologies could make it easier to respond to these differences.

By 2030, learning platforms may be capable of identifying patterns in a student's performance and adjusting exercises accordingly.

A student who repeatedly makes the same type of mistake could receive targeted practice. A student who demonstrates mastery could move to more challenging material.





This could make learning more flexible.

But personalisation should not mean that children learn alone in front of screens.

The most useful model may combine machine-assisted personalisation with human teaching.

AI can help identify what a student appears to need. A teacher can help determine why the student needs it and how best to respond.

The classroom becomes more immersive

Virtual reality and augmented reality could also change the learning experience.

Instead of simply reading about the solar system, students could explore it.

Instead of looking at a diagram of the human heart, they could examine a three-dimensional representation. History students could enter simulated environments representing different periods. Geography students could explore ecosystems without travelling thousands of kilometres. Medical students could practise procedures in controlled virtual environments.

The OECD already identifies immersive technologies such as VR as tools being used in areas such as medical training and explored for developing other skills, including empathy.

The real value of immersive learning, however, will depend on whether it improves understanding. Technology should not be used simply because it looks impressive.

A virtual experience that helps students understand a difficult concept can be powerful. A virtual experience that merely adds entertainment without improving learning may have little educational value.

By 2030, schools may therefore become more selective about when immersive technology genuinely adds something that a book, video or teacher cannot provide as effectively.

From passive learning to active learning

Another major shift could be from consuming information to creating things.

Students may increasingly learn through projects, simulations, experiments, collaboration and real-world challenges.

Imagine a class studying climate change.

Instead of simply memorising facts, students could analyse local environmental data, model different scenarios, design solutions and present their proposals.

A mathematics lesson could involve planning the budget for a hypothetical business.

A language class could involve producing a podcast. An engineering project could require students to design and test a low-energy structure.

The boundaries between subjects could become less rigid. This is closely connected to the changing world of work, where employers increasingly value people who can combine technical knowledge with creativity, analytical thinking, collaboration and adaptability.

The workplace is changing the classroom

Education has always responded, at least partly, to changes in the labour market.

The difference today is the speed of change.

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025, based on the views of more than 1,000 employers representing more than 14 million workers across 55 economies, projects significant labour-market disruption between 2025 and 2030. It estimates that 170 million new jobs could be created while 92 million roles could be displaced, resulting in a net increase of 78 million jobs.

The report also identifies AI and big data, networks and cybersecurity, and technological literacy among the fastest-growing skills. At the same time, creative thinking, resilience, flexibility, curiosity and lifelong learning are expected to become increasingly important.

That combination is significant.

The future worker will not simply need to

understand technology.

They will need to work with technology.

And that means schools cannot focus exclusively on either technical skills or traditional academic knowledge.

Students will need both.

Learning how to learn

Perhaps one of the most important skills of 2030 will be the ability to keep learning.

A student graduating in the early 2030s may work in industries that change significantly during their career. Some roles may disappear, others may be transformed and entirely new occupations may emerge.

This makes the traditional idea of education as something that happens primarily before entering the workforce increasingly outdated.

Learning may become continuous.

A university degree could be the beginning of a professional journey rather than the end of formal education. Workers may return to education repeatedly to acquire new skills, earn micro-credentials or retrain for changing occupations.

The OECD highlights lifelong learning and the need to combine specific skills with broader competencies that enable people to continue learning as labour markets evolve.

The most valuable lesson schools can therefore teach may be how to learn independently.

Teachers become even more important

If technology becomes better at delivering information, what happens to teachers?

Their role may become more human, not less.

Teachers could increasingly act as mentors, coaches, facilitators and learning designers.

AI may help identify that a student is struggling with a particular concept. The teacher can investigate the reason.

A platform may generate a personalised exercise. The teacher can decide whether that exercise is appropriate.

An AI system may produce an answer. The teacher can challenge students to evaluate it.

A digital simulation may create an impressive experience. The teacher can help students connect that experience to the wider subject.

In this environment, the teacher is not competing with technology.

The teacher is helping students make sense of technology.

The OECD's 2026 report on the teaching profession argues for harnessing AI as an ally for teaching and learning while strengthening teacher autonomy, trust and collaboration.

Assessment may have to change

If students can ask AI to generate an essay, solve a mathematical problem or produce a presentation, traditional assessment methods will face increasing pressure.

Simply asking students to reproduce information may become less useful when machines can generate information instantly.

Schools may therefore place greater emphasis on assessments that reveal the student's own reasoning.

Students could be asked to explain how they reached an answer, defend a position, conduct an experiment, solve a real-world problem or work collaboratively on a project.

Oral examinations and classroom discussions could become more important. So could portfolios showing how a student's work develops over time. The purpose of assessment may increasingly shift from asking:

"Can you produce the correct answer?" to: "Can you demonstrate that you understand, evaluate and apply the knowledge?"

Creativity becomes a core skill

The growth of AI may make creativity more important rather than less.

If machines become increasingly capable of generating text, images, code and other content, students will need to develop the ability to identify meaningful problems and imagine useful solutions.

The World Economic Forum's 2025 report places creative thinking among the skills expected to rise in importance through 2030.

This reinforces the case for STEAM education, project-based learning, design thinking, arts education and opportunities for experimentation.

Students should have opportunities to make things that do not already exist.

They should be allowed to try ideas that fail.

They should learn that a first attempt is not necessarily the final answer.

In a world where AI can produce an answer in seconds, the ability to ask an interesting question may become particularly valuable.

Human skills remain essential

There is another paradox.

The more technology becomes embedded in education and work, the more important certain human capabilities may become.

- Communication.
- Empathy.
- Leadership.
- Teamwork.
- Resilience.
- Judgement.
- Curiosity.

The ability to build relationships.

These are difficult to automate because they depend on context, relationships and human experience.

Schools therefore have a responsibility to create opportunities for students to interact with one another, work through disagreements, collaborate on projects and develop social and emotional skills.

A technologically advanced classroom should not become a socially isolated one.

Learning may happen everywhere

The classroom itself may also become less important as the only place where learning happens. Students could move between physical classrooms, virtual environments, home study, laboratories, community projects and workplaces.

A geography lesson might involve fieldwork.

A business class might collaborate with a local company. A university student might combine online learning with an industry placement.

A school could connect classrooms across countries, allowing students to work with

peers from different cultural backgrounds.

The concept of a "school day" may gradually become more flexible as digital resources make learning accessible beyond fixed classroom hours.

But flexibility will also require discipline.

Students will need to develop time management, self-direction and the ability to distinguish productive digital learning from distraction. There is a temptation to imagine the future classroom as a collection of screens, headsets, robots and AI assistants.

But technology alone does not improve education. The OECD stresses that technological change brings opportunities as well as concerns around privacy, equity, bias and other risks.

Access is another issue.

If some students have sophisticated AI tools, high-speed connectivity and immersive devices while others do not, technology could widen educational inequalities rather than reduce them.

Data protection will also become increasingly important.

Schools will need to consider what information AI systems collect about students, how it is stored and who can access it.

There will also be questions about academic integrity, over-reliance on AI and whether students are developing the underlying skills they are supposed to learn.

A successful education system in 2030 will therefore need not only technological capability but also clear ethical boundaries.

What might a typical lesson look like?

Consider a secondary-school lesson on water scarcity in 2030.

The teacher begins by introducing the problem.

Students then use an AI learning assistant to explore different aspects of water use, but they are required to verify the information against reliable sources.

Teams analyse local and international data.

Using an immersive simulation, they explore what happens to a city when water availability falls.

They then design possible solutions.

One group develops a water-saving campaign. Another designs a technological solution. A third analyses the economic implications.

The teacher moves between groups, challenging assumptions, asking questions and helping students refine their ideas.

At the end, students present their proposals and explain not only what they recommend but why.

There is still teaching.

There is still knowledge.

There is still a teacher.

But the learning experience is more interactive, personalised and connected to real-world problems. Perhaps the biggest transformation by 2030 will be the changing role of the learner. Students may have greater control over the pace, pathway and format of their education.

But greater choice comes with greater responsibility.

A personalised learning environment cannot work if students are unwilling to engage.

Students will need to learn how to set goals, manage their time, assess their own progress and ask for help.

The ideal learner of 2030 may therefore be neither a passive recipient of information nor a student left alone with technology.

They will be an active participant in their own education.

For all the technological change ahead, some elements of education should remain familiar.

Children will still need teachers who know them.

They will still need books and stories.

They will still need opportunities to ask questions.

They will still need friends and classmates.

They will still need encouragement when they fail.

They will still need adults who help them distinguish between right and wrong, fact and misinformation, confidence and overconfidence.

Technology can transform the tools of education.

It cannot replace the fundamental human purpose of education.

A classroom built for an uncertain future

Nobody can know exactly what education will look like in 2030. The OECD itself cautions that the future is rarely a simple continuation of current trends and uses scenario planning precisely because trends can accelerate, change direction or interact in unexpected ways.

But some direction of travel is becoming clear.

AI is changing how information is created and accessed. Immersive technologies are expanding the ways students can experience subjects.

Personalised platforms are making it possible to adapt learning more closely to individual needs. And changing workplaces are demanding a combination of technological knowledge and distinctly human capabilities. The challenge for education is not to predict every job or technology that will exist in 2030.

It is to prepare young people to function confidently in a world that cannot be predicted with certainty. That means teaching them how to use technology without becoming dependent on it.

How to work with AI without surrendering their judgement.

How to learn independently while valuing teachers and peers.

How to combine technical knowledge with creativity. And, perhaps most importantly, how to remain curious.

The classroom of 2030 may have fewer boundaries between subjects, more personalised pathways and a much closer relationship with technology. But at its heart, it should still be a place where young people ask questions, explore ideas, make mistakes, work with others and discover what they are capable of becoming.

The technology may change. The purpose of learning does not have to.

ONE BOOK, MANY FORMATS: WHY CHOICE MATTERS IN READING

For generations, the image of a child reading has been fairly straightforward: a book held in two hands, pages turning one by one, perhaps a quiet corner at home or a school library.

Today, that picture is changing.

A child may read a printed novel before bedtime, listen to the same story as an audiobook on the way to school, explore a graphic-novel version on a tablet, or read an e-book on a family trip. Another child may prefer large print, highlighted text or a

read-along version that combines narration with words on a screen.

They are all reading.

And increasingly, educators and literacy experts are recognising that the question may not be “Which format is best?”, but rather “Which format helps this child engage with the story?”

Recent research from the National Literacy Trust shows that print and digital reading are not simply

competing activities. Children and young people increasingly move between formats, with the most engaged readers particularly likely to read across both print and digital media.

That has an important implication for parents and teachers: choice can be a powerful part of developing a reading habit.

Beyond the print-versus-screen debate

The debate about children and screens often



From print books and e-books to audiobooks, graphic novels and interactive stories, children today have more ways than ever to experience a book. Giving them the freedom to choose the format that works best for them could be one of the keys to building stronger, more enthusiastic readers



presents a simple choice: books are good, screens are bad.

Reality is more complicated.

Print reading remains extremely important. Research continues to associate print reading with strong reading outcomes, while sustained reading of books can help develop concentration, comprehension and confidence. The National Literacy Trust's 2026 research also found that print remained the most popular format for children's free-time reading in 2025.

But digital reading is already part of children's lives.

In the same research, more than one in five children aged 8 to 18 reported reading fiction digitally, rising to almost three in 10 among 16- to 18-year-olds. Young readers described digital formats as convenient and compatible with the devices they already use.

The lesson is not that digital reading should replace print.

It is that reading can happen in more than one way.

The power of choice

For a reluctant reader, being told exactly what to read – and exactly how to read it – can sometimes make reading feel like another school assignment.

Choice changes that experience.

A child interested in football may be more willing to pick up a sports magazine or biography than a traditional novel. A child fascinated by space might prefer an illustrated science book. Someone who struggles with long blocks of text may be drawn to a graphic novel. Another child may discover that listening to an audiobook makes stories more accessible.

The format becomes a bridge to the content.

Research from the National Literacy Trust identifies freedom to choose what to read, books connected to children's interests and exposure to a variety of formats among factors that can encourage reading for pleasure.

This is particularly important because reading for

pleasure is not simply about getting children to complete more pages. It is about helping them develop a relationship with reading.

Once a child discovers, "I like this," reading becomes less of a task and more of a personal activity.

When the audiobook becomes the gateway

Audiobooks are sometimes dismissed as an easier alternative to reading.

That misses their potential.

Listening to a story can introduce children to vocabulary, narrative structure, characters and ideas that they might otherwise avoid because the printed text feels difficult.

The National Literacy Trust's 2026 research found that 47.3% of children and young people listen to audiobooks or podcasts, while more than a quarter say listening to audio sparks their interest in reading books.

Audio can therefore become a gateway rather than a replacement.

A child might first listen to Harry Potter, for example, and later decide to read the physical books. A student struggling with a challenging novel might listen to a chapter and then follow along in print. Families can listen together during a car journey and discuss the story afterwards.

The experience remains centred on language and storytelling.

Reading and listening can work together

One of the most useful possibilities offered by digital technology is the ability to combine formats.

A child can read the words on a screen while listening to a narrator. Some platforms highlight text as it is spoken. Others allow children to adjust font size, spacing or display settings.

For younger children, this can help connect spoken language with written words.

For students learning a second language, audio can also provide a model of pronunciation, rhythm and expression. This is particularly



relevant in multicultural environments such as Qatar, where children may be learning and using several languages in their daily lives.

Qatar National Library, for example, provides children with access to print books, e-books, audiobooks and educational digital resources. Its children's online collection includes resources in both English and Arabic, including BOOKI, which combines digital books with read-along audio, and I Read Arabic, a leveled digital reading programme. That kind of variety matters because access and engagement are closely connected.

Graphic novels count too

Another format that deserves more respect is the graphic novel. Some parents may worry that a child who chooses comics or graphic novels is avoiding "real reading". But graphic storytelling requires readers to interpret words, images, sequencing, expressions, context and visual cues.

For some children, the combination of text and imagery provides the confidence they need to become more enthusiastic readers.

It can also serve as a bridge.

A student who starts with graphic novels may eventually move towards conventional novels. A child who finds a 200-page book intimidating may happily begin with a visually rich story and gradually develop the stamina to read longer texts. The objective should not always be to move children towards the format adults consider most serious.

Sometimes the better question is:

What will get this child reading?

Different children, different readers

There is no universal reading profile.

One child may love the physical sensation of turning pages. Another may prefer an e-reader because it is easier to carry and customise. One may enjoy listening to stories. Another may want a combination of illustrations, text and sound.

Even the same child can

prefer different formats at different times. A student might choose a physical novel for bedtime, an audiobook during a journey and an e-book while travelling.

That flexibility should not necessarily be viewed as inconsistency.

It may actually be a sign of a confident reader.

The National Literacy Trust found that children who enjoy reading most are particularly likely to read across formats, suggesting that engagement can come first and format follows.

But not all screen reading is equal

There is an important distinction between digital reading and simply spending time on a device. Reading a novel on an e-reader is very different from scrolling through short videos. Reading an online article carefully is different from jumping between notifications. Listening to an audiobook is different from passively consuming rapidly changing entertainment. The device alone does not determine the quality of the experience.

Purpose matters.

Recent literacy research has found that while digital reading remains part of children's lives, engagement with online-only reading material has declined, particularly as short-form video and AI-generated summaries become more prominent.

That makes sustained reading even more important.

Technology should make it easier for children to enter a story and stay with it, not constantly pull them away from it.

Parents don't have to choose sides

Parents sometimes feel they must decide between traditional books and technology.

They don't.

A family reading routine can include both.

A child can have a physical book beside the bed and an audiobook for the car. Parents can visit the library and also explore its digital collection. A family can read the same story in different formats and talk about which version they preferred.

The important thing is to create opportunities for reading rather than turning the format into an argument.

Instead of saying:

"You should read a physical book."

Try asking:

"What would you like to read, and how would you like to experience it?"

That small change can give children a sense of ownership.

Teachers can use format as a teaching tool

The same principle applies in the classroom.

Rather than requiring every student to engage with a text in exactly the same way, teachers can sometimes offer multiple entry points.

A student might:

- read the printed text;
- use an e-book with accessibility features;
- listen to an audiobook alongside the text;
- explore a graphic adaptation;
- discuss the story with classmates;
- create a response through writing, illustration or presentation.

This does not mean lowering expectations.





The learning objective can remain the same while the pathway towards it becomes more flexible.

For a student with reading difficulties, accessibility features may remove an unnecessary barrier. For a multilingual learner, audio may support vocabulary and pronunciation. For a highly confident reader, independent access to digital libraries can open up a much wider range of books.

Accessibility

For some children, choosing a format is not simply about preference.

It is about access.

Adjustable text size, audio narration, highlighted words, digital dictionaries and other accessibility features can make reading possible for children who find conventional print challenging.

Qatar National Library's Bookshare resource, for example, allows eligible users to listen to books, follow highlighted text, use Braille and customise the reading experience.

This illustrates an important principle: a reading environment should adapt to the reader, rather than expecting every reader to adapt to one fixed format.

Don't turn every book into homework

Perhaps the greatest danger is that adults become so focused on measuring reading that they forget to protect the pleasure of it.

How many pages did you read?

How many minutes?

What was the moral of the story?

What did the author mean?

What vocabulary did you learn?

These questions can be useful in the right context. But if every reading experience ends with a worksheet or test, children may begin to associate books with assessment rather than enjoyment.

Sometimes the most productive question is simply:

"Did you like it?"

And then:

"What should we read next?"

The ultimate objective is not to raise children who can complete a certain number of books each year.

It is to raise people who know how to find a book, story or piece of information that speaks to them — and who feel comfortable exploring it.

That may happen through a paperback.

It may happen through an e-reader.

It may happen through an audiobook.

It may happen through a graphic novel.

Or it may happen through all four.

The future of reading does not have to be a battle between paper and pixels. The strongest readers may be those who move comfortably between worlds, choosing the format that best suits the moment, the material and their own needs.

In the end, the most important thing is not how a child opens a story.

It is that they want to open one.

And sometimes, giving a child the freedom to choose the format is the first step towards making that happen.

THE HUMAN SIDE OF LEARNING

As artificial intelligence transforms classrooms, the teacher's role is evolving from delivering information to mentoring, guiding, motivating and helping students make sense of an increasingly complex world



For generations, the image of a teacher has been remarkably familiar: standing in front of a classroom, explaining a lesson, writing on a board and helping students understand concepts that may initially seem difficult.

But the classroom of the future may look very different.

Artificial intelligence can already generate lesson plans, summarise information, create exercises, provide instant feedback and adapt learning materials to different levels. AI-powered systems can also support personalised learning and help educators with some administrative and assessment tasks. UNESCO notes that such technologies can create opportunities for personalised tutoring and smarter lesson planning, while also raising questions about over-reliance, ethics and human agency.

This naturally raises a question that has been asked repeatedly since generative AI entered mainstream use:

If machines can provide information, what is the role of the teacher?

The answer may be more important than the question itself.

AI may change what teachers do, but it does not eliminate the need for teachers. Instead, it creates an opportunity to redefine teaching around the things that technology cannot adequately provide: human connection, judgement, encouragement, empathy, mentorship, context and an understanding of the individual learner.

The teacher of the AI era may be less of a transmitter of information and more of a mentor, coach, facilitator and guide.

From information provider to learning guide

For much of modern education, teachers have been among the primary sources of information available to students.

Today, information is everywhere.

A student can ask an AI system to explain a mathematical concept, summarise a historical event, translate a paragraph or generate examples within seconds. This does not make teachers less important. It changes the nature of the value they provide.

The challenge is no longer simply helping students find information.

It is helping them determine which information is accurate, relevant and trustworthy – and what to do with it.

AI systems can produce convincing answers that contain inaccuracies, incomplete explanations or misleading assumptions. Students therefore need someone who can teach them to question, verify and evaluate what they encounter.

A teacher can ask the questions an automated system may not ask:

Why do you believe this answer?

What evidence supports it?

Is there another perspective?

What assumptions are being made?

How would you explain this in your own words?

These questions develop critical thinking rather than simply delivering information.

The teacher as mentor

One of the most important roles teachers can increasingly play is that of mentor.

Students do not simply need academic



information. They need guidance as they navigate choices, challenges, friendships, failures, ambitions and uncertainty.

A teacher who knows a student over time may recognise when their confidence is declining, when they are becoming disengaged or when they have discovered an area in which they genuinely excel.

A machine may identify that a student is consistently performing poorly in mathematics.

A teacher may discover why.

Perhaps the student is afraid of making mistakes. Perhaps they understand the concepts but struggle to explain their reasoning. Perhaps they have lost confidence after repeated setbacks. Or perhaps they are simply more engaged when mathematics is connected to something they care about.

This human interpretation matters.

Technology can identify patterns. Teachers can help understand the person behind those patterns.

Personalised learning

Personalisation is one of the most frequently discussed benefits of AI in education. Different students learn at different speeds and in different ways. Some need additional practice, while others are ready for more challenging material.

AI tools can potentially help identify gaps in understanding and provide differentiated exercises or explanations. UNESCO recognises personalised learning as one of the opportunities emerging from AI in education. But personalisation should not be confused with automation.

A genuinely personalised education involves knowing the learner. A teacher can decide when a student needs another explanation, when they need a challenge, when they need encouragement and when they simply need someone to listen. The most effective future classroom may therefore combine machine-assisted personalisation with human judgement.

AI can help answer the question:

What does this student appear to need academically?

The teacher can then consider the larger question:

What does this student need as a person and as a learner?

Meaningful feedback

Assessment is another area in which AI is likely to change teachers' work.

Automated systems can potentially assist with routine marking, identify common errors and provide immediate feedback.

That can save teachers time.

But the value of assessment has never been limited to assigning a grade. A student's mistake can reveal how they think.

A teacher reading an essay may notice not only a grammatical error but also an emerging idea, a lack of confidence, a misunderstanding of a concept or an unusually creative approach.

UNESCO has previously cautioned that excessive automation of assessment can risk removing opportunities for teachers to learn about students' strategies and capabilities.

The future may therefore involve less time spent on repetitive assessment and more time spent interpreting what assessment tells us. Instead of replacing teacher feedback, AI could potentially help teachers focus their feedback where it matters most.

The emotional dimension

Education is deeply emotional.

Students experience excitement, frustration, embarrassment, curiosity, anxiety and pride.

A student who fails an examination does not simply receive a lower number on a page. They may begin to question their ability.

A student who finally understands a difficult concept may experience a surge of confidence.

A teacher is often present during these moments.

That emotional relationship cannot simply be automated. A chatbot may provide encouragement. An AI tutor may explain a concept patiently for the

tenth time. But a teacher can build a relationship over months and years and understand the individual student's history.

They know that the student who is struggling today once succeeded at something difficult.

They can say, in effect:

"You have done this before. You can do it again."

That kind of encouragement is not a technical function. It is part of the human experience of education.

Teaching students how to use AI

Teachers will also become increasingly important as guides to AI itself.

Students need to understand not only how to use AI tools but when to use them, when not to use them and how to question their outputs. AI literacy includes understanding the technology's capabilities and limitations, as well as its ethical implications. UNESCO's teacher competency framework identifies areas including human-centred thinking, AI ethics, AI foundations and applications, AI pedagogy and AI for professional learning.

A teacher might therefore ask students to use AI to generate an answer – and then challenge them to fact-check it. Another assignment might require students to compare an AI-generated explanation with a textbook or primary source. Students could also be asked to identify bias, missing perspectives or unsupported claims in AI-generated content.

The objective is not to teach students to avoid AI.

It is to teach them not to surrender their judgement to it.

The teacher as coach

Sport provides a useful analogy.

A coach does not run onto the field and play every position for the athlete. The coach helps the athlete understand their strengths, identify weaknesses, develop strategies and learn from mistakes. The same principle can apply to education.

AI can become a powerful assistant, but the teacher remains the person helping the student develop the ability to think independently.

A teacher may increasingly spend less time explaining basic information to the entire class and more time moving between groups, asking questions, observing progress and providing targeted guidance. The classroom could become more interactive rather than less.

Creativity becomes more important

As AI becomes increasingly capable of generating text, images, presentations and even computer code, education will need to place greater emphasis on the abilities that students must develop themselves.

Creativity is one of them.

So are curiosity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration and problem-solving.

Teachers will therefore have an important role in designing learning experiences that cannot be completed simply by asking an AI system for an answer. Students may be asked to conduct experiments, debate competing ideas, build prototypes, collaborate on projects, interview people, solve real-world problems or defend their reasoning.

The teacher becomes the designer of meaningful learning experiences. There is another reason teachers will remain essential: school is not only a

place where academic content is delivered.

It is where children learn how to work with other people. They learn to listen, disagree respectfully, collaborate, negotiate, apologise, lead and compromise. They encounter people with different personalities, cultures, abilities and perspectives.

These experiences help develop social and emotional skills that cannot be reduced to academic performance.

UNESCO's current approach to AI in education emphasises the importance of preserving human agency, inclusion, equity and cultural and linguistic diversity.

This is particularly important in increasingly diverse classrooms, where education is also about learning how to live and work with people who may see the world differently. The transformation will not happen simply by giving teachers access to AI tools.

Teachers themselves need training and professional development. They need to understand how AI systems work at an appropriate level, how to evaluate their outputs, how to protect student data, how to recognise bias and how to incorporate AI into lessons without allowing it to undermine learning.

UNESCO's AI competency framework was developed specifically to help teachers build these capabilities and emphasises that educators need technical, ethical and pedagogical understanding of AI.

This means professional development must become an ongoing part of the AI-enabled education system. Teachers cannot be expected to prepare students for an AI-shaped world while being given little opportunity to understand that world themselves.

There is, however, a line that education systems should be careful not to cross. Efficiency is valuable, but education cannot be measured entirely in terms of efficiency.

If AI saves a teacher two hours of administrative work and allows those two hours to be spent working directly with students, that is a meaningful gain.

If technology reduces human interaction because human interaction is considered inefficient, something important has been lost.

The goal should not be to create a classroom with fewer teachers. It should be to create classrooms in which teachers have more time and capacity to do the things that require a teacher.

As UNESCO has argued, AI should support human agency rather than displace it, and technology should be used in ways that strengthen – rather than diminish – the relational dimension of education.

A new partnership

The future may therefore be less about a competition between teachers and machines and more about a new relationship between three participants: teacher, AI and student.

AI can process information quickly.

It can generate examples, identify patterns and support routine tasks.

The student brings curiosity, experience, imagination and the desire to learn.

The teacher brings judgement, empathy, context, mentorship and the ability to understand the learner as a whole person.

Each has a different role.

The challenge for education systems will be to make sure those roles complement rather than undermine one another.

There is a paradox at the heart of AI in education.

The more technology becomes capable of delivering information, the less valuable information delivery alone becomes. And as that happens, the human dimensions of education become more important.

A teacher's greatest contribution may no longer be knowing every answer.

It may be knowing which questions to ask.

It may be recognising when a student needs a challenge and when they need encouragement. It may be helping a teenager discover a talent they did not know they possessed. It may be teaching students to question a machine that sounds confident but is wrong.

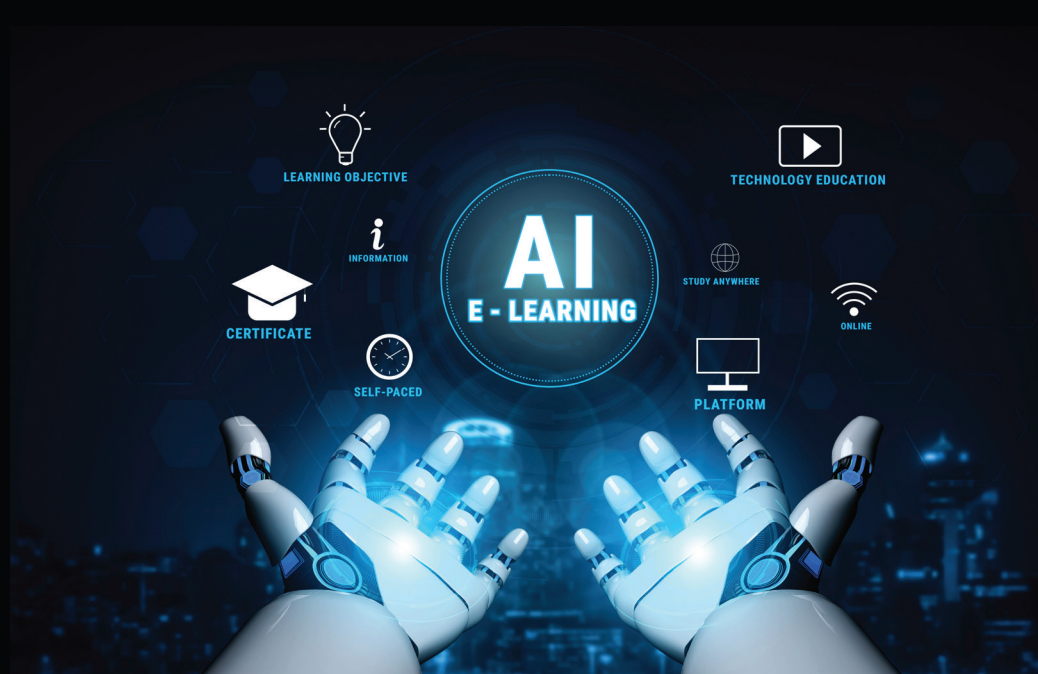
And it may be reminding them that learning is not simply about obtaining answers.

It is about becoming the kind of person who knows what to do with them.

AI will undoubtedly change the classroom.

But if education uses the technology wisely, the future may not be one in which teachers become less important.

It may be one in which teachers finally have more time to focus on what makes teaching uniquely human: mentoring, inspiring, challenging, listening and helping young people discover who they can become.



FROM "RIGHT ANSWERS" TO BETTER QUESTIONS

In a world where information and AI-generated answers are available within seconds, education needs to do more than teach children what to think. It must also teach them how to ask better questions

For generations, much of schooling has been built around finding the right answer.

What is the capital of France? What is 12 multiplied by 8? Who wrote a particular novel? When did an important historical event take place?

There is nothing wrong with knowing the answers to these questions. Knowledge provides the foundation for learning. But education is also about something more difficult: knowing what to ask.

A child who asks, "Why does this happen?" is already beginning a different kind of learning. A student who asks, "What would happen if we changed this?" is moving from memorisation towards investigation. And a young person who asks, "How do we know this is true?" is beginning to develop critical thinking.

In a rapidly changing world, these abilities may be just as important as remembering information. Children are naturally curious. Anyone who has spent time with a young child knows how quickly one question can lead to another.

Why is the sky blue? Why can't I fly? Why do plants need sunlight? Why do people speak different languages?

As children grow older, however, that constant questioning can sometimes fade. The pressure to provide correct answers, complete the syllabus and perform well in examinations can encourage students to focus on what they are expected to know rather than what they genuinely want to understand.

A classroom does not have to choose between knowledge and curiosity. It needs both. Students need facts, concepts, vocabulary and foundational skills. But they also need opportunities to investigate those ideas and connect them to the world around them.

Consider a science lesson about plants. A traditional approach might ask students to learn that plants require sunlight, water and carbon dioxide. A more inquiry-based approach could begin with a simple

question: What would happen if we changed the amount of sunlight a plant receives?

Now students have something to investigate. They can develop a hypothesis, conduct an experiment, record observations and discuss the results. The same principle can be applied across subjects.

In history, students can ask: Why did this event happen? Could it have happened differently? Whose perspective is missing?

In mathematics: Is there another way to solve this problem? What happens if we change one of the numbers?

In literature: Why did the character make that decision? What might have happened if they had chosen differently?

Questions turn students from passive recipients of information into active participants in learning. This is particularly relevant in the age of artificial intelligence.

Students can now ask AI systems to explain concepts, summarise chapters

or generate answers in seconds. Access to information is no longer the main challenge it once was.

The challenge is knowing whether the information is accurate, understanding its context and deciding what to do with it.

A student who accepts the first answer without question may learn very little. A student who asks, "What evidence supports this?", "Are there other explanations?" or "What might be missing?" is developing a much more valuable habit.

Teachers can encourage this by making questioning part of everyday classroom culture. Instead of always asking students for answers, they can sometimes ask students to generate their own questions.

Parents can encourage the same habit at home. Ultimately, education should not be a choice between teaching answers and encouraging questions. Children need both.

They need knowledge to understand the world, but they also need curiosity to explore it.



Northwestern University in Qatar welcomes newest Wildcats



Faculty and staff join the Class of 2030 for Convocation, August 20, 2026

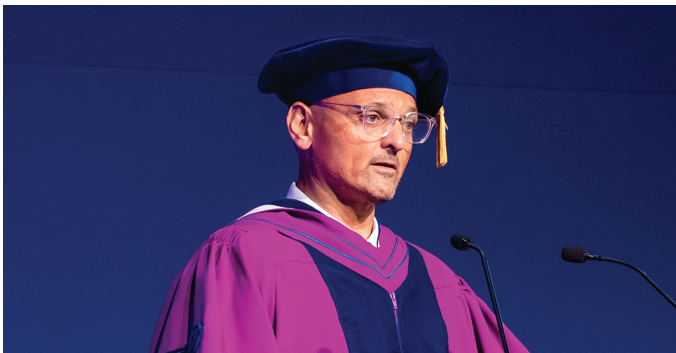
For more than 160 students, the 19th Convocation at Northwestern University in Qatar marked a new chapter. Gathered with their families, faculty and fellow students on August 20, the incoming Class of 2030 officially joined NU-Q, and became Wildcats, as Northwestern students are known.

The ceremony also connected the new class to the wider Northwestern community: more than 20,000 current students across the University and a global alumni network of more than 200,000.

The Class of 2030 received more than 1,700 applications, a record double-digit increase over the previous year. New students represent more than 80 schools and 25 nationalities, bringing a wide range of experiences and perspectives to campus.

Seeing more deeply

Addressing the new class, Dean and CEO Marwan M. Kraidy centered his remarks on *basira*, an Arabic word meaning insight, vision, discernment, and moral clarity.



Dean Kraidy addressing Northwestern Qatar Class of 2030

For students coming of age alongside artificial intelligence and an information environment that often rewards speed over reflection, Kraidy's message was simple: learning is not only about knowing more, but about seeing more deeply.

"In a world overflowing with information, what will distinguish you is not simply how much you know," Kraidy told students. "It will be how deeply you see."

He described three dimensions of *basira*: imagination, integrity, and wisdom, and encouraged students to approach their education as more than an accumulation of facts. He also connected these qualities to NU-Q's four core values of excellence, community, collaboration, and sustainability, describing them as habits to be developed throughout their time at the University.

"The greatest gift a university can offer is the ability to transform knowledge into understanding, understanding into wisdom, and wisdom into action," Kraidy said.

As a university focused on media, communication, and storytelling, the idea carries particular weight. Students are entering a world in which information is increasingly abundant, while the ability to understand, question, and give meaning to that information is becoming ever more important.

A fellow first-year

The Class of 2030 was not the only new arrival on stage at Convocation. Joining Kraidy was Erik Luijten, who became Northwestern University's provost on July 1, 2026 after more than a decade in academic leadership at the University.

A materials scientist by training, Luijten has built much of his career on bridging the physical sciences with the arts and humanities, including work with Northwestern's Center for Scientific Studies in the Arts. Luijten drew a line between his own new chapter and that of the students in front of him.

"When it comes to the role of provost, I, like you, am a first-year," he said.

Luijten encouraged students to treat curiosity as a discipline, asking questions, seeking help, and viewing mistakes as part of learning rather than something to fear.

That collaborative spirit is central to the NU-Q experience, where students learn across disciplines and through the practice of creating and communicating stories. It also reflects a broader Northwestern culture in which learning extends beyond a single classroom, campus, or field of study.



Provost Luijten delivering Northwestern Qatar Convocation 2030 address

“We enhance our learning through talking with others; through explaining our ideas to our peers and listening to theirs; by sharing our thinking through writing, reporting, filmmaking, and other creative work,” Luijten said.

New voices, new questions

The Class of 2030 also arrives alongside four new faculty members, expanding the range of perspectives represented at NU-Q.

Chafic Najem, an expert in Arab digital media and mobile communication, and Demet Yigitbilek, a lecturer in writing studies, join the University this fall. Ghaleb Attrache, whose work explores environmental humanities and media technology, and Mona Hedayati, who studies artificial intelligence from a critical, humanistic perspective, will join in January 2027.

Their areas of expertise reflect some of the critical questions shaping contemporary media and society, from artificial intelligence and mobile communication to environmental media and the changing role of writing.

“These appointments align with Northwestern Qatar’s value of academic excellence, reflecting our ambition to build a distinctive intellectual community that is grounded in the Global South while engaging with some of the most consequential questions shaping our world,” Kraidy said.

That intellectual community also extends beyond the University’s classrooms. NU-Q’s Faculty and Staff Colloquium weeks earlier saw faculty and staff return to campus to kick off the new academic year around the University’s four core values: excellence, community, collaboration, and sustainability.



Northwestern Qatar welcomes new, globally renowned faculty to Doha

That same spirit has carried into the semester through the weekly Hiwar Scholars Seminar, which brings scholars, journalists, and researchers to campus to unpack pressing issues, from geopolitics to the future of media, in dialogue with students, faculty, and staff.

Four students, four starting points

Behind the numbers are students whose journeys to NU-Q are as varied as the communities they come from.

On Convocation day, Ahmed Khalil was also competing on another stage entirely, representing Qatar at the Asian Men’s Youth Handball

Championship, which opened the same day his new chapter at NU-Q began. As he and his teammates pursued a third title, Khalil was balancing the demands of elite competition with the start of a new academic life at NU-Q. Eleven days later, on August 31, Qatar defeated Bahrain to claim the championship. For Khalil, the discipline of elite competition and the discipline of academic life have been intertwined since his first day as a Wildcat.

Tamara Shahab El Din discovered an interest in sports journalism through an internship at a news channel. She hopes to use journalism to promote women’s sports and has already co-founded a women’s football team on campus with fellow student Albandari Al-Thani.

For Rose A-Moayyed Albanai, a 2018 visit to Syria and years of competitive debate helped shape an interest in journalism, diplomacy, and policymaking. She sees storytelling as a way to give greater visibility to voices from the Middle East and the wider Arab world.

Maruf Tanvir’s path to NU-Q took an unexpected turn. Raised at a military high school in Bangladesh and selected as a naval officer, he ultimately chose filmmaking and technology after visiting the NU-Q campus. He hopes to make documentaries exploring subjects ranging from history and business to technology.



Wildcat Ahmed Khalil, competing in the Asian Men’s Youth Handball Championship

Their stories are different, but together they reflect the kind of perspectives that shape NU-Q’s community: students arriving from different countries, disciplines, and experiences, with questions of their own and stories they want to tell.

More than a degree

For students beginning their first year, university life will inevitably extend beyond classrooms and assignments.

Student Government President Timaa Kamar, now in her final year at NU-Q, offered the new class a glimpse of what those years can bring. She recalled friendships formed during late nights working on film projects and professors who challenged her to go further than she expected.

“Don’t forget that while you might be trying to build a resume or portfolio, you’re building a life too,” she told the Class of 2030. That sense of community is one of the defining parts of the Northwestern experience. The new cohort will develop their craft, learn from people whose experiences may be very different from their own, and become part of a global Northwestern network connecting students, faculty, and alumni far beyond Education City. Kraidy closed his remarks by returning to NU-Q’s founding purpose.

“The Class of 2030 is joining a community built to tell the stories of the Global South with rigor and care,” he said. “Their perspectives, shaped by the Middle East, South Asia, and beyond, are exactly what will keep that mission alive and growing.”

For the newest Wildcats, the journey ahead will be about more than earning a degree. They are beginning to develop the skills and perspectives that will shape the stories they tell, while forging connections that will remain with them well beyond their time at NU-Q.



VCUARTS QATAR OFFERS AN EDUCATION FOR A CHANGING WORLD

Choosing where to study art and design is about more than selecting a degree. It is about finding a place where ideas are taken seriously, experimentation is encouraged and creative interests can grow into meaningful careers.

At Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar), students learn in an environment shaped by nearly three decades of creative education, research and engagement with Qatar's cultural and design sectors. Founded in 1998 through a partnership between Qatar Foundation and Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Richmond, Virginia,

VCUarts Qatar combines the close-knit experience of a specialized art and design school with the opportunities of Education City and the reach of an international university.

Students come to VCUarts Qatar with different interests and ambitions. Some want to become artists or designers. Others are drawn to animation, game design, museums, cultural heritage, technology, research, entrepreneurship or emerging creative fields. What connects them is a desire to make, question and contribute, and to discover where their creativity might lead.





Opening doors to exceptional talent

VCUarts Qatar's new scholarship program is intended to ensure that exceptional students can pursue their ambitions. By investing in high-performing local, regional and international talent, the program provides a fully supported pathway to a rigorous, US-accredited education and an internationally recognized degree.

The scholarship reflects the university's commitment to building an inclusive, merit-driven creative community. It also recognizes that an art and design education can lead in many directions, from creative direction and cultural practice to digital innovation, entrepreneurship and global design. By widening access to this education, VCUarts Qatar is investing not only in individual students, but in the future cultural and creative landscape of Qatar and the wider region.

A place to learn by making

VCUarts Qatar offers undergraduate degrees in Art History, Graphic Design, Interior Design, Kinetic Imaging, and Painting and Printmaking,

as well as a Master of Fine Arts in Design. Across these programs, students develop strong disciplinary skills while learning to work across media, technologies and other areas of knowledge.

That learning is supported by specialized on-campus facilities. The Art and Design Library holds one of the region's broadest collections of art and design resources. The Materials Library, the first of its kind in an academic institution in the region, gives students access to thousands of material samples from around the world. Digital Design + Fabrication facilities and Innovative Media Studios support work in areas ranging from model-making, 3D fabrication and immersive media to sound, video, animation and emerging technologies.

These spaces are not simply campus amenities. They are places where students test ideas, solve problems and learn through making. A project might begin with a sketch or question and develop through research, prototyping, critique and revision into an exhibition, publication, spatial

proposal, film, interactive experience or new material. The process is rigorous, collaborative and central to preparing students for professional creative practice.

Learning connected to the world

Education at VCUarts Qatar extends well beyond the classroom. Students encounter artists, designers, scholars, curators and industry leaders through exhibitions, lectures, workshops and major public programs. Signature events such as Tasmeem Doha and the Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art bring international conversations onto campus while creating opportunities for students to participate in them directly.

VCUarts Qatar's international presence also reached a new milestone in 2026 with "Aghrab Idrāk: Thresholds of Perception," an official collateral event of the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. The exhibition brought together interdisciplinary, faculty-led creative research developed through the university's Institute for Creative Research.

**VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS IN QATAR**

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QATAR



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Art History

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS (BFA)
Graphic Design
Interior Design
Kinetic Imaging
Painting + Printmaking

MASTER OF FINE ARTS (MFA)
Design

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Its projects moved across film, photography, sound, artificial intelligence, kinetic sculpture, Arabic typography and material experimentation, addressing subjects including migration, memory, heritage, ecology and human relationships with technology.

For students, this international activity matters not only because of where the work is shown, but because of what it brings back into their education. They learn in a community where research and creative practice are active and evolving, and where local knowledge can contribute to global cultural conversations.

Ideas with real-world impact

At VCUarts Qatar, art and design are understood as ways of responding to real human needs. During the past year, a multiversity research collaboration led by VCUarts Qatar with Weill Cornell Medicine–Qatar and colleagues at VCU in Richmond combined interior design, neuroscience, virtual reality and behavioral science to study how lighting conditions affect autistic learners. Using immersive virtual classrooms and EEG technology, the researchers examined how design decisions can influence attention, stress and cognitive processing.

The project demonstrates the breadth of

contemporary creative practice. Design is not treated as decoration added at the end of a process; it is a form of inquiry capable of improving learning, health and wellbeing. For prospective students interested in the space between creativity, science and technology, this is the kind of interdisciplinary environment in which new possibilities can emerge.

VCUarts Qatar also continued to strengthen its links with Qatar's creative and professional sectors. A new partnership with Doha Design District will establish a multifunctional creative hub in Msheireb Downtown Doha, extending academic, research and community activity into the heart of the city's design community. The initiative is intended to create further opportunities for students, alumni, practitioners and industry partners to meet, experiment and collaborate.

Preparing students for what comes next

Students begin building professional confidence before they graduate. Through critiques, exhibitions, competitions, internships, collaborative projects and contact with working professionals, they learn how to present their ideas, respond to feedback and carry a project from concept to completion.

In 2026, four Graphic Design and Interior Design students were recognized through the Arab Engineering Bureau Design Excellence Award and Creative Achievement and Potential Award. The honours acknowledged both graduating students ready to enter the profession and junior students already demonstrating exceptional promise. One recipient described developing a versatile toolkit spanning brand identity, motion graphics, sound design, game design and user-interface and user-experience design, an example of how students can shape an education that crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries.



A creative community in Education City

VCUarts Qatar's location in Education City gives students access to a wider academic community unlike any other. Cross-registration and collaborative opportunities allow students to encounter different fields and perspectives, while partnerships with cultural institutions and organizations across Doha connect academic work to the life of the city.

Just as important is the daily experience of studying in a diverse, supportive creative community. Students work closely with faculty and alongside peers from many backgrounds. They learn to articulate their ideas, take creative risks, work through uncertainty and see familiar questions from new points of view.

STUDY AT VCUARTS QATAR

Bachelor of Arts in Art History

The Art History program offers a distinctive concentration in Islamic art within a global perspective. Students learn from scholars and practitioners working in art history, museums and cultural heritage in Qatar, the region and internationally.

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design

Graphic Design students work across print, digital, interactive, moving-image and three-dimensional forms of communication. The program develops conceptual thinking, visual literacy and technical skills for careers wherever ideas need to be communicated clearly and imaginatively.

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design

The Interior Design program is accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation in the United States. Students study design alongside environmental and behavioral sciences, sustainability, communication, codes and regulations, and professional practice.

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Kinetic Imaging

Kinetic Imaging is for students interested in creative approaches to technology and emerging media. Areas of study include animation, game design, sound design, video, coding and interaction design, allowing students to build an individual pathway across a rapidly evolving field.

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting and Printmaking

Students explore traditional and contemporary approaches to drawing, painting and printmaking alongside sculpture, installation, photography, film, sound, performance, animation and new media. The program supports the development of an individual artistic voice grounded in broad technical and conceptual experience.

Master of Fine Arts in Design

The full-time, two-year MFA in Design supports each student in developing a course of study around their own research and creative interests. The program brings together aspects of studio practice, digital craft, architecture, graphic design, fashion and product design in a flexible, interdisciplinary graduate experience.

For students who want to explore ideas, work across boundaries and help shape the future of art, design and technology, VCUarts Qatar offers a place to begin and a community in which that ambition can grow. Through its new scholarship program, more exceptional students will have the opportunity to take that first step and discover where their talent can lead.

CREATIVITY BEYOND THE ART ROOM

Creativity is often associated with drawing, painting, music and drama. But in education, creativity is much broader. It is the ability to ask questions, make connections, solve problems and approach familiar challenges in new ways

When we think of a creative child, we may picture someone drawing a colourful picture, playing an instrument or writing a story. These are certainly forms of creativity, but they represent only part of a much bigger picture.

Creativity is not confined to the art room.

A child finding a new way to solve a mathematics problem is being creative. A student developing an experiment to test an idea in science is being creative. A group working out how to present a history project in an engaging way is being creative. Even finding a different strategy during a game can involve creative thinking.

This broader understanding of creativity is increasingly important because today's students are preparing for a world in which simply remembering information may not be enough. They will need to know how to use knowledge, connect ideas, ask meaningful questions and develop solutions to problems they have not encountered before.

In mathematics, for example, students are often taught to follow a particular method to reach the correct answer. While learning these

methods is important, teachers can also encourage students to explore different approaches. Asking, "Is there another way to solve this?" can turn a routine exercise into an opportunity for creative thinking.

Science offers even more opportunities. Rather than simply memorising facts, students can be encouraged to develop hypotheses, design experiments and consider why something did not work as expected. An experiment that produces an unexpected result can become the starting point for further investigation.

Creativity is also important in language learning. Writing a story, developing a presentation, debating an idea or finding different ways to communicate the same message requires students to make choices. They learn that communication is not always about finding one perfect answer.

Even history can become more creative when students are encouraged to examine events from different perspectives. They might write a diary entry from the viewpoint of a historical character, create a documentary or debate how an event could have unfolded differently. Technology is creating

even more opportunities. Students can use digital tools to create videos, podcasts, animations, presentations, websites and interactive projects. Artificial intelligence can also support brainstorming and experimentation, provided students remain responsible for their ideas, decisions and final work. But creativity does not necessarily require sophisticated technology.

Sometimes it begins with a simple question.

"What if?"

What if we approached this problem differently? What if we changed one part of the experiment? What if we designed a solution for someone with different needs? What if there were no single correct answer?

These questions encourage students to move beyond memorisation and become active participants in learning.

Teachers play an important role in creating this environment.

A classroom focused entirely on correct answers can unintentionally discourage experimentation. Students may become reluctant to suggest unusual ideas because they fear being

wrong. A creative classroom treats mistakes differently.

A failed experiment, an unusual solution or an unexpected interpretation can become an opportunity for discussion. Students learn that creativity involves trying, evaluating, changing and trying again.

Parents can encourage the same attitude at home. Children can be invited to help plan a meal, build something from household materials, invent a game, solve a practical problem or find another use for an everyday object. These activities may appear simple, but they encourage observation, imagination and problem-solving.

The goal is not to make every child an artist.

It is to help every child become a thinker who is comfortable exploring possibilities.

Creativity belongs in the art room, but it also belongs in the mathematics classroom, science laboratory, library, playground and home.

Because the ability to imagine a different possibility is not simply an artistic skill.

It is a life skill.



WHY THE RIGHT LEVEL OF CHALLENGE HELPS CHILDREN LEARN

By *Jacinth Gurdon*

Head of Primary, The Hamilton International School.



developing confidence in English may understand a science concept but not yet have all the language needed to explain their thinking. Rather than simplifying the learning, teachers can provide the vocabulary, visual prompts or sentence structures the child needs to participate, while keeping the same underlying challenge. Over time, that support can be gradually reduced as the child becomes more confident expressing their ideas independently.

Learning also becomes more meaningful when children make connections. Using measurement during a science investigation, for example, or applying writing skills to a social studies topic helps children understand that knowledge does not exist in separate boxes.

Ultimately, primary education is about more than preparing children for the next grade. We want children to become curious, confident learners who are willing to ask questions, comfortable saying, "I don't know yet," and ready to keep going when something feels difficult. At The Hamilton International School, this is part of how we ignite passion, purpose and potential in every child: giving them the confidence to take on challenges, discover what they are capable of and keep learning.

For families interested in understanding what this looks like in practice, a visit to The Hamilton International School offers the opportunity to see how children are supported and challenged in their learning every day.



One of the most valuable things we can do for a child is resist the temptation to give them the answer.

Whether it is a four-year-old working out why a tower keeps falling over or an older primary student facing a mathematics problem they cannot immediately solve, there is powerful learning in the moment when a child has to stop, think, try again and eventually say, "I worked it out."

As educators, we sometimes describe this as the "good struggle": the idea that learning should not always feel easy. With the right level of challenge, and support without being immediately rescued, children learn to persevere, adapt



gives children opportunities to build, explore, ask questions and test their ideas. Teachers observe carefully, using what they know about each child to decide when to step in, when to encourage another attempt and when to introduce a new challenge.

As children progress, the nature of that challenge evolves. In KG2, play remains important while children spend increasing time developing early reading, writing and mathematics skills, preparing them for Grade 1 without unnecessarily rushing the process.

From Grade 1, the AERO American Standards provide clear, internationally benchmarked expectations for learning within our American curriculum. But standards alone do not create great learning. Our personalised approach means teachers develop a detailed understanding of each child through observation, assessment, conversation and their daily learning. This helps them recognise the

difference between a productive struggle and genuine difficulty, but also allows them to understand when a child needs more support or is ready for greater challenge.

This is especially important in Qatar's diverse, multilingual community, where children may arrive with different languages and educational experiences. At The Hamilton International School, multilingualism is viewed as a strength and an important part of a child's identity. Our English as an Additional Language (EAL)



programme is closely connected to this approach, with teachers and EAL specialists working together to help children develop the English they need to participate confidently in learning. Developing English should not mean lowering expectations: children can receive appropriate language support while continuing to be challenged across the curriculum.

For example, a child who is still



when something does not work and develop confidence in their own ability to solve problems.

At The Hamilton International School, part of International Schools Partnership (ISP), this begins in Early Childhood, from Pre-KG to KG2. Purposeful play



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Northwestern University in Qatar is a multidisciplinary community of evidence-based storytellers focused on the Global South. Driven by our core values of excellence, community, collaboration, and sustainability, we are a distinctive global institution that delivers an exceptional education in media arts, sciences, and crafts. Positioned at the forefront of knowledge production and digital innovation, we amplify Northwestern University's global impact in research, teaching, and service through our partnership with Qatar Foundation, contributing to Qatar's rise into a knowledge society.

