

# RAISING GLOBAL



**Preparing Our Students  
for a Shrinking Planet**

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**CARL F. HOBERT**

Foreword by Charles MacCormack

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# **RAISING GLOBAL IQ**

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for a Shrinking Planet

Carl F. Hobert

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*To my three magical daughters, Leah, Olivia, and Juliana, for offering me their deep love and for teaching me the best lessons of compassion I have ever learned. And to my dear mother and late father, whose unconditional love and belief in opening their three sons' eyes to a shrinking world deeply influenced me from an early age.*

—CF

To Friendship among Children and Youth around the World (founded under UNESCO), New York:

*You young people should consider yourselves fortunate that you, in your impressionable years, have the opportunity to exchange viewpoints and ideas with those of a variety of cultural backgrounds. There is no better opportunity to acquire the life-long insights that are necessary for the resolution of international problems and conflicts.*

*In the hope that your endeavors have a lasting impact, I send you my warmest greetings and wishes.*

—Albert Einstein, Salzburg, Austria, November 22, 1952

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# Foreword

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Over a century ago, H. G. Wells wrote that “history is a race between education and catastrophe.” In many ways, education is winning that race. More people are literate, healthy, and well-nourished today than ever before in human history. Fewer people have died in wars over the past generation than during most comparable periods. The hands of the clock of nuclear holocaust have been turned back.

At the same time, the race has become swifter. Technology has knit the world more closely together. Global companies design, produce, and market goods and services with little consideration of national boundaries. Millions of people from one part of the world are migrating to another part. Once-underdeveloped countries such as China, India, Brazil, Indonesia, and Turkey are now important powers. Their young people are far better educated than ever before. Events in one part of the world that would once have had only regional impact now influence the lives of everyone on the planet.

Take the current crisis in the Eurozone. Financial, economic, and structural problems in the small nation of Greece, and to a lesser extent in countries such as Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and Italy, could potentially derail the entire world economy. Whether or not today’s US high school and university graduates face bleak or upbeat employment prospects over the next several years could depend on decisions made in Berlin and Brussels, regardless of how well or how poorly policy is managed in Washington and New York.

For the past fifty years, thoughtful people have realized that more and more elements of our lives are becoming more and more globally influenced. Take climate change, the management of epidemic diseases, or the price of food. The forests of the American West are unprecedentedly fragile: tinder-dry, infested by invasive new species, and threatening to destroy entire communities. The H1N1 virus has faded from the headlines, but public-health leaders throughout the world continue to have nightmares that viruses infecting a flock of chickens or geese in China or Indonesia will mutate into an uncontrollable human epidemic. The price of fish goes up and up as we fail to establish a meaningful and enforceable law of the seas to ensure sustainability. The list could go on and on, but the basic point is that the impact of global forces on our lives is so pervasive that almost every American is now aware that the world of our parents and grandparents has changed irrevocably.

This is understandably disturbing to almost everyone. It is very challenging to manage these complex issues on a global basis. Most fundamentally, the system of global decision making continues to be dominated by sovereign nation-states with the mandate to look after their own interests. This is why, for example, it has been so difficult to find a solution to the Euro crisis. The ongoing gap between global forces and national power structures and identities demands that the next generation have the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to understand and influence multinational issues and groups in an informed and competent way.

*Raising Global IQ: Preparing Our Students for a Shrinking Planet* lays out a detailed and practical blueprint for how we can prepare our next generation of citizens with the tools they will need to sustain the optimism, freedom, leadership, and opportunity that have marked

American life from its founding. We undertake this challenging task from a position of many strengths. First, we are a society that has always looked to a better future with a willingness to change yesterday's patterns in order to achieve it. Second, we are the world's most diverse and multicultural society, and virtually every neighborhood, town, and school in America provides, even demands, engagement with other languages and cultures. Third, the opportunity to travel and visit other countries has never before been more affordable and widely available. Once the purview of a wealthy elite, travel to other countries is now offered through many school programs, church groups, and even sports teams, often with scholarship or fund-raising or work options available. Social networking and technology are opening up whole new worlds of opportunity to engage with people from other countries. The overseas "pen pal" of yesteryear is being replaced by Facebook, Twitter, and cell-phone connections that can bring instantaneous audio and visual engagement with hundreds if not thousands of people around the world. And, as Carl Hobert points out, within the past decade or two we have already demonstrated how schools, communities, and households can incorporate transformational change in the way we have positively incorporated new technologies and increased diversity in our school curricula and our lives.

So we enter this period of great change with much strength, and the well-being of the next generation depends on how successfully we provide it with the knowledge and experience necessary for leadership in a global age. As Hobert points out, this can no longer be left for a select few to experience at the college and university level. The very best time to begin learning a second language, and indeed to begin engaging with people from other cultures, is at the preschool, kindergarten, and elementary levels.

*Raising Global IQ* provides a detailed and user-friendly compendium of both the general categories and specific activities that would enable a school administrator, a teacher, a parent, or a student to understand what the "end-game" of global competence looks like and what broadly needs to be done to get there, and it gives concrete examples of how others have improved the global IQ of their own communities.

Specifically, Hobert sees five areas where our schools will need to do things differently going forward if we expect to sustain our global leadership throughout the twenty-first century: 1) language and cultural fluency, including Chinese, Arabic, and other non-western languages, as well as the more traditional European languages; 2) technology and media as means to making international issues more alive in the classroom; 3) expanded international exchange programs and other forms of cross-cultural engagement; 4) problem solving and participatory case studies of global crises, such as the one currently taking place in Syria; 5) and service-learning opportunities, both here at home and through well-thought-out programs abroad.

Strengthening these curriculum and content areas would not only improve a school's global IQ but would also enhance the school's general problem-solving skills and the capacity to apply classroom learning to life experience.

Most schools are already doing most of these activities to a greater or lesser extent; they are not the monopoly of wealthy or advanced schools, communities, or families. Raising the global IQ of a school system need not cost a lot more money than is currently being spent and require radical reform of the curriculum or extracurricular activities. However, the global

demands of the next twenty-five years will require that we better integrate and more systematically and consistently deliver the international components of our K–12 education. Hobert makes an important point when he suggests that school systems would benefit greatly from establishing the position of Director of Global Programs or International Studies to bring coherence and accountability to the raising of global IQ, just as we have so often done with educational technology.

I would argue that the greatest challenge of the next generation will be managing global opportunities and challenges from a nationally based system of decision making. This will require young people with the global IQ necessary to produce positive results while working with individuals of different languages and cultures. America is well positioned to be able to do this, and the well-being of our country depends upon it. Carl Hobert, with *Raising Global IQ*, has provided us with an invaluable roadmap on how to prepare our children for the new world they will inevitably inhabit.

—Charles MacCormack

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# Introduction

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## Improving Our Schools' Global Intelligence Quotient

It was a crisp and sunny New England autumn morning in 2002, and I had arrived early at the school where I taught. I wanted to correct students' French and Spanish quizzes and tests long overdue; catch up on e-mails; write classroom assignments on the whiteboard for my beginning, intermediate, and advanced modern language classes; and still have time to meet some colleagues over coffee before our teaching day began. By 7:30 a.m., I headed out of my classroom to join other teachers and administrators in the small but bright faculty dining room.

En route, I leaned down to pick up the newspapers that had been delivered outside our school library earlier that morning, wrapped in blue plastic bags, and covered with a bit of dew. As I walked down the brick hallway in front of the still-locked library entrance, slowly pulling the newspapers from their bags, I said, "*Bonjour!*" "*Buenos días!*" and "*Ni hao!*" to several of the middle and upper school students sitting comfortably on three wooden benches on one side of the hallway. "How was your scrimmage yesterday?" I asked two of the boys who had moved on to the varsity ranks that fall from the freshman football team that I coached. "How did you like that weekend drama program?" I asked two other boys who were seated there, both extremely talented actors. "It was amazing," one of them said. "We're destined to act on Broadway one day!" As he smiled, the other rolled his eyes and raised his fingers in the "OK" sign, as if to say, "Yeah, right!" Ah, how I loved working with those confident and humble adolescents.

The morning had started so well, I thought, chuckling as I continued on my way to the library door. As I placed the newspapers down in front of the locked door, sliding the slightly wet plastic wrappers off, I glanced at the *New York Times* front page. The headline read "Suicide Bomber on Jerusalem Bus Kills 11." I started to read the article, stunned, shocked, and breathless. My thoughts jolted from practical preoccupations to the details of the bombing. As I read the front-page article, I imagined the children who had died on that Jerusalem bus on their way to school, their cell phones ringing after the blast like a slightly off-key middle school orchestra. Worried mothers and fathers tried to contact their sons and daughters, only to discover later that day that they would never speak to them again. I imagined the ambulances that arrived at the site of that charred, mangled bus—"ORs on wheels" my Israeli friends call them—as trauma specialists and their surgical teams came out of nowhere, in triage-mode, in an attempt to save as many lives as they could. How, I asked myself at that moment, could this happen to children, children like my own three daughters, like the students I had just spoken to in the hall? I felt a tinge of nausea as I contemplated that suicide bombing, depicted so graphically in the *Times* and now frozen in my mind. I placed the newspapers down in front of the library door, but instead of going to get coffee and have my raisin bran, I took a roundabout walk outside to return to my classroom, noticing the individual particles of my quickened breath. I reflected on the news and the increasingly familiar feeling I had of deep sadness and frustrated helplessness in the face of terrible events unfolding in the Middle East and other hot spots around the world. I decided that my soon-to-arrive

students and I could at least talk about what had happened so that we could begin to acknowledge the significance of the event even from a distance.

Fifteen minutes later I was broaching the topic with a small group of sixteen- and seventeen-year-old boys, my junior class advisees, for our short, fifteen-minute homeroom period. There was some interest in the topic, yet I found myself surprised that most of the boys seemed more concerned about their chemistry test that morning or their cross-country meet or soccer game that afternoon. Here we were, barely a year after 9/11; why weren't they more willing to talk about the Middle East conflict and yesterday's suicide bombing? Perhaps I was still seeking some kind of closure for the loss of a former student in the second of the two World Trade Center towers to be hit. I thought about that bright, loving, generous young man who had been working for Cantor Fitzgerald at the time of the destruction and had left behind a young child and pregnant wife. Like so many others killed that day, the former student had held such potential to do good in a world sorely in need of it.

As the advisees left my classroom that morning, they were talking excitedly—about the games, about their social plans for the coming weekend, about their upcoming Thanksgiving vacations. I wondered what I could do, as a teacher, to make this bloody Middle East conflict come alive and get the attention of these high school students. I thought about the children growing up in the world and about what we could do differently to defuse violence more effectively and strengthen the foundations for more long-lasting peaceful coexistence. One thing stuck in my mind. During our discussion, when my students' attention had largely been waning, their interest was piqued when I asked them to voice their *personal* opinions about the continued construction of Israel's protective West Bank wall, about the failing health of Yasser Arafat and the growing importance of Mahmoud Abbas (or Abu Mazem) in the Palestinian world, or about the possible Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, beginning with the small Jewish settlement of Peat Sadeh. At this point, I noticed that several of my advisees spoke up with strong feelings about those issues, disagreeing with something another student had said. If only there were a way to keep this spirited intellectual surge going—and actually stoke it—rather than having it snuffed out by the sound of the bell ending homeroom period or an entire class period.

Nine months and almost one-half of a school year of planning and development later, the first Preventive Diplomacy and International Conflict Management and Prevention Workshop, focusing on the Middle East conflict, came to life in a conference hall five minutes from that library corridor where I had read the *New York Times* article that crisp November morning. The three-day workshop was filled with the incredible energy of fifty-five students and teachers, ready to tackle one complex issue: the Arab-Israeli conflict. The workshop would become the prime mover for hundreds of similar efforts I have engaged in since then, as I founded the nonprofit organization Axis of Hope.

Axis of Hope's name is a response to President George W. Bush's second State of the Union address. In February 2002, the same year as the Jerusalem bus bombing, Bush had condemned certain countries—specifically Iran, Iraq, and North Korea—as being members of an “axis of evil.” I was deeply disturbed by the ignorance it reflected, not just ignorance of the complexities of history, but of the impact of his categorization of these countries—his invitation to hate them. Following this speech and the president's “shock and awe” invasion

of Iraq in March 2003—and the prolonged US military presence in that violent quagmire—was of course the United States that earned the label “evil” in the eyes of much of the world. We would learn later of the deeply flawed US intelligence findings, astonishing ineptitude, and manipulative media packaging of the military response that allowed a president intent on launching an unprecedented preemptive military strike to have his way.

I felt at the moment that Bush uttered those three words—axis of evil—that we had to balance this perception of evil, of terrorism, of “others out to get us.” We had to balance this with a self-confident, but not haughty, educational alliance—in the United States and abroad—to manage and prevent international conflict more effectively. And this had to begin in US classrooms where students in their formative years could learn so much more about how to prevent future conflicts like this. In the intervening ten years, Axis of Hope workshops have taught countless middle and high school students of diverse backgrounds about conflict management and prevention, with the goals of enlivening the imagination, awakening moral reasoning, and imparting lifelong social and civic skills.

“West is best” may sum up the history of geographic expansion in the United States, as well as its cultural orientation, what the French refer to as *chauvinism* or we might call *jingoism*. But times have changed, and so must our educational reactions. One thing I have found interesting in my conversations over the past decade with students, parents, teachers, and school administrators about the importance of global education is the catalyst of fear. Until recently, there were two commonly accepted human responses to fear—fight or flight. Yet both responses are ultimately self-defeating in a world where there’s no room left to run and not enough weapons to wipe out our species in one bad afternoon of nuclear one-upmanship. A recent scientific finding comes as timely and welcome news: among some of us, fear triggers a dramatically different response—an urge to prevent conflict and to engage in a new kind of preventive diplomacy with the reflex to, as Teresa Barker calls it, “tend and befriend.” This suggests a logical direction for engaging people who seem most foreign and perhaps most frightening to us sooner rather than later. It’s time to head east, Columbus.

## What Is Global Intelligence?

We can teach the next generation to break through historic patterns of destructive isolationism and militarism if we use intelligence not just as a military tool, but as an educational and cultural imperative for deepening mutual understanding and connection. We have greater resources than any generation in history—dynamic and creative teachers, cutting-edge technology and students who understand this technology, travel options (including local, national, and international), and funding sources—to meet the challenge of US isolationism. We can do better; and we must do it now. The dangers have never been greater and the stakes have never been higher.

I’ve developed what I call the global intelligence quotient, or global IQ, as an evaluation and strategic planning tool to identify the strengths and opportunities for improvement of a school’s global education curriculum and improvement of the school community’s GIQ as well. In a global IQ review, key categories and questions define the critical components of a strong curriculum for improved competence and global involvement and responsibility. In the pages ahead, when I refer to “boosting global IQ,” I’m referring to ways to strengthen the

content and effectiveness of a school's global focus as well as a personal or community perspective. It is an exciting process—for our students and ourselves.

The idea of global education in US K–12 schools is not new. In fact, terms such as “global education” and “world citizens” are increasingly commonplace in school mission statements, lists of core values, and curriculum discussions. A growing array of products and services respond to the expanding interest in global learning, including instructional software, book games, curricula, study abroad, and educational travel programs. Most of us hear or see evidence of it in our schools, where colorful flags from different countries adorn the walls or hang from the ceilings in gymnasiums, auditoriums, and lunchrooms. Indeed, heightening awareness of other cultures is indeed part of most schools' basic philosophy and curriculum.

But this has not come without resistance and objections. One teacher, who taught in a classroom near mine for years, declared, “How can we think of all the global problems, and global responsibility, when we have so many problems occurring right here in the US or, in fact, right here in Boston?” An English teacher suggested that a global focus in middle and high schools would be premature; that it is the college years when students are able to learn to think globally—as he had done in college—not necessarily during their adolescent years.

Their comments echoed similar concerns and complaints I've heard voiced in parent and faculty meetings in public and private schools throughout the United States, from Boston to San Francisco, from Dallas to Detroit, and many points in between.

- What exactly is global intelligence and how, in addition to everything else, do we teach our students in order to raise GIQ?
- How will raising global intelligence affect students' performance in other subject areas? After all, doing their homework well in all classes, and turning it in on time is a very important part of their learning responsibility.
- Where is the funding for adding a new program like this? Our town, community, school board, or board of trustees might never approve this.
- What about students who already struggle with the demands of school? School is hard enough without asking more of them.
- With pressures on us to produce high scores on standardized tests, there's simply not enough time in the day to add something extra like this.

Any of these issues would be enough to end the conversation or postpone it if either were an option. But, as schools reevaluate their basic tenets, close to 90 percent are putting the words *international*, *global*, or *world* in their carefully crafted forty-five- to fifty-word mission statements or the core values displayed in bullet points on the home page of their website. Imagine that you've just secured the copyright on your core values or your mission statement, and now your superintendent or head of school says that your educational approach has to reflect raising global intelligence—legitimately reflect it. The question is no longer whether improving a school's global IQ is feasible or can be comfortably accommodated. Now, the only remaining question is, how can I do so, quickly and effectively?

## The Structure of This Book

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Just as there are many ways to enrich a child's experience of the world, right in her or his classroom, there are many ways to enrich and expand the global education component of a school's curriculum, as well. However, I want to focus attention on what I consider five strategic changes—essential curriculum upgrades—that can transform a school's culture and curriculum in powerful, positive, lasting ways.

1. *Language and cultural fluency* ([chapters 1 and 2](#)): An initiative emphasizing early acquisition of a second language beginning in kindergarten, subsequent foreign language education in higher grades, and targeting an East-West balance. This includes the Eastern languages, Arabic and Mandarin Chinese, and the Latin-based Western languages, Spanish and French, in language and culture studies before high school graduation.
2. *Technology and media literacy* ([chapter 3](#)): An emphasis on integrating cutting-edge technology—computers, the Internet, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, Skype—and other communications tools, and the study of the news and social media—to expand learning and networking opportunities for students and educators internationally.
3. *Extracurricular activities and foreign travel* ([chapter 4](#)): Using the languages of the arts, athletics, and other extracurricular and curriculum-related endeavors to break down the walls between cultures, including education-based adventures on the local, national, and international levels, and hosting other cultures in our home communities.
4. *Case studies focused on conflict-resolution skills* ([chapters 5, 6, and 7](#)): Expanded case study activities based on current events, providing content-rich, hands-on role-play experiences for students in the universal principles and practices of conflict management and prevention—the core curriculum of a new form of preventive diplomacy. I call this the “intellectual Outward Bound” experience and have developed specific case studies for use with students.
5. *Service learning and experiential education* ([chapters 8 and 9](#)): Allowing schools to develop community service or service learning in a way that stretches students' comfort zones, bringing them into contact with others in need and with their own vulnerability. This enhances their commitment to a universal code of compassion while at the same time engaging all their senses—so crucial in their formative years. Involving parents and other community members can deepen the experience for all.

Although I have structured this book around these five objectives for the sake of clarity, in reality the effect of improving a school's global IQ occurs far more three-dimensionally. This means teaching our students (and ourselves) to think globally but to act in three other dimensions as well: locally, regionally, and nationally, with conscious attunement to the international context. Three-dimensional thinking can mean expanded collaborations among public, private, and parochial schools to bring students from all socioeconomic groups

together for interest-based activities and workshops, service learning opportunities, athletic endeavors, community interaction, and international travel. It can mean expanded partnerships with business or philanthropic sponsors to bring funding to educational projects that enhance global learning experiences for all students and teachers. Or it can mean expanded professional development programs for teachers and administrators from public, private, and parochial schools, training them in cross-disciplinary, experiential pedagogical approaches to cultural literacy and conflict management and prevention skills.

These are not pie-in-the-sky ideas. As a nation, we have everything we need—the know-how, the resources, and the educational infrastructure—to make this happen. We have successful models: some progressive programs in global education are up and running in many of the nation's K–12 schools and school districts. Some parents have made global competency and citizenship a priority in their family's lives. We have brilliant, passionate educators, too: beyond the progressive models and the showcase programs is a nation of dedicated teachers, administrators, and other education leaders who are passionately invested in this work and in our children's future as global citizens.

We have money and other resources: models of public, private, and business support for important education initiatives are plentiful, no longer an educator's or parent's fantasy. Philanthropy underwrites progressive education programs around the United States and the world. There is a partnership possibility for every school in need, if we are willing to network and collaborate to help not only ourselves but others to find their matches. There are enough resources to go around, if we become advocates and activists for all, collaborators for the common good of *all* children, rather than only for our own children or school.

Finally, we have over 55 million children in our schools who are eager to start. Nature is on our side. Children are born hungry to learn, to grow, to feel mastery in the world, and to feel useful at every age. They are, as many teachers and parents recognize, like little sponges in terms of how much they can learn and how quickly they can learn. The developmental impetus has only to be fully engaged.

## **Our Children Come Hard-Wired for Global IQ**

The great twentieth-century education and psychology theorists researched and wrote extensively about teaching global intelligence—without calling it that. While they did not have a unitary concept such as global IQ in mind, their ideas, still used extensively in US K–12 schools, offer renewed support for bold measures.

John Dewey, the American psychologist, philosopher, and educational reformer, championed the then-revolutionary idea of student-centered in-class experiences rather than the traditional memorization and regurgitation of facts more common in the first half of the 1900s when he was most active as a researcher and teacher. This led to the highly important idea of experiential education so familiar to us now. Jean Piaget, the Swiss developmental psychologist best known for his work refining the cognitive development theory into a series of four stages encompassing birth through adolescence, saw children as little philosophers whom he called “young scientists building their own individual theories of knowledge.” Using his own three children as experimental subjects, Piaget found that children were able not only to acquire foreign languages more effectively at a young age but to learn a great deal

about other cultures and to refine intercultural problem-solving skills very well also.

Dr. Maria Montessori, best known for the theories and schools that she developed in an effort to improve education for poor children in her home country of Italy, crafted the Montessori method, based on carefully observing young children's learning characteristics and educational needs. She saw children as progressing through two stages of learning, in which they shared "universal characteristics" of learning, moving from an individually paced learning environment in their earliest years, to a more peer-oriented social environment for learning beginning at about age seven. Of particular relevance here is her belief that "all children are endowed with [the] capacity to 'absorb' culture," and if exposed to ideas early in life could learn them without feeling as if they were being taught. Montessori was also a firm believer in children's rights, in Italy and around the globe; in the value and importance of children's work so that they might develop themselves into socially conscious adults; and in the hope that this development would improve future students' conflict-resolution skills and lead to more widespread peace initiatives around the world.

Finally, Brazilian educator and theorist Paulo Freire espoused the "democracy of education." His work began with impoverished peasant youth in Brazil, whom he sought to teach so that they might overcome mid-twentieth-century oppression. Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* emphasizes the need to educate countries' native populations more effectively. Freire attacked what he called the "banking concept of education" in which the student is seen as a newly opened, empty bank account to be filled with a teacher's knowledge, rather than the student being an active learner. Freire also defended deep student-teacher reciprocity, in which students learn from teachers and vice versa. According to Freire, we should become teachers who learn, and learners who teach, because being much more democratic in our method of teaching is a basic foundation of modern education.

These classic theories provide a sound underpinning for progressive global education with the intention of improved global competency and responsibility. They are further supported by newer contributions to the field, including Howard Gardner's description of multiple intelligences and the defining quality of emotional intelligence that is so important for the interpersonal "people skills" of good leadership in any era, but more so in a time of deep and immediate global interconnectedness. What these theories describe, in essence, is how we can best help our children develop the intellectual flexibility, cross-cultural skills, and moral and ethical grounding to become responsible global citizens. It shouldn't surprise us that children are powerful actors in their own right, well before they get to college. In other societies, children are powerful actors, too. We know, for example, that Al Qaeda leaders have maintained training camps in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan, and Yemen to teach youth a radical version of Islam and train them to die fighting as young soldiers or as suicide bombers. We know that similar youth training goes on in Sri Lanka, Darfur, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip and beyond. An estimated two hundred thousand to three hundred thousand children are soldiers for rebel or government forces in more than twenty countries, according to Human Rights Watch.

Whatever we call it—brainwashing, indoctrination, nationalism—when you strip away the politics, the religion, and the social and economic forces, what you have left is the powerful potential of youth to learn, act, and shape their world. If we want our children to grow up

make the world a safer, healthier, and more prosperous place for all the earth's inhabitants, then we must teach them how to do so, in new, more creative ways. The catch is that we can't really teach them in the same way as past generations educated children. Our parents assumed a somewhat more predictable world where the expectations of work, family, commerce, and politics followed traditional patterns. Today, we're painfully aware that all of these and many other social constructs as well as geopolitical developments are highly changeable and constantly evolving; creative, intelligent improvisation, beginning in the classroom, is the order of the day. It isn't enough to just read; our children need to be able to read *between the lines, and in different languages*. Why? So they can learn how to confront complex, often thorny issues and think profoundly and more effectively about solving these problems and, more importantly, preventing them from recurring. They need to be able to integrate ideas across disciplines and across cultures and be innovative, critical thinkers as they craft new collaborative responses to some of humankind's oldest sources of conflict.

Our young people are already out there—on iPhones, Skype, Facebook, surfing the Internet—forging friendships and accessing information and experiences, and sharing ideas and opinions about everything from movies and music to intimate details of their lives in online journals. Unlike any previous generation, they have the exciting real-time opportunity to interact, learn, and socialize with others worldwide, and they do so with an eagerness we often wish they would bring to conventional studies. How can we harness their love of interacting with peers, and this power and profound knowledge of technology, to their educational advantage? How can we, as teachers, administrators, parents, and students—groups including all of these people—analyze what exists and then expand these opportunities to discuss current events, conditions, and circumstances more effectively? How can we allow more people to plug in and to connect with one another to prevent conflict more effectively?

These are the questions I and others have been asking for years. The answers fill a large and growing body of literature on progressive global education. Determined educators, parents, and policymakers (many but not nearly enough) have been persistent, eloquent voices advocating for meaningful global programs for our children. So I am far from a lone voice in the wilderness. But I do have something to contribute from the nearly thirty years—thousands of hours—I have focused on learning exactly what global competency, literacy, responsibility, and citizenship really mean. And perhaps most importantly, I have investigated what students, educators, parents, and policymakers worldwide ask, need, and demand. While the hundreds of students I have taught over the years have worked to learn, I have learned what works for them—what makes them come alive with excitement for global studies and for meaningful action to resolve and prevent conflict. In my travels to schools in the United States and other countries, I have learned what students and educators are confronting and what they need to succeed. All that I have seen, heard, and experienced prompts me to say that we need to launch a national initiative for sound, swift educational change, and we need to do so as soon as possible.

I am not discussing a wholesale renovation of our curriculum here as much as remodeling, taking what we are already doing well and adding to it a more globalized focus. All efforts, no matter how simple or sophisticated, have strengths that put them somewhere along an initiation-innovation curve. And no matter where you are on the curve, you can always initiate and innovate in some creative, collaborative way to advance the curriculum.



Remember, as I so often say, “it is all about the kids.”

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My intention in writing this book is to encourage grassroots change, not to criticize or correct. I want to share an inspiring view of amazing teachers and young people that is currently missing from our discussions of them and their educational endeavors. I want to support foreign language study, to encourage collaboration with students in using technology in schools, to demystify the dynamics of conflict resolution, and to offer the principles of preventive diplomacy as a guide for charting your own course (or one for your school) in teaching global competence and improving your community’s global IQ. Wherever you are in the process, I hope the stories here encourage you to take a step forward along the exciting path of supporting twenty-first-century global citizenship skills that these students are pioneering. As an educator, a parent, a public policymaker, or simply a concerned citizen, you need to show our children that it matters enough for you to take that step and the next one. However far it goes, it will be a step in the right direction. If it’s a giant step, all the better. We have a lot of ground to cover and we need to move fast.

### **The Elements of Global IQ**

Communication (in other languages)

Comprehension (of other languages and cultures)

Compromise (in conflicts created by difficulties in communication and comprehension)

Compassion (service to others)

Creativity (pursuing a new architecture of educational transformation)

**FLUENCIES**

## The Argument for Starting with Romance Languages

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Seventh graders, I remember, often didn't get much respect in the halls of Jefferson Junior High School in Minneapolis. But looking back, I can say that being a student there was a turning point in my life. My parents—Mom, the history teacher, and Dad, the industrial psychologist—had three boys: one in elementary school and two in junior high school. Both my younger brother, Will, then in fifth grade, and my older brother, Tom, then in ninth grade, had started showing real strength in sports: football, hockey, and baseball. I played a little, but didn't possess the same level of skill that they did. Where I did excel was in music—specifically, in piano, with a great music instructor, Mr. Cherwin—and in a foreign language, namely French. But I had no idea of the opportunity I was about to receive when my parents told my brothers and me that after the school year ended, we would be taking a trip abroad to France.

We were public school kids in Minneapolis. We didn't have a lot of money. But my father sat on the board of a local travel agency, and in exchange for attending the quarterly meetings the agency gave board members a choice: it either paid checks or gave an equivalent travel allowance. My dad chose to barter for five round-trip coach tickets to Paris. I tell you this because while finances can be a huge challenge to globalizing or internationalizing your educational experience—or that of your children—the solutions are often right at your fingertips, when you think outside the box.

Off we went that June, traveling on a modest budget, in what was to be a unique family bonding experience—two, fun, sometimes frantic, fast-paced, full-of-surprises weeks spent crisscrossing Paris and taking an overnight train to the south of France, tightly packed in a tiny train compartment. My parents believed children needed to take calculated risks in order to build self-confidence. Specifically, on this trip, we were to work on our knowledge of foreign languages and what I now call our “global street smarts.” Before we had even departed on this family adventure, my father (a former professional football player and self-promoting family team captain) cheerfully assigned each of us certain plays or responsibilities for the trip. As if being in a huddle back in the 1950s while an All-American offensive tackle at the University of Minnesota, he smiled and said to me, “Since you're the one studying French, we're going to count on you to order our meals, get hotel rooms, buy train tickets. You're the translator for the trip. *D'accord?*”

At the time I thought it was a joke, maybe meant to humiliate me. Isn't that how seventh graders think? But Dad's much less obvious, more subtle idea was to improve my confidence to get me to explore a path that could become my true passion, my true calling in life. My parents had been thrilled at the prospect of all of us learning foreign languages the old-fashioned way, immersed in the rote memorization and regurgitation of linguistic necessities of the Jefferson Junior High School French classroom. Yet when parents add the linguistic and cultural surround-sound effect, immersing their children during their formative years in the everyday life of another, totally different culture, the magic begins. This magic began the day I walked off the charter jet at Charles de Gaulle International Airport northeast of Paris.

excited and nervous as hell.

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What I have since learned from so many youth I have taught and traveled abroad with is that a tour of a foreign country—especially when you're young—can be a life-changing experience. That's what that first trip to France was for me. The trip is imprinted in my mind forever as one of the best times of my life. I will never forget coming out of the metro at Place Trocadéro and seeing the Eiffel Tower for the first time, just across the Seine. I will also never forget neglecting to remind my mom and dad to exchange money one Friday. With the banks closed on the weekend, no ATMs, few restaurants taking US credit cards then, and a little money for meals, we found ourselves one Sunday evening pondering how we would pay for dinner. I suggested singing some American or British songs on a street corner (my father and I were the only two in the whole family who could carry a tune) with a beret held out as our collection cup. My other idea was to go into a restaurant, ask for free food, and declare that we would do dishes in exchange for our meals. In the end, I convinced the manager of a small restaurant to let us eat nothing but *pommes frites* in his restaurant, because that was all we could afford. I don't remember my brothers or parents complaining about our meal of French fries, but I can still see the quizzical expression on the cook's face as he came out of the kitchen to see who was eating all those fries he was preparing, plate after plate after plate. It did not need translation.

I could not have played the role of translator on this trip, nor would I have embarked on my career with such a strong international relations component, had it not been for experiences like that first trip to Paris. I was also helped by some of the great teachers I had in my formative years. I will never forget Mademoiselle Brune (Miss Brown), my first French teacher, in seventh grade. Her passion for teaching the French language and culture to inner-city Minneapolis junior high school students infused me with a love of the language and culture of France. Her marvelous accent carried with it the flavor of the land that I fell in love with (and coincidentally reinforced the necessity of developing the best accent possible). Mlle. Brune would use one particular line with students who had not completed their homework assignments, something we *still* laugh about to this day: *Tu as été trop occupé pour terminer ton devoir hier soir? Ton cours de français est le cours le PLUS important dans ton école en fait, dans ta vie!* (“You were too busy to finish your homework last night? Your French course is your most important course in the school, in fact, in life!”) We tried to hold back our laughter, but found it impossible. She also spoke to us in French at all times in the hallway of our school and had a lunch table once each week where we could speak the language for the carrot of extra credit.

I also remember Mr. Fred Oliver, my incredible French teacher from ninth through twelfth grades at Minneapolis West High School. He is a wonderful man in his eighties now—we still keep in touch—who was the essence of a stickler, not just in speaking the language all the time, but in having a perfect accent, excellent grammatical skills, and a deep treasure chest of French vocabulary and cultural lessons in the intellectual arsenal. He was what kids today would call “a pain in the butt.” But as I have also learned, as a teacher myself for almost thirty years, a good pain-in-the-butt teacher who truly believes in your talents will mentor and push you so your language capabilities will be nearly perfect.

Mr. Oliver knew that most of the students at our school would never be able to travel

France, so he would take us on off-campus field trips to a moderately priced French restaurant where he would make us speak French while we ordered and ate our meal. Looking back, I realize that in these off-campus moments, on educational family vacation and in school, using my very limited French abilities to experience new cultures and have the courage to immerse myself in what is considered foreign, I was not only learning French and about French culture, but experiencing the context of a larger world previously unknown to me. As I look back, the sometimes difficult or unsettling experience most often proved to be exhilarating, satisfying, and life changing.

Some twenty years after my father made me the family's rookie translator, I was hired as the founding director of a US boarding school's study-abroad program in Avignon, France. Each year, Proctor Academy, with its primary campus in Andover, New Hampshire, sends three groups of its French students, a maximum of ten students each trimester, to its Avignon-based program, which I founded in 1983, for a nine-week intensive program. I welcomed new arrivals from the United States with a task similar to the one my parents had given me. I met each group at the Paris airport, hugging all the fatigued, jet-lagged students as they emerged from French customs with their overloaded luggage. From there, we took taxis—three to a taxi, and the students had to tell the drivers where they were going—to the Paris Gare de Lyon train station where we would await the TGV train to Avignon, in southern France.

To the students' surprise, before we boarded our train to Avignon, I broke the group into smaller sections, handed one member of each 100 francs (this was well before the creation of the euro), and asked them to go as teams and buy different portions of the *pique-nique* we would enjoy together later on the train. The foods were available at an open market near the train station. Just as my parents had done years before, I forced the students—experiencing their first bout of language and culture shock—to do something by themselves. They had to take risks and use the language to achieve a goal, in this case purchasing our lunch for the train ride, but in a fun way and as a team. Each time, the students who arrived in Paris were nervous, but once they discovered that they could successfully achieve something simple like this, their fear began to fade, after only an hour or two in a new country. Yes, the students made inevitable linguistic faux pas, but they learned how to laugh and hop back into the conversation unafraid then, and for weeks to come.

These students taught me something early in my career as a foreign language teacher that made a profound difference in the way I understood foreign language acquisition. Many of the students who came to Proctor Academy had diagnosed learning differences (many were unfortunately labeled with having “learning disabilities”; I like to call them simply learning “differences”). For those, this diagnosis made traditional classroom learning difficult. However, immersed in the language and the culture of France, and forced to paddle along in French society, they were able to be successful over time. As Max, a student of Arabic who will meet in the next chapter, observes about the essence of learning a foreign language, “It isn't truly about textbooks or technology or teaching practices. Instead it is about immersion. This is when language acquisition works so well. I know students who had never taken Spanish class and went to Spain for a whole academic year and were speaking with almost native fluency upon their return to the United States. They managed to do that without even being asked to conjugate verbs or being quizzed on vocabulary in a US classroom.”

To foreign language teachers, this realization might first occur with some discomfort. We want to believe that it is our language pedagogy that creates success, our curriculum that engenders fluency. But deep down we know that our students absorb information like a sponge, learning foreign language quickly and efficiently. If we, as parents and educators, commit to teaching foreign language in children's formative years, they will meet us more than halfway. Excellent foreign language pedagogy and acquisition are so important to improving a school's global IQ that I have devoted two chapters in this book to this basic idea. This chapter opens the discussion with the Romance or Latin-based languages where many of us began our own language acquisition. [Chapter 2](#) discusses broadening what we teach to include Eastern languages, Mandarin or Arabic, as well as Western languages, Spanish and French, in order to enhance the prospects of future peace and prosperity. In both cases, we must appreciate that our students are eager to match pace with their multilingual peers worldwide, and they are waiting for the opportunity to learn. What is the alternative?

### **Melting-Pot Nation Makes Savory Linguistic Stew**

We know what doesn't work. Memorizing myths of Americana and encouraging white nationalism at Dartmouth College educator and friend John Rassias called in 1964 "the moat mentality" of linguistic and cultural isolationism only put us at a deeper and potentially deadly disadvantage internationally. We have to use curricula in US schools to build bridges, not moats, and to give our children the knowledge and skills they need to maintain those bridges and to build more. We have to give them the tools to build cross-cultural relationships, too, so they'll be able to use and adapt to meet future challenges and opportunities that we can only imagine today. We have to collaborate with one another—teacher to teacher, teacher to student, parent to teacher, parent to child—to prioritize creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, curiosity, imagination, and, especially, innovation in US language education.

The reputation of the United States as a monolingual society is in contrast to its reality as a nation of immigrants rich in foreign languages. Currently in our public schools, it is not uncommon for the English as a Second Language teacher to have children in class from two dozen or more different language backgrounds. Spanish, certainly. But also French, Mandarin, and Cantonese Chinese, Tagalog (Filipino), Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Polish, Italian, Greek, Hindi, Urdu, French Creole, Portuguese, and German. The United States can be described as traditionally chauvinistic in its adherence to English; not only do we consider foreign language instruction a low priority for younger school-age children, but we also pressure children from families that speak a foreign language at home to abandon that language as a sign of assimilation. And so often they do.

This divide is between de jure and de facto—between law and practice, between what we may want to believe and reality. Periodically there are xenophobic outbreaks of misplaced nationalism that seek to pass a federal law mandating English as the official language of the United States. We need only look at the local level, however, to see how such a proclamation would be at best counterproductive and at worst a veiled form of racism. It is a matter of our shared humanity that the California Department of Motor Vehicles publishes its documents in nine languages, including Armenian and Punjabi. New Mexico not only publishes its government forms in Spanish as well as English but also requires that all official services be

available in both languages. Even Arizona, a state conflicted over the hot-button topic of immigration reform, requires the distribution of voting ballots in such languages as Navajo and Tohono O'odham—and Spanish—in certain counties.

English is the most spoken language in the United States. More than 82 percent of the U.S. population speaks English as a native tongue, and more than 96 percent of Americans speak English “well” or “very well,” as self-reported on the most recent census. Americans will most likely always feel that they must continue to teach children this “native tongue,” given its importance around the world. But today’s global culture, economy, and geopolitical dialogues demand more of those who want to shape the way Americans work and live. Bilingual fluency in Spanish and English is already a requirement for many jobs and careers. And it is not only an advantage in the workplace but also in community life where language differences have traditionally acted as barriers.

### **Latin-based Languages Are a Natural First Step**

Spanish and French oral and written comprehension and expression skills are particularly well suited for integration into early education in the United States. These traditional Latin-based favorites offer young learners a natural step into foreign language acquisition. A young person who is bilingual in Spanish and English has access to a much wider range of words, study, and social interaction opportunities in the United States, where more than 35 million people, or roughly 12 percent of the population, speak Spanish at home (45 million people speak Spanish as a first or second language). Thus Spanish is the second-most-spoken language in the United States, and when compared to other countries where Spanish is spoken widely, the United States has the third-largest Spanish-speaking population of any country in the world, after Mexico and Colombia, and before Argentina and Spain.

The fact that Spanish is booming in the United States also means that for real-world language practice, students do not always have to travel internationally for an immersive experience. The important, long-standing, and profound presence of Latino cultures in the United States has provided ample opportunities for interface in this country. Spanish is, in terms of oral comprehension and expression, relatively easy to learn. As I tell kids, with Spanish, what you see is what you get in terms of the consistent pronunciation of consonants and vowels.

I have taught both Spanish and French since 1983, so I am not playing favorites here in outlining the national situation. Even as an avowed Francophile, I have had to contemplate the question, is French becoming passé? There was a time when French was the first choice of foreign language among many students. Some liked the elegant sound of it or its status as a language of great literature, cuisine, art, international diplomacy, and world leadership. Some liked the food—crêpe, croissant, quiche, café au lait—or other cultural appeals of France, including cinema, music, and architecture. Some just chose it because their parents told them to. In recent years, I’ve heard more debate on the merits of French versus Spanish, with the pro-Spanish argument (kids do actually argue over these matters) being that because it is America’s obvious second language, it just makes sense to know it; that Spanish, too, speaks of a culture rich in literature and leadership; and that it is associated with good food that has long been underappreciated. I’ve also heard the argument that French isn’t important in many

places anymore.

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Of course, that is not true, although French dominance as the lingua franca of international affairs and high culture has receded somewhat as other nations and other languages have grown stronger in the global milieu. However, the imprint of French history, culture, ideas, and the language itself is richly present in US history and culture. The United States' first two ambassadors to France were Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, both fluent in French. Even in just a practical sense, what remains vitally important about French, absolutely undiminished by time or geopolitical shifts, is the same thing that makes any language important in the context of second-language acquisition: if you enjoy a language, for whatever reason that might be—from the sound of it, to why it might be useful to you, to whatever positive associations it holds for you—then it is the ideal language for you to study in addition to English. And if you learn a second language well—be it French or Spanish—during your formative years, you have exercised a crucial area of the brain that will remain in shape and effectively usable for years: the oral and written comprehension and expression language portions of the brain. A student who has learned *how* to learn another language in those formative years will only find it easier to learn other languages later. For me, this was true. I studied and learned Spanish, after first learning English and then French. A good experience learning any foreign language trains the brain to acquire subsequent languages more effectively than monolingual brains acquire languages, and it opens the mind to the nuances of another culture's sights, smells, tastes, and surfaces, affecting all of the senses, a crucial exercise in multifaceted linguistic and cultural acquisition.

### **Foreign Language Learning Trains the Brain**

Interestingly, it was prejudice and discrimination against children who spoke French as well as English that led the researchers Elizabeth Peal and Wallace Lambert to offer the watershed study on bilingualism and intelligence. Peal and Lambert found that not only did bilingual ten year olds in Montreal score higher on verbal intelligence tests than did their monolingual counterparts, but they also did better on nonverbal tests “involving concept formation or symbolic flexibility.” Thus began a tidal wave of research that demonstrated how learning more than one language improves people's ability to solve problems, multitask, plan actions, and remember things. At the same time, other investigators debunked the assumptions made at the turn of the last century that a child who lives with two languages would have, in the words of Scottish educator and philosopher Simon Laurie, the “intellectual and spiritual growth... not thereby doubled but halved.”

Suzanne Flynn, professor of foreign languages and linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, believes the research is conclusive: there is no such thing as “finite brain space” where learning one language would mean that someone cannot simultaneously learn another. She points to studies in which babies as young as three months learn the difference between two languages, babbling slightly differently when they are with an English-speaking parent, for example, than when they are with their Spanish-speaking parent. “The child is differentiating these languages,” Flynn says. “Children never get mixed up.” Contrary to the belief that adding another language too early will interrupt or disrupt a learner's first or “home” language, “the capacity to learn languages is infinite,” Flynn says. “It is only bounded



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