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Educating for innovation

R. Keith Sawyer

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Abstract

In the last several decades many of the world's most developed countries have shifted from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy, one based on the creation of knowledge, information, and innovation. Educational researchers have paid very little scholarly attention to this economic shift, although it has substantial implications. After all, educational historians have repeatedly shown how today's schools were designed in the first half of the 20th century to meet the economic needs of the industrial economy; if that economy is a thing of the past, then many features of contemporary schools may become obsolete. In today's knowledge society, creativity always occurs in complex collaborative and organizational settings. Teams and organizations innovate using open-ended, improvisational group processes. I argue that education should be structured around disciplined improvisation, and I advocate the use of situated, collaborative knowledge-building activities. I argue that creative collaboration in classrooms aligns with the social nature of innovation in today's economy.

Keywords

Creativity; Innovation; Collaboration; Knowledge society

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