

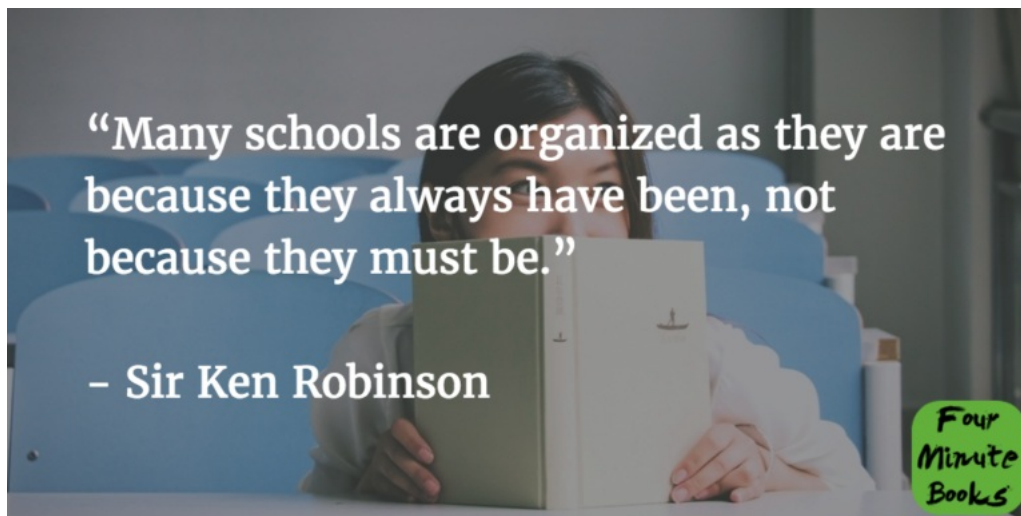
Creative Schools Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/creative-schools-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *Creative Schools reveals how fundamentally broken our formal education system really is and how we can change our perspective to teach children the competencies and things they actually need to navigate the modern world.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



I remember where I first saw Sir Ken Robinson's face. On the TED website. "Do Schools Kill Creativity?" is the most popular TED talk of all time with over 40 million views. The knighted professor emeritus from the University of Warwick has dedicated most of his life to transforming education, especially with respect to the arts.

If you thought school was boring and feel it didn't prepare you too well for real life, then you and Ken Robinson will get along just fine. He's been criticizing the standardized testing machine we call school for years. In *Creative Schools*, he outlines how we can fundamentally shift our perspective to help shape schools that actually teach kids what they need to know.

And don't think it's an effort in vain, even if you've long finished all sorts of schooling. We're all teachers at some point in our lives, and it's up to us to be the best ones we can be.

Here are 3 lessons to show you where schools are, where they need to go, and how we can make it happen:

1. School is not designed to make you well educated; it's designed to make you a useful, obedient worker.
2. When you're teaching someone, think of yourself as a gardener.
3. The most important things we can teach our children are curiosity, creativity and criticism.

Ready to make school a better place for future students? Here's how a true teacher extraordinaire thinks we can do it!

Lesson 1: Schools aren't meant to make you better, they're designed to make you an obedient, productive employee.

Have you ever thought about why schools are the way they are? What they were created for?

When you dig deep into the books of the history of education, what you find isn't all too pretty. Before our Western, formal school system was introduced, only few people were schooled. Usually the sons and daughters of rich people would have private teachers to teach them in a variety of subjects like history, art, math, language, biology and music.

Why the sudden change? Why have everyone learn these things? **Because after the industrial revolution, people would need them to do their work.**

It's simple. To do highly standardized factory work, people would need highly standardized factory knowledge. So at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century Western governments introduced mass education built around conformity and obedience, using the same linear processes that made factories so efficient.

100 years later our kids still run through the same standardized, test-infested machine, to become cogs in the system when those cogs have long stopped being valuable.

There's a reason Western schools do poorly in PISA studies (not least because PISA is standardized itself) and Finnish schools with only 2 hours worth of lessons a day are at the top of the scoreboard.

Schools are not designed to make you smarter. Right now, they're designed to make you a productive employee, who doesn't ask too many questions.

Lesson 2: Try to think of yourself as a gardener when you want to teach someone something.

Can you remember a time when everything was interesting? When you wanted to touch, feel, look at and explore the whole world?

You might not remember it, but there was such a time. It was when you were four years old. And then you started going to school. All of a sudden, you *had* to do stuff. Not because it was fun. But because it was required. And you started disliking books, disliking the subjects, and you stopped exploring.

If you didn't and you liked school, there was only one person responsible for this: your teacher. Great teachers nurture the creativity and curiosity of kids. They expand it, instead of nipping it in the bud by making their lessons boring.

We all teach at times, whether to our friends, family, kids, or actual classrooms. When we do, Ken Robinson suggests we think of ourselves as gardeners: **we can't force our "plants" to grow, but we can feed their natural desire to do so.**

He says a good teacher will do four things:

1. Engage with children on their level to spark their curiosity – for example relating math exercises to baseball, history to the local city and music to the genres the kids listen to.
2. Show his or her expectations to be a mentor to aspire to.
3. Use different means of teaching for different students – no two human beings are exactly alike.
4. Bestow children with the confidence to handle whatever difficult tasks the world will throw at them.

We're all teachers. Make sure you make whatever you teach worthwhile.

Lesson 3: What our kids really need to develop are curiosity, creativity and criticism.

In today's world, kids don't need to remember facts or hard skills. They'll learn most of those during their careers. Anything beyond basic math and language understanding is rarely needed in real life.

Instead of skills, Ken Robinson argues, **we should teach our children competencies**. What would you want your kid to learn? A few useless subjects, or the attitudes that help it navigate life?

The world is changing fast, and there's no way to predict what subjects will be useful tomorrow. Some things, however, are timeless. Like these three:

1. **Curiosity** – the constant drive to pay attention to the world and ask questions about it.
2. **Creativity** – the ability to come up with new ideas to solve complex, interesting problems and implement them.
3. **Criticism** – the courage to question even the answers to their own questions, filter out facts from opinions and distinguish the signal from the noise.

If we do nothing to be good parents, but instill in our kids these traits, I'd say we'll have done a decent job. I'm sure Ken Robinson would agree. How about you?

Creative Schools Review

Yes, Ken Robinson has raised his finger with this book, and it's pointed right at governments and policy makers. But it's more than that. While admitting that we're standing in front of a big pile of broken processes, he also shows us how we can start picking them up and piecing them

back together. Let's all rally together for more *Creative Schools*.

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Learn more about the author >>

What else can you learn from the blinks?

- What the results of our standardized education are (they're not pretty)
- How good schools are similar to an organic farm
- Which other five core competencies children need
- A great example of a school run right, even within the limits of the current system
- Why one of your best bets is to let others do the teaching

Who would I recommend the Creative Schools summary to?

The 18 year old who just finished her last high school exam and is about to leave the formal education system, the 61 year old teacher, who hasn't changed his teaching routine in the past five years, and anyone who wants to have kids.