Virtual Reality in Education has given more opportunities for teaching and learning. Without leaving the classroom, VR allows students to explore and absorb more information. The 3D environment makes learning a more fun and stimulating experience.

In traditional education, teachings are based on lessons learned, written history and future demands. These are usually laid out in books, ebooks and illustrations which also come in different versions alongside the restrictions of our bare imagination. With Virtual Reality in Education, teachings come to life before any learner’s eyes. Without relying just on textbook descriptions, any student experiences interactive 3D world where they travel, explore and immerse.

A breakthrough happened in 2003, an online virtual world called Second Life was launched. However similar it was to massively multiplayer online role-playing games, its creators were emphatic to state it is not a game. It features 3D based user-generated content which targets people aged 16 and over. Education-wise, Second Life is a platform used by over hundred regions for educators to build lessons and invite students to immerse themselves in a more personal form of distance learning.

Field trips to Mars was also made possible with the help of Virtual Reality. Geared with transparent 4K displays, switchable glass film and surround sound system, Lockheed Martin transformed a local school bus into the Red Planet. Students were handed VR glasses as they traveled along the streets of Washington DC mapped onto the virtual surface of Mars. This Red Planet experience is only one of the space explorations and science projects Generation Beyond offers on their website for educators who wish to make high school and middle school more immersive and interactive.

Apart from space exploration, Virtual Reality makes museum visits one click away. Boulevard pioneers in allowing users to tour famous museums, interact with it and learn more about arts and history. To top it all, users are accompanied by well-known authors, artists and curators which in turn increases students’ engagement without even leaving their classroom.

Labster VR made virtual lab simulations possible for schools and universities. It aims to ensure safe and interactive environment where students gain more understanding of STEM courses through hundreds of engaging hours of science learning content. Future doctors can visualize how surgery works without any potential risks. There are several simulations available on their website which can run on laptop and desktop computers.

Gently disrupting, Google Expedition is little by little surpassing conventional classroom settings as it offers virtual fieldtrips anywhere in the world, brings abstract concepts to life and enables teachers or learners their own virtual adventures – all these made possible with a touch on their own smartphone and tablet. A very similar platform that uses Virtual Reality in fieldtrips is Nearpod. It also introduces interactive videos, game-based learnings and quick formative assessments as collaborative work among students and educator.

These virtual reality inventions are just enough proof that VR isn’t made solely for games and entertainment. The possibility of VR soon replacing textbooks with interactive educational experiences is not a farfetched. Both learners and educators can unlock potential skills through practical experiences in a virtual world. Only time will tell when the whole world will completely turn head to this computer technology and take education on a whole new level.

Resource Links:

<https://www.educationnext.org/virtual-reality-disruption-3d-technology-education/>

<https://arpost.co/2019/12/04/4-inventive-examples-virtual-reality-education-learning/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Second_Life>