

Consolarium meets Marc Prensky, part 2

Yes, I think the challenge for us working in schools is how we make children passionate about learning that we need to deliver in some regards. How do we create context in which children become passionate about writing, passionate about numeracy, passionate about enquiry, expressive arts.

Well its not clear that any of them ever will or that we can do that but we can do is say if you are passionate about this then I can show you something in mathematics, or I can show you something in graphic arts that will advance your own agenda. You may never totally get into my agenda, you may, but that's ok as long as you see a connection and that I think is the teacher's job more and more is to make that connection real. This is not just relevant because we are doing this but here you are interested in the environment and let's go out to the forest and let's talk about math in terms of trees for let's talk about this or let's do it in a way that you say 'I can see how I can really apply that'.

Another question that was thrown at you yesterday was about an evidence-based to support your thoughts, to support your theories etc. In Scotland, what we have tried to do with games-based learning is to try where possible to have some research evidence to show, because people ask for it, where is any evidence to back this up, I get asked that all the time. How would you respond to that and what kind of things have you used or can call on to support what you say.

Well, I don't see that as my job necessarily, my job is mostly to share ideas but there are plenty, mostly many isolated examples, and people ought to be collecting those. I think just like yesterday when somebody stood up in the middle of the presentation and said I have an example I have been doing that for a long time so it would be nice is somebody collected these things and said there are the collected examples but I don't see that as my job necessarily. I would like to know about them if somebody does and I hope people do but sometimes the idea of research people have it wrong, people want to see numbers or they want to see something else, really when something works you can tell and I don't think there is any question about that.

Well the work the Consolarium team, that I have been leading for a number of years now in relation to games-based learning is working with school all over Scotland, fantastic teachers, fantastic headteachers and people who help make it happen. Any parting words you would give to them, any words of encouragement to say to keep on going on, anything you would like to say to them.

Sure, there is plenty, I am very optimistic and I'm always looking for ways to help teachers do their jobs better and for things that will impact learning without making the teachers job harder but making it easier. One of those is understanding the passions of your people and that is probably the easiest thing you can do that will have the biggest impact so let me leave it there. If every teacher tomorrow or the next school day takes twenty minutes out of the day and says to every student 'what are you passionate about?' and writes it down and then thinks about it in the back of their mind how they can use that, education will be much improved overnight.

Mark, I would just like to say thank you for your time and all the best with your new book Teaching Digital Native. Ok, thanks very much Mark, take care.

Pleasure.