



The PACE Setter: *The Weekly Newsletter for PACE British School*

Edition 1: Thursday, 26 Sep 19

It is my pleasure to be writing this, my first newsletter for PACE British School, Sharjah. Since our opening 3 weeks ago, we have grown to over 100 pupils in our FS2-Y6 classes. They are all enjoying their UK National Curriculum Studies in addition to PE, Robotics, Arabic, Islamic Studies, Moral Studies and French. Our teachers are working hard to deliver the highest quality lessons in our growing school; a school that offers a broad diversity of nationalities and ethnicities in both our pupil and staff ranks.



If you have been in school this week, you would have seen a variety of different learning activities ongoing. For FS and Y1, they have been working on phonics and on robotics. We also held a whole school Fire Practice and the students evacuated the building quickly and quietly. I was very impressed with their maturity and focus during this exercise. Do go to our **Instagram** and **Facebook** pages to see our students in action:

- <https://www.instagram.com/pacebritishschool/?hl=en>
- <https://www.facebook.com/pacebritishsharjah/>

One of the many positive aspects of our school's diversity is fluency of language with some of our pupils and staff speaking several languages in addition to their mother tongue.

I am full of respect for our students and staff who move seamlessly between languages and routinely embrace others. In an ever shrinking world where communication and fluency becomes ever more important, I am heartened by the fluencies evident in our school.

The Oxford Dictionary defines "fluency" as "*the ability to express oneself easily and articulately.*" This key skill has been an important aspect of communication throughout history. However, our current students are facing a world that requires further fluencies in a wider range of subjects beyond language.

The educator, Ian Jukes affirms that established educational models teach the ability to solve problems in "*a show-and-tell manner (we show students the problem, and tell them how we got the answer) that has fostered a culture of dependency, rather than discovery. But if you look at today's economy, you'll discover that most left-brain tasks are already automated or outsourced via Internet in a global economy, leaving jobs that require whole-brain thinking. This means creativity and problem-solving applied in real time. The "6D" system is a logical, thorough, and relevant approach for tackling problems!*"

This is an interesting observation from a respected educational guru who has worked as a Primary and Secondary School Principal and latterly, an educational consultant for many years. So, what does he mean by fluencies? Jukes cites a "6D system" of learning that focuses on problem solving using the following approach:

- Defining** the problem so as to establish what challenge it is that has to be overcome.
- Discovering** a solution through investigation that inevitably involves failure.



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Dreaming / Imagining / Reasoning to form a process to solve the problem involving informed trial and error.

Designing a problem solving process that is accurate and effective.

Delivering and communicating the problem solving process to peers and others.

Debriefing and evaluating the whole experience so as to refine it in the event of new challenges.

Whilst, at first glance, this may appear to be the stuff of university level researchers or space exploration engineers, it can be seen every day at PACE British School at every level. The learning through play approach we have adopted as part of the British curriculum we deliver fosters exactly this approach to problem solving and to learning; preparing our learners for the challenges of IGCSE, A level and far beyond. Whilst the level of sophistication inevitably and rightly increases significantly as children move through the school, the fundamental concepts can be found in the Nursery years and developed through interaction with friends and family at home.

I have often been told that the fears and uncertainties about what the future world will look like and how today's children will succeed or fail in it are very much the fears and uncertainties of today's adults whose thinking is often constrained by an education system that is rapidly developing in response to a changing world. Like the dodo, the age of testing to produce a "score" that often lacks any relevance to ability and achievement other than to produce a top quartile percentage, is heading towards extinction. The key to decoding and, more importantly, to preparing students for the future is very much in letting go of the boundaries that many of us have preprogrammed into us from our educational experiences in favour of embracing a dynamic, often very foreign system of learning. I commend you therefore to visit our classes and see this learning in action.

Wishing you a positive week ahead.

David Flint
Principal

References:

[Ian Jukes - The Committed Sardine](#)

[Andrew Churches, the 21st Century Teacher](#)