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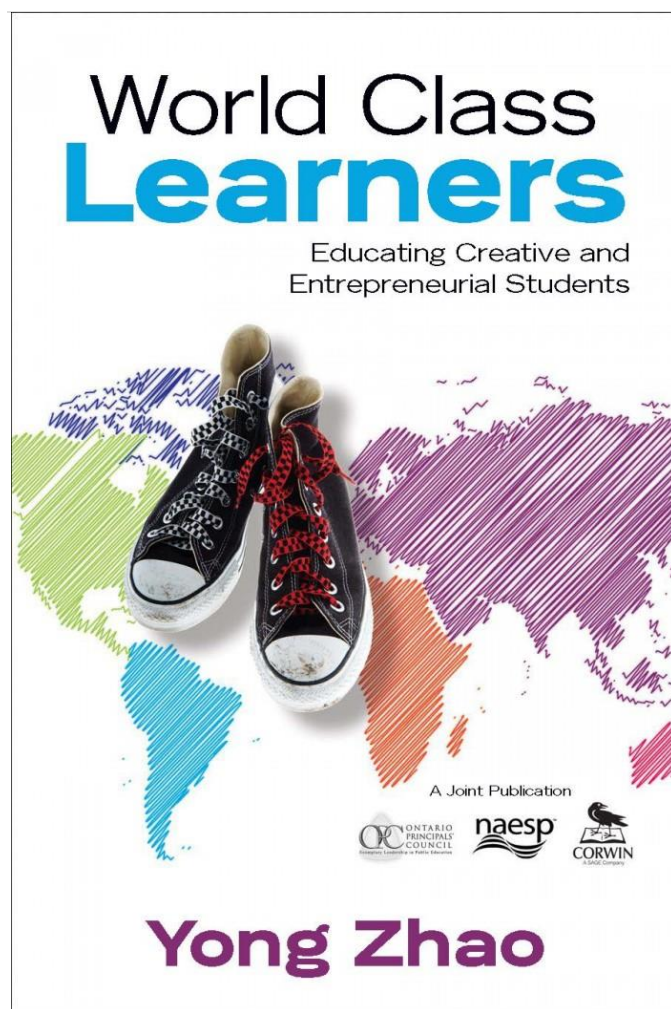
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My new book: *World Class Learners: Educating Creative and Entrepreneurial Students*



I am very pleased to announce that Corwin Press will release my new book *World Class Learners: Educating Creative and Entrepreneurial Students* in association with the National Association of Elementary School Principal (NAESP) next month, June 2012. The book is about preparing global, creative, and entrepreneurial talents. It is my attempt to

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answer a number of pressing questions facing education today. These questions are exemplified by two new stories that have dominated the media recently, one around the Facebook IPO and the other the debt and jobs of college graduates.

100 billion, 900 million, and 28 are three numbers that quickly summarize the story of Facebook Inc.: a 28-year-old CEO who co-founded a company with 900 million users world-wide and is now valued at over 100 billion dollars. The 28-year-old CEO and Co-founder, Mark Zuckerberg, is worth nearly \$20 billion dollars and one of the 30 wealthiest people on earth. He was named one of the 100 most influential people multiple times by the *Time* magazine. Along with Zuckerberg, Facebook has produced a few other young billionaires and created jobs for thousands of people.

1 trillion, 4.9 million, and 23,000 capture the essence three numbers for the latter story: over 1 trillion dollars in outstanding student loans, with an average of over \$23,000, and 4.7 million who had gone or graduated from college are unemployed in the United States. “For the first time in history, the number of jobless workers age 25 and up who have attended some college now exceeds the ranks of those who settled for a high school diploma or less,” according to a [story in The Investors’ Business Daily on May 17](#).

No question that Facebook stocks can go up and down, the company could be a bubble and even disappear after a while, just like many others, but at its current value, 10 Facebooks or 50 Zuckerbergs can wipe out all the college debts. You may not like Facebook or its creator and you may question if Facebook is truly worth that much, but at this time, it sure would be nice to have a few more innovative entrepreneurs like Mark Zuckerberg.

But how come we don’t have more Zuckerbergs? What led to the making of Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook? What’s the difference between Zuckerberg, who dropped out of college but created jobs, and the many millions who finished college but are looking for jobs? Is Zuckerberg a nice accident, a lucky anomaly like Steve Jobs? What role did his schooling play in his success, if any? Did



Zuckerberg become Zuckerberg because of or despite his schools? Can we design schools to cultivate creative and entrepreneurial talents like Zuckerberg? If so, what does it look like?

“College and career readiness” is the mantra in the global education reform circle. Uniform curriculum, common standards and assessments, globally benchmarked practices, data-driven instruction, and high-stakes testing-based accountability are touted as the path to edutopia. PISA, TIMSS, and other similar type of international tests are regarded as the gold standard of educational quality and indicators of a nation’s future prosperity. But at a time when college degrees do not guarantee gainful employment or a meaningful life, what is the point of preparing someone to be ready for college? At a time when most of the careers for our children are yet to be invented, how could we prepare them? At a time when seven billion human beings living in vastly different societies that are intricately connected, how could “all children be above average” or winners of the global competition in a narrowly defined game?

This book is the result of my attempts to answer these questions with data and evidence from a variety of sources. Essentially, I reached the following conclusions:

1. The current education reform efforts that attempt to provide a common, homogenous, and standardized educational experience, e.g., the Common Core Standards Initiative in the U.S., are not only futile but also harmful to preparing our children for the future.
2. Massive changes brought about by population growth, technology, and globalization not only demand but also create opportunities for “mass entrepreneurship” and thus require everyone to be globally minded, creative, and entrepreneurial. Entrepreneurship is no longer limited to starting or owning a business, but is expanded to social entrepreneurship, policy entrepreneurship, and intrapreneurship.



3. Traditional schooling aims to prepare employees rather than creative entrepreneurs. As a result the more successful traditional schooling is (often measured by test scores in a few subjects), the more it stifles creativity and the entrepreneurial spirit.
4. To cultivate creative and entrepreneurial talents is much more than adding an entrepreneurship course or program to the curriculum. It requires a paradigm shift—from employee-oriented education to entrepreneur-oriented education, from prescribing children's education to supporting their learning, and from reducing human diversity to a few employable skills to enhancing individual talents.
5. The elements of entrepreneur-oriented education have been proposed and practiced by various education leaders and institutions for a long time but they have largely remained on the fringe. What we need to do is to move them to the mainstream for all children.

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