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The script that formed the basis of this podcast.

Gamification out, podcasting in? A old way not to leave anyone behind in a new format.

Geez, I think we are on the cusp of an educational revolution.
Not another one!

Here's the thing. We all want learners to succeed, no matter what age or ability, right?

Right.

But at the moment that's not working for so many people.

Right.

So what can we do about it? Well, it's going to be helpful if we skim through the history of learning. Trust me, it is important.

The first form of learning was just word of mouth. You know, tall stories passed from generation to generation, or learning important parts of religion. Things like sagas or passages from the Bible. No reading, no writing. Because most people couldn't read or write.

And it worked - in a limited kind of way. Keep that thought going.

Right!

So here comes the first revolution: schools.

Schools were invented by the Greeks and other ancient civilizations. Teachers and students. Teacher lectured. Students listened and if they were lucky, debated.

After those ancient civilizations things went downhill for the best part of two thousand years, at least in the west, with just a few people getting private tutors or being taught by the church. But guess what, that meant they learned just church-related subjects like Latin.

Well, it doesn't take me to tell you that Latin has never been a great turnon for most learners. It was unbelievably unrelated to most people's needs. Except, if you had it, you got a better job. So you put up with learning it, and a few other things for the sake of what came later. It's what we still do in many subjects.

Schools had been around since the 1300s in Europe, if you could

pay for them, but public schools belong to the 19th century. Next Revolution. What to teach a wide range of children in a school open to all? OK. They will mostly work in shops where they will need to add up, or in factories. So let's give them the basics: reading, writing and arithmetic. The 3 Rs.

Now if you are starting out an education system who could argue with that?

But note that there was a business purpose behind the education. Keep that thought going, too.

Now somewhere down the line that idea of purpose got pushed to the back of the class.

Next revolution. The curriculum was broadened to include a wider range of subjects. But teaching still meant chalkboards.

Next revolution. Textbooks. They were called textbooks for a reason. They only had text. Unbelievably dull to us nowadays, but a huge step at the time. Remember, old printing presses could not handle pictures.

So how did learning work? If learners were going to learn something they had to get it fixed in their heads. That was not new. In previous ages when there were no books, people learned religious texts that way. It was well tried and tested. And it did not require highly skilled teachers - an important point. So schools became places of rote learning. Ugh!

Over the decades a revolution of a more gradual kind took place, with textbooks becoming illustrated.

And in a way, that is where we still are.

But then people started to worry about learning, and think that learners need to be encouraged to learn, and that meant fun and games. Gamification we now call it.

So we now live in a world where the fundamental purpose of education is well and truly lost and confused in a web of games.

Doctor Brian Knapp, famous author of over a thousand books and educationalist, says "Two things are now missing. The whole purpose of education, and the best way to learn."

That's pretty damning.

So what can we put in its place? Well, much of it is still fine, but it is not directed to the needs of most learners. They need to know their particular light at the end of their particular tunnel. They have to know what benefit this education will be to them.

Now some learners like learning for its own sake. It's the others that are being left behind.

So, Doctor Knapp suggests we take a good look at what worked in the past. People talking has worked down the ages. So let's keep that. But always add how this learning will help you if you are going to be a hairdresser or a bricklayer or whatever else you want to be. That's what the first schools did. In a way that were business schools for young people. But it gave them a layer of motivation, and motivation spells more achievement.

Take English as an example. Most people use English conversationally. It is natural. They don't need to know about the detailed structure of English grammar, just the basics. Sure, some will need to be precise, but let's face it, most won't. They will forget all about English lessons as soon as they go o work. What a waste of part of their lives!

Now let's add another thread. People love movies. Have you noticed how you can be age eight or eighty and still watch the same movie? That's because it is conversational, and of course has a story. It is easy, accessible and not related to language level like a text or information book.

Which, Doctor Knapp suggests, is where conversational podcasts come in. Everyone will listen to a conversational podcast between two anchor personalities. The back and forth banter is engaging. It's really not much different to sagas or movies. With anchors you get to know the personalities, just as you would, for example in a breakfast TV show or your own teacher. That makes it more comfortable for the more educationally-challenged.

So can you put this to use in a classroom teaching say science, without making it condescending or trivial? Can you take it seriously, give sufficient facts and not make it all seem like a game? And can you provide a big picture in 5 minutes that you could never ever achieve by reading a book.

Absolutely, according to Doctor Knapp, who has two anchors addressing a wide range of topics for mainstream and special needs children all using the same content on his Curriculum Visions websites.

As he says "It's not rocket science. It is simply going back to basics. What works best? What gives un unconfusing message, and what can this do for my life? And can it all be done in a five minute podcast? Yes, really, Five minutes."