



FLAT CLASSROOM

The **Flat Classroom™ Project** is a global collaborative project that joins together middle and senior high school students. This project is part of the emerging trend in internationally aware schools to embrace a holistic and constructivist educational approach to work collaboratively with others around the world in order to create students who are competitive and globally minded. The project was co-founded by [Vicki Davis](#) (Westwood Schools, USA) and [Julie Lindsay](#) (Beijing BISS

International School, China) in [2006](#). Since then a series of projects have been implemented that have joined over 3000 students and educators from more than 25 countries in virtual and face-to-face opportunities that have enhanced cultural understanding, formed lasting friendships and shaped the future of education to change the world as we know it today.

Elements of the project for **students** include:

- A deeper understanding of the effects of technology on our world that leads students to not only study but actually experience the ‘flatteners’
- An opportunity to be grouped with global partners to explain trends, give personal viewpoints and create a video containing an outsourced video segment from their global partners.
- Access to an educational network, blogging, posting photos, videos etc and a wiki, to plan their topic and build a web page on the topic.
- Being assessed on a common criterion based rubric
- Real-life flavours of deadlines, accountability and interdependence
- Having completed videos reviewed by global judges
- Participating in a virtual student summit, using Elluminate, to complete the project and showcase their learning.

Classrooms are flattened as teacher’s blog, share personal learning networks, collaborate on wikis and reach out to those who share a common curricular perspective. There are a series of Flat Classroom Projects that run multiple times every year and include teachers, students and of course classrooms from around the world.

As a sister to the Flat Classroom Project the **NetGenEd Project** (previously named Horizon Project) also lowers or ‘flattens’ the classrooms walls by emphasizing connection, communication, collaboration and creativity as well as higher-order thinking skills and problem solving. This project is a collaboration with Don Tapscott and is based on the concepts found in his book ‘Grown Up Digital’ as well as the Horizon Report released annually by New Media Consortium and the Educause Learning Initiative that outlines 6 trends believed will be impacting college and university campuses within the next five years.



A further initiative is the **Digiten Project** which links classrooms of middle school students from places that include Australia, Canada, USA, Spain, China and Qatar with the aim of promoting better online citizenship through research and discussion and culminates in each school taking action within their own community to promote this. This is based on the nine elements identified in Ribble and Bailey’s book, ‘Digital Citizen ship’.

In October 2009 a new project, culminating from a student action project developed at the Flat Classroom Conference in Qatar 2009, called **Eracism** was launched. This takes the form of a global student debate and includes a virtual world component.

Our highly connected world gives educators the global imperative to connect students and the wider community. Flat Classroom™ Projects have the power to produce world-class students with a worldview, based on understanding, and not misinformed bias from the media. It will require many hard-working, well informed, ethical, diligent teachers and visionary administrators to give them the framework to operate. How about you? Will you be an advocate for a Flat Classroom project at your school?

Project Awards



SHORT-LISTED (September 2009) for a World Innovation Summit for Education award in the pluralism section. <http://www.wise-qatar.org/>



FIRST PLACE in the Best Wiki 2008 category of the 2008 Edublog Awards
<http://edublogawards.com/2008>



FIRST PLACE in the Best Wiki 2006 category of the 2006 Edublog Awards.



FIRST PLACE in the [SIGTel Online Learning Awards for 2007](#). Special Interest Group Telelearning (now called Online Learning) is a part of ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education). The SIGTel Online Learning Awards recognize international innovation.



FIRST PLACE in the [Taking IT Global collaborative project contest 2007](#)

The Flat Classroom™ Project has also been:

- Included in Thomas Friedman's 3rd edition of **'The World is Flat'**, 2007 edition.
- Featured throughout ISTE publications, **'Reinventing Project Based Learning: Your field guide to real-world projects in the digital age'** by Suzie Boss and Jane Krauss and **'Global Education: Using Technology to bring the world to your students'**, by Laurence Peters
- Included in Don Tapscott's recent book, **'Grown Up Digital'**
- Featured in the book by **Curtis Bonk**, **'The World is Open: How Web Technology is Revolutionizing Education'**

Flat Classroom™ Conference and Workshops

Since the inaugural Flat Classroom Conference held in Qatar, January 2009, Flat Classroom workshops have been held in Hong Kong, September 2009 as part of the 21st Century Learning Conference and Mumbai in February 2010 as part of ASB Unplugged. The second global Flat Classroom Conference is to be held in Beijing, February 2011. These events bring students and educators from around the world to work on a project-based conference format where global problems are identified and solutions envisioned. Virtual and live participants join together to research and pitch solutions that include Web 2.0 tools for communication and collaboration and the development of multimedia products to share ideas.

Associated projects and links

- Learn more about Flat Classroom Projects and Conferences through our portal to all projects and 'About' page <http://www.flatclassroomproject.org/>
- Flat Classroom Conference: <http://flatclassroomconference.com>

Join us on:

- Flat Classrooms Ning (for educators): <http://flatclassrooms.ning.com>

Correspondence (please contact us for more information): flatclassroomproject@gmail.com

Follow us on twitter: @flatclassroom

"We are building bridges between students that our future can walk across"