

TRANSLATION

Ag Caitheamh Súl Siar ar an Todhchaí

Chuir do ríomhphost faoin gcaoi go raibh imeagla ort roimh fhilleadh ar scoil sna tríthe gáire mé. Tar éis blianta fada duit a bheith i do mhúinteoir cinnte ní amhlaidh is go mbíonn an t-imeagla céanna ort roimh thús na scoilbhliana is a bhíodh nuair is ar an taobh eile den bhord a bhí tú? Ar aon chaoi, is cúis áthais dom é gur theastaigh uait go roinnfinn mo chuid smaointe faoi thionscnamh spraoiúil go bhféadfá tabhairt faoi le do chuid daltaí sinsearacha. Seo ceann a rinne mé le mo shlua féin ag deireadh na bliana seo caite. Bhíomar ag plé na rudaí úfásacha go léir atá ag tarlú i ngach áit, agus an chaoi ina bhfuil gach aon rud trí thine srl. Toisc go nglaothar glúin 'na calóige snaeachta' nó 'lánmhíleach' ar ghlúin na ndaltaí, agus toisc go bhfuil an chumhacht ag calóga sneachta tine a mhúchadh, d'iarr mé orthu taispeántas a chuir os ár gcomhair faoin gcaoi ar féidir le, agus go ndéanann daoine óga an domhan a athrú ('is a fheabhsú, dar ndóigh!)

Mar a shamhlófá, b'é Greta Thunberg an chéad ainm a laugh daoine (tá mo ríomhaire de shíor ag athrú a hainm go dtí 'Great Thunberg', is comhartha cinnte é sin d'inteallacht shaorga dar liom!) Tá sé deacair a chreidiúint go ndeachaigh cailín cúig bliana déag d'aois ó a bheith anaithnid go bheith mar ainm teaghlaigh don dul i ngleic le hathrú aeráide chomh gasta sin. Thug sé an méid sin dóchais dom don todhchaí, tar éis dom na daltaí a chloisteáil ag labhairt faoina stailc scoile agus faoin gcaoi ar spreag sé chun gnímh iad i gcoinne na géarchéime aeráide. Is amhlaidh go raibh tionchar an-mhór ag an teachtaireacht a thug sí, nach bhfuil aon duine róbheag riamh le difríocht a dhéanamh. Cuireann sé an seanfhocal ón Afraic i gcuimhne dom, a deir, 'má tá tú den tuairim go bhfuil tú róbheag chun difríocht a dhéanamh, níl tú riamh tar éis oíche a chaitheamh is seomra le corrmhíol.'

Bhí taispeántais shuimiúla eile ann chomh maith. Labhair dalta amháin faoi Boyan Slat, déagóir Ollannach a dhearr córas chun an plaisteach sna haigéin a dhíbirt. An raibh a fhios agat nach raibh sé ach sé bliana déag d'aois nuair a tháinig sé ar an smaoineamh, agus ach naoi mbliana déag d'aois nuair a bhunaigh sé 'The Ocean Cleanup', comhlacht a mhúscail daoine chun a fheachtas a mhaoiniú, chun iarracht a dhéanamh snámh in aghaidh an easa agus truailliú plaistigh a dhíbirt. De réir dealraimh táthar ag déanamh tástála ar fhréamhshamhail i limistéar bruscair an Aigéin Chiúin i láthair na huaire.

Labhair taispeántas eile faoin gcaoi ar éirigh leis an nglacaí ón Rómháin ceithre bliana déag d'aois, Nadia Comaneci - an chéad ghlacaí Oilimpeach i stair na gcluichí ar a bronnadh scór foirfe 10.0 don léiriú a thug sí - an cosán a leagadh amach do Simone Biles an lae inniu, lena léirithe dochredite Oilimpeacha. Áfach, nílim cinnte an nglacfar leis sin mar chruthú na todhchaí nó an bhfuil sé sin beagáinín áiféiseach!

SOURCE TEXT

RE: Back to the Future

Your e-mail about dreading going back to school really cracked me up. After all these years you've been a teacher, surely you can't still be dreading the start of the new school year as much as you did when you were on the other side of the desk? Anyway, I'm flattered you asked to pick my brains for ideas for a fun project to do with your senior students. Here's one I did with my lot at the end of last year. We were discussing all the terrible things happening everywhere and how everything is on fire, etc. Seeing as the students' generation is the so-called 'snowflake' or 'millennial' generation, and snowflakes have the power to put out fire, I asked them to give a presentation on how young people can and do change the world (for the better, of course!).

As you might expect, Greta Thunberg was the first name on most lips. (My computer keeps autocorrecting her name to 'Great Thunberg', which is a sure sign of artificial intelligence if you ask me!) It's hard to believe that a 15-year old could go from an unknown to a household name for climate activism so quickly. It gave me such hope for the future to hear so many of the students talking about her school strike and how it's inspiring them to take action to combat the climate crisis. Her message that you are never too small to make a difference seems to have really struck a chord. It reminds me of that African proverb that says, 'If you think you are too small to make a difference, you have never spent the night in a room with a mosquito'.

There were some other interesting presentations as well. One student talked about Boyan Slat, the Dutch teenager who designed a system to clean up ocean plastic. Did you know he was only 16 when he came up with that idea and just 19 when he founded 'The Ocean Cleanup' company and got people to fund his campaign to try to turn the tide on plastic pollution? Apparently they're currently trialling a prototype in the Great Pacific garbage patch.

Another presentation talked about how back in 1976 the then 14-year old Romanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci - the first gymnast in Olympic history to be awarded the perfect score of 10.0 points for her performance - paved the way for today's Simone Biles with her ground-breaking Olympic routines. Though I'm not sure if that counts as literally shaping the future or was a bit of a stretch!