

TRANSLATION

RE: Nazaj v prihodnost

Ko si mi po elektronski pošti poslala sporočilo, da trepetiš pred vrnitvijo v šolo, sem se počeno nasmejal. Ne morem verjeti, da se po vseh teh letih poučevanja začetka šolskega leta bojiš tako močno kot takrat, ko si bila na drugi strani katedra! Kakorkoli, počaščen sem, da si me prosila, naj se domislim nekaj idej za zabaven projekt, ki bi ga lahko izvedla s svojimi starejšimi dijaki. Na koncu lanskega leta sem se z mojimi dijaki pogovarjal, kakšne grozne stvari se dogajajo po svetu - povsod skorajda gori voda! Ker današnji generaciji pogosto pravijo da so generacija "milenjicev" in "snežink", snežinke pa lahko pogasijo požar, sem mojim dijakom naročil, naj pripravijo predstavitve o vseh načinih, s katerimi mladi ljudje spreminjajo svet (seveda na bolje).

Verjetno ni presenečenje, da se je večina najprej spomnila na Greto Thunberg (njeno ime moj računalnik vztrajno popravlja v "Great Thunberg", kar je po mojem mnenju zanesljiv znak, da umetna inteligenca živi v njem). Težko je verjeti, da 15-letno dekle lahko v tako kratkem času postane najprepoznavnejše ime podnebnega aktivizma na svetu. Ko sem poslušal, kako se mladi ljudje pogovarjajo o njenem "šolskem štrajku" in kako jih je navdihnila, da se tudi sami lotevajo podnebnega aktivizma, sem bil navdan z upanjem na boljšo prihodnost. Njeno sporočilo, da lahko nekaj spremeniš kljub svoji majhnosti, je številnim dijakom sedlo v srce. Spomni me na afriški pregovor, ki pravi: "Če misliš, da si premajhen, da bi spremenil svet, še nisi spal s komarjem v sobi."

Tudi nekaj drugih predstavitev je bilo zanimivih. Eden izmed dijakov je predstavil delo Boyana Slata, najstnika iz Nizozemske, ki je iznašel sistem za čiščenje plastike iz oceanov. Si vedela, da je imel komaj 16 let, ko se je ideje domislil, in komaj 19 let, ko je ustanovil podjetje "The Ocean Cleanup"? Z njim je uspel številne prepričati, da so financirali njegovo kampanjo proti onesnaževanju oceanov. Slišal sem, da trenutno preizkušajo prototip v Tihem oceanu.

Druga predstavitev je govorila o 14-letni romunski gimnastičarki Nadii Comaneci, ki je leta 1976 postala prva gimnastičarka v olimpijski zgodovini, ki je za svoj nastop prejela vseh 10 možnih točk. Nadia je s svojimi pionirskimi olimpijskimi nastopi orala ledino za današnjo Simone Biles. Čeprav nisem prepričan, ali to dobesedno šteje kot ustvarjanje prihodnosti. Za doseg tega zaključka je nemreč potrebne nekaj miselne telovadbe!

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!