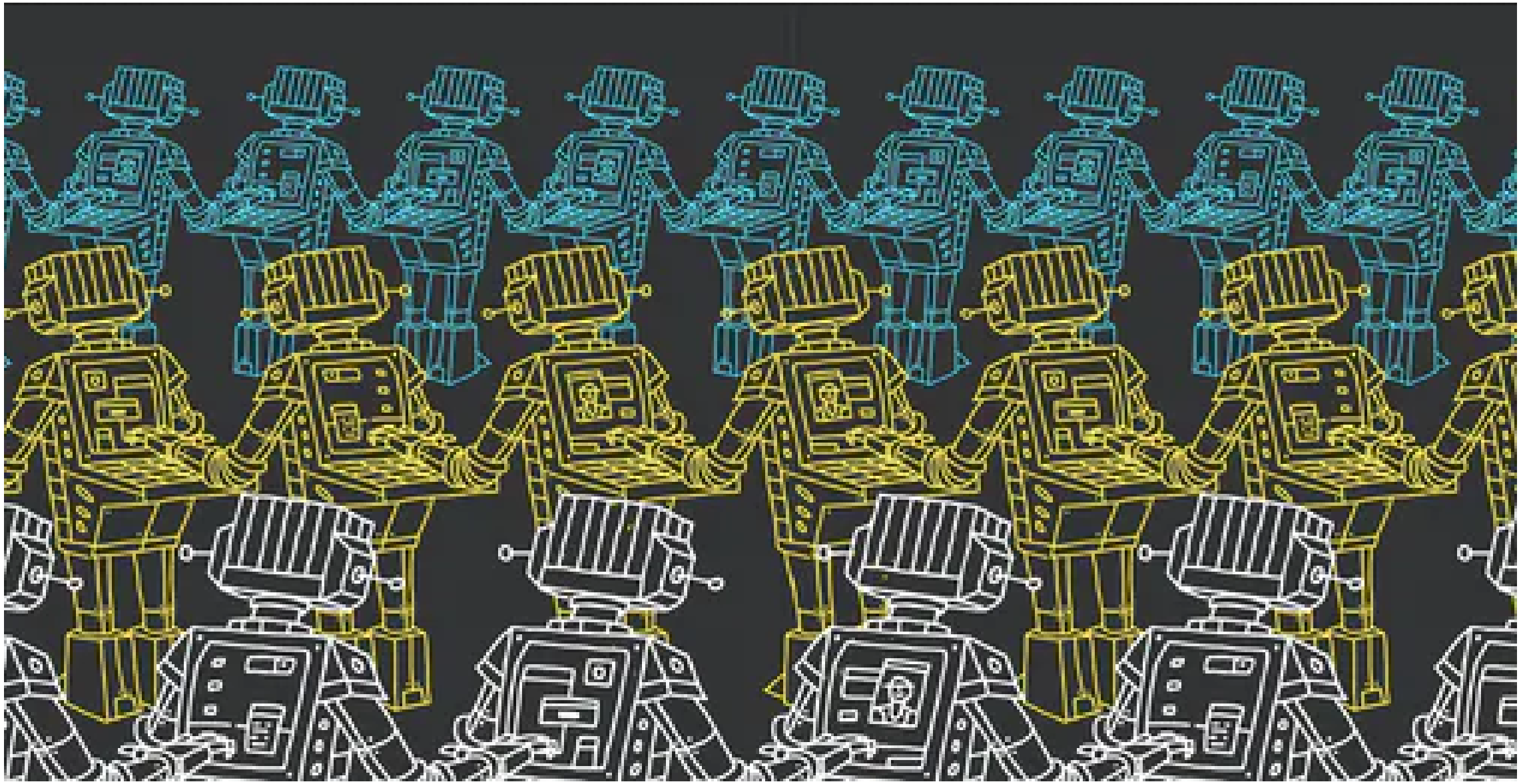
Lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic:

How to Improve How We Teach and learn Online

Stephen Downes

March 1, 2021



As faculty and instructors…

- What are we learning?
- What can we build on?
- What changes can we make?

In this interactive webinar…

- 10 lessons
- Three challenges
- Three improvements

COMPETENCE
KNOWLEDGE
SKILL
ABILITY
LEARNING

Key Takeaways

- Nature of teaching and learning
- Authentic assessment
- Diverse needs of learners

Lessons

HABITS
CHANGES

Any change will be hard at first.

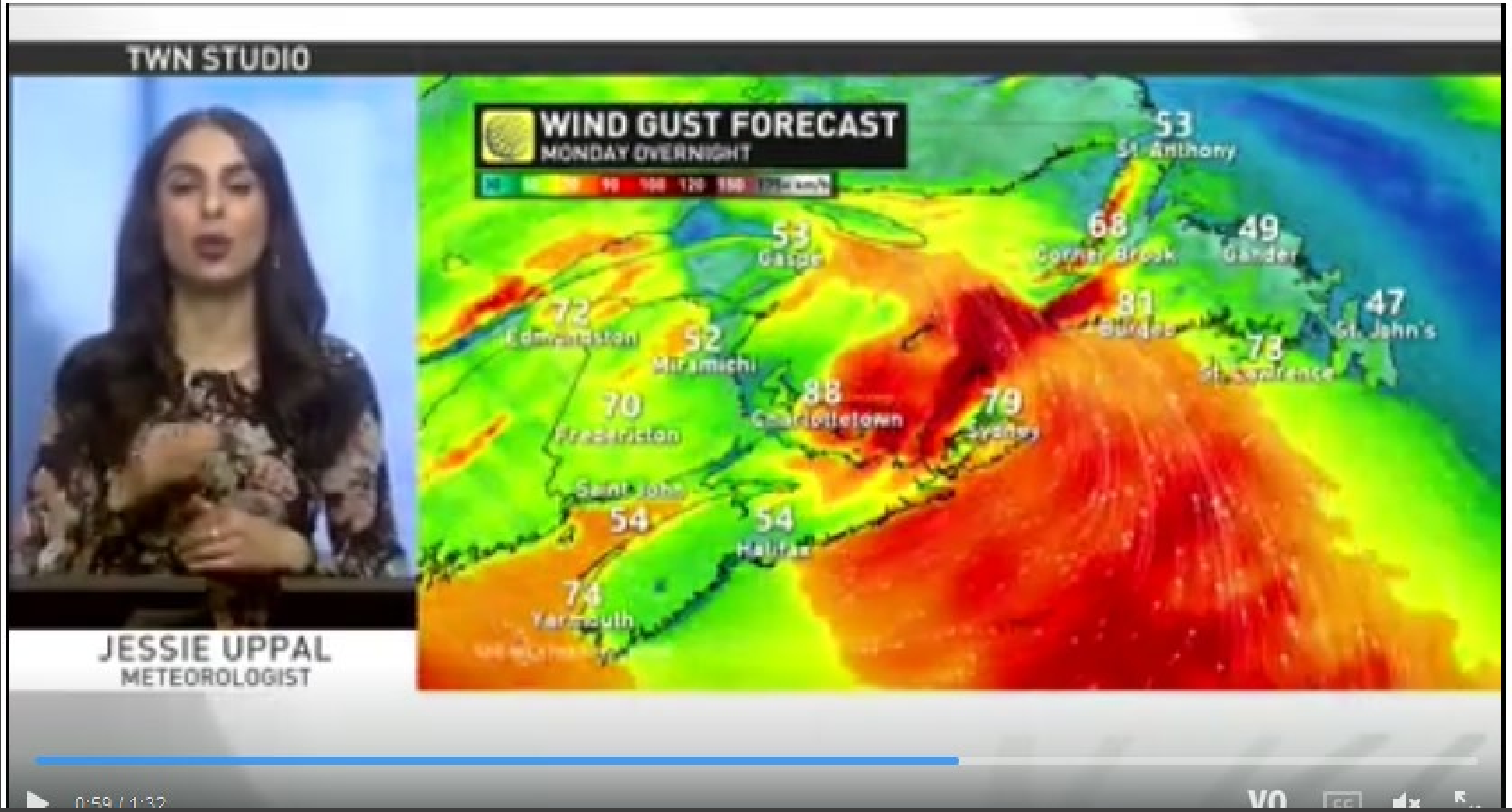
- We can’t directly compare the new thing with the old thing.
- Give ourselves some time

Learning is social.

- We knew that already
- Some outcomes are social
- We learn as a community
- We exchange ideas, conduct trade, and develop networks

*Teaching is not a solitary profess*ion.

- Teachers need buildings, etc.
- Now they need a support team.
- Like when we watch the news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JESSIE UPPAL
METEOROLOGIST
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We need live events.

- Not everything
- But live events draw us in
- Planning and anticipation
- Interaction, presence

Open media plays a key role.

- We can’t learn without it
- We need an alphabet
- We need words
- We need data

Quality matters,

- It’s not guaranteed
- We have to make our own judgements
- We have to be critically-minded

Teaching is more than broadcasting.

- 8-hour videos bad
- Get us away from the keyboard
- Still true when we return to the classroom

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PGM
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CAM 8

Reading the room is harder.

- We can scan a classroom
- Online, it’s a lot more difficult
- This needs to become a deliberate practice

We need structure, order and routines.

- A respite from uncertainty
- Balance our work with our play, rest and self-care.
- That’s what school often provides

It's not just school subjects

- Not just schools and universities
- Beyond traditional academics
- Support in-home workers, self-employed, new careers

Challenges

Motivation matters.

- Educators have always known
- Online we haven’t the same tools
- We can’t force them
- Need people interested and engaged

KLOOK

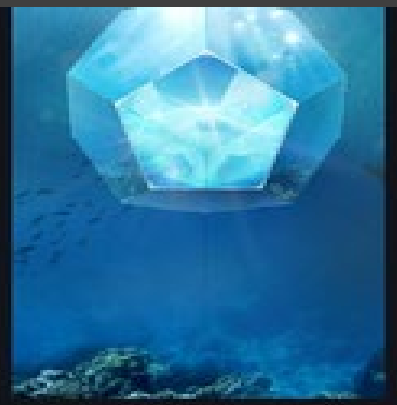
People have diverse needs.

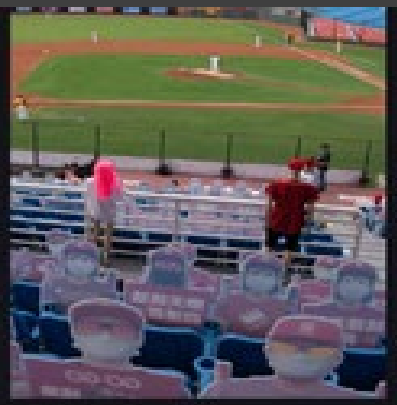
- Designed for the mainstream
- Built-in, systemic discrimination
- Everyone has special needs

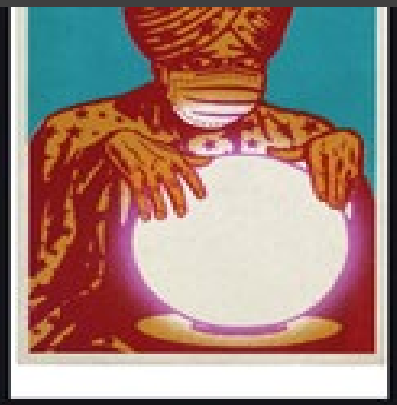
Inequities harm learning.

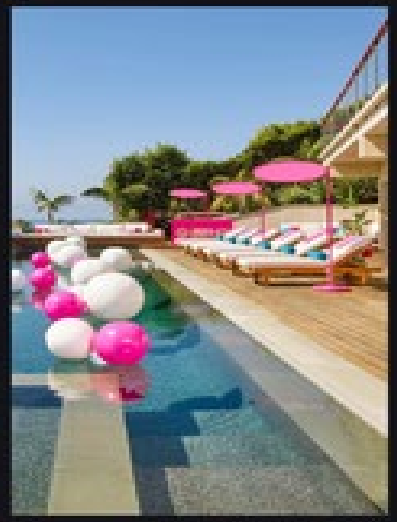
- School mitigated some of the worst inequities
- This disappeared online
- People in need just vanished.
- We need the will to solve it

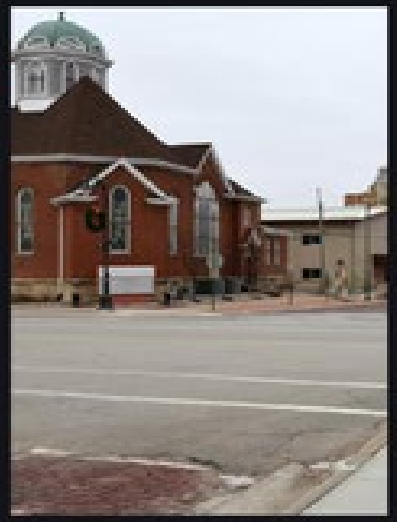
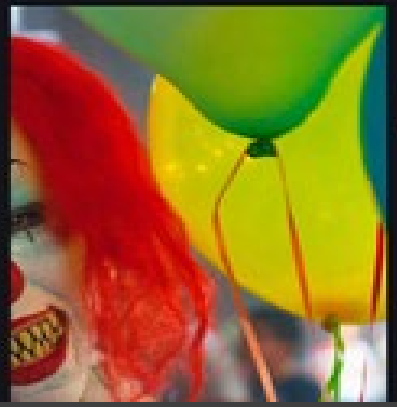
Ways to Improve

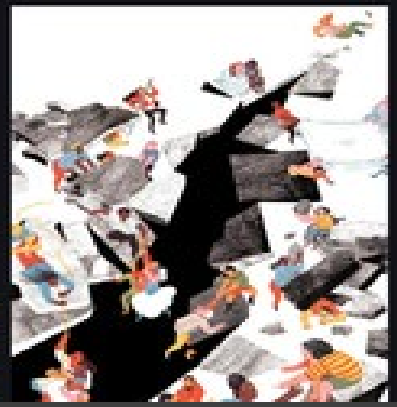




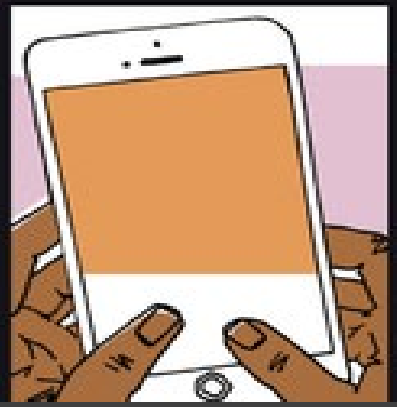






LOVE
YOU
BRO



We need to learn how to learn.

- Can’t learn on their own.
- If nobody there to teach them, they wouldn’t try to learn
- Both teachers and students

Webinar - De snelle opkomst van de hybrid virtual classroom
Leave

Employ a range of strategies.

- Develop ‘hybrid learning’
- Not doing both at once
- Meet the different needs of people at different times and in different ways

Assessment needs to be flexible.

- Traditional testing has become dysfunctional
- Depending on surveillance
- Instead, show work directly to employers

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