



MAKING MAGIC HAPPEN EVERY DAY

by John McBride, Teachink



This resource explores how teachers can make magic happen every day in class. John McBride at GTI Axis Summit 2019 said that “teachers should be wow; they should be able to bring magic into class”. Most teachers have a limited understanding of creativity; they usually only do things that are included in the syllabus. But teachers are the ones who can encourage magic to happen in the classroom.

They can do this by allowing students to do things through their own creative processes. Teachers can also perform for students to show or illustrate a particular idea. For example, John McBride at the GTI Axis Summit 2019 made a performance where he poured water into a glass, put a sheet of paper on the glass and when he turned the glass upside down, the water did not fall out of the glass. Everyone who was in the class was amazed and we were wondering how he had done that. Teachers who bring magic to the class make students excited and curious, so they remember what they have been taught. This encourages learners to think out of the box, to think beyond where they are at the moment.

Teachers can also be "doctors" or "nurses" in order to help those who need assistance in the class. Sharing magic in the class increases active learning. John McBride at the GTI Axis Summit 2019, asked three people who were at the conference to go to the front to try the experiment that he had performed earlier. Most of them got it right and all the participants were excited about doing the experiment. They started asking questions about how he had done it. Engaging learners actively makes them focus. Learners learn when they are actively engaged.



John McBride at the summit said that one of the elements of making magic happen in the class is that there should be no limits on how ideas are shared, though structure needs to be there so that there can be order. Learners learn when they are allowed to share their thoughts and feel that their ideas are appreciated. Learning also happens when ideas are challenged. For example, teachers can get real experience by making a small market and giving learners fake money to go and buy things to show how the money flows. Magic happens when learners learn by doing.

Magic happens when learners get together and play. John McBride made an example where he set up a problem-solving game. He brought seven chairs to the front and called six participants in two teams. He set out certain rules as to how they could move, and where they needed to be by the end of the game. Participants had to figure out how they could solve the problem. The whole "class" were actively engaged, as the people who were not participating were allowed to offer suggestions. Effective learning takes place when students are given chances to try to figure things out, are allowed to make mistakes, and can try new things. Such an environment allows learners to collaborate to solve problems and share ideas.

Teachers can also make magic in the classroom by using technology. Though many teachers and schools have an uneasy relationship with technology, teachers and schools can still use technology to their advantage. Kayla Delzer said "it's way too late to try to keep tech out of classrooms or children's lives. We may think we're protecting students when we keep them in a tech-free bubble for the school day, but they eventually leave, graduate, get jobs.

If we block technology from them, we might actually be inhibiting them. We need to put them in dynamic, responsive environments at school so they can be successful later on".¹ Technology gives teachers more ways to teach and engage with learners, but they must determine the best way to use it. Teachers can make magic in the classroom using the following technology:

Introducing a game-based platform can be one of the ways to develop an ambitious way of using technology in the classroom. Most platforms are designed to help learners to access stored information. But platforms can also add context and real-world applicability to your lessons. They can also help in teaching students how to apply their knowledge in a greater range of scenarios. Teachers can also set up student blogs which can be used deliver content such as videos for short lessons enabling learners' teachers to do reviews and previews.

Teachers can use websites specifically aimed at educators and students such as teacher tube as a way of introducing magic into the class. "Research has shown that the use of animated videos can positively impact a child's development in several competence areas including memory, creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving".² **Co-ordinate Live Video.**

Source: Prodigygame.com. Teachers can also interact live via Google hangouts and Skype to bring in experts who can deliver a lesson or expose learners to new ideas. Playing podcasts, adding multimedia elements such images, graphs, pictographs, podcast clips, sound effects, short video lessons, news, movie and television show clips to presentations can all also add variety and magic.

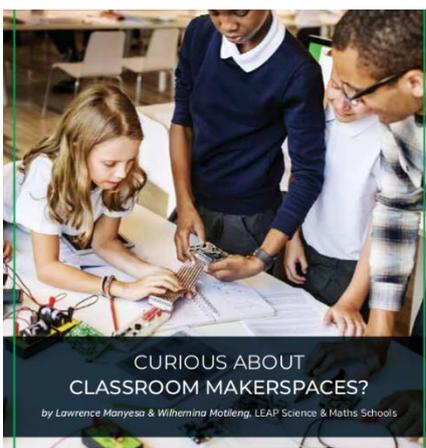
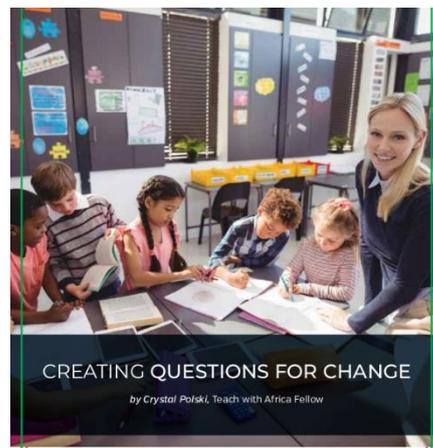
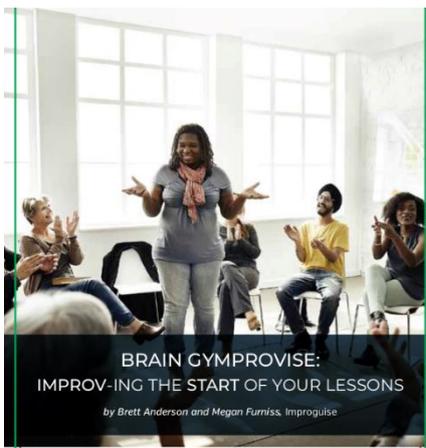
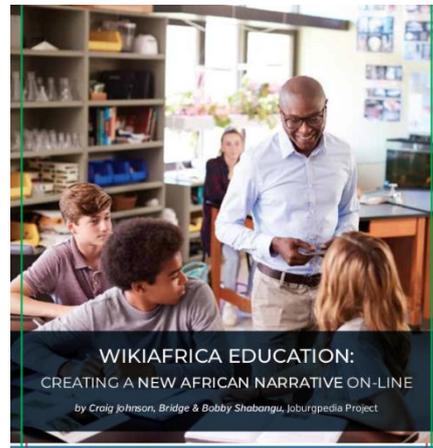
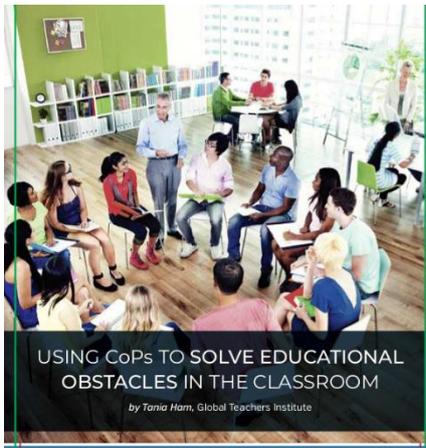
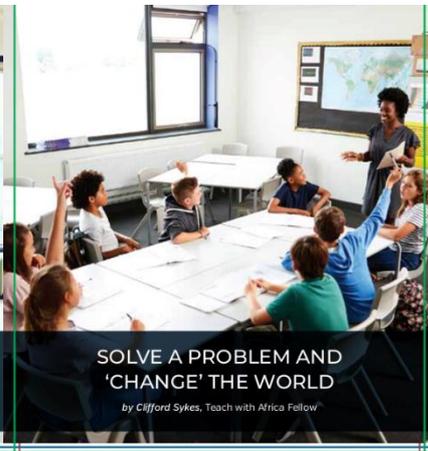
¹ "7 smart ways to use technology in classrooms - TED - Ideas." 13 Sep. 2017, <https://ideas.ted.com/7-smart-ways-to-use-technology-in-classrooms/> . Accessed Jul. 2019.

² "25 Easy Ways to Use Technology in the" 16 Feb. 2017, <https://www.prodigygame.com/blog/ways-to-use-technology-in-the-classroom/> . Accessed Jul. 2019.



Real magic happens, though, when students become creators of content, for example by making their own videos. John offered some useful suggestions as to how to make effective videos, such as:

- Always trying to ensure that the subject is facing the light;
- Keeping the camera (phone) as still as possible;
- Using the camera in landscape mode. Another important aspect of real learning which John focused on was the power of reflection. To experience this, participants used toothpicks and plasticine to create a model that reflected their understanding of real learning. In conclusion, this was a fun, inspiring session which provided many useful tips and ideas for classes, while also reminding participants of some of the fundamentals of effective learning.



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The Global Teachers Institute (GTI) is a teacher development network of educators, schools and organisations committed to developing high quality teachers through school based initial teacher education programmes, international exchanges and collaborative platforms.

Our mission is to develop reflective, empathetic, socially responsible master teachers for high-need African schools through projects and interventions for replication and scale.

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PRESENTER



John McBride

John McBride is a passionate Science and Maths educator with a very special interest in motivating teachers to be innovative and creative.

He has been involved in education for more than 30 years and facilitated workshops across Africa. He currently holds the position of Knowledge Sharer at Teachink.

PRODUCER



Morris Phundulu

'I hold a Bcom Honours degree in Economics from the University of Venda. Research, in all its forms intrigues me from theory to implementation.'

I want to be able to instill hope and determination so that children in South Africa can get to enjoy the benefits of true education. My passion for ensuring a better life drives me every day. I am not afraid of change and it has given me a strong background in understanding the root causes of many problems in various situations.'

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