

Education 1-2-3

Education 1.0



Winslow Homer learned early in life how to draw and paint, first as an illustrator of sheet music covers, later as a lithographer, and famously as a watercolorist. Born in 1836, he rendered faithfully the life of the times: the sailors, farmers, the war, the storms, the children, the schools.







We see common themes reflected in his work: people in small groups going about their daily routines; their closeness to nature; their spirit manifest in their hands and faces. Don't you wish sometimes you could live back then? Everything was simpler. You walked to the local school, taught by your neighbor's daughter, worked in the fields or at the shore, and enjoyed the company of a few friends.

Let's take a closer look at the school of those halcyon days. What do we see?

- People in groups of two or three working and figuring things out together.
- Simple hand tools, and very few of them.
- People of varied ages in the same setting.
- No two people doing exactly the same thing.
- A range of clothing colors and styles.
- A clear view of the world outside.

Now let's take a look at other aspects of life in Winslow Homer's era. What do we see?

- People in groups of two or three working and figuring things out together.
- Simple hand tools, and very few of them.
- People of varied ages in the same setting.
- No two people doing exactly the same thing.
- A range of clothing colors and styles.
- A clear view of the world outside.

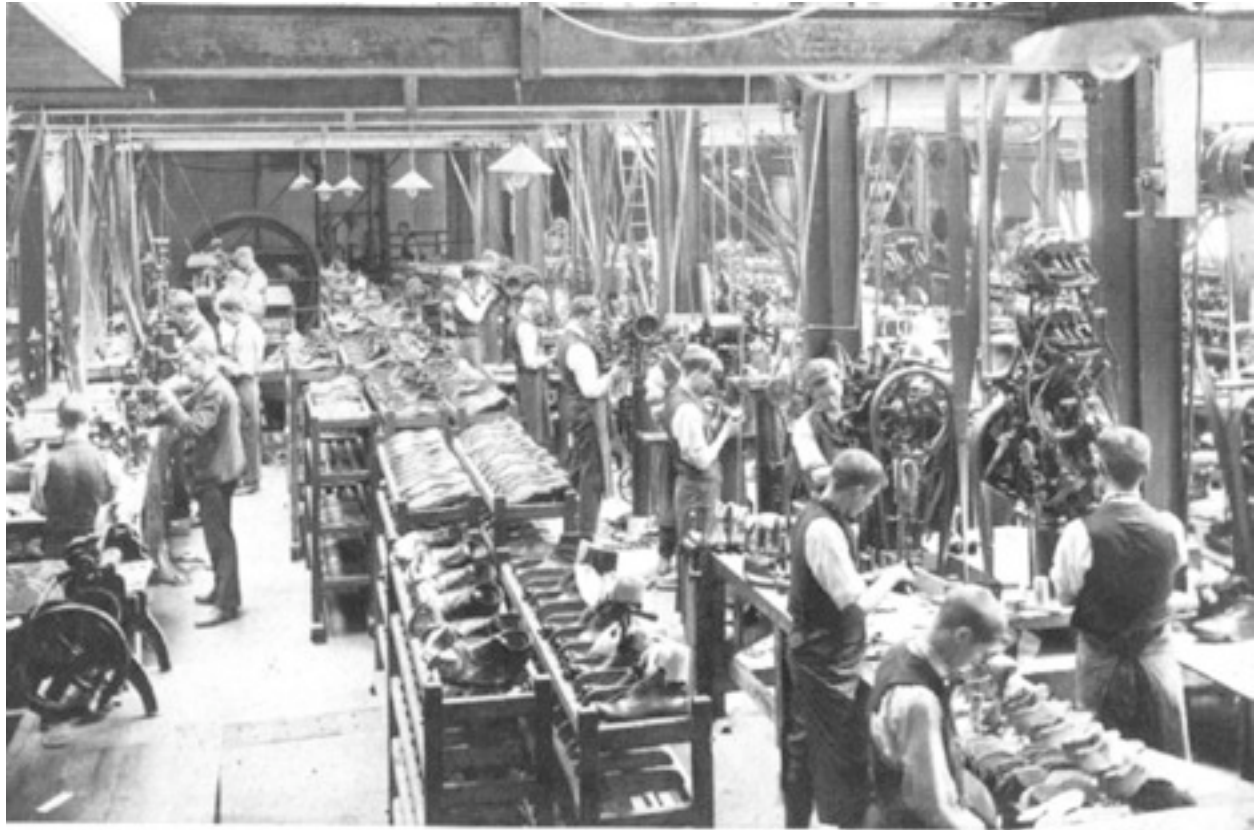
Life in school, and life outside, were pretty much the same. The school reflected the society it served. Children in school learned what they needed to survive and succeed in the world outside. The way you worked at school, the tools you used, the schedule you kept, fit well into the agricultural and artisan economy of the day.

Winslow Homer painted in the era of Education 1.0, when schools were designed to prepare farmers and craftsmen and weavers and cooks, who worked with simple hand tools in an economic and social environment that remained static for four and five decades at a time. In this first phase of American school history, schools settled into a comfortable pattern of preparing young people for pastoral prosperity.

Education 2.0

But by the year of Homer's death, 1910, society had changed. More and more people worked in the factory, in the office, on the line, rather than on the farm, in the kitchen, and in the field.







Let's take a look at these photos of the workplaces of the early 20th century. What do we see?

- People working alone at an individual work station.
- Specialized mechanical tools, one for each person.
- People of about the same age in each setting.
- Most people doing exactly the same thing as the person next to them.
- A uniformity of clothing styles and colors.
- Little or no connection with the world outside.







Now let's take a look at the school of the same era. What do we see?

- People working alone at an individual desk.
- Specialized mechanical tools, one for each person.
- People of about the same age in each setting.
- Most people doing exactly the same thing as the person next to them.
- A uniformity of clothing styles and colors.
- Little or no connection with the world outside.

The schools were no longer so sleepy and sylvan. They woke to the challenge of industrialization, and the nature of the school changed. They shifted their paradigm to prepare people to survive and succeed in the industrial workplace. They entered the era of Education 2.0.

Let's review the story so far:

Education 1.0

- Agriculture, artisanry.
- Cooperative small group work.
- Variety of tasks.
- Hand tools.

Education 2.0

- Manufacturing, processing.
- Solitary work in a group setting.
- Repetitive tasks..
- Mechanical tools.

Education 3.0 ?

Now we'll jump ahead a century. One hundred years later, let's see what the world of work looks like.













What do we see?

- People working in small groups to solve new problems.
- Digital information tools on the desktop and in their hands.
- No two people doing exactly the same thing as the person next to them.
- A variety of ages working together in the same setting.
- A variety of colors and styles of people working together.
- A variety of tasks and groupings.

These pictures represent Workplace 3.0, the information age doing its business in this 21st century of ours.

Now, if the schools have been keeping up with the changes in society, we would expect them to reflect this new world of work. We would expect Education 3.0 to prepare people for this new workplace. So let's take our camera into the schools of 2009.







What do we see?

- People working alone at an individual desk.

- Specialized mechanical tools (the pencil and paper) one for each person.
- People of about the same age in each setting.
- Most people doing exactly the same thing as the person next to them.
- A uniformity of clothing styles and colors.
- Little or no connection with the world outside.

Will these students be prepared to survive and succeed in the modern workplace? Will they know how to use the information tools necessary to compete in a knowledge-based economy? Aside from the color in the photographs, how different are they from the pictures of Education 2.0?

The questions for us as educators today are:

- What should Education 3.0 look like?
- What should students learn to prepare them for Workplace 3.0?
- How should they learn it?
- How should teachers teach in Education 3.0?
- What tools should they be using for their work?
- Is my school 2.0 or 3.0?

If you could hire Winslow Homer today to paint a picture of your ideal school, to illustrate Education 3.0, what would be in the picture?













