

FOREWORDS BY JOHN HATTIE AND CLASS 3G, BELLEVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

# THE SCHOOL IN THE CLOUD

THE  
EMERGING  
FUTURE  
OF LEARNING

• • •  
SUGATA  
MITRA

CORWIN

Thank you

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INTEREST IN  
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from *The School in the Cloud* by Sugata Mitra. This foreword, written by a class of seven-year-old students, serves as an example of what students can do in a self-organised learning environment (SOLE).

**LEARN MORE** about this title, including Features, Table of Contents and Reviews.

CORWIN

# FOREWORD

Written collectively by the pupils of Class 3G,  
Belleville Primary School, London, England

## Sugata Mitra's Notes

*Can children write a foreword to a book about children's learning? To test this, I went to Belleville Primary School in London, England. Belleville Primary is a part of the Quality First Education Trust. The principal of the school, John Grove, had invited me years ago to visit his school and demonstrate SOLEs (self-organized learning environments, about which you will read in this book). Since that time, I have visited his school many times and conducted some really interesting sessions with children. This time, it was with a research question—Is there something called “collective writing,” an expression of the “collective voice”?*

*The experiment was done with 7-year-olds of class 3G. I met the children and explained that I had written a book, and I would like them to write a foreword for that book, one that was from them. They did not know what a foreword was. “You figure the rest out,” I told them.*

*A group of teachers watched the process as observers and facilitated access to the resources needed for the experiment. I had instructed them not to speak to the children at all. The group of observing teachers formed my research group for later discussions. They were Andrew Furniss, Karen Taylor, and Alexandra Edwards led by Tom Greene and James Canniford. They, along with Principal John Grove, made this experiment possible, and I am grateful to them.*

*Taking printouts of the seven key chapters of this book, The School in the Cloud: The Emerging Future of Learning, the children distributed themselves into fluid groups of approximately four. In the next few minutes, each group elected a reader, who read the chapter aloud; a researcher, who searched the internet for words and ideas they did not understand; and two scribes, who made notes about all this. Amazingly, all this happened by itself.*

*I returned to the school about ten days later to find that the children had figured out what a foreword was and, using their notes from the first day, had constructed a collective document. Here is that amazing piece of work. It has not been edited.*

**T**his book is about pupils learning in a self-organised learning environment (SOLE). In countries all over the world young people have been doing SOLEs. SOLE is about children being in charge of their own learning. When they work together in a SOLE they don't use teachers. Children need no more teachers because they should have more SOLE lessons. This isn't another ordinary book about teachers. It's a book about how students can work independently and teach themselves. It also contains information on how children can be in charge of their own learning. SOLE is something Sugata Mitra wants to do more.

The problems with teaching are that in all of the lessons we have been in teachers gave us clues or answers on the subject. Children answer the questions. The problem with teaching is that sometimes the teacher gets tired out. If you let the

children do SOLE, it's like the problem never existed. Teaching is telling, so we would like to use more independent work. Students need their independence. Pupils need power.

This book aims to fix those problems by children learning by themselves. They can talk in groups so they learn from others.

We think that you will notice a strong emphasis in this book on children being in charge of their own learning. Children have been working by themselves for several years because of SOLE lessons. Kids have been learning with adults but Professor Mitra has changed this system. Children are independent and they do SOLE lessons in groups.

Children have been learning with teachers but Professor Mitra changed that and made pupils learn by themselves so they are independent enough. You'll also notice a strong emphasis on students being in charge of their own learning and don't need teachers to help them. Young learners have been working by themselves for years now because of SOLE.

This book is particularly important because it shows how children can develop their learning independently. Flick through these pages and see how important children's access to the internet is. You'll find out that Sugata Mitra supports pupils learning independently or in groups.

This book is about children but is for adults. Children should be able to educate alone independently. Pupils can learn by themselves. You will be reading this book because it is about SOLE. This isn't another book about boring old teachers, it is to help see your child doesn't need a teacher. We think students can learn in the 'cloud'. You will enjoy this book because Professor Mitra is a very experienced teacher. As you run through the book imagine what you could do as a learning method.

—Class 3G  
Belleville Primary School  
Clapham, London