The Innovator's Mindset by George Couros

Think you might want to read this book?

George Couros', *The Innovator's Mindset* convincingly makes the case that schools should exist to empower students to be innovative leaders, creators, problem finders, and problem solvers. He creatively introduces a blueprint for how schools can do this by introducing two different approaches focused on making meaningful connections by building trust and taking risks. If you are a teacher looking to increase student empowerment and adaptability, look no further. If you are an administrator seeking both philosophical inspiration and practical advice about how to tap into teacher talent and passion, in order to foster student learning and growth, this is a must-read. Couros cultivates the innovator's mindset by both affirming some of your current practices and challenging you to grow in others.

What would Socrates ask?
- If you were to start a school from scratch, what would it look like?
- How do we move from a culture of engagement towards a culture of empowerment?
- How can we move away from compliance and control and toward freedom and innovation?
- How do we leverage technology to empower student learning, growth, innovation, and leadership?

Research
- A Watson Wyatt study showed that high-trust companies outperform low-trust companies by nearly 300 percent.

Concepts
- "The Innovator's Mindset"— the belief that the abilities, intelligence, and talents are developed so that they lead to the creation of new and better ideas.
- An educator's approach should be to empower students to wonder, explore, and lead instead of simply getting through the curriculum.
- One-to-one technology ratios woo students and impress administration and teachers at neighboring schools, but inside too many of these tech-equipped schools are many uninspired students who believe traditional education is irrelevant.
- Students have access to better resources online than what teachers could possibly offer. If schools are only about content and information, that really poses a threat to educational facilities.
- "Adjacent Possible"— those changes currently possible in one's current state or position. By incrementally exploring and pushing the boundaries of your current adjacent possible, you create new adjacent possibilities. One need not to accomplish great change in a single, giant leap.
- A great teacher adjusts to the learner, not the other way around. S/he asks the following questions to personalize learning to each student— what is best for this student? What is

this student's passion? What are some ways that this student could demonstrate their knowledge?
- Learning is creation, not consumption. Knowledge is not something a learner absorbs, but something a learner creates.
- Before innovation can occur, relationships must be built— student:student, student:teacher, teacher:teacher, and teacher:administrator.
- Innovative leaders hire innovative teachers, and then get out of their way.

Quotes from the author
- "...if students leave school less curious than when they started, we have failed them."
- "The question that must be asked every day is, 'What is best for *this* learner?'"
- "Effective leadership in education is not about moving everyone from one standardized point to the next, but moving individuals from *their point "A" to their point "B."*
- "For those with an innovator's mindset, the reality is that their work will constantly be questioned simply because it is something new.

Quotes from others
- "Learning and innovation go hand in hand. The arrogance of success is to think that what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow." - William Pollard
- "Technology is a tool, not a learning outcome." - Bill Ferriter
- "Change is inevitable. Growth is optional." - John Maxwell
- "We need to move beyond the idea that an education is something that is provided for us and toward the idea that an education is something that we create for ourselves." - Stephen Downes
- "Finding the problem is an essential part of learning— one that students miss out on when we pose the problem to them first." - Ewan McIntosh

Implement tomorrow?
- See each duty, interaction with students, and interaction with colleagues as a way to build deep and meaningful relationships.

Organizations/schools working on answers
- The Jacobs Institute for Innovation in Education
- Michigan Association for Computer Uses in Learning (MACUL)
- The Center for Accelerated Learning
- Understanding by Design Framework
- "Blog as Portfolio"
- UCEA Center for the Advanced Study of Technology Leadership in Education
- Modern Learners

Gateways to further learning
- An Open Letter to Educators
- I'm 17
- The Tempered Radical
- How to Get a Job at Google

- [Stop Stealing Dreams](#)
- [School vs. Learning](#)

Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning in education

Author(s) Last Name	Title
Covey	*The Speed of Trust*
Johnson	*Where Good Ideas Come From*
Burgess	*Teach Like a PIRATE*
Godin	*Tribes*
Dweck	*Mindset*
Sinek	*Leaders Eat Last*
Martinez & Stager	*Invent to Learn*
McKeown & Wiseman	*Multipliers*
Rath	*Strengths Based Leadership*
Rath	*Strengths Finder 2.0*
Drucker	*The Practice of Management*
Wiseman, Allen & Foster	*The Multiplier Effect*
Pink	*Drive*
Schwartz	*The Paradox of Choice*

The applicability of this book to education is ….

Abstract ←——————————————————→ Obvious