

**IAO**

AUGUST 31, 2021

# ACCREDITOR

**FEATURED**

## **WORLD DISTANCE LEARNING DAY**

- ➔ **History Of World Distance Learning Day**
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**EXCLUSIVE**

## **BOOK LOVERS DAY**

## **THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED EDUCATION FOREVER.**

# EDITOR'S NOTE

The 31st of August is World Distance Learning Day, a day dedicated to celebrating learning that occurs outside of the traditional classroom. Whether it's a completely online program or a combination of in-classroom and at-home study, the extra flexibility and sometimes lower cost of distance learning are benefiting more students than ever before. The internet, together with the resultant influx of high-quality online curricula and courses, has fundamentally changed traditional education techniques and spawned the popular distance learning movement.

This month isn't just limited to the one event of World distance learning day but contains an additional event for avid readers "Book lovers day". If you are one of the kinds who are enthusiasts about reading then this day is perfect for you to escape with a new read or get lost in the imagination with a favorite book.



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Online learning is rapidly becoming one of the most cost-effective ways to educate the world's rapidly expanding workforce. Distance learning not only cuts back on paper and electricity use, but also on carbon emissions commuting to a physical classroom. Distance learning classes use 90% less energy and have 85% fewer carbon emissions than traditional, face-to-face classes.

## 06 BOOK LOVERS DAY

Books can help reduce stress, as they offer comfort and a place to escape to if you're feeling down. They also help us understand other people better, making us feel less alone and studies have shown that this causes us to be more empathic.

## 09 THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED EDUCATION FOREVER.

It is clear that this pandemic has utterly disrupted an education system that many assert was already losing its relevance. In his book, 21 Lessons for the 21st Century, scholar. How schools continue to focus on traditional academic skills and rote learning, rather than on skills such as critical thinking and adaptability, which will be more important for success in the





# World Distance Learning Day

World Distance Learning Day on August 31 is a day to embrace the learning that takes place outside of the physical classroom. Whether it is a remote learning program that is delivered entirely at a distance, or a hybrid blend of in-classroom and at-home learning, the added flexibility and often more cost-effective option of distance learning is benefiting more students around the world than ever before. In recent times, the internet and the resulting surge of high-quality online curriculum and courses have completely transformed traditional education methods and given birth to the popular distance learning movement. With that in mind, today is a day to be thankful for the distance learning opportunities we have and the countless resources that are available to use.



# HISTORY OF WORLD DISTANCE LEARNING DAY

Learning facilities haven't always been a few clicks away. Back in 1728, Caleb Phillips was advertising his teachings on a new method of shorthand in the Boston Gazette, with the lessons to be delivered via mail on a weekly basis. Sir Isaac Pitman took the idea one step further in England in the 1840s. He was also teaching shorthand via mail, but his students would send him a postcard containing their own efforts, which he would correct and send back to them. Pitman's course swelled in popularity and within a few years, the Phonographic Correspondence Society was established to formalize the courses on offer. This society led to colleges and by 1873 the first correspondence school to operate in the U.S was founded.



*Online learning is rapidly becoming one of the most cost-effective ways to educate the world's rapidly expanding workforce*

Universities began offering distance learning options and the idea was driven forwards by the Open University in the 1960s. They offered a respectable alternative to traditional learning methods and have been at the forefront of developing new technologies and teaching methods ever since their inception.

The internet revolutionized distance learning, making it easier, faster, and cheaper for students to learn. The first completely online course arrived in 1984 and both the resources available online and the number of students taking part have developed at a rapid pace ever since. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led to widespread school closures, which in turn meant that more students than ever turned to distance learning.

World Distance Learning Day was established to raise awareness of the learning resources and options available to students and to celebrate how far the concept of distance education has advanced over the years.

### **The First Ever?**

Caleb Phillips  
advertises a  
shorthand course in  
the Boston Gazette.

**1728**

### **A New Era**

The Open University,  
an establishment  
credited with  
contributing greatly to  
distance learning  
methods, is founded.

### **The First Of Many**

The University of  
Toronto launches the  
first-ever completely  
online course.

**1969**

**1984**

### **The COVID-19**

pandemic means that many schools  
throughout the world were forced to  
close their doors and transition to  
online classes, leading to a huge rise  
in the number of students practicing  
distance learning.

**2020**

# WORLD DISTANCE LEARNING DAY - SURVEY RESULTS



**Students involved  
in a distance  
learning course**

**35%**



**Amount of students  
that have a portion  
of their course via  
distance learning**

**18.7%**



**Amount of students  
that conduct studies  
completely via  
distance learning**

**16.6%**

# WORLD DISTANCE LEARNING DAY ACTIVITIES



## 01 Sign up for a course

Learn to code via Codecademy, learn a language via Duolingo, or research other courses that align with your interests and, most important of all, start learning!

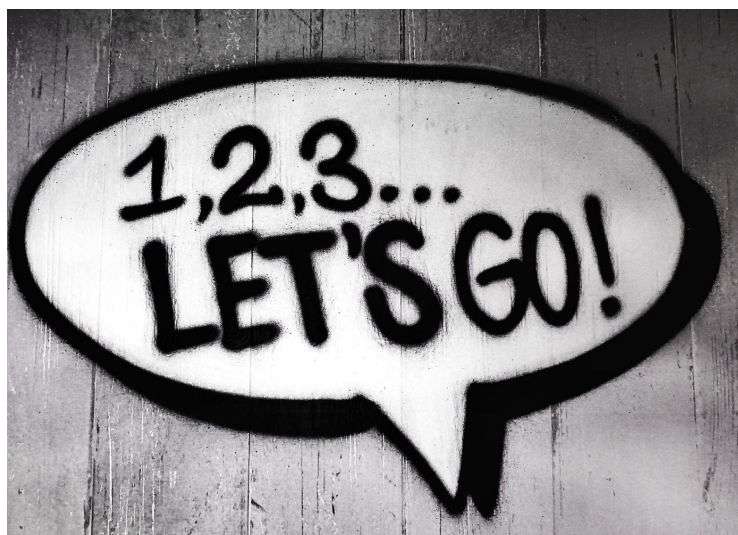
## 02 Collaborate with others on a peer-to-peer learning platform

You are capable of a lot more when you are surrounded by other people who you can learn from and who you can share your expertise with. Try joining a peer-to-peer learning community like Brainly, which helps people around the world go from questioning to understanding and acts as a homework help resource for students.

For every question that's asked, someone somewhere has an answer. They do not have to be an expert - they just need to know a little more than you do about that specific area or topic. This is what's really at the heart of peer-to-peer learning - learning from other people and sharing knowledge freely with that common goal in mind.

## 03 Post about your experience

Use this day to post online about your distance learning experience. Whether it is to recommend a useful tool for others, or to discuss a course that you completed, sharing your experience with others may inspire more people to take up some distance learning.





# WHY WE LOVE WORLD DISTANCE LEARNING DAY

## A It's Flexible

Distance learning often means that you can create and stick to your own learning schedule. This means you can fit your learning needs around your other needs, which in turn helps create a rewarding learning experience.

## B It's Rich In Resources

The internet has changed what is possible with distance learning. A few searches and you will realize that you're spoiled for choice with thousands of different websites and apps offering courses, lessons, and learning tools.

## C It's Environment ally Friendly

Distance learning not only cuts back on paper and electricity use, but also on carbon emissions commuting to a physical classroom. Distance learning classes use 90% less energy and have 85% fewer carbon emissions than traditional, face-to-face classes.





# Book Lovers Day

*That's the thing about books.  
They let you travel without  
moving your feet.*

August 9 is National Book Lovers Day, a day for those who can't live without books and reading. People love books because of their immense potential. They can transport you to new and fantastical worlds, or back in time in history. They offer escapism and can make you feel many emotions at once. They are a never-ending source of education. They carry memories from the past, seeing an old book will always transport you back to the time in your life that you read it. In short, books are magical. So spend today getting lost in a book!

## *Background*

No one really knows how or when National Book Lovers became a part of the calendar, but people have been carrying books with them for centuries. Books were invented to substitute the heavy stones where texts and drawings were originally carved, as many people would struggle to carry them. The first books were made of parchment or calfskin, and had a cover made of wood that was wrapped in leather.

In earlier years, books were large and bound with expensive leather, so only wealthy people could afford to own them. The only book that most people owned at the time was the bible.



It was with the Industrial Revolution on the first half of the nineteenth century, and the wide availability of printing presses, pulp paper mills and mechanical typesetting, that cheap paperback books began being published and distributed, not only making them affordable for the masses but also something that was easy to carry. Books, now available to all classes, saw a huge rise in popularity as it was a great distraction and form of entertainment. Popular American authors at the time included Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Frederick Douglass, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allen Poe, among many others.

Book lovers can rejoice at a wide variety of genres, authors, books from different time periods. There are thrillers, romances, non-fiction and graphic novels... Something for every taste! And best of all, books are now accessible for everyone on computers, smartphones, tablets and kindles, and of course, the trusty old paperback, as nothing can substitute the feel and smell of book pages when reading a novel.



## Why Reading Is Important

Reading is obviously important because it helps us develop language and thinking skills and it also broadens our knowledge. However, there are many other benefits to picking up a book.

For one, books can help reduce stress, as they offer comfort and a place to escape to if you're feeling down. They also help us understand other people better, making us feel less alone and studies have shown that this causes us to be more empathic.

Reading also helps in improving our focus and concentration abilities, as well as being a great tool to enhance memory, as books force you to remember information from the narrative you are focusing on.

# What To Do On This National Book Lovers Day

If you are an avid reader, then this day is the perfect excuse to sit down and get lost in a new book or an old favorite. It's also the perfect time to rearrange your bookshelves if you've been meaning to do that for a while.

If reading is not your thing, why not gift a special book lover in your life with a brand new novel that you think they'll love?



# THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED EDUCATION FOREVER. THIS IS HOW

- The COVID-19 has resulted in schools shut all across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion children are out of the classroom.
- As a result, education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms.
- Research suggests that online learning has been shown to increase retention of information, and take less time, meaning the changes coronavirus have caused might be here to stay.



While countries are at different points in their COVID-19 infection rates, worldwide there are currently more than 1.2 billion children in 186 countries affected by school closures due to the pandemic. In Denmark, children up to the age of 11 are returning to nurseries and schools after initially closing on 12 March, but in South Korea students are responding to roll calls from their teachers online.

With this sudden shift away from the classroom in many parts of the globe, some are wondering whether the adoption of online learning will continue to persist post-pandemic, and how such a shift would impact the worldwide education market.

Even before COVID-19, there was already high growth and adoption in education technology, with global edtech investments reaching US\$18.66 billion in 2019 and the overall market for online education projected to reach \$350 Billion by 2025. Whether it is language apps, virtual tutoring, video conferencing tools, or online learning software, there has been a significant surge in usage since COVID-19.





# HOW IS THE EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONDING TO COVID- 19?

In response to significant demand, many online learning platforms are offering free access to their services, including platforms like BYJU'S, a Bangalore-based educational technology and online tutoring firm founded in 2011, which is now the world's most highly valued edtech company. Since announcing free live classes on its Think and Learn app, BYJU'S has seen a 200% increase in the number of new students using its product, according to Mrinal Mohit, the company's Chief Operating Officer.

Tencent classroom, meanwhile, has been used extensively since mid-February after the Chinese government instructed a quarter of a billion full-time students to resume their studies through online platforms. This resulted in the largest "online movement" in the history of education with approximately 730,000, or 81% of K-12 students, attending classes via the Tencent K-12 Online School in Wuhan.

Other companies are bolstering capabilities to provide a one-stop shop for teachers and students. For example, Lark, a Singapore-based collaboration suite initially developed by ByteDance as an internal tool to meet its own exponential growth, began offering teachers and students unlimited video conferencing time, auto-translation capabilities, real-time co-editing of project work, and smart calendar scheduling, amongst other features. To do so quickly and in a time of crisis, Lark ramped up its global server infrastructure and engineering capabilities to ensure reliable connectivity.

Alibaba's distance learning solution, DingTalk, had to prepare for a similar influx: "To support large-scale remote work, the platform tapped Alibaba Cloud to deploy more than 100,000 new cloud servers in just two hours last month - setting a new record for rapid capacity expansion," according to DingTalk CEO, Chen Hang.

Some school districts are forming unique partnerships, like the one between The Los Angeles Unified School District and PBS SoCal/KCET to offer local educational broadcasts, with separate channels focused on different ages, and a range of digital options. Media organizations such as the BBC are also powering virtual learning; Bitesize Daily, launched on 20 April, is offering 14 weeks of curriculum-based learning for kids across the UK with celebrities like Manchester City footballer Sergio Aguero teaching some of the content.







While some believe that the unplanned and rapid move to online learning – with no training, insufficient bandwidth, and little preparation – will result in a poor user experience that is un conducive to sustained growth, others believe that a new hybrid model of education will emerge, with significant benefits. “I believe that the integration of information technology in education will be further accelerated and that online education will eventually become an integral component of school education,” says Wang Tao, Vice President of Tencent Cloud and Vice President of Tencent Education.

There have already been successful transitions amongst many universities. For example, Zhejiang

University managed to get more than 5,000 courses online just two weeks into the transition using “DingTalk ZJU”. The Imperial College London started offering a course on the science of coronavirus, which is now the most enrolled class launched in 2020 on Coursera.

Many are already touting the benefits: Dr Amjad, a Professor at The University of Jordan who has been using Lark to teach his students says, “It has changed the way of teaching. It enables me to reach out to my students more efficiently and effectively through chat groups, video meetings, voting and also document sharing, especially during this pandemic. My students also find it is easier to communicate on Lark. I will stick to Lark even after coronavirus, I believe traditional offline learning and e-learning can go hand by hand.”

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FUTURE OF LEARNING?



# CHALLENGES OF ONLINE LEARNING

There are, however, challenges to overcome. Some students without reliable internet access and/or technology struggle to participate in digital learning; this gap is seen across countries and between income brackets within countries. For example, whilst 95% of students in Switzerland, Norway, and Austria have a computer to use for their schoolwork, only 34% in Indonesia do, according to OECD data.

In the US, there is a significant gap between those from privileged and disadvantaged backgrounds: whilst virtually all 15-year-olds from a privileged background said they had a computer to work on, nearly 25% of those from disadvantaged backgrounds did not. While some schools and governments have been providing digital equipment to students in need, such as in New South Wales, Australia, many are still concerned that the pandemic will widen the digital divide.



For those who do have access to the right technology, there is evidence that learning online can be more effective in a number of ways. Some research shows that on average, students retain 25-60% more material when learning online compared to only 8-10% in a classroom. This is mostly due to the students being able to learn faster online; e-learning requires 40-60% less time to learn than in a traditional classroom setting because students can

## IS LEARNING ONLINE AS EFFECTIVE?

learn at their own pace, going back and re-reading, skipping, or accelerating through concepts as they choose.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of online learning varies amongst age groups. The general consensus on children, especially younger ones, is that a structured environment is required because kids are more easily distracted. To get the full benefit of online learning, there needs to be a concerted effort to provide this structure and go beyond replicating a physical class/lecture through video capabilities, instead, using a range of collaboration tools and engagement methods that promote “inclusion, personalization and intelligence”, according to Dowson Tong, Senior Executive Vice President of Tencent and President of its Cloud and Smart Industries Group.

Since studies have shown that children extensively use their senses to learn, making learning fun and effective through use of technology is crucial, according to BYJU's Mrinal Mohit. “Over a period, we have observed that clever integration of games has demonstrated higher engagement and increased motivation towards learning especially among younger students, making them truly fall in love with learning”, he says.



# A CHANGING EDUCATION IMPERATIVE

It is clear that this pandemic has utterly disrupted an education system that many assert was already losing its relevance. In his book, *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*, scholar Yuval Noah Harari outlines how schools continue to focus on traditional academic skills and rote learning, rather than on skills such as critical thinking and adaptability, which will be more important for success in the

future. Could the move to online learning be the catalyst to create a new, more effective method of educating students? While some worry that the hasty nature of the transition online may have hindered this goal, others plan to make e-learning part of their 'new normal' after experiencing the benefits first-hand.

# The importance of disseminating knowledge is highlighted through COVID-19

Major world events are often an inflection point for rapid innovation – a clear example is the rise of e-commerce post-SARS. While we have yet to see whether this will apply to e-learning post-COVID-19, it is one of the few sectors where investment has not dried up. What has been made clear through this pandemic is the importance of disseminating knowledge across borders, companies, and all parts of society. If online learning technology can play a role here, it is incumbent upon all of us to explore its full potential.

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