

THE FUN THEY HAD by ISAAC ASIMOV



LEARNING THROUGH
COMPUTERS



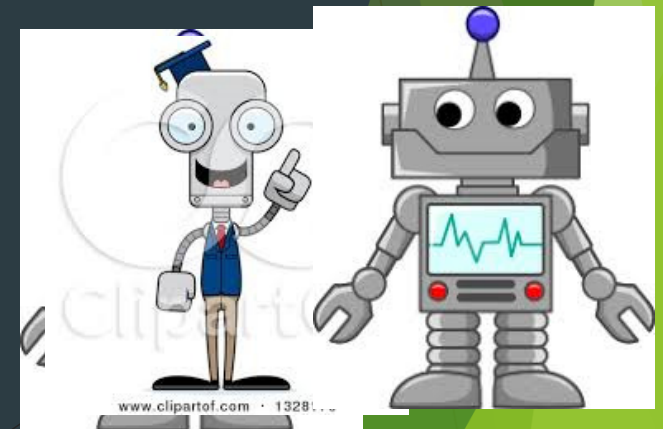
MOVING E-TEXT



SCHOOLS OF FUTURE

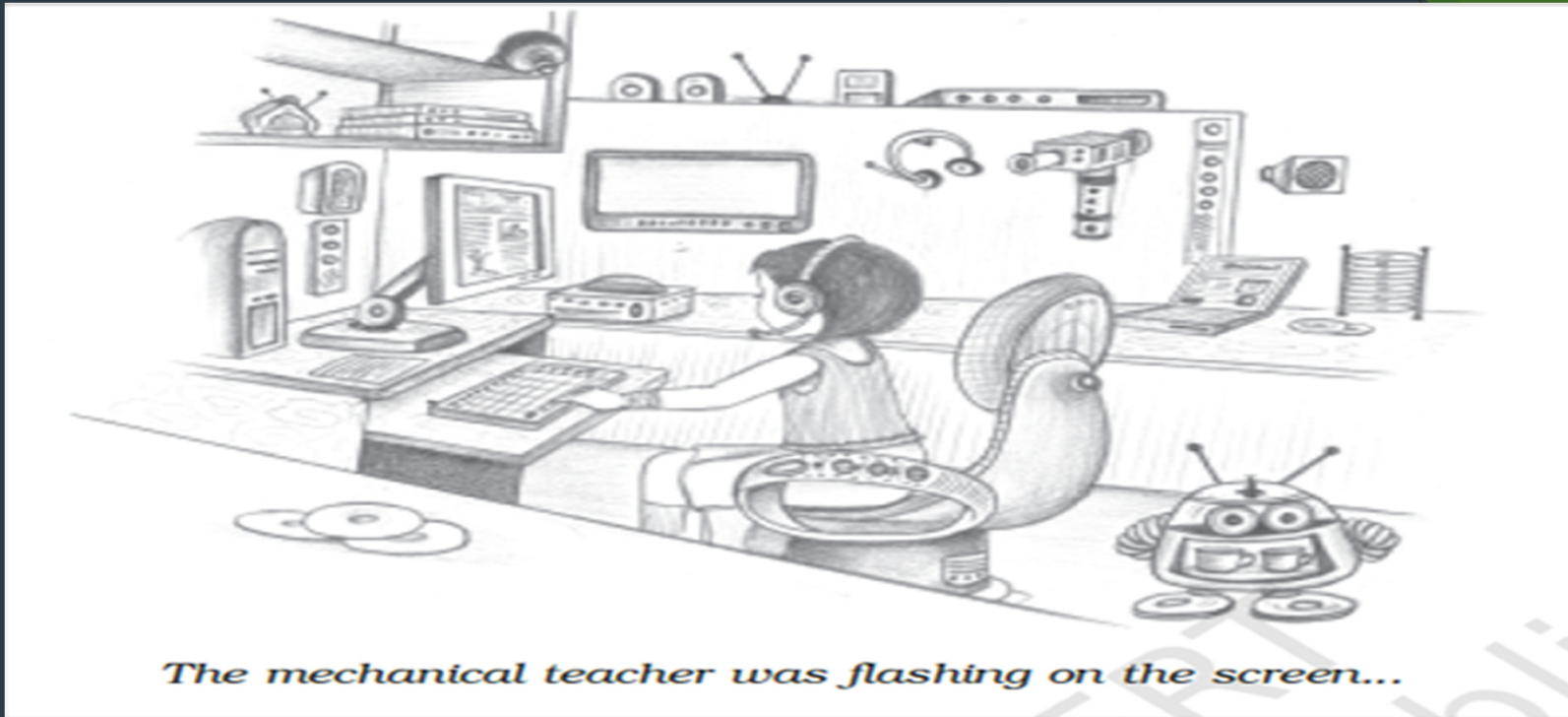


VIRTUAL CLASSROOM



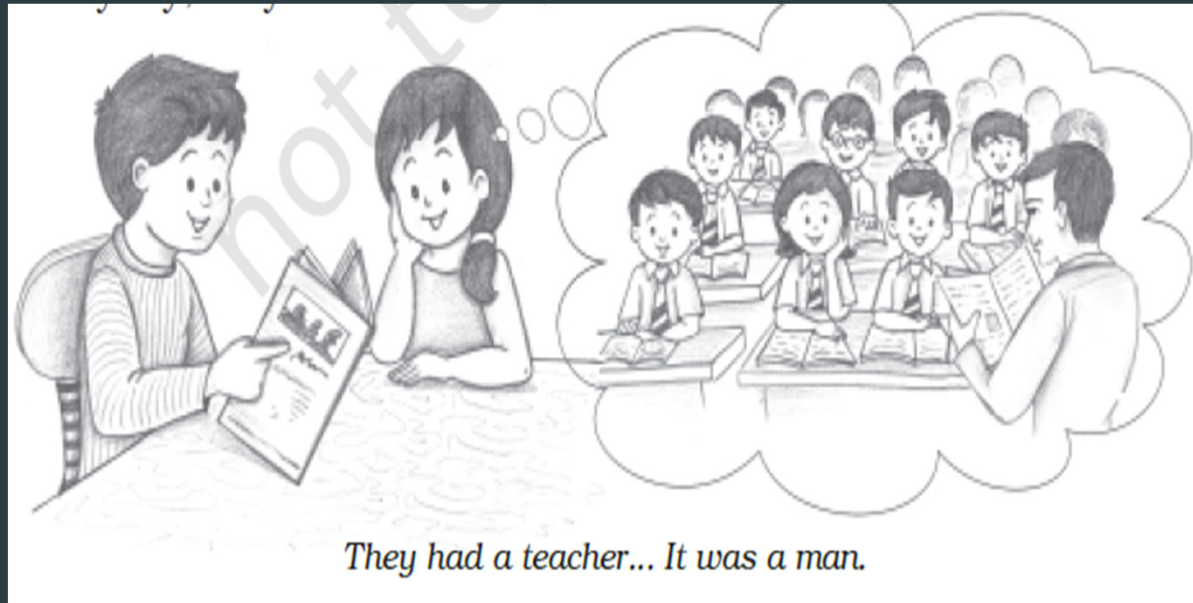
ROBOTIC TEACHER

- ▶ The story takes us to the world of future where computers will play a major role in the field of education. Books and schools as we know now will perhaps not exist.
- ▶ The story opens with Margie writing in her diary about an old book that Tommy had found. Margie was reminded of her grandfather who had once talked about his grandfather who went to an actual school where the students were taught by human teachers. Tommy was thirteen years old and Margie was of eleven. They found many strange things in the book. One of the strangest things was that after reading the book became useless. The text written on it did not change the way it happened on their computer screen.



- ▶ However, Margie and Tommy lived in the future world, in the year 2157 where education was completely computerized. They did not go to schools. Instead, they had a special study room where a computer taught them. The computer teacher was programmed and adjusted according to the needs of each child.

- ▶ The pages of the book they found were yellow and crinkly. Margie and Tommy found it funny to read the words that didn't move like they moved on the screen. When they turned back to the page before, it still had the same words on it.
- ▶ Margie hated school. She was having problems with learning Geography from her 'mechanical teacher'. It was black, large and ugly with a big screen on which all the lessons were shown and questions were asked, all in a special room in their own house. It could also calculate the marks in no time. Margie hated the slot where she had to insert her homework or test papers. Once the geography sector of her mechanical teacher was graded too quick so that her marks got worse and worse. The county inspector rebuilt it in one hour.



SCHOOL - CENTURIES AGO

Both Tommy and Margie wondered at the book found. Margie also wondered how much fun it would be studying in a school. Studying in a fun way, with other children and that too from a human teacher who gave them homework and asked questions. They had a special building, where the children went to study and they learned the same thing if they were the same age.

MESSAGE

- ▶ The author's message is one of warning against the dangers of computerized homeschooling which will deprive children of the benefits of the personal interactions between students and teachers, which help them develop social skills.