The bell rings and students wait for the Mrs. Johnson, their teacher, to open the door to a start of another school day. Greeting the students as they walk in, she takes notice that a couple are missing today. After the students hang up their coats and bags, they sit down at their desks and wait for Mrs. Johnson to take role. Today she has planned to begin to teach the students their multiplication tables and have them memorize part of the Constitution of the United States. She has already put on the blackboard a portion of the Constitution, which the students will copy on their paper. The class will also chant the multiplication tables together and write them down. The students will also continue writing their reports about a particular State in the United States. Many of the students will need to use the encyclopedias, so Mrs. Johnson clean them off and moved them to a lower shelf so the students could reach them. The class after lunch will continue to read Treasure Island. The students are going to draw a picture of their favorite scene in the book. When the day ends, Mrs. Johnson gives the students a couple pages of homework and dismisses them. This sounds like a typical day in a classroom. If you were to go into any classroom today these are the types of activities you might see. The unfortunate thing is that I wrote this story of Mrs. Johnson’s class as if it had taken place 100 years ago. This could have been a one-room schoolhouse in the late 1800’s. A noticeable difference might only be that the students wouldn't have had as many States to choose from for their reports. Minor changes have taken place in the classrooms of today, yet the rest of the world has gone on without us.

If we were to compare today’s businesses with those of the late 1800’s the differences are enormous. Businesses know the importance of keeping in touch with the new technology. Many businesses no longer exist because they were stuck in the past and new businesses took their place. Since public schools haven’t had any real competition they became stagnant and have fallen well behind.

This is a crime because our students are not being prepared properly for what they will encounter after they graduate. Students in a one-room schoolhouse were getting the skills they needed as an adult. Although some of those basic skills have not changed, most of everything else is completely different. Businesses of today are looking for applicants that have proper skills and knowledge in technology. Most students are not learning those skills in their classroom.

Many people will argue that the funds are not out there to get the technology. There are several responses to this question. There are ways to get the resources necessary without waiting for the District to fund them, which may or may not ever happen. If you were to go into a school today that is rich with technology, they would probably tell you that much of their technology is from donations, grants, and/or fund raising. Many businesses are willing to donate their older technology (which is usually no more than a couple years old) or even partially fund the purchase of new computer technology. Many businesses (i.e. Hewlett Packard) know that in order for them to get qualified employees in the future they must invest in the students of today. For those willing to spend the time writing Grants, a lot of money is out there and available for use to purchase technology for the schools. Also, PTAs at schools need to raise money specifically for the use of purchasing new technology. Most parents understand the importance of technology and will support the use of money to educate their child(ren) with up to date equipment. Obviously we need the districts to allocate a much larger portion of their budget to technology so we can shorten the gap between the schools and the rest of the World.

This is how I would like to see that same class of Mrs. Johnson’s for the
year 2000. Please notice that the personal touch of the teacher and her guidance has not disappeared.

The bell rings and students wait for the Mrs. Johnson, their teacher, to open the door to a start of another school day. Greeting the students as they walk in, she takes notice that a couple is missing today. After the students hang up their coats and bags, they sit down at their desks and plug in their laptops while they wait for Mrs. Johnson to take role. The students can see by the large projected computer image that today Mrs. Johnson has planned to begin to teach them their multiplication tables and have them learn about the Constitution of the United States. Mrs. Johnson found a website, which she will use for her math lesson today. This website gives the students a chance to manipulate many different items on their screen to use as counters for learning the multiplication concept. She has already put on the class website many links for the children to explore information and graphics about the Constitution. The students will continue gathering information from the Internet for their State reports and will create a multimedia presentation, which they will present to the class. Mrs. Johnson walks around the room guiding students to the information. The class after lunch will continue to read Treasure Island. The class will then be directed to create a Hyperstudio stack of their favorite part of the book and find out information on the Internet about the author, Robert Louis Stevenson, and other books he has written. When the day ends, Mrs. Johnson reminds the students to do their homework, which she put on the class website and dismisses them.