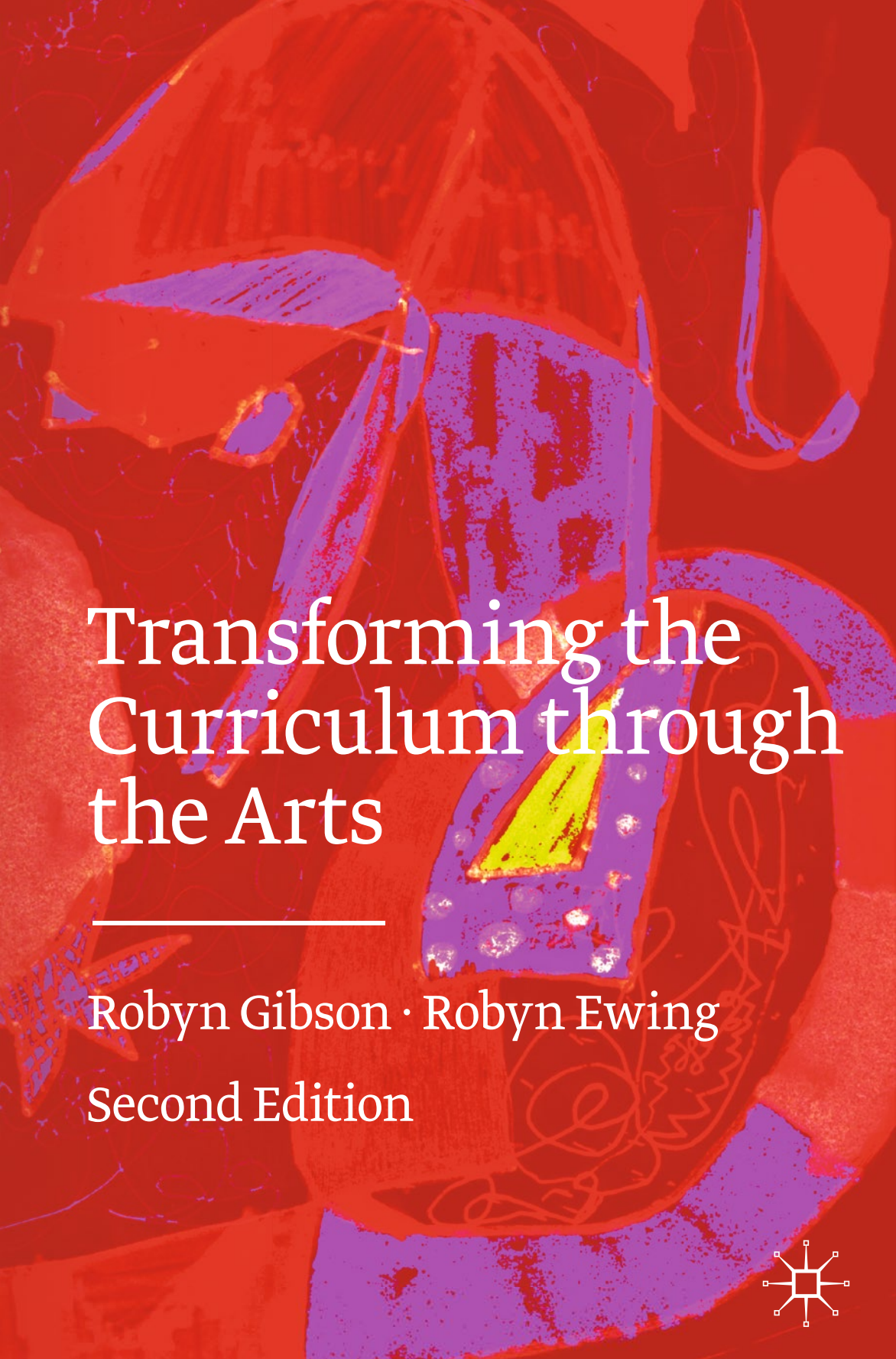

Transforming the Curriculum through the Arts

Robyn Gibson · Robyn Ewing

Second Edition

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Robyn Gibson • Robyn Ewing

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"… to all teachers who use the Arts to nurture the creativity and imagination of the children and young people in their care."

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Robyn Gibson and Robyn Ewing

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Introduction

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The arts are the window to the soul

—George Bernard Shaw

Our 'passionate creed' (LaBoskey 1994) centres on the centrality of the Arts to the development of the human being and the right of every child to an Arts-rich curriculum. There is much evidence to suggest that the Arts can make a unique contribution to the lives of young people, their learning and their ability to be creative, imaginative thinkers (e.g. World Health Organisation 2019; Fleming et al. 2015; Winner and Vincent-Lancrin 2013; Ewing and Gibson 2011; Catterall 2009; Gadsden 2008; Deasy 2002; Fiske 1999). Learning at preschool or school needs to be artful, relevant, connected and meaningful if today's children and young people are to remain engaged and motivated for the whole of their educational journey.

Yet the current neoliberal approach to learning and education in many western countries seems to be increasingly at odds with ensuring that every child has access to meaningful Arts experiences throughout their years at school. Australia's prime minister has announced in 2019 that the Arts department will be moved into a department of roads and infrastructure and communications and will not be named. The ongoing emphasis on high-stakes testing continues to privilege technical approaches to literacy and numeracy and places pressure on both teachers—who feel constrained to teach to these tests—and students who report test anxiety and fatigue (Whitlam Institute 2012). This is of real concern given that creative and critical thinking and reflection, well-developed communication skills and collaboration to enable problem-solving are so crucial in our rapidly changing world (NEA 2013).

A decade ago the *Shape paper for the Arts in the Australian curriculum* (ACARA 2011) argued that:

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> The Arts are fundamental to the learning of all young Australians. The Arts make distinct and unique contributions to each young person's ability to perceive, imagine, create, think, feel, symbolise, communicate, understand and become confident and creative individuals. The Arts in this Australian curriculum will provide all young Australians with the opportunity to imagine and creatively engage, personally and collectively within their real and imagined worlds. Engagement in all the Arts, shapes community. (p. 3)

But we are still waiting for the Arts to take its rightful place in the curriculum, no longer relegated to extra-curricular activities or end-of-year art exhibitions and school concerts. Arts experiences must not be the privilege of more advantaged children whose parents can afford art, dance classes, music instruction and visits to the theatre after school or in the holidays.

This second edition of our book offers something for every teacher of early childhood, primary and middle years students—especially those who are concerned about the lack of creativity and imagination in today's intended curriculum and the way knowledge is so often fragmented into meaningless chunks.

We acknowledge that each of the Creative Arts is a discipline in its own right with particular ways of knowing, representing and appreciating the world. At the same time, we strongly believe that the Arts also has the potential to offer powerful learning and teaching strategies across the curriculum.

Initially Chap. 2 provides a well-grounded rationale for embedding the Arts in the curriculum based on current national and international research. In the second chapter we explore the 4Cs (communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity) as core skills (NEA 2013) and offer an additional four (curiosity, compassion, connection and courage) that we believe are also essential for every child. The next chapter documents various conceptualisations of integration, offering an historical overview and suggesting different integration models for differing but authentic purposes.

As it is not our intent to imply that any one of the Arts disciplines (capitalised to signify their importance) is more important than any other, we have alphabetised the following chapters, which lead with a specific art form—creative dance, drama, literature, media arts, music and visual arts. Each of these chapters includes a range of suggestions for 'warming up to the particular art form' before demonstrating some powerful exemplars, many written and/or implemented by classroom teachers. Several chapters then suggest how the Arts can work effectively with and through other KLAs—STEAM and Humanities and Social Sciences. Each chapter includes suggestions for teachers about how to get started as well as lesson sequences and more complete units of work. The book concludes with a glossary of key terms as well as an extensive list of quality literary texts.

We welcome pre-service, early career and experienced teachers to share this creative journey with us. We know that your students and their parents will appreciate the transformative opportunities such a journey can provide.

We are encouraged by Katherine Anne Porter's words in *The Leaning Tower* published in 1944:

The arts do live continuously and they live literally by faith; their names and their shapes and their basic meanings survive unchanged in all that matters through times of interruption, diminishment, neglect; ***they outlive governments and creeds and the societies, even the very civilisation that produced them. They cannot be destroyed altogether because they represent the substance of faith and the only reality. They are what we find when the ruins are cleared away.***

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The Imperative of an Arts-Led Curriculum

2

Learning Objectives

- to introduce the potential role the Arts can play in learning;
- to consider the relevant definitions and artforms introduced in subsequent chapters; and
- to explore relevant research about the transformative nature of the Arts.

1 Introduction

Imagination, creativity and the Arts are, in our view, inextricably linked. We believe unequivocally that every child deserves the opportunity to learn in, about and through the Arts including dance, drama, literature, media arts, music, storytelling and visual arts. We argue that an Arts-led curriculum for children and young people from early childhood through to tertiary studies is imperative if today's learners are to develop a sense of their own identities and ability to belong within their social and cultural worlds. Quality arts processes can foster the creative and flexible thinking skills needed for coping with the new knowledges, dilemmas, technologies and inventions that constantly challenge our thinking and being.

International research over the past three decades (e.g. Catterall 2002, 2009; Deasy 2002; Ewing 2010; Fiske 1999; Fleming et al. 2015; Kisida and Bowen 2019; Seidel et al. 2009; Winner et al. 2013) clearly documents how ensuring that quality Arts experiences are at the centre of learning contexts will enhance students' social and emotional well-being and imaginative and creative capacities. Such experiences then improve their overall learning outcomes in other curriculum areas, including literacy and numeracy.

There are many examples of projects where the Arts have provided the means for disadvantaged, disengaged and disenfranchised communities to find a way back to learning and to a meaningful place in society: the powerful impact of *Big hART's*

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projects in New Roebourne comprising a suite of workshops, performance pieces, video and music programmes delivered simultaneously to build community skills, resilience and pride; *Somebody's Daughter Theatre* with women pre- or post release from Victorian prisons over the past three decades and its offspring *Highwater Theatre*; and *Nobody's Fool Theatre* now making a real impact on disengaged and at-risk students in Victoria—or Jonathon Welch's work with the homeless through *The Choir of Hard Knocks.* As we write this, however, we are conscious of the many and ongoing funding cuts made to small to medium arts organisations in Australia that have prompted outrage from the arts community at large.

All too often, the Arts remain an untapped, add-on or ignored resource in many western contemporary classroom contexts. There are a number of reasons why this may be the case including some teachers' own prior experiences, limited professional learning or lack of confidence with particular art forms. Nevertheless, the current overemphasis on high-stakes literacy and numeracy testing coupled with an increasingly overcrowded curriculum, must also be seen as contributing factors.

This chapter initially defines how we understand and have used the term 'the Arts' as a kind of shorthand collective noun throughout this book. It then draws on relevant research and literature to explain why we believe so passionately in the role that the Arts can and should play in children's learning from birth throughout their learning journeys. Finally we discuss the current context and the potential that creative interdisciplinary approaches to curriculum may hold for bringing the Arts and education together in exciting ways.

▶ **Activity**

We use 'imagination', 'creativity' and 'the Arts' frequently throughout this book.

How do you understand these concepts? Does creativity always imply our imagination and the Arts have been involved? When we use our imagination, will we always be creative?

2 The 'Arts' Defined

The 'Arts' has been used as a collective term throughout this book to represent discrete but interrelated creative disciplines that include dance, drama, literature, visual arts, music, film and other media. While each artform is a distinctive discipline with particular knowledges, language and skills, all involve play, experimentation, exploration, provocation, expression, and the artistic or aesthetic shaping of the body or other media to bring together emotions as well as personal, sensory and intellectual experiences (Ewing 2010). Subsequent chapters develop opportunities to lead curriculum experiences with different art forms. Later chapters suggest how arts disciplines can be embedded in other Key Learning Areas (KLAs). While there are numerous lists of what comprise 'the Arts', in this book we have chosen to concentrate on the following:

Creative Dance: using the body to move to express and enhance our ideas, understandings, inner thoughts and feelings. 'Dance is a poem of which each movement is a word' (Mata Hari).

Drama: suspending our disbelief to embody or enact someone or something else using a range of processes, devices and strategies adapted from theatre.

Oral Storytelling: sharing an event or story orally often embellishing using images, sound effects and improvisation, is an important drama strategy.

Literature: authentic and evocative language in narratives, poems, picture books and graphic novels.

Media Arts: using traditional and digital technologies creatively and critically.

Music: organising sound expressively in time and space to express feelings and imaginings.

Visual Arts: expressing our imagination in visual forms such as painting, drawing, collage, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, craft, photography, textiles and electronic media (Image 2.1).

It's vitally important to recognise the intrinsic value of the Arts for children and adults alike (McCarthy et al. 2004). Optimally, we need opportunities to develop literacy in all the above art forms and we do not wish to undermine or downplay their individual rigour and integrity in any way. There are, however, some resonances we believe that the Arts all share that are valuable for enhancing learning

Image 2.1 Wire sculptures

more generally. Our proposal is that each of the Arts should be viewed separately as discrete art forms but also as critical, quality arts-rich pedagogy (Ewing 2019) and should be integrated across all the Key Learning Areas in the early childhood, primary and middle years curriculum (and beyond). The following chapter explores different ways that meaningful integration across the curriculum can be planned while enabling students to see knowledge connections and real-world links with what happens in their classrooms.

3 A Rationale for an Arts-Rich Curriculum

Why should the Arts play this role in today's curriculum? Suzanne Langer (1957) suggests that art promotes insight and understanding about our subjective inner life and enables us to look at the everyday with different eyes. Perhaps this is why the Arts help us understand more about who we are. The famous poet Wordsworth (1798) saw art as emotion when it has a chance to be still or tranquil. Expressionists saw art as enabling personal feelings and imagery to be translated into a unique 'sensible' form (in Barone 2001). This book proposes that the integration of the Arts across the curriculum, thus has the potential to deepen our learning experiences, foster our creativity and enhance our ability to make meaning in diverse ways through understanding the different languages of the Arts. If we better understand who we are, we are better equipped to develop a deeper understanding of the world and our role within it.

▶ **Activity**

Is there a particular Arts discipline that you feel most confident about? Why? How has your own learning journey fostered this? What does it enable you to do well? Does it help you feel positive about yourself? Does this affect your teaching and the way you learn? If so, in what ways?

4 The Role of the Arts in Learning

Art makes visible the need for change and social transformation.
Art is functional, collective, and committed. (Diawara 2008)

The Arts, and arts processes and rituals are indicators of what it means to be human and, as the above quote suggests, they can often provide a trigger for reform in a community. They can create opportunities for intercultural conversations and, by helping us see things in new ways, they can encourage us question what we take for granted or, as Sara Delamont (1976) among others once said, make what is everyday and familiar strange so we can see it in a new way and investigate new possibilities. Such experiences ultimately assist us to develop deep learning and

understandings that enable us to question our acceptance of the existing status quo or stereotypes.

Appreciating the critical role played by the Arts in everyday life is not new. As Nathan (2008) writes:

> Our ancestors knew the arts were synonymous with survival. We created art to communicate our emotions, our passions, jealousies, enduring conflicts…. (p. 177)

Below are several exemplars that demonstrate that our understanding of the Arts as facilitators of deep learning is almost as old as human civilisation itself:

- All Indigenous cultures embed story in dance, music and art.
- Early cultures recorded their observations of the world and their stories through *drawing and painting* on cave walls and rocks, through dance and oral storying. Australian Aborigines' rock art is thought to be at least 60,000 years old. Although contested, some would suggest that some of these visual representations of the world preceded the development of oral language.
- *Songlines* can be thought of as 'tracks across the landscape'. Aboriginal peoples in Australia believe they were sung by their ancestors as they travelled across the land, moulding its physical features. Important details about place can thus be remembered by Indigenous peoples through songlines. Chatwin (1986) uses this concept to propose that language has its beginnings in song.
- *Oral storytelling* was the main vehicle for communication for thousands of years before writing was invented and for many centuries thereafter. Stories passed down ancient wisdom, morals, cultural values and beliefs, as well as great historical moments and explanations about natural phenomena from one generation to another. Storytellers of note were accorded much privilege in the community. In what is now known as Scandinavia, a storyteller or 'skald' even rode with the king into battle.
- *Enactment* of important rites of passage and critical life events including birth, war and death using *dance, mime, mask and puppetry* had great ceremonial significance from very early in civilisations all over the world.
- Greek philosophers advocated the study of music to enhance the soul more than 2000 years ago (Nowak and Whelan 2016). Shakespeare notably called music *the food of love.*

► **Activity**
Can you add to these exemplars from your own experience, research and reading?

5 The Arts and Learning: Recent Research

These early understandings of the value of the Arts have been extended and elaborated through the ages. More recently, they have been supported by the scholarly research and writings of researchers and educators. A well-known advocate was

John Dewey (1934) who acknowledged the artistic qualities of young children's play and its foundation for their learning. Some examples of other prominent educators who have argued strongly for the critical importance of the Arts in learning include Viktor Lowenfeld (1947), Peter Slade (1954), Jean Piaget (1962), Herbert Read (1964), Lev Vygotsky (1971), Jerome Bruner (1986, 1990), Dorothy Heathcote and Bolton (1995), Maxine Greene (1995), Peter Abbs (1987), Shirley Brice Heath (2000), Elliot Eisner (2002), and Kieran Egan (2007).

▶ **Activity**

Select at least one of these educators to research. What arguments do they use in their discussion of the importance of the Arts in learning?

Kieran Egan (1988) has advocated strongly for a primary curriculum based on narrative, and links the ancient art of storytelling with enhancing students' learning across the curriculum. He has argued consistently (e.g. 1988, 2007) throughout his career that our neglect of children's imaginations in twentieth-century western curricula has in fact dulled their intellectual excitement—that we too often start with what children already know about a subject rather than begin with their wonder and imagination.

It is now widely documented that those students whose learning is embedded in the Arts achieve better grades and test scores, are less likely to drop out, rarely report boredom and have a better developed sense of self than those without such opportunities. Two compelling compilations of such evidence can be found in the US Senate Report *Champions of change* (Fiske 1999), Deasy's (2002) meta-analysis but Bamford's (2006) report; Catterall's longitudinal study (2009); *Drama improves Lisbon key competences in education consortium* (DICE) (2011) across 12 European countries and the Arts Council in England's *A time to listen* (2019) all merit careful reading.

Interestingly, in addition, there are other more important but less measurable outcomes from immersing students in arts-rich curriculum including the National Education Association's (2013) *Four Cs*, demonstrating increased empathy and compassion and the ability to work collaboratively, as we address in the following chapter.

Neuroscientific research is providing increasing evidence about how the brain functions that supports our intuitive and long-standing knowledge about the link between the Arts and deep learning and understanding (e.g. Blair 2015; Lindenberger 2010). It is clear that there is a very strong interrelationship between feeling positive emotionally and optimal learning. For example, the human brain is programmed to flee if it feels threatened. It is only when it feels comfortable or safe that it can engage in explorative, creative, risk-taking and problem-solving processes (Williams and Gordon 2007; Damasio 2004). Children therefore need to feel comfortable in classrooms before they will take risks and be willing to make mistakes when

learning new skills. Many collaborative strategies common in creative dance and drama experiences have been shown to develop this kind of supportive and trusting context. The co-operation required in dance encourages interdependence across racial and ethnic boundaries (Heath 2001) and the breaking up of old patterns of behaviour increasing the likelihood of new patterns being created (Freeman 1995).

We talked earlier about the importance of learning different kinds of literacies and suggested that the Arts are different literacies or ways of making meaning and communicating beyond words (NAAE 2019). We have also discussed the importance of the 'aesthetic' in all art forms. But what do we mean by 'aesthetic literacy'? According to Education Queensland (1984) aesthetic literacy derives directly from becoming aware of our beliefs along with our perceived reality, our cultural background and our *insights into beauty* (our emphasis). In addition, such knowledge about aesthetics can, in the words of award-winning illustrator and author Shaun Tan, transform an idea or a concept.

It is essential that a more sophisticated definition of deeply literate practices is adopted rather than the restricted traditional view of literacy as learning to read and write. Barton (2014) proposes 'interpretive and expressive fluency through symbolic form, whether aural/sonic, embodied, textual, visual, written or a combination of these within the context of a particular art form' (pp. 3–4) is more appropriate. All arts disciplines should thus be understood as different ways of making meaning, different ways of representing reality—different literacies (Ewing 2010; Livermore 2003).

In addition, quality teaching frameworks (e.g. NSW Department of Education and Training 2003; Education Queensland 2001; Newmann 1996) include elements such as deep learning and understanding, problematic knowledge, engagement; higher-order thinking and narrative. At the same time Fleming, Gibson and Anderson (2015) found that these frameworks often lacked a way of accounting for affect in learning. Arts experiences and processes have the potential to change classroom dynamics to enable learners to own more of the learning process, think creatively and compassionately, take imaginative steps to solve problems (Ewing 2019; Ewing and Saunders 2016; Biesta 2014; Martin et al. 2013; Gibson et al. 2010). It seems that the current research clearly establishes that there should be a re-acknowledgement of the place of the Arts in formal school curricula. Rhetoric, however, is not enough.

Despite long-standing intuitive knowledge and confirmatory research about the importance of the Arts in learning and learning through the Arts, prejudice about the Arts remains a feature of modern western societies. In the United States the emphasis on the rigid pedagogies and high-stakes assessment regimes developed as a result of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) initiative has further disadvantaged learners who are vulnerable and at risk. The *Cambridge Primary Review* (2009) led by Alexander, for example, concluded that, after two decades of a national curriculum and high-stakes testing in England, the important role of the Arts and humanities had been severely devalued with students' creativity at risk. This very comprehensive report asserted that the English national curriculum's adherence to narrowly based, hierarchical standards and technical assessment had dire outcomes. In their analysis of European curriculum documents, Wyse and Ferrari (2014)

reported the disjunction between policy rhetoric about the need for creativity and enacted curriculum, stating that while '... creativity was represented in arts subjects more than other subjects ... [it] was relatively neglected in reading and writing as part of the language group of subjects' (p. 30). They concluded that there needed to be greater coherence between general statements in education and the actual representation of creativity in curriculum. Such conclusions reflect the ongoing siloing of subjects and the privileging of the competitive academic curriculum in some western countries. Given that Australian education policy continues to follow both the United Kingdom and the United States in its development of national curriculum and assessment regimes, these concerns need to be heeded before we make similar mistakes. Certainly *My School* and National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Australia demonstrates that it is already treading the same dangerous path.

Fortunately, there are some exceptions: in the new Welsh curriculum for children aged between 3 and 15 to be introduced in 2022, Expressive Arts will be one of six areas of learning and experience. The other areas include health and well-being; humanities; languages; literacy and communication; mathematics and numeracy; and science and technology. Four key purposes will be used to measure the effectiveness of this new approach: supporting learners to become ambitious capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; and ethical informed citizens and healthy, confident individuals. This follows renewed emphasis on the Arts in Welsh schools since a five-year plan was launched in 2015. This £20 million plan aimed to improve teachers' expertise in using creative arts-based approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy, and increase partnerships between arts organisations and schools. A recent report found it had benefitted nearly 100,000 students with 900 teachers receiving professional learning and 22 new partnerships formed (Romer 2019).

Over 15 years ago Elliot Eisner in the United States (e.g. 2005) argued that, since Renaissance times, it has been assumed that the Arts enrich our lives through engagement of our emotions. While he agrees that there is no doubt that this is true, he argues strongly that abstract intellectual activity should not only be viewed as the province of the sciences. There is compelling evidence that the Arts are pivotal for the development of the intellect as well. Several examples of research demonstrate how particular Art disciplines can enhance students' learning in other curriculum areas cited below. Further examples are to be found in subsequent chapters:

- It is well established that learning music provides access to an extensive symbol system that develops meaning and memory in particular ways. Schellenberg (e.g. 2006, 2008) undertook extensive research at the University of Toronto in Canada over a number of years demonstrating that children who have studied music over a year have a greater increase in their intelligence tests as well as school grades when compared with their counterparts who did not. (The same research also found that those children who had drama lessons, instead, performed more highly on measures that examined social skills.) More recent neuroscientific

research demonstrates that early years music-making activities draw on various areas of the brain simultaneously and thus facilitate many different aspects of brain development. Anita Collins (2013, 2014) a researcher in neuroscience and music education recently described in her TED Talk that the effect of music as 'like fireworks going off in the brain after evaluating the findings of neuroscience studies into the "musician's advantage"'. She believes that music education can raise literacy and numeracy standards. (For more information visit anitacollins-music.com).

- In their important Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report Winner et al. 2013 examined the extent to which arts in education fosters skills such as critical and creative thinking, self-confidence, motivation, co-operation and the ability to communicate. One of their strongest findings underlines that opportunities for students to engage in enactment through classroom drama strengthens reading, writing and text understanding.
- Reading imaginative fiction has also been found to enable more compassionate learners because readers enter into the lives and dilemmas of the characters. Phelan's (2017) doctoral research concluded that it is the *process* of careful reading of quality literary works that encourages the reader to use close analysis and interpretation. He quotes Kidd and Castano's (2013) research.
- Creative writing is greatly enhanced through the use of drama strategies and processes. Embodiment enriches students' understandings and hence their capacity to write creatively (e.g. Cremin 2014; Saunders 2019; Ewing et al. 2015; Crumpler and Schneider 2002). This in turn improves learners' confidence in other areas and self-efficacy (Deegan 2010) and therefore enhances their future employment potential.
- Dance and creative writing taught together improved students' skills in both areas (Nesbit and Hane 2007).
- Involving children in discussion of visual works of art and enabling them to explore the impact of an artwork on their emotions can help them develop empathy (Riddett-Moore 2009) and 'qualitative reasoning' (Eisner 2002; Dewey 1934) or imaginative cognition (Efland 2004). A museum programme that focused on interpreting art improved the participant students' communication skills both in art and more broadly (Siegesmund 2005). Mai's PhD on very young children's aesthetic experiences of artworks (Mai and Gibson 2009) in a Sydney art gallery profiled young children's engagement with art over a sustained period of time.

Ongoing literacy research (e.g. Strauss et al. 2009; Krashen and Mason 2014) has put much emphasis on the importance of predictive and meaningful learning experiences coupled with integrative approaches to learning when children are learning to read. Real-world connections, higher-order thinking and deep learning challenge students to think beyond the surface meaning of any text (text defined in its broadest sense). These findings unequivocally underline the importance of the use of expressive, evocative literary texts rather than contrived texts with highly controlled

vocabulary and syntax in English classrooms and support the work of Freire (1985). Freire's work with disadvantaged learners struggling to become literate demonstrated the importance of the learner's active engagement in the learning process.

Such creative student engagement in and control of the learning process cannot be overemphasised. Many children and young people opt out of formal learning activities because they cannot see its relevance in their own lives. They find strategies to avoid classroom learning experiences and soon fall behind their peers. Too often learning in schools is very different from learning that occurs in children's everyday worlds. In our increasingly digital world, arts processes can enable us to select, analyse and reflect in order to interpret information effectively and, at the same time, be more conscious of our own social and cultural biases. In addition to developing our minds, the Arts enable us to convey meaning through less traditional uses of our language resources (e.g. consider what poetry makes possible that prose does not). For too long, our understanding of 'language' has been confined to the language of words and sentences (Tishman et al. 1995). People think in many other different ways, including through images, movement, colour and symbols. Arts experiences enable all students to take part regardless of their initial linguistic abilities. Students' social skills, including active listening and ability to work collaboratively, are also enhanced.

6 The Current Context

Considering the above-mentioned arguments, it seems that until recently, many western education systems, including Australia, have not afforded the Arts their rightful place in the formal or intended curriculum. This may be at least in part because, as Eisner's argued earlier, they are often seen to be solely aligned with the affective and imaginative dimensions of our being and therefore regarded as 'soft' or not intellectual, rational or academic enough.

Exploratory play early in the lives of most children allows them to feel initially confident about their drawing, painting, singing, storytelling, music-making, dancing and role-play abilities, and the aesthetic in their play and art-making is often evident (see Image 2.2).

Unfortunately, too often, it does not take long for this confidence to be eroded once formal schooling begins, and the emphasis on performance in high-stakes testing takes over. Well-meaning teachers sometimes highlight the efforts of those with obvious talent or expertise when creating art displays. Many teachers have memories of being cast as a tree or autumn leaf in the class play or being told they have 'two left feet' when dancing or are 'tone deaf' during singing. Feeling insecure or anxious about their own expertise in a particular art form may constrain a teacher.

Despite the advent of Arts syllabus documents and the introduction of mandated arts curricula, it is still common for Arts activities to be, at best, confined to being programmed later in the day, at the end of the school week or whenever the class is scheduled to present an assembly item. At worst, it can become relegated solely to extra-curricular timeslots before or after school or during lunchtime. Many teachers

Image 2.2 Alia's drawing

facing an increasingly crowded curriculum either lack the confidence or the expertise to embed Arts activities in their day-to-day timetable as an integrated part of other Key Learning Areas. When this happens, it is often only those whose parents are more affluent who are provided with extra-curricular tuition in Arts disciplines. This sidelines those from impoverished families and is of great concern, given that it is these children who will benefit most from Arts experiences.

It is, however, now more widely accepted that students should learn *about* art forms and conventions through actively engaging *in* Arts processes and activities, as well as *through* responding to the work or performance of others (Abbs 1994). Contemporary syllabi have incorporated processes of creating, communicating, responding and appreciating, as well as performing or presenting components. Yet, to date, there is often little funding or resources to support the teacher professional learning needed to accompany the stated intentions of such documents. In addition, a tendency to focus on those students who demonstrate particular potential in an art form, showcasing their talents in end-of-year state and regional performances and exhibitions still remains.

Questions

Do you agree with the authors that the Arts should play a pivotal role in all learning? Why? Why not? Think of some examples to support your view. Could a renewed understanding of the Arts and more confidence in arts-rich pedagogy improve your learning and teaching across the curriculum?

7 Summary

To date, the educational place of each Arts discipline, the nature of their distinctive contribution to the education of individuals and communities, and their relationship to other curriculum areas remain undervalued despite age-old wisdom and a growing body of research evidence that demonstrates the potential for education in, through and about the Arts to transform learning and enhance the development of learners' creativity and problem-solving.

This book demonstrates that interdisciplinary Arts experiences can:

- facilitate genuine engagement in learning experiences helping learners make links with our/their knowledge and life experiences;
- take us beyond our comfort zone to help us think more flexibly;
- enable a range of possible meanings and perspectives to be explored and represented;
- help us imagine different ways of seeing, knowing, interpreting and viewing the world;
- develop empathy and compassion for others' perspectives and ways of thinking, knowing, being and feeling;
- provide opportunities for reflection about the things we take for granted;
- develop our ability to collaborate with others more effectively;
- enhance our creativity and problem-solving; and
- personalise these new learnings so we can apply new understandings to our own personal context or other contexts.

8 Conclusion

In launching the University of Sydney's Creativity in Research, Engaging the Arts, Transforming Education (CREATE) Centre in 2019, acclaimed Aboriginal actor and director Wesley Enoch spoke about the centrality of story and the Arts in the lives, communities and curricula of Australia's First Nations. He encouraged his audience 'to hold onto the things that we think are important as society begins to fall apart…we need the stories and the songs that will take us into the future because without them we will literally fall off the edge'. He reminded us that the idea that we can teach content is over. We must encourage curiosity and questioning, creative cultural conversations to enable new dreamings to take us forward.

▶ **Activity**

Listen to and reflect on Wesley Enoch's whole address at:

https://soundcloud.com/user-710328418/create-centre-launch-speech-by-wesley-enoch

It is our hope that the following chapters will give you the inspiration, the conviction, the confidence and the enthusiasm to engage with different Arts disciplines with your learners and to ensure we are equipped to face our post-normal age (Sardar 2010). We challenge you to explore the benefits of interdisciplinarity across the curriculum. We envisage that such experiences and the responses from your learners will encourage you to advocate strongly for the imperative of an arts-rich curriculum.

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Useful Web Links

Anita Collins. (2014). TED talk. Accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0JKCYZ8hng&feature=emb_title
Anita Collins. http://www.anitacollinsmusic.com/neuroandmused
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The Centre for Imagination in research, culture and education. http://www.circesfu.ca

Exploring Life 'Cs' Through the Arts

3

Learning Objectives

- to expand the concept of twenty-first-century skills and capabilities;
- to understand the potential role interdisciplinary arts units can play in developing capabilities across the curriculum; and
- to develop confidence and expertise in planning and embedding such skills and capabilities to enhance lifelong learning.

How can education systems help young people develop a greater awareness of the connections between their daily decisions and possible long-term consequences, not just for themselves but for society as a whole? (OECD 2019, p. 6)

1 Introduction

In Chap. 2, we provided a range of evidence that articulated why all children are entitled to an arts-rich curriculum that fosters the development of teachers' and children's creativities and imaginations. We have discussed how each arts discipline embodies distinctive ways of knowing, being and making meaning, as well as the potential of the Arts disciplines working in symphony to enable learners to enhance students' well-being, artfulness and lifelong literacies. We understand the concept of symphony as a synthesis to envision a big picture, crossing discipline boundaries to investigate the combination of disparate elements into a new whole.

This chapter explores how quality arts processes and experiences can help students develop the core capabilities that will promote confidence, self-understanding, agency and personal identity as they learn to view today's world from multiple perspectives. There are many lists of core skills/capabilities/dispositions cited as much needed to cope with the accelerated change that is a feature of the world

R. Gibson, R. Ewing, *Transforming the Curriculum Through the Arts*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-52797-6_3

today. Alongside such capabilities, education departments cite the need for all learners to be 'resilient', 'creative', 'flexible' and 'collaborative' problem-solvers. Yet these capabilities are not new or century-specific—in fact, all have been mentioned as important capacities for learners throughout our education careers.

Initially we very briefly refer to the history of the twenty-first-century skill movement in the United States that led to the National Education Association's—NEA (2013) distillation of *4Cs* they asserted were vital for students in dealing with the challenges of twenty-first-century living and learning content mastery in different learning areas. The summary of the 4Cs is followed by an interesting arts exemplar that requires all four for successful completion. The next section documents our exploratory proposal for four additional *Cs* Gibson and Ewing 2019; Ewing 2017). We believe these are also vital and have included some initial work with these and with some primary children as a starting point for investigating learners' understandings of and responses to these. Finally, an interdisciplinary arts unit provides another opportunity to explore how these capabilities can be developed.

2 The 4Cs

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, what was known as 'The 3 Rs'—reading, writing and 'rithmetic'—were hailed as the foundations for a 'good' education for all children. Rote learning and memorisation of large chunks of information were strategies that were considered to be essential in the learning process. Three decades ago, with rapid technological advancements and the so-called digital age, it was not surprising that policymakers, education, business, community and technology leaders, civic groups and professional education associations alike called for a twenty-first-century learning movement to document the knowledge and skills relevant for the incoming century. In the United States, this led to the foundation of the *Partnership for twenty-first century skills* (2002)—more recently the *Partnership for 21st learning* or *P21*. This group consulted widely in their efforts to identify skills that would equip learners with the flexibility to cope with ever-accelerating change and developed a *Framework for twenty-first century learning.* Johnson (2009) describes the twenty-first-century framework as divided into four separate components:

Core subjects and twenty-first century themes (such as language arts, mathematics, science, global awareness and financial literacy).
Learning and innovation skills (such as creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving).
Information, media and technology skills.
Life and career skills (such as initiative and self-direction).

Activity

What knowledges, skills, capabilities, dispositions and understandings do you see as vital for today's learners? How can these be assessed?

Over the past two decades many national and international organisations, including the World Education Forum and the OECD have published lists of skills, competencies and character traits. The Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority) (ACARA), for example, lists seven general capabilities that are intended to be realised across the curriculum, and these include literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology capability, personal and social capability, critical and creative thinking, intercultural understanding and ethical understanding. Alongside these lists of capabilities and skills has also been a renewed focus on creativity. Many educators have advocated for creativity to be seen as a core skill alongside literacy and numeracy. Ken Robinson, for example, has published articles and books about the importance of creativity in education (see e.g. 2009, 2020 forthcoming). His TED Talk remains one of the most frequently watched worldwide.

In 2013, the National Education Association (NEA) published a document that defined '4Cs' as the most important skills for twenty-first-century learning *alongside* content knowledge. These 4Cs—critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity—have been widely adopted.

We are very concerned that too often these kinds of skills or attributes, dispositions or traits are described as 'soft' skills implying they have less significance than those described as 'hard' skills (although the 'hard' skills are often nameless). Such a dichotomy is very misleading, given we believe that all are core to our social and emotional well-being and to the development of deep understanding.

In Table 3.1, the four key interrelated skills proposed by NEA in 2013 as needed by all twenty-first-century learners highlight aspects of being critically literate are summarised (reprinted from Ewing 2019):

Activity

With colleagues consider this chapter's opening quote together with the following questions and statement from the OECD's recent report (2019) *Envisioning the future of education and jobs: Trends, data and drawing.*

> With global mobility on the rise, classrooms are becoming ever-more diverse. How can education systems better prepare for the inflow of students from various backgrounds, socio-economic classes and cultures? (p. 4)
>
> What are the media and digital literacy skills that citizens need to navigate through 'digital' democracies? Is digital citizenship different from its traditional form? (p. 8)
>
> Does education foster and value the creativity necessary to be innovative? (p. 10)

Table 3.1 A summary of 'The Four Cs'

Twenty-first century 'C' skill	Brief definition
Critical thinking and problem-solving	Effective use of different types of reasoning appropriate to a situation, Analysis and evaluation of alternative points of view, Synthesising and making connections between information and arguments, Identifying and asking significant questions, Successful conventional and innovative problem-solving and Critical reflection on both learning experiences and processes.
Communication	Expressing thoughts and ideas clearly using oral, written and non-verbal communication skills in a range of forms and in multilingual and multicultural contexts, and for a variety of purposes (e.g. to inform; articulate opinion, instruct; motivate; persuade); Effective listening to ensure meanings, attitudes, values and intentions are understood; and Understanding and using multiple media and technologies, and how to assess impact and effectiveness.
Collaboration	Ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse groups and teams; Flexibility and willingness to help and negotiate making necessary compromises where appropriate to achieve a shared goal; and Share responsibility for collaborative work and value individual contributions.
Creativity and innovation	Think using a wide variety of techniques to create ideas and elaborate, refine, analyse and refine to improve new and worthy ideas; Work creatively with others being open, and respond to new and different perspectives, incorporating input and feedback; View failure as part of the creative process and an opportunity to learn; and Act on/implement creative ideas where appropriate.

Ewing (2019) adapted from the National Education Association (2013)

> Longer working lives and rapidly changing skill demands increase the need for continuous learning throughout life. Should some form of lifelong learning be compulsory? Should lifelong learning be a right? (p. 12)
>
> To thrive in increasingly diverse classrooms and workplaces, students and workers need to be able to collaborate with others who might not look or think like them, or share their beliefs. (p. 14)

Many other educators have also used or adapted the 4Cs in their work in schools and other organisations. Miranda Jefferson and Michael Anderson, for example, have particularly emphasised Critical Reflection, a component of Critical Thinking in the original as shown earlier. (see e.g. Jefferson and Anderson (2017). *Transforming schools* and Anderson & Jefferson (2019). *Transforming organisations*).

Example

Below is a Visual Arts activity developed by Robyn Gibson that incorporates all four key skills.

Visual Arts Lesson Based on 'Building the Sydney Harbour Bridge'

Aim: to work collaboratively using limited materials in order to construct a representation of the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Learning/Teaching Process

Exploring

On IWB look at images of the Sydney Harbour Bridge (daytime, night-time, New Year's Eve fireworks). If time permits look at its history.

Focus on its distinctive features: 'coat-hanger' shape, pylons, etc.

Break into three groups.

Explain that each group will 'construct' the bridge using the materials offered. (NO other instructions/information is required at this point!)

Developing/Making

Groups move to three different areas (preferably to different rooms)

Materials ready in each area are as follows:

Group 1: cardboard and clothes pegs;
Group 2: newspaper and string; and
Group 3: aluminium foil and meat skewers.

Groups discuss how they can build a bridge using only these materials, that is, no scissors, sticky tape and so on have been provided.

Teacher should visit each site but give no guidance!

Reflecting/Responding

After completion, each group visits the three sites to view the constructed bridges.

Teacher should take photos so that students can annotate later.

The host group explains the process they went through. For example, did they restrict themselves to the two materials or did they incorporate furniture or their own bodies in the final construction?

Debrief

What skills, strategies and techniques were used/developed as a result of the above activity? ◄

Teacher Reflection

I have undertaken this activity with primary age students, preservice teachers and primary school teachers over a number of years. At the end of the experience, when we unpack what skills are required to succeed, it quickly becomes apparent that the 4Cs—creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking all play a significiant part! (Robyn Gibson)

3 Additional 4Cs

Our research and experience in classrooms, in developing the 4Cs, however, led us to reflect whether this skill set was all that is required, in order to flourish in a future of innovation, uncertainty and change?

Teacher Reflection
What other skills/dispositions/capabilities should be added?

We have proposed Ewing (2017) and Gibson and Ewing (2019) that a further 4Cs need to be included with this list to empower educators and learners to move forward: curiosity, compassion, connection and courage. Each is vital to our social, emotional and intellectual well-being and ability to become critically and creatively literate. These skills are also at the heart of the transformative power of arts education and are briefly introduced below:

Curiosity

Young children epitomise curiosity, exploring their worlds from the moment they are born. Once they learn to talk they are forever asking 'why'. Curiosity has been called the 'wick of the candle of learning' (Kang et al. 2009, p. 983), given that it simultaneously engages multiple areas of the brain. Asking why because we want to find out more, or are tentative or uncertain about something appears to strengthen our desire to learn (Siegel 2007). The use of conditional language in these contexts reflects our desire to encourage openness and avoidance of snap or black and white judgements. See, for example, Mary Ann Hunter's work on Curious Schools (2015).

Compassion

Compassion takes empathy (understanding another's feelings or perspectives) a crucial step further. As Goleman (2006) and Miller and Saxton (2016) suggest, it is not enough to have empathy for another's feelings or situation: for empathy to count, we must take action in some way to try to make a difference. The coupling of empathy with our own action, however small, signifies compassion.

Connection

As discussed further in the following chapter, seeing the connections between our ideas, knowledges and understandings and being able to authentically link or integrate them across disciplines/curriculum areas is the way we learn to make sense of the world. Our knowledge does not operate in separate silos!

Courage

For too long, educators have often been obliged to follow bureaucratic policy directives that are sometimes at odds with their beliefs about learning and teaching. Courage to take risks, make mistakes and ultimately challenge the status quo is also essential for teachers and should be modelled for learners. Without courage, we cannot speak up and stand up for what we know is right to effect change.

Having proposed these additional 'Cs', we have reported on some preliminary work in 2018–2019 with primary students at Beauty Point Primary School in suburban Sydney. Our first task was to explore whether children had understandings of these concepts and how they might respond to working with them explicitly.

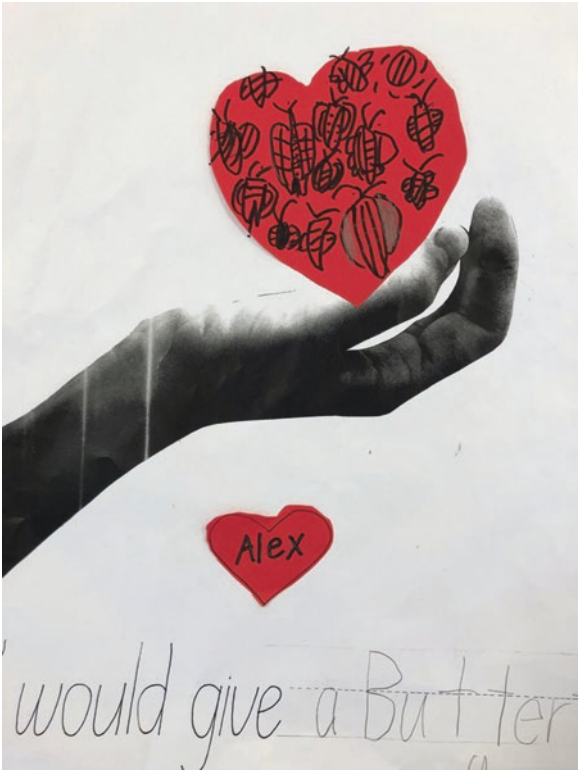
Example

Exploring the concepts through art: How can art be used to aid students' understanding of and response to these 'Cs?

1. *Curiosity – Year 2: What's behind the door?*
   In pairs or small groups, students talk about the things that they are curious about. They sculpt each other to embody this concept. Children draw, paint and/or collage something that makes them curious: for example, the future; a new sibling; life on Mars. On a piece of brown paper (the same size as the drawing), they draw a large door. The left side of the door is glued to the original drawing, while three sides are cut to create a flap thus revealing the 'curiosity' drawing behind (Image 3.1).
2. *Compassion – Year 1: I'm broken-hearted*
   Students and teachers discuss how they might help someone who is very upset or broken-hearted. They enact giving each other such a gift. Each student is then given a large piece of paper with an image of an outstretched hand. They cut out red and pink hearts of various sizes. Words and images are drawn or cut

Image 3.1 Curiosity

Image 3.2 Compassion



from magazines and pasted onto these hearts which are then arranged so that the hand is offering these to 'the broken-hearted'! (Image 3.2)

3. *Connection – Year 6: Finding the links*
   In groups of 4 or 5, students are given three disparate artworks—an image of an individual; an image of an object; and an image of a place—plus one word, that is 'journey', 'family', 'gift', etc. The group must find connections between all four items and then construct a narrative which is scribed. The narratives are then performed as a series of freeze-frames as the narrative is read aloud (Image 3.3).
4. *Courage – Year 5: What colour is courage?*
   Children discuss the symbolism of colour which is often culturally specific. In colour groups—red, orange, purple, white—they construct simple cardboard masks using a variety of recycled materials such as tissue paper, fabric, Cellophane, pipe cleaners, buttons and so on. Individually, in pairs and in small groups, the children present a courageous scenario or pose which is photographed for future use (Image 3.4). ◄

Image 3.3 Connection

Image 3.4 Courage

Teacher Reflection
Although this work was exploratory in nature, it offered us an opportunity to re-examine these additional 4Cs from a child's perspective. This proved to be a learning experience for all of us and lead to our belief that there was a fifth C—contemplation! (Robyn Gibson)

The final unit below designed by Robyn Gibson draws together various art forms (literature, storytelling, visual arts, music, dance) to explore the 8Cs, as well as the concept of identity.

Example

Creative Arts unit based on the topic of 'Shapes' and Anthony Browne's *The Shape Game.*

Aim

- to interpret 'shapes' in a variety of creative ways, including both individually and collectively and
- to demonstrate how identity can be explored through the Creative Arts.

Exploring/Experimenting

Read Anthony Browne's *The Shape Game.*

Look at the last page—how can shapes mean different things to different people?

1. Play the 'Shape Game'. An individual draws a shape—any shape. 'It is not supposed to be anything, just a shape.' The shape is passed to the person to the right who adds to it to change it into 'something'. This reworked shape is then passed to the next person who gives it a title, that is, one word, phrase or question. Artworks are returned to their original drawer. Some of these are shared with the class.

2. In table groups create a narrative that includes all the group's shapes. The story may be told by a single narrator or several but must include all the artworks.
   These stories are shared along with the corresponding drawings.
   Extension Idea: One shape is removed and given to another group. The narratives must be retold to include this new 'character.'

3. Look at John Coburn's *Fire Dance* (1979) or any related artwork that focuses on shape (Image 3.5).
   Discuss:
   What design element is the artist focusing on?
   Identify specific shapes—what does this shape remind you of?
   If this shape had a sound, what would it be?

4. Individuals select a musical instrument/sound appropriate for a specific shape. One person becomes 'the conductor' and develops a piece of music by pointing to various shapes within the artwork and asking others to play their instrument. If a shape is tapped twice that sound continues until the conductor double-taps again.

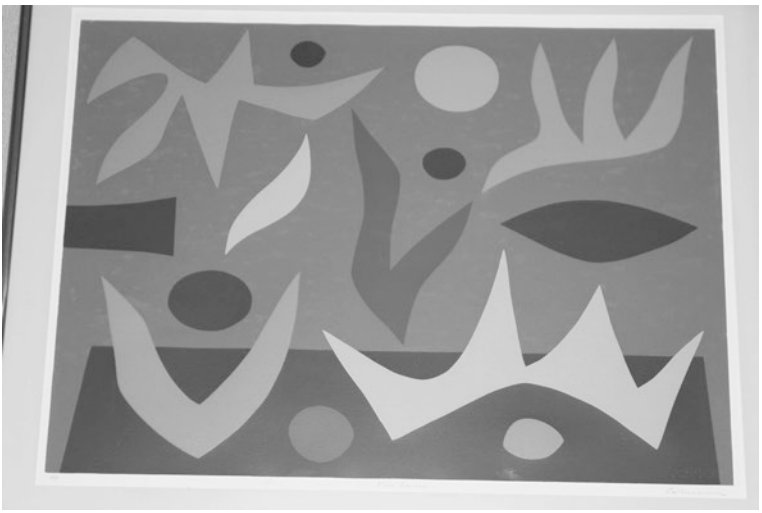


Image 3.5 *Fire dance* by John Coburn

NB: these pieces can be recorded and used in later dance/movement lessons.

Developing/Making

5. Ask individuals to visualise a shape that matches their personality/character NOT their physical body shape!
   Probe with questions: is this shape small? round? jagged? and so on.
   If this shape was a particular colour, what would that be?
6. Break into groups of five or six.
   Individuals sketch 'their shape' and cut out a template from cardboard. They then choose a colour to represent themselves.
   Cut this shape out (× 5 or 6)
   Individuals keep one shape and distribute the others to the members of their group.
   Students are asked to manipulate the six shapes to create a visually interesting composition.
   They should consider touching, overlapping, placement and so on, before finalising the collage! (Image 3.6)

Responding/Reflecting

7. Individuals are asked to attach a word/phrase, sound and/or movement to their own shape.
   The group selects one collage to 'creatively interpret' using the above.
   The six collages are displayed. The group performs their 'shape piece', and the rest of the class attempts to identify the specific collage that is being interpreted.
   Once guessed, the shape piece is repeated to confirm the accuracy of the guess.

Image 3.6 Example of shape collages

NB: These performances should be recorded (consider smartphones) so that the group can critique their own performance. This final task links to literacy. ◄

Teacher Reflection
Working in the field of the Creative Arts encourages students to experiment, explore and create. This exemplar has been used as an exemplar to demonstrate that the Arts can be integrated with integrity. I am always amazed (as are the students) by the diversity of collages that are produced using the same selection of shapes and the excitement and joy that result from their creative interpretations of the chosen collage. (Robyn Gibson)

4 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the idea of twenty-first-century skills and particularly explored the need for a rich education that intentionally embeds the Arts in learning. It demonstrates the fluid and ever-changing nature of this discussion and asks you to consider what your approach might be.

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Integrating the Creative Arts with Integrity

4

Learning Objectives

- to consider definitions of authentic curriculum integration;
- to explore the benefits of using the arts to develop rich integrated units across the curriculum; and
- to develop confidence and expertise in planning and teaching, using integrated approaches.

To integrate or not to integrate
That is the question:
Whether it is wiser to segment knowledge and thus learning;
To create barriers between disciplines,
Or, by opposing, blend them.
For one must question segregation,
Of Science from Music;
Art from English;
Health from History;
When it seems all knowledge is intertwined
In a web, which when broken,
Collapses and falls, powerless and insignificant.
The need to integrate is vital
As, says Pring (1976)
'Tis the way knowledge, life, experience is'.

(Excerpt from a final year pre-service teacher's rationale for curriculum integration, 2004)

▶ **Activity**

Reflect on how you come to know about things? Does it arrive neatly packaged in separate areas or disciplines? Do you use your knowledge to think

R. Gibson, R. Ewing, *Transforming the Curriculum Through the Arts*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-52797-6_4

about dilemmas or issues or the world more broadly in a holistic way or do you partition different areas off into silos?

1 Introduction

Traditionally in western education systems the 'competitive academic curriculum' (Connell 1997; Connell et al. 1982) has divided knowledge into a hierarchy of subjects alongside a teacher-centred pedagogy and formal—often high-stakes—competitive assessment. This kind of approach creates difficulties for many children and young people who do not see how such siloed-learning is meaningful or has relevance to their lives.

If the school curriculum is about the stories we want our young people to learn about, in order to meet the challenges of the future (Yates and Grumet 2011), it needs to be selected, structured and organised in a way that is meaningful for *all* students. Teachers and principals need to know their students well to ensure they can adapt and contextualise the intended curriculum as developed in syllabus and policy documents. This chapter thus explores interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary possibilities. As Pring (1976), who is quoted in the poem that begins this chapter, explains, all knowledge is related to every other piece of knowledge. While some relationships may be more direct and stronger than others, we all integrate our knowledge in ways that work for us as individuals.

The kinds of issues and problems that we most often face in reality are multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary (sometimes called transdisciplinary) and are seldom adequately addressed by any single discipline. Elliot Eisner has long urged us (e.g. in 2003) to think outside the square about how content is selected and organised in schools and other learning institutions. We believe that knowledge in the real world operates wholistically and that we integrate our understandings to make sense of our lives and to solve problems.

Despite this, reality concepts that work towards a more wholistic curriculum have often been resisted in school contexts. Opponents argue that meaningful integration of subject disciplines is not possible because each is a discrete form of understanding or field with its own distinctive logical structure. They assert that these discrete fields of knowledge need to be carefully protected. Some also wish to control the teacher's decision-making. But as Clark, Dobson, Good and Neelands (1997) assert: 'A curriculum where knowledge is neatly packaged into subject areas, with clear boundaries, limits the power of the teacher to decide what is taught and how' (p. 14). Rigid boundaries between subject areas can strain the relationships between school knowledge and everyday living, excluding students' own life experiences. Blurring the curriculum boundaries between subject areas can thus empower teachers to tailor what children will learn to ensure their needs and interests are highlighted, leading to a valuing of students' personal knowledge. Honouring student voice and agency needs to be highly valued if learning is to be engaging and relevant for everyone.

In life, we always integrate knowledge when we attempt to solve problems that require us to bring a variety of perspectives together—there is a unity in the natural world that suggests that knowledge is interconnected or wholistic. As teachers we must encourage knowledge transfer from the classroom to the outside world and vice versa (Miller 1988) more readily. Miller also proposes that intuition and insight are important components that learners need to cultivate in order to see interconnectedness between different areas so they can transfer their understandings.

This chapter initially provides a well-defined rationale for integration with integrity as well as a brief historical overview of this area. A discussion of the numerous ways in which integration can be effected authentically follows using *The four Cs* (NEA 2013) and a further 4Cs we propose are core to learning in the twenty-first century. Finally, specific examples of integration with integrity conclude the chapter.

2 Defining Integration

Integration is another term often used in education that means, in the words of the song 'different things to different people'. Primarily, it is about connection: connection across disciplines, connection with real life and connecting skills with knowledge. The concept itself has been discussed since at least the turn of the nineteenth century so it is not new!

We are using the following definition:

> *… relevant, context-based learning which emphasises the inter-connectedness of knowledge.* (Clark et al. 1997, p. 16)

It's important to emphasise that we are not advocating that all curriculum areas have to be integrated at any one time—depending on your focus or purpose, two or perhaps three may be more than enough. Additionally, integration must only happen because it makes sense to connect several areas of knowledge—not for integration's sake! Hence, decisions about integration of aspects of the curriculum must be made *with integrity* and rigour. The sections on models and examples that follow clarify this further.

In writing this book we are suggesting that 'integration' can be seen as an umbrella term used to describe the need to connect different areas of knowledge and thinking. We suggest that there are three different approaches to integrating the curriculum:

- *Multidisciplinary*—different disciplines are viewed as 'lenses' to explore a problem, theme, dilemma or issue. They are taught separately and retain their subject boundaries but contribute to the overall theme or topic. Connections are made explicitly across subject areas, but the identities of the various subjects remain separate.

- *Interdisciplinary (or Transdisciplinary)*—while the disciplines retain some separation (e.g. concepts and skills in different fields of knowledge), the question, theme, problem or issue is specifically organised to reduce the boundaries.
- *Integrated*—there is no separation of the different disciplines—the learning experiences all focus on the central theme, question and issue.

We are not arguing that one approach is better than another—rather the blending of subject areas or the blurring of boundaries between different knowledge areas occurs as you move from multidisciplinary to integrated approaches.

Holistic Curriculum

- curiosity and development of better communication and social skills;
- holistic approach encourages children to make connection in a subject, using their creative skills;
- develop psychological, social and emotional growth;
- make learning natural and engaging;
- motivates children to learn and know more; and
- make learning a fun and meaningful experience.

3 Historical Overview

As mentioned earlier, integrating the curriculum is not new to education. Vars (1991) suggests that integrated models of curriculum can be traced back to Spencer's writing in the 1800s. John Dewey certainly advocated the importance of making meaningful links across different disciplines and with the everyday world in his discussion of experiential education. Early childhood education has focused on the interrelationship of all curriculum areas. Inspired by approaches such as Reggio Emelia, the child has always been the starting point. Teachers first observe and listen to children's ideas, asking questions and planning inquiries and projects based on their observations.

More recent integration practices developed progressively between the 1930s and the 1960s, as alternative educators drew on the work of Piaget (1962), Vygotsky (1971) and Bruner (1986). Integrative activities were a defining feature of the progressive education movement, which also privileges a more child-centred approach to curriculum planning and implementation (Ewing 2014).

Certainly, early career primary teachers in the late 1970s in Australia were encouraged to integrate different subject areas around a theme or a topic. It was, however, often the case that at this time, neither the theoretical basis nor the rationale for integration was always made clear, and, often, it seemed that the rationale for linking some subjects thematically with others was rather tenuous and often tokenistic. The related arts movement, however, did gain some momentum at the end of this decade.

The 'back-to-basics' movement that accompanied neoliberalism had a profound effect on approaches to curriculum in the 1980s–1990s. Integration practices lost favour in many western countries with Beane (1996) suggesting that integration lay virtually dormant for nearly two decades. It was suggested that there was a lack of research evidence to 'prove' that integrated curriculum was more effective. High-stakes national testing with a focus on mostly technical aspects of literacy and numeracy were progressively introduced. The pressure to teach to the test led to the devaluing of creativity and innovation and the Arts disciplines in many classrooms (Ewing 2012). A focus on outcomes in discrete subject areas, particularly English, Mathematics and Science, became all important. Yet many primary teachers would agree that the ever-increasing content demands on the primary and middle years curriculum has led to an overcrowded curriculum and authentic integration is the only logical way forward.

► **Activity**

As an early childhood/primary/middle years teacher, have you always attempted to connect your curriculum work?

In what ways?

In 1983, Howard Gardner first began to publish his theory of multiple intelligences and different ways of learning. By 1996 he had extended these understandings, adding an eighth intelligence. He includes the following intelligences:

linguistic;
logical-mathematical;
spatial;
bodily kinaesthetic;
musical;
interpersonal;
intrapersonal; and
naturalistic.

Transmissive approaches to organising learning in schools were thus challenged once again. Towards the mid-1990s, middle years' educators saw the inherent value of integrated approaches as students transitioned from primary to secondary contexts. Engagement in relevant, challenging and imaginative issues began to be regarded as the way forward for middle years students who had traditionally demonstrated disengagement and loss of focus (Beane 1996).

The re-emergence of a focus on authentic pedagogy (Newmann and Associates 1996) led to a number of quality teaching and learning models in Australia (Education Queensland 2001; NSW Department of Education and Training 2003; Mitchell and Mitchell 2009). Such frameworks contributed to a renewed valuing of integrated models of collaborative learning opportunities, alongside elements such as 'connectedness' through relevant, context-related learning activities, discussion of 'problematic knowledge', the use of 'narrative', 'substantive communication' or meaningful teacher-student exchange and genuine reciprocity and 'higher-order thinking'.

4 The Four Cs, Another 4Cs and Curriculum Integration

There are a number of reasons why curriculum integration is enjoying a renaissance. The need for a meaningful context for learning has been an important rationale for more recent calls for a more integrated curriculum. Research reported by the Grattan Institute (2016) claimed that 40% of middle years school students were disengaged. The core skills cited as necessary for the twenty-first century underpin a growing understanding that knowledge application is far more important than simple accumulation of facts with the twenty-first century, often referred to as the 'Knowledge Age'. Studying subjects or disciplines in isolation does not provide the means to address issues of real significance if undertaken. The growing body of neuroscientific research mentioned in Chap. 3 underlines the importance of patterns, connections and coherence in brain processes, suggesting that an integrated approach will be more accessible for learners. The Australian Curriculum mandates seven general cross-curricular capabilities that encapsulate knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions important for students to live and work with the increasing demands of twenty-first-century living:

- literacy;
- numeracy;
- information and communication technology (ICT) capability;
- critical and creative thinking;
- personal and social capability;
- ethical understanding; and
- intercultural understanding.
- (Accessed at: https://australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/curriculum-connections/portfolios/food-and-wellbeing/general-capabilities/)

At this point it is pertinent to reconsider the *Four Cs* (as distilled from an earlier list of 18 skills) and strongly advocated by the National Education Association in 2013 as four key inter-related skills needed by all twenty-first-century learners alongside mastery of discipline knowledges: critical thinking and problem-solving; communication; collaboration and creativity and innovation. These were discussed in Chap. 3.

Alongside these well-established 'Four Cs', it is proposed by Ewing (2017) and Gibson and Ewing (2019) that a further 4Cs are vital to our social, emotional and intellectual well-being and ability to become critically and creatively literate:

Curiosity

Curiosity has been called the 'wick of the candle of learning' (Kang et al. 2009, p. 983), given that it engages multiple areas of the brain. Asking why because you are tentative or uncertain appears to strengthen our desire to learn (Siegel 2007). Our use of conditional language in these contexts reflects our desire to encourage openness and avoidance of snap or black and white judgements.

Compassion

Compassion takes empathy one step further: it is not enough to have empathy for another's feelings or situations. For empathy to count we must take action in some way to try to make a difference. As Goleman (2006) and Miller and Saxton (2016) suggest: empathy + action = compassion.

Connection

Seeing the connections of our ideas, knowledges and understandings and being able to authentically link or integrate them across disciplines/curriculum areas is the way, we learn to make sense of the world. Our knowledge does not operate in separate silos!

Courage

Courage to take risks, make mistakes and challenge the status quo is also essential. Without courage we cannot speak up and stand up for what we know is right to effect change.

It is of concern that too often these kinds of skills or attributes, dispositions or traits are described as 'soft' skills, implying they have less significance than those described as 'hard' skills (although the hard skills are often nameless). Such a dichotomy is very misleading, given all are core to our social and emotional well-being and to the development of deep understanding.

In concluding this section, we assert that all students' outcomes will be significantly improved if quality, inclusive learning and teaching practices are in place where teachers develop relationships based on trust, flexibility and concern for students as individuals. Learning experiences should be explicit in both task and assessment criteria and connected to issues, people and events outside the school. These should be accompanied with high intellectual challenge and the expectation for all students to learn through rich, authentic tasks.

5 Towards Integrating the Curriculum: Different Models

There are numerous models of and approaches to developing integrated curriculum that have been proposed by different authors. However, the first and probably most important and interrelated questions that need to be answered are as follows:

- Why are we integrating?
- What are we integrating?

Your answer to the 'why' question will be related to your specific context (the way your class is organised; the experience of staff in particular areas; the timetable; your students' needs; curriculum priorities in your school; expectations from your education sector). The answers to these questions will assist you to determine which model or approach might be best or more appropriate at a particular time in a given school context.

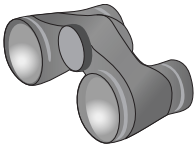
It is possible in answering the 'what' question to focus the integrating decisions on different aspects of the curriculum:

- outcomes, for example, rich tasks or connected outcomes;
- central concepts/ideas in particular fields of knowledge and how these contribute to examining themes or topics or questions (e.g. ‘climate change’; ‘the sea’; ‘is there life in outer space?’);
- skills, for example, literacy or numeracy across the curriculum, ICT skills for using laptops and collaborative group work skills;
- activities/experiences, for example, producing a newspaper in small groups, and planning and undertaking an excursion; and
- values, for example, co-operation, empathy and respect.

These decisions will help in the selection of one of the following models or approaches identified and provide direction and focus around the decisions regarding the integration process, as well as the criteria to be used for authentic assessment of student learning.

Nine different models have been suggested for designing curriculum units that depart from the fragmented traditional way of thinking about curriculum (Morris 2003). Some models are more integrated than others. Although they are interrelated and represent different levels of complexity, Fogarty’s (1991) metaphors use different types of glasses or lenses to illustrate *how* they are different.

1. **Connected integration** within subjects allow for skills to be integrated, for example, the life evolutionary processes can be examined in different scientific disciplines.

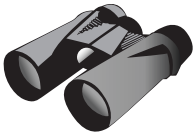


2. **Nested** models focus on naturally occurring combinations within subject areas. If studying the solar system you might also look at the way planets orbit around the sun as well as gravity.

3. Different subjects can be taught separately but **sequenced** around related concepts in a multidisciplinary approach. A close reading of Anthony Hill’s novel

The Burnt Stick (1994) about an Aboriginal child stolen from his mother might be followed by a history lesson on the Stolen Generations.

4. A **shared** model coordinates planning of overlapping concepts—the work around *The Burnt Stick* may be studied alongside a factual newspaper article about the Stolen Generations, the policy of the time and the 2008 Apology.

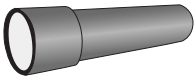


5. The **webbed** model connects a range of subject areas with a theme. If the overall theme of the sea was chosen: in English the students could read *Blueback* (Tim Winton 1983) while in Science students could visit a rock platform to observe the creatures living in rock pools and then research sea creatures that might be represented through collage or puppet-making in Visual Arts. They might also track a famous sea voyage in history, calculate the distances it involved in Mathematics and examine the decline of the Great Barrier Reef in Geography.

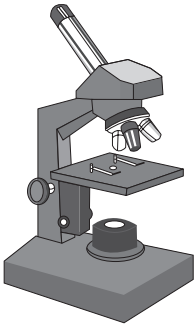
6. Thinking, social and study skills can be **threaded** to connect learning across the curriculum. If learning to sequence, students can be introduced to this in a range of subject areas. They could draw a story-map in English, learn about sequencing

in Mathematics, record the sequence of the water cycle and order the causes of the Second World War.

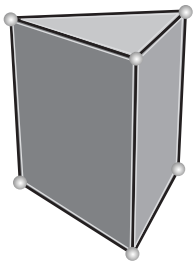
7. An **integrated** model blends major disciplines reducing or even eliminating the boundaries between subject areas and separate times for teaching and uses overlapping concepts or skills.
   See Stephanie Alexander's kitchen garden programme.
   Accessed at https://www.stephaniealexander.com.au



8. The **immersed** model focuses on the learner's own preference for a particular person, animal, thing or issue. Their passion for dinosaurs will lead them on a journey in which all discipline areas are invoked.



9. A **networked** model allows for exploration, experimentation and participation to see the multiple dimensions of a particular topic.



Activity

Can you reclassify the above-mentioned models as multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary or both?

6 Dimensions for an Integrated Curriculum

Thus, there are numerous definitions of integration and sometimes confusion over the use of terms such as 'interdisciplinary', 'multidisciplinary' and 'transdisciplinary'. You will need to make your own decisions about how you wish to use integrative processes. Lauritzen and Jaeger (1997) argue for a transdisciplinary approach because they believe that meaningful contexts for learning coupled with the way children learn are of uppermost importance. In their view, the appropriate disciplines need to serve the needs of learners in a particular learning context. As we argued earlier, they warn against using a shoehorn or a crowbar to force all disciplines to be represented in any particular study.

Beane (1996) suggests there are four dimensions to an integrated curriculum:

(i) the topic, problem or issue is of personal and social significance in the real world;
(ii) learning experiences related to the central issue/topic/theme integrate pertinent knowledge without regard for subject boundaries;
(iii) knowledge is developed and used to address the central topic rather than to prepare for a test or other externally mandated traditional assessment regime; and
(iv) emphasis is placed on a substantial project or activity that requires the real application of knowledge.

He urges us to base our curriculum on what the students are interested in and what they need—an intersection of their concerns with world issues. However, if designing an integrated unit, there are some useful questions to consider when including activities:

- Does the activity allow students to develop meaningfully, address critical/substantive issues in their lives or local community, or apply authentically important content?
- Does it involve authentic application of skills from other disciplines?
- (adapted from Brophy in Brophy and Alleman 1991).

There are a number of elements in planning that are helpful when thinking about the concept of a continuous cycle:

- engaging students;
- refining their knowledge;
- extending understanding and perceptions;
- reflecting on what students have learnt; and
- each learning activity builds on prior learning experiences.
- (Adapted from Sweeney and Ingram 2001; Murdoch 2019)

In designing this book, we have chosen to 'lead with' a particular Arts discipline area and incorporate other disciplines as they are relevant and appropriate given that Arts disciplines are often the afterthought or the servant to other curriculum areas traditionally thought more important. While our focus in this text is centred around the Arts as critical, quality pedagogies, the principles are the same for all curriculum areas. The examples we have provided have often been developed by classroom teachers who have designed learning experiences and activities to meet the needs of their learners in particular school contexts. It will be interesting for you to identify what model is at play in each and how you might adapt it to meet the needs of the learners in your contexts.

7 Obstacles

At the same time there are many other practices that obstruct curriculum integration. Most notably as mentioned earlier is the reductive approach to learning and assessment as evidenced by current national testing regimes and the lack of substantial amounts of time to attend to deep learning, given the often-overcrowded curriculum.

Similarly authentic integration can be trivialised when unconnected thematic studies masquerade as integrated curricula. In these scenarios topics are selected at random and activities may only be unsequenced and/or loosely linked to the actual topic, theme or purpose.

A more subtle threat is the tendency to try to incorporate everything that happens in the school programme into one unit. When this happens links are often forced, tenuous and busy—work results.

8 Some Possible Interrelated Guiding Questions When Planning an Integrated Unit

- What are we going to integrate? Why?
- What do we wish to explore? Why?
- What do we need to find out as learners?
- What kinds of synthesising/culminating activities will draw our learning together/demonstrate we have achieved our purposes?
- What do we already know about this issue/area?
- Are there authentic connections between these fields of knowledge?
- How will we begin?

You should be clear that these questions are not the only ones you will need to answer, nor do they need to be answered in a particular order.

Example

The following unit is based around the stunning book *Ollie's Odyssey* (William James) and was written by Robyn Ewing and Suzanna Robertson initially for a Year 5 class at Beauty Point Primary School. The unit below is appropriate for Years 4–6 but can easily be adapted for other year groups, depending on the context and class needs.

A Journey in Being and Becoming Based on Ollie's Odyssey (William Joyce)

Year level: Appropriate for Years 4–6

Focus Areas: **English** (Talking and listening, descriptive language, imaginative writing, visual literacy)

Arts: Drama, Visual Arts, Design

Resources: Ideally, 6–8 copies of the book should be purchased so children can use the book for close study in small groups. Study of the images will be important if the students are to develop and understand the metalanguage of visual literacy (Callow 1999, 2013).

Themes: identity, friendship, self-expression, courage
emotional intelligence, empathy, journey, and belonging

Introduction

This is a new transdisciplinary unit developed and implemented with Susanna Robertson for Stage 3 students. The suggested sequence of lessons is flexible and could easily be altered depending on the children's needs and interests as well as the teacher's particular focus. The following strategies described are based on the belief that deep understanding of the themes in this book can be enhanced through initial enactment and embodiment followed by talking and listening activities, visual representation of ideas, and finally, through writing. Any of the suggested activities may be recorded and used as assessment strategies. These seven workshops outline deep study of the first eight chapters, but there is much more that could be explored if the learners were still keen to continue.

Aims
This workshop series aims to:

- explore literature as an art form as well as a multimodal text;
- enhance the development of imaginative writing;
- foster collaboration and the development of strong peer relationships in small groups;
- engender empathy and compassion for others;
- encourage close study of descriptive language;
- explore the empowering nature of trust, courage and friendship;
- understand the destructive potential of anger and fear;
- provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their creativity by responding imaginatively to the story through drama, dance, creative writing, visual arts;
- interpret key themes in the story and draw implications for our own contexts; and
- Integrate several discipline areas authentically.

Related books and media:

- Milne, A.A. *The house at Pooh corner.*
- Williams, M. *The Velveteen Rabbit or How toys become real.*
- Wild, M. & Vivas, J. *Wilfred Gordon Macdonald Partridge*
- *The Toy Story movies*

Workshop 1

1. **Strategy Title:** Warming Up—Clumping; Word Bank and Embodiment
   Grouping: Whole class/individual
   Purpose: To start to explore key themes: in different-sized spontaneous groups, students will embody some of the potential key themes: courage; fear; friendship; haves and have-nots; trust; anger; and belonging.
2. **Strategy Title:** Word Bank
   Grouping: 4–5 students
   Purpose: To introduce key themes in the unit and to develop vocabulary.
   The following words are written on six separate, large pieces of butcher's paper:
   Friendship, Fear, Bullying, Courage, Journey, Real, Anger and Trust.
   In small groups students rotate to each piece of paper and write words, phrases and/or pictures that relate to the theme words. Each group then returns to their first word or 'home' word and examines the extra ideas. Discuss what ideas resonate and what surprises.
   Follow-Up
   Children draw/paint/sculpt their interpretations of these one or more of these concepts.
3. **Strategy Title:** Talking and Listening
   Grouping: Whole class
   Purpose: To introduce the book

Students are asked to think about a favourite toy/imaginary friend they loved as a younger child. What did it look like? Sound like? Smell like? Feel like? Do you remember any stories about this toy/imaginary friend? Share some of these as a whole-class group or in smaller groups stories. Write about this memory.

A large percentage of children have an imaginary friend at some stage in their childhood? (Introduce Natasha Mitchell's work on imaginary friends on ABC podcast). Students may do some reading about imaginary friends.

Later, examine the front cover of the book and discuss the observations they make about the cover. The teacher may use questions like:

- What do you think the book will be about?
- What might 'odyssey' mean?

At this point, it may be pertinent to examine some famous odysseys. Where does the word come from?

Read the rest of chapter 1 without showing the pictures.

4. **Strategy Title:** Sculpture
   Grouping: Pairs
   Purpose: To embody Ollie using the description of him pp. 3–7.
   Students sculpt each other as Ollie trying to capture and embody aspects of the description (e.g. 'hopeful', 'steadfast' and 'charming'.
5. **Strategy Title:** Freeze Frames
   Grouping: triads—doctor, Billy's mum and dad
   Purpose: To capture the before and after body language as they hear the doctor's news about Billy's heart.

Further Activities

Divide an A3 sheet of paper in two. On one side students draw their image of Ollie using the description as mentioned earlier. On the other they draw a favourite toy of their own. Both drawings can be annotated to describe their features.

Choose a famous 'odyssey' to write about.

Design a toy and over the duration of the unit construct this toy from junk or recycled materials.

Alternatively, a soft toy can be designed and made.

Billy's mother made Ollie to keep her mind busy, while she was afraid of what might happen for Billy. Discuss/write/draw the things you do when you're afraid. Read *Silly Billy* (Anthony Browne).

Workshop 2

Brief Recap and Sharing of Drawings

Read chapter 2 *A New Moon*

Discuss any significant moments shared as we read as identified by the students, for example, the significance of:

- a new moon/a full moon in some myths and legends;
- a first thought;

- awakening after a long time and seeing everything as if for the first time;
- feeling like you belong; and
- learning names for things.

6. **Strategy Title:** Adjective Call Out
   Grouping: Whole class circle facing outward
   Purpose: To consider the significance of 'home' and 'belonging'.
   Students will think of a word that encapsulates what 'home' means to them or how they feel about their home (or a special place). In turns around the circle, they share their word and try to convey its meaning through voice and movement. Students can also choose a word to share how they would feel if they had to leave/were taken from home and knew they would never return. They can contrast the two feelings and words and if time permits transform from one to the other and back again. A discussion about belonging (and not belonging) may also be valuable here.
7. **Strategy Title:** Reading and Discussion and Choosing Critical Moments
   Grouping: Small groups 3-4
   Purpose: To consider the major themes that are emerging in the story.
   In small groups students enjoy a shared reading of picture books chosen by the teacher with similar or resonant themes. Examples include *Two blankets*; *The velveteen rabbit*; *Home in the rain*; *Goodnight moon*; *Lost and found*; and *Amy and Louis.* Students discuss similar use of language, themes, symbol, visual imagery and so on, and the resonance with *Ollie's Odyssey*. They then choose three critical moments from their text to portray the story to the other class members and discuss why the story resonates.
8. **Strategy Title:** Presenting Critical Moments and Responding
   Grouping: Whole class sharing of the picture books and each group presents the critical moments chosen. Students discuss their rationales for these choices and how they think this book links with the themes in *Ollie*.
   Follow-Up
   Research and discuss the kinds of things that are said to happen when there's a full moon.
   Students choose one of the critical moments they embodied and draw and/or write about it.
   Workshop 3
   Read chapter 3: *The Keeper of Safeness*
9. **Strategy Title:** Mime
   Grouping: Small groups of 2–3
   Purpose: To consider the meanings and etymology of words.
   Students will choose one of the featured words in the previous two chapters. They will research its meaning and origin and develop a brief mime that will convey its meaning for others to identify. Suggested words: belonging; desperation; agony; terrified; clench; instinct; bliss; slobber; relentless and so on.

10. **Strategy Title:** Improvised Conversations: 'Eavesdropping'
Grouping: Pairs, one student will be Billy and the other Ollie.
Purpose: To have the conversation about favourite things.
In pairs, students create a conversation about favourite things (see p. 20). Round the circle, we will eavesdrop on these conversations.
Students script their conversations about favourite things. (Can link to poetry or the song *My favourite things*)

11. **Strategy Title:** Story Circle
Grouping: Whole class, small groups, whole class.
Purpose: To focus on prediction.
Teacher and students have a discussion about who might be listening to the discussion in Billy's room that night. In small groups, they predict who this could be and why it might have favourite things. In a storytelling circle, students each take turns to add a sentence to develop the final paragraph of the chapter:
But there was something else that was listening that night. Something that wasn't a toy, exactly…
Students write a paragraph predicting who might be listening and why whoever it is might hate favourite toys.
Follow-Up

(a) Students create and complete a table with three columns:
Words I like better than others Words I don't care about Words I don't like
(b) Start a class list of interesting observations about language that continues through the unit:
for example, 'grown ups' but not 'grown downs'.
Workshop 4
Students Share Some of the Writing and Words Chosen for Close Study

12. **Strategy Title:** Mirrors
Grouping: Pairs
Purpose: To warm up and consider the role of clowns in different cultures.
In pairs, students take it in turns to be the clown putting on clown make-up. Their partner becomes the mirror.
Discussion of the role of clowns, our memories of seeing clowns at work and the places we are likely to see them. Brainstorm the words we associate with clowns and clowning. Some children may express fear of clowns, and this may lead to a desire to research their origins thoroughly.
Read chapter 4 *King Zozo*

13. **Strategy Title:** Postcards
Grouping: Whole class working one by one.
Purpose: To build a class postcard of the carnival scene and *Bonk-a-ZoZo* in its heyday at the carnival.

Starting with one student representing ZoZo in the middle students, add themselves one by one to the postcard to build up the scene. As they add themselves to the picture postcard, they identify their role.

14. **Strategy Title:** Frozen Images
Grouping: Threes or fours.
Purpose: To identify and represent the three critical moments in ZoZo's heyday and decline**.**

In their groups students discuss the critical moments in this chapter and create three critical moments that tell the story.

Follow-Up Suggestions
Storyboard the events of chapter 4.
Research clowns and clowning.
Writing in role as Zozo beginning with: *The golden thread was broken.*
Workshop 5
Share Some of the Critical Moments; Storyboards, and so on
READ chapter 5: ***An awfully huge a-venture***

15. **Strategy Title:** Brainstorming
Grouping: Groups of 3-4, then whole class
Purpose: To reflect on why we have rules and consequences.

Ask the students to think about different kinds of rules: rules at home, rules at school and so on.

In small groups, students brainstorm as many rules they can think of, then share with the whole class. Teacher and students list rules in their different categories (e.g. home rules, school rules, special rules for games, government rules). Teacher draws students' attention to the language that is typically used in framing a rule. Why do we have rules?

Students can move from the more conventional rules they are familiar with to those that are invented in games—with perhaps wilder consequences. For example, when walking along the footpath or a tiled walkway, a familiar chant is:

Don't step on the cracks or you'll break your mother's back.

Follow-Up
Consider some of the rules in Shaun Tan's *Rules of Summer.*

16. **Strategy Title:** Freeze Frames
Grouping: Groups of 3–4.
Purpose: To embody rules and the consequences of disobeying rules.

In their groups, students choose one of the unconventional rules shared earlier and discuss the consequences of not abiding by it. They prepare two freeze frames depicting the rule and then its consequence and must think of how they will transition from one freeze frame to the other.

Students present their freeze frames and the rest of the class attempts to guess the rule and the consequence.

Discussion: Who could be watching and why? Students make some further predictions.

Follow-Up

Students divide an A3 sheet of paper in two. On one side they draw their rule and on the other its consequence. They can then add a paragraph about each.

Workshops 6–7

Read and Discuss Chapter 6 *The creeps,* Chapter 7 *An old friend* and Chapter 8 *Cool, we're going to a wedding! What's a wedding?*

17. **Strategy Title:** Readers' Theatre

Grouping: Groups of 3.

Purpose: Oral reading fluency and comprehension.

Chapters 6 and 8 lend themselves to readers' theatre (see script suggestions below):

1. pp. 54–5: beginning with: *The creeps had been watching Ollie even before he had been a favourite…*and ending with: *Creep 5 was the leader and was called 'the Super Creep' or just 'the Super'* .
2. pp. 55–58: *The creeps were extremely good at blending in.…The boss would accept nothing less.*
3. pp. 63–65: *Of all the huge A-ventures Billy and Ollie have had…After that, Billy hated the Tie.*
4. pp. 65–67: *'Do I really have to wear the Tie?'…No Shouting at the Wedding.*
5. pp. 67–69: *The absolute worst thing about the Wedding though…the slowest time they had ever felt.*
6. pp. 69–71: *'Where are your parents toys?'…his blanket called 'belonging' had just been torn apart*

Assuming the class is already familiar with readers' theatre, this will be about choosing an appropriate excerpt, exploring the scripting process, word processing it, rehearsing over several sessions and ultimately presenting to the class. If the class hasn't engaged in readers' theatre then perhaps the teacher will script and model the process first (see chapter in Ewing and Simons with Hertzberg and Campbell 2016).

The teacher will choose groups that should be able to collaborate well. Once scripts are ready students read through the scripts and decide on and subsequently highlight their parts. They read through the scripts again and annotate their parts to show words and phrases they will emphasise, add a gesture, movement, sound effects, and so on.

N.B. Groups will need time to rehearse their reading.

When ready, they will share their readings.

Follow-Up

Students can draw or make a model of the creeps, using the description in p. 52.

English Outcomes

- effective communication for a range of purposes and audiences to express well-developed, well-organised ideas dealing with more challenging topics;
- independent reading of an extensive range of texts with increasing content demands;
- ability to respond to increasingly complex themes and issues;
- critical analyses of techniques used by writers to create certain effects, to use language creatively, to position the reader in various ways and to construct different interpretations of experience;
- critical evaluation of how own texts have been structured to achieve their purpose; and
- able to discuss ways of using related grammatical features and conventions of written language to shape readers' and viewers' understanding of texts.

Visual Arts

- attempts to represent likenesses of things in the world and
- communicates about how subject matter is represented in artworks.

Drama

- Interprets and conveys dramatic meaning by using the elements of drama and a range of movement and voice skills in a variety of drama forms.

Studies in Society and Environment/Human Society and its Environment

- appreciates the diversity of different cultures and
- understands the need to belong.

Values Education

- Visual education can empathise with others in difficult situations. ◄

Teacher's Reflection

This class really melded as a group through this unit of work. Susanna and I were astonished at how much this novel engaged the students and how it became a jumping-off point for other investigations. Susanna continued to use the novel for close study over the rest of the term. The creatures designed by the students were displayed. Students wrote reflections in their learning journals about their key learning experiences from their perspectives. There was genuine understanding about tolerance, belonging and collaboration and a culmination of the presentation of the students' work to other classes. (Robyn Ewing)

Example

The following unit was designed for a third/fourth composite class by Janelle Warhurst at Curl Curl North Primary School. Based on *The Viewer* (Crewe and Tan) and integrates English, Mathematics and the Creative Arts to develop students' skills in listening and then developing and justifying a point of view.

Unit of Work 'The Viewer'

English Term One 4/3J

Integrated Literacy Programme Term 3 weeks

A multidisciplinary literacy unit for Stage 2 students (easily adapted for Stage3) with English K-10 Syllabus (NESA 2012), Mathematics K-6 Syllabus and Creative Arts Syllabus.

Purposes

To enable the students to:

- listen to more complex explanations of simple phenomena;
- offer opinions about films or stories read aloud; and
- justify a point of view with supporting evidence.

Discussion Starters during the reading of the book.

Why are there three different discs so far? How long ago did the sabre tooth tiger/icythyosaurus roam the earth?

- What do you know about Pompeii/Stonehenge?
- Where did the "snail of eternity" originate? Why?
- Draw as many objects as you can from the page where Tristan is a baby lying on his patchwork rug. Label the objects you have drawn. Write the answer to these questions: What puzzles you about this page? Name some of the objects which would be unusual for a baby of around three months of age to play with. Explain what in particular would not be safe for a baby.
- Students record their own questions about the story. Each group will decide which questions they would like to discuss and does so. Students formulate a response to one question.
- Hot seat Tristan and ask student questions. Also, hot seat Gary Crew, Shaun Tan and Tristan's Mum.

Reading and Writing

- Listen while your teacher reads the extract about the box from *The Viewer*.
- Read the description of the wooden and metal box which Tristan found at the dump yourself. Highlight any words which you think create pictures (images) in your mind. Paste this page into your writing journal.

Whole class activity: Write a sentence from this page which helps you to create an image in your mind into your writing journal and then into the Viewer notebook on the smartboard. Your teacher will help you to take turns.

Write a description of the wooden and metal box in your own words. Don't forget to mention what it looks like, feels like and smells like. Use different verbs and adjectives just as Gary Crew has. Look at the page with all the objects inside the box. Include a description of what is inside the box. Inside the box is …

- Choose ten words with more than two syllables from the page which you have highlighted and copy them into your homework book. For homework do three activities from the spelling sheet about the words you have chosen.

- Write a resolution for the reader, which is satisfying and worthwhile and includes enough information about what happened to Tristan rather than ending suddenly.

Mathematics

- Find out why the ancient Egyptian pyramids have been so solid and durable. Create a fact file about Egyptian Pyramids in your purple Maths book. Which 3D shape are they? Make a square pyramid from a net. Draw one in your purple Maths book.
- How did the ancient Romans count? Did they use zero? Why not? Who invented zero?
- Compare different prisms and pyramids? Make them with sultanas and toothpicks. How many faces, edges and vertices do they have?

Visual Arts

- Observe, draw and colour the disc, which interests you with pencil, water colour and edicol dye.
- Research the smaller pictures inside the disc and write a fact file about one of the pictures using the reference books in our classroom, for example, the pharaohs of Egypt, Stonehenge or Pompeii.

Drama

- Groups create scripts for each section of the book as there is no dialogue. These are then performed for the class in sequence.◀

Teacher's Reflection

Such units foster creativity while allowing students of all abilities to achieve and collaborate with others. Gifted and talented students enjoy the Creative Arts because there is no end to what they can achieve. The emphasis in Arts education on problematic knowledge without right or wrong answers has been a focus at CCN, and we are achieving success with all our students.

Year 6 students who have been struggling for the past two years with reading and writing have improved in leaps and bounds because of such a creative approach to teaching and learning. The behaviours and self-esteem of these students also improved. (Janelle Warhurst)

Example

The final unit was developed by David Smith and is an integrated multidisciplinary Creative and Performing Arts unit with a rich task as the central focus. It is what might be called a multidisciplinary unit since the boundaries between the individual subjects remain strong, and the subjects are taught in separate time units, and the focus in these separate time units is on the concepts and skills of the separate subjects even though together they contribute to the product and presentation in Music.

Integrated Creative and Performing Arts Unit

This curriculum unit occupies approximately 5 weeks of lessons for the middle years (Stage 4 or years 7–9). Rich task learning activities are centred in Music

around the task of group development and performance of an original Music composition. The process for the conceptualising and development of this is supported by activities leading to the demonstration of outcomes in Drama, Dance and the Visual Arts. The unit could easily also incorporate activities and outcomes from English (literacy and literature), Studies of Society and its Environment (SOSE) (cultural understanding) and Personal Development and Health (adolescent cultures).

The Rich Task

'In a group of four, you are to conceive, develop and perform a musical composition. Your composition can be either instrumental or a song and should have the following features:

(a) be based on a theme that relates to some aspect of your own adolescent culture;
(b) use at least three different instruments played by members of the group;
(c) include two different layers of instrumentation; and
(d) include a main melody and a bridge into a contrasting section of the composition.

The best five compositions judged by your class peers will perform their composition live at the end-of-term school concert.

In addition, you are required to keep a diary/journal. This should record the group's creative processes of thinking, conceptualising, developing and composing. There should be at least one entry for each week of learning activities, and each group member must take responsibility for an entry. Entries can be in the form of writing, sketching, pictures, mind maps, downloaded images and so on.

During the lessons in Music that will assist and support you in the activities of developing your composition, you will also be engaged in learning activities in Drama, Visual Arts and Dance related to your work in Music. These are designed to help you in your thinking and conceptualising of your composition. They are outlined below. Your weekly entries in your diary/journal should also make explicit reference to these activities and how they have influenced your thinking about and conceptualising your composition.

Drama: In Drama, your lessons will be focused around exploring themes of adolescence and adolescent cultures. You will be using techniques of frozen moments, character creation, improvisation and play-building.

Dance: In Dance, learning activities will parallel those in Drama. You will also be exploring the themes of Adolescence and particularly issues of dependence/interdependence and child/adult transitions and the conflicts that this can bring. You will be particularly experimenting with hip-hop and rap dance forms to portray these themes.

Visual Arts: In Art, you will be engaged in learning activities that focus on the conceptual structure and frames of graffiti and street art, and art forms employed in the designs and illustrations of the Compact Disc (CD) covers and music videos of popular youth music. As a result of this exploration, your group will design and construct in appropriate mediums a CD cover for your composition. ◄

Teacher's Reflection
This unit was implemented with a Year 8 class. The students were interested and excited about the project and stayed engaged throughout. They found actual production challenging because they had to mix the different musical instruments together. The teacher needs to carefully scaffold this part. The integration within the Creative Arts was a particularly strong feature, for example, the creation of the CD cover. The authenticity of the task was appreciated by the students. (David Smith)

9 Conclusion

In summary the following principles characterise an integrated curriculum unit in the twenty-first century:

Curriculum Integration
- ensures the curriculum is child/student centred and meaningful;
- connected to the wider world;
- usually includes some negotiations with the learners;
- uses subjects and disciplines co-operatively and at strength;
- incorporates a broad range of experiences that are relevant;
- must fit the particular school and class context;
- must be sequenced meaningfully;
- incorporates collaborative activities;
- reduces the challenges of the overcrowded curriculum;
- enables students to see the interrelationship and the cross-connections;
- emphasises inquiry processes;
- is learner centred;
- addresses the knowledge explosion; and
- incorporates diverse opportunities for language use.

Curriculum integration needs to be authentic and relevant in reflecting the real world. It, therefore, must be negotiated with learners. As teachers we must remember that if we believe in a constructivist theory of learning, it is the learner who ultimately will do the integrating by building knowledge and relating it to his or her existing understandings. We have a responsibility to develop learning experiences that are both intellectually and creatively demanding, and foster the knowledge integrating processes of the learners in our care.

Questions

What does the term 'integrated' curriculum imply for you? What are the benefits and drawbacks in implementing an integrated approach to curriculum?

Are there some issues/topics that are more suitable than others for developing an integrated unit of work? Do they lend themselves to multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary or integrated approaches?

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Suggested Reading

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Trailer for *Ollie's Odyssey.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_vCPYIw0Ws

Leading with Creative Dance

5

Learning Objectives

- to develop a rationale for creative dance;
- to understand how dance involves our whole being;
- to explore creative ways to embed dance and movement across the curriculum; and
- to experiment with using dance to interpret feelings, ideas, dilemmas and needs.

1 Introduction

David McAllister, the outgoing Director of the Australian Ballet, has commented that, in his view, dance is one of the least understood of the Arts disciplines, and, consequently, it is perhaps the most neglected in early childhood, primary and middle years classrooms. This may be the result of the stereotypes related to the performative aspects of dance, associations with the tutu, and femininity and concepts of elite skills (Buck 2004).

2 Creative Dance Defined

> *I guess it's as simple as when a rhythmic idea in the body fits together with a rhythmic idea in the structure of a pre-recorded piece of music. So especially in an improvised setting, it's a synchronicity, or a sense of arriving at something spontaneous that connects.* (Whaites 2014 in McKenzie 2017)

Creative dance is not easily defined but involves using our bodies to express and enhance our inner thoughts and feelings using different techniques and sometimes

R. Gibson, R. Ewing, *Transforming the Curriculum Through the Arts*,
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incorporating some aspects of different dance forms. Creative dance involves us physically, emotionally, intellectually and aesthetically. Donald Blumenfield-Jones (2008) suggests that dance is a 'personal affair of motion' (p. 175) and suggests that when we dance we are analysing or interpreting through our bodies and turning that analysis or interpretation into action.

When we move creatively we are engaged in problem-solving, and are embodying our thoughts and feelings. Dance involves our whole selves in individual self-expression and, at the same time, improves our physical skills and flexibility. In addition creative dance involves organising or choreographing that movement and, finally, performing it (Image 5.1).

This chapter includes creative ways to embed dance and movement in the primary and middle years curriculum. It demonstrates that the elements of creative dance such as action, dynamics, structure as well as appreciation lend themselves quite naturally to the other Arts disciplines, in particular, drama and music, but also across other Key Learning Areas. Dance activities can also be visually represented through paint, charcoal, clay or digitally. David Spurgeon (1991) advocates that 'students can achieve rewarding, satisfying and aesthetically pleasing dance experiences via improvisation' (p. 4).

Image 5.1 Year 6 students creating body shapes

3 Movement Is Important in Everyday Life

Movement is part of the child's life from the moment they are conceived. From birth movements like sucking, reaching, stretching, kicking, crying, rolling and, ultimately, crawling, walking and running continue to be critical to healthy growth and intellectual development. Learning to talk also requires movement of our vocal cords, and most of us embellish our language with gesture and movement. Often the first sign that a child may be experiencing some developmental difficulties is indicated by difficulties with their motor activities. As Cust (1974) wrote:

> Children readily reveal their modes of exuberance, anger, tiredness and fear in movement. They will jump and twirl for joy, stamp in anger and slouch and stoop when tired or bored. It is this natural, spontaneous use of movement as an expressive medium that children are urged to exploit in creative dance.

Unfortunately sometimes starting school means that movement becomes more limited for the young child. Children are often expected to 'sit/stand still' or to 'work quietly' in the classroom, and the emphasis is increasingly on verbal followed by written activities. For some children, this is an extremely difficult expectation because they are kinaesthetic learners and need to be actively doing things to learn effectively.

While some teachers are happy to include the more traditional 'folk' or 'bush' dancing as part of the physical education curriculum, this is not always done well and leaves some children with a distorted and very limited view of the unique possibilities that dance and creative movement can play in their lives.

Feeling comfortable in and with our bodies is important to sustain throughout schooling and, indeed, through life. As Noone (in Everett et al. 2009) reminds us, 'being comfortable with our own bodies helps us connect with other bodies, as well as with non-human elements in our physical, social, cultural, economic and political environments' (p. 197). In 2001, Shirley Brice Heath's study of extra-curricular activities after school, or what she called the third learning space, found that involvement in dance activities develops students' interdependence, planning and designing, precision in focus and risk-taking. She asserted that intercultural understandings could also be developed through dance, providing examples of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, who had developed empathy for each other through their dance collaborations:

> Dancing together illustrates the ultimate in aesthetic and visible rendering of coming together, being in one another's heads and bodies, and joining in mutual support and interdependency. (p. 14)

Another example of a dance programme that is used to improve students' academic and social outcomes can be found in *Dance – The Next Generation* run by the Sarasota Ballet School in Florida, in conjunction with the University of South Florida. Since 1991, each year, as many as 100 economically disadvantaged and/or at-risk Year 3 children are accepted into the ten-year full scholarship dance

programme with the aim of enabling student self-discipline inherent in the study of dance and resulting in achieving academic goals and becoming a positive, contributing member of society. Students attend classical ballet, jazz, elements of dance and composition to improve their self-esteem, identity and purpose. A former dance student from *Dance – The Next Generation* commented:

> Dancing has shined a light in my life and taken me to places I never thought I would be. (http://www.sarasotaballet.org/index.php/dng-success-stories.html)

One of the interesting things with *Dance – the Next Generation* is that the aim is not necessarily to develop outstanding dancers (although some participants in the programme have become well-known dancers)—it is to improve students' academic and learning outcomes.

4 A Rationale for Creative Dance

> *Dance is expressive movement with purpose and form. Through dance, students represent, question and celebrate human experience, using the body as the instrument and movement as the medium for personal, social, emotional, spiritual and physical communication.* (Dance in the Australian Curriculum, https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/dance/)

Just as with visual arts, drama, music, literature and film, we argue that it is the engagement in the dance *process* that is crucial, not the teacher's own skill in this area. Becoming physically articulate and finding one's own ways of moving can often improve a child's abilities with spoken and written language at the same time. The *Out There: the Australian Ballet in Schools* programme offered to schools by the Australian Ballet since 2006 is premised on these understandings (Cameron 2010). Other research suggests that collaborative dance opportunities can enable children to break with stereotypical ways of looking at themselves and the world. As Macdonald (1991) argues:

> Only those children who have experienced creative dance can appreciate its physical, intellectual, and emotional impact, since physical movements are external representations of internal events. Because these movements could not take place without inner experience, the inner experience cannot be denied. Creative dance helps children explore their views on life issues, on the human condition, and on their own condition. (p. 434)

As we mentioned in Chap. 4, those educators who advocate a wholistic approach to curriculum planning emphasise the connections between the mind and the body (e.g. Miller 1988). Cust (1974) reminds us that creative dance is concerned with 'movement imagination' (p. 3) or the 'kinaesthetic feelings or sensations of fastness, slowness, suddenness, sustainment, strength, lightness' (p. 4).

Macdonald (1991) uses this premise to argue that creative dance involves much more than the physical self—it involves our whole being. One of the best historical examples of this is Isadora Duncan, a dancer of the early twentieth century. She

argued that dance was the outward manifestation of inner feeling and awareness, and that to dance was to involve oneself in the greater movements of the universe (Duncan 1969). Contemporary dance enthusiasts assert that dance involves learning through all the intelligences: verbal-linguistic, mathematical-logical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, auditory-musical, intrapersonal and interpersonal, and naturalistic (Gardner et al. 1996).

Many teachers, however, express a lack confidence in the creative dance area and, consequently, creative dance is frequently overlooked in their classrooms. Other schools leave dance to a specialist teacher and happily deposit their class at the door of the hall for this lesson and quickly escape. In addition there is a myth that is strongly perpetuated by many parents and community members that creative dance is much more the province of girls. This is an unfortunate misperception, given that many boys prefer to learn kinaesthetically, and creative dance provides such an opportunity.

Interestingly, it would seem that the neglect of dance is often a feature of western education cultures. In contrast, in African and Pacific Island cultures, for example, dance is an extremely important part of the curriculum. Robyn Archer (2009) reminds us that it is the Arts processes that are important—so it is the creative movement making and exploration that are important rather than the dance performance itself.

► **Activity**
How do you feel about teaching creative dance? Why? When was the last time you took a dance class or lesson? Is it time to have another?

5 Goals of Creative Dance

Integrating creative dance in the early childhood, primary and middle years curriculum aims to enable students to:

- enjoy moving creatively;
- know their bodies well and feel comfortable with and confident in them;
- express ideas and feelings through movement, both individually and collaboratively; and
- apply artistic elements such as time, shape, and energy and structure to their movement.

6 Beginning with Creative Dance

Those who advocate that dance should be an integral part of the curriculum provide many examples of how this might happen. Certainly poems and stories can be interpreted through creative dance as exemplified in the Monkey Baa Theatre Company's

rendition of Wild and Brook's (2000) *Fox*. If students realise that they can use their bodies to interpret their feelings, ideas, beliefs and needs, such understandings have the potential to affect their whole approach to learning (Image 5.2).

Research in this area is sadly minimal. Macdonald's (1991) Canadian study, however, shows how eight teachers of varying experience teaching grades, ranging from junior kindergarten through to Grade 3, quickly saw its significance in their classrooms after just six 2-hour workshops. The workshops incorporated some basic dance theory as well as concrete ideas for the classroom. Children were introduced to the concept of focus. They made different shapes with their bodies, experimented with different body levels, worked in groups and danced with props and to different sounds. Creative dance was introduced in their classrooms in mathematics, science and language content areas. These teachers were actively encouraged to participate alongside their students and then to follow up with the ideas and skills that had been introduced in between the workshops. The strength of this project was that Macdonald addressed the professional learning needs of the classroom teachers at the same time—although no benchmarks of student learning before and after the dance programme are reported.

Image 5.2 Students exploring the concept of 'the quest'

7 Establishing a Positive Creative Dance Context in the Classroom

Depending on their family and cultural background, students will come to creative dance with different attitudes to and understandings of the art form. Whatever background they arrive with it is important to create a positive and supportive atmosphere where students feel comfortable and ready to have a go. They need to understand that there is no right or wrong in dance and they should not feel threatened. The following suggestions may facilitate a positive dance climate in your classroom:

- Discuss routines, signals and organisation and your expectations including the need to share the space amicably.
- Find a space that will work for creative dance. If you are going to use your classroom there needs to be a routine everyone is aware of for moving desks without fuss.
- Encourage students to explore their own body movements. You might want to start with mirror activities led by you and then by different students before they mirror in pairs.
- Teach your students the language of dance. Discuss with them how shape, motion and time are all important features of dance. They might like to think about shape as arrested motion, similar to the way frozen images or depictions in drama allow us to focus on one moment in time.
- Model good posture, safe dance practice, appropriate ways to bend, stretch, rotate and so on.
- Focus initially on exploring the different elements of dance through non-gender-specific content and themes. Over time move to more extended topics.
- Provide opportunities for students to create movements which connect with others.
- Encourage students to work in single- and mixed-sex groupings.
- Incorporate a wide range of music from a range of different cultures with strong beats and suggesting different moods and themes. Discuss the way the different music encourages different kinds of music (there are strong links to the music chapter here)
- Introduce percussion instruments.
- Explore a wide variety of sounds including those that are generated electronically.
- Encourage children to explore different movements and levels. Ask questions that will extend students and help them explore how they can use movement to improvise, discover and create dance. Gradually students will develop confidence to take risks.
- Enable students to make decisions about their creative process so that they can develop ownership of their dance activities.
- Provide opportunities to view, respond to and discuss live dance performances (Image 5.3).

Image 5.3 Students responding to *Dream of an ancient tablet*

Following are some suggestions to encourage you to think about potential connections between Dance and other Key Learning Areas.

8 Dance and Mathematics

A Year 2 class learning about different 3D shapes (prism, cube, cylinders, spheres) made cardboard models to represent each one. Later in small groups they made models of a nominated shape with their bodies and when the music changed they transformed into the next one. The teacher photographed the models and displayed them in the classroom, referring to them regularly.

Similarly, Macdonald (1991) suggests that fractions can be better understood through rhythmic movements and the elliptical orbit of the planets in the solar system around the sun can be explored through dance.

Example

Leading with Dance in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM): A Lesson Sequence on Flight for Year 1–2

Introduction

The following sequence of lessons developed by Robyn Ewing illustrates how dance can be used as the catalyst for a science investigation. Although developed for Stage 1, it can easily be adapted for older children.

Session 1

Play excerpts from Neil Diamond's *Jonathan Livingstone Seagull* or similar music, evoking flight and freedom.

Ask the children to close their eyes and think about what the music reminds them of?

Brainstorm their responses.

Play the music again. Ask children to move to it using different parts of their bodies in isolation (feet, arms, head) and then using different levels—reaching up high, getting down close to the ground, stretching out as far as they can horizontally. Finally they can move at different paces (fast, slow, light, heavy, etc.).

Repeat the music and then ask the children to move using their whole bodies.

Tell the children the title of the music and discuss.

Session 2

Read the first few pages of the book *Jonathan Livingstone Seagull*.

Discuss what it must be like to fly.

Watch excerpts from the film *Flight with Birds* (William Lishman). Discuss the way birds begin to fly, move in flight and alight. Study different kinds of birds and the way they fly. The albatross is a good example—so clumsy on earth, so graceful in the air.

What makes the movement? What is the movement like? Children make similar movements and describe them.

How might it feel to fly?

Session 3

Teacher shares a factual text that explains how birds are able to fly.

Play the music again.

Ask the children to visualise what might be happening at different moments in the piece.

Ask children to move to the music again using their understanding of the music and the movie.

Children paint their impressions of 'flight' using large brushes, sponges and rollers.

They may also consider what colours they associate with flight.

Session 4

Teacher reads the legend of Icarus who wanted to fly so fashioned wings and then flew too close to the sun causing his wings to melt.

Children conduct experiments with paper aeroplanes, miniature hot air balloons, 3D models using feathers and so on. Their experiments can be recorded.

Session concludes with time for the children to work in a small group to design a sequence of movements that accompanies the music and tells the story.

Session 5

Children have opportunities to work together in their small groups with the music to shape their storytelling through movement.

Teacher and children brainstorm words used to describe flight, for example, 'dart', 'dive' 'soar', 'glide' and 'float'. These are photographed and displayed, and also represented visually with paint and clay.

Children explore movements to represent these words. They use these movements on high and low levels. They share their movements with each other.

Some of these movements are shared with the whole class and a dance sequence is created, which is filmed then annotated/critiqued by the dancers. ◄

Teacher's Reflection
I was struck by how readily the children explored the music through movement at the beginning of this sequence—it seemed to set the parameters for their talking and listening, and creative writing at a higher level. I had wondered how much scaffolding from me they would need but they responded well to working both as a whole class and then in small groups. They appeared to really engage with the flight DVD and represented different verbs associated with flight imaginatively. I was impressed with their writing about the legend of Icarus. Photographing their work and displaying it was both motivating but also a useful assessment tool. (Robyn Ewing)

9 Integrating Dance and Writing

Nesbit and Hane (2007) worked simultaneously with dance and creative writing aiming to infuse children's writing and choreography. They engaged primary school students in three different artists-in-residence programmes, in schools, over a 12-month period. In a study of literacy devices, for example, students explored the concept of hyperbole in exaggerated movements. Action verbs were the inspiration for dance sequences embodying these words. The researchers and class teachers noted improved imaginative writing as well as new-found confidence and skill in creative movement.

10 Creative Dance and Literature

Following discusses a sequence of dance and English lessons based on *Blue Sky, Yellow Kite* (Holmes and Bentley) for students in years 2–6. Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEMryQzyPQk

The exploration of this picture book begins with movement before moving onto other responses.

Example

Leading with Creative Dance: *Blue Sky, Yellow Kite* (Janet Holmes & Jonathan Bentley)

Session 1: Building the Field

Teacher asks students about their experiences with kites and how they work before asking them to be a kite, beginning with lying on the grass to soaring in

the sky above, tossed by a strong wind, getting stuck in a tree and eventually returning to earth. Music can be played—for example: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQ1tbwPqDTw

Teacher asks the children to *Think about something* that is really special, that they would find hard to share. They can *share* this with a partner or *write* it or draw it on a post-it note to share later.

Session 2: Getting into the Story

The first four openings of the book are shared. Daisy and William's homes can be compared.

In A and B pairs, A *sculpts* B: Daisy looking through the fence, then B *sculpts* A: William flying his kite. Standing back to back students start as their sculpted image and transform to their imagined image over the count of ten, then back again. They think about how each character is feeling at this point in time.

(Follow-up: drawing the sculpted image and add a thought or speech bubble.)

Session 3

Read the next two openings. In pairs imagine the *conversation* as Daisy and William meet each other and William shares his kite. Form the drama circle and *share excerpts* of these brief conversations. (These can be recorded or written up later).

Going Beyond/Interpreting the Story

Read the next two openings. Discuss what is happening here either as a whole group or in small groups. What has Daisy done? Why? How is Daisy feeling? William? (Children can write in role as either Daisy or William—how are they feeling at this point in time?)

Session 4

In small groups share thoughts about what might happen next. Students devise three movement sequences to tell the rest of the story. They can think of a caption for each sequence. When each group is ready, these can be shared; initially, all at the same time, and then each can be viewed separately.

(Follow-up: these can be drawn and a paragraph written about one of these key moments).

Session 5

Students choose either William or Daisy and create a sequence of movements that represents the character.

Read the rest of the story. Discuss and compare with the children's dance sequences.

Session 6

Students and teacher decide on a dance 'plan' to retell story.

Or

Students break into different groups to portray the emotions that are evident in the story, for example, jealousy, kindness, loneliness, forgiveness or guilt.

Students choose appropriate music and choreograph a sequence of movements to display these emotions.

Follow-up: Daisy writes a letter to say sorry to William.

Follow-up: Kite-making could follow. ◄

Teacher's Reflection
This is a stunning exploration of strong emotions—Daisy wants something so badly she just has to have it but then she can't live with herself; William's unselfishness and capacity to forgive. The dance opportunities enable the students to work collaboratively and to immerse themselves in these emotions. (Robyn Ewing)

The following integrated unit brings together visual arts, dance, history, geography, drama, media arts and English in an exploration of *My Place*. It can be adapted to meet the needs of students from Stages 2–4 (Years 3–8).

Example

Finding Your Place in the World

Purpose

This unit aims to explore both place and the dynamics of place. It is anticipated that students will develop a sense of how things change over time and that they can make a difference to whether change is positive or not.

Session 1

Teacher and students read the first few pages of *My Place* (Nadia Wheatley 1987). They discuss how each of the children feel about their place. Extend this discussion to how the students feel about their own place.

In pairs, students share features of their own place.

Teacher asks children to brainstorm descriptive words that express how their special place feels for them.

Students embody these words themselves or sculpt each other (e.g. 'safe'; 'comfortable;' 'warm', 'accepted').

These words are displayed around the words 'My Place'.

Students are asked to sketch/photograph their own house and bring it to class.

Session 2

Students share their images in groups of four.

Teacher continues to read the next two or three openings of *My Place.* Students discuss the central enduring features of this particular house and neighbourhood and time frame.

Students examine the similarities and structure of the vignettes they have read so far in *My Place. (My name is _____ and this is ____).* Students use this model to write their own vignette about themselves and their place.

Session 3

The class takes a walk around their neighbourhood and around their school using a map as a guide. What do they think are the enduring features of this neighbourhood? Students make observation notes, and sketch or take photos of those features and the sketches/photos are later enlarged and displayed. Students write captions to describe them. Returning to school, students can discuss the major things they saw, felt, heard and so on. Make a 'Y' chart:

'our neighbourhood looks like/sounds like/feels like'.

If possible, old photos of the neighbourhood are collected and displayed alongside the children's sketches and photos.

Session 4

Students are asked to make a still image of one of the features they observed during the walk.

They are asked to think about how this feature could be represented through movement rather than a still image.

After some warm ups, students explore how they could use movement to represent the way they felt on their walk/the various things they saw/what they heard.

Each student can be asked to show their movements to a partner and then the partners can share with another pair. They can experiment with combining their movements into a sequence.

Students can sketch their thoughts and feelings about the dance movements they created.

Session 5

Teacher asks students in pairs to brainstorm questions they would like to know about the area they live in. These questions are later shared as a class and prioritised.

Session 6

Students interview several long-term residents of the area using questions they developed after their walk around the neighbourhood. Students make notes.

Session 7

Teacher continues to read *My Place.*

In groups of four students choose one of the decades depicted in *My Place.* They study the picture for this decade in the book and depict this as a still image. They will need to think about how to depict the tree, the stream and the characters.

Students present their still images. Teacher taps in to selected students to see how they are feeling.

The still images are photographed, and later the photos are used as a starting point for writing about this vignette.

Session 8

Ask the children to re-form groups and think about how they can represent this vignette through movement rather than as a frozen image. Teacher uses questions like:

How could you use movement to show that the canal is now very polluted?
How will you move to show the relationship between the tree and the children?

Children work on creating a movement sequence and, if desired, can choose music or percussion to accompany their sequence. These can be shared with the class and children can be given opportunities to reflect on their own and others' creative dances.

(This could, if desirable and appropriate, lead to a performance for parents and caregivers).

Session 9

Children view several episodes of the children's drama *My Place* (Australian Children's Television Foundation 2010) that is based on the book. They discuss the choices made by the directors in representing these vignettes through film.

Teacher finishes reading the book. Students share their responses to the story in literature circles and ask:

What do you think are some of the most important things that Nadia Wheatley wanted to say through *My Place*?

Students choose their favourite decade to draw, paint, collage or sculpt.

Sessions 10–11

In small groups, students use the following questions to research their chosen decade in Australian history. They will be given several sessions to undertake the research and develop a PowerPoint presentation for the class:

What were three major world events during this decade?
What were three major Australian events during this decade?
Find out about something that was invented in this time frame?
What is something that has lasted from this era?
What is something that has been lost?
These presentations will be made over two weeks at various points during the school day.

Session 12 (Optional)

Excursion to a museum to look at a display of 'the way things were'.

Children could discuss what they think their neighbourhood will be like in another decade. What would they like it to be like? How could they help shape it that way? (This could also be represented through still image or creative dance.) ◀

Teacher's Reflection

It's my experience that students often have difficulty with finding their place in the world and sometimes this can also be manifested in mapping, reading scales, understanding the passing of time. I found embedding dance in this unit very useful for extending students and drawing them outside of their comfort zone. Embodying place was empowering and certainly some students demonstrated a new-found confidence. (Robyn Ewing)

11 Conclusion

Creative dance should be an integral part of every early childhood, primary and middle years classroom. Its place in the curriculum should not depend on teacher skill or confidence in dance. Rather, as Buck's opening quote suggests it is about the fostering of collaborative opportunities in the classroom to enable students to develop an understanding that movement and dance are part of who we are and that we should feel comfortable with knowing and expressing through our bodies.

In her poem, *The Simultaneous Dress,* Blaise Cendars (1914) writes *on her dress she wears a body.* Oh, if we could give students that kind of confidence! It is our experience that children will not need much encouragement to explore dance—given the opportunity to create movement in a supportive environment they will really engage with the possibilities it brings for new ways of expressing their knowledge and understandings.

Questions

Do you agree that children need to be comfortable in their own bodies and in connecting with other bodies? Can you think of some meaningful ways to include creative dance in your next unit of work? What strategies could you use to help develop these?

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Leading with Drama

6

Learning Objectives

- to expand the use of drama strategies and processes beyond the use of warm-ups and drama games in the classroom;
- to understand the potential role of drama-rich pedagogy across the curriculum; and
- to develop confidence and expertise in planning and embedding a range of drama strategies and devices to enhance deep learning and understanding.

1 Introduction

Drama is a discipline that must have its place in the formal curriculum in its own right. At the same time, drama-rich strategies can be powerfully employed across the Key Learning Areas as critical, quality pedagogy (Ewing 2019, 2006). Drama can also enhance students' social and emotional well-being.

Yet, while drama has been acknowledged as an important medium for learning (particularly in English, language and literacy) for decades (see, for example, Moffett 1968; McMaster 1998; Winner et al. 2013), many teachers lack confidence in using drama in the classroom. Some of this can be attributed to the way drama has traditionally been marginalised in contemporary syllabus documents and the dearth of drama professional learning in teacher education. Often teachers carry their own baggage about drama: negative memories of school performances in which they, like many of their peers, wafted in the background as trees, the wind, waves in the ocean or other peripheral items while those with 'talent' performed main roles up front. Still others feel that the importance of drama is limited to games that can provide useful transition activities 5 minutes before the bell or when their students need a break in between 'real work'. Many don't use drama for any substantive activity. A few, while acknowledging that drama is important, feel constrained by

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the current emphasis on literacy and numeracy in a reductive curriculum that privileges high-stakes testing. They lament there is no time in the crowded curriculum for the creative use of drama in learning. Finally, some teachers feel hesitant because they believe they will not be able to control the outcomes or because there may not be a written artefact as substantive evidence of learning. These responses to the place of drama in the intended curriculum are a sad indictment of the approach to curriculum that currently predominates in many western education systems.

This chapter demonstrates that drama-rich pedagogy fosters students' already rich imaginations and encourages the 'Cs' or capabilities of creative and critical thinking. While many teachers see a place for drama in English—it is a sophisticated tool for building decoding, vocabulary, syntactic, discourse and metacognitive skills—drama can and should play a central role in all Key Learning Areas enabling children to explore a range of meanings, concepts, cultural assumptions, social dilemmas and issues and develop confidence in their own identities. It encourages collaboration, problem-solving and reflection. Drama can be thought of as a metaphor for bending time and space to create a place for exploratory interactions, dialogues and representations out of which new thoughts, ideas, possibilities and ways of looking/seeing the world can emerge.

The opportunity to explore an imagined context enables us to suspend our real-world persona to make meanings from a range of other perspectives (Bolton 1984). This chapter provides several exemplars in which drama processes and strategies have provided starting points for units of work across the Arts and other KLAs. The power of drama to engage students in creative thinking and problem-solving across other curriculum areas and to help them make emotional connections is demonstrated through evidence of changed student responses to learning and improved thinking and literacy outcomes. Engagement, for example, is identified as a critical element in most frameworks that have been developed to define quality learning and teaching (see for example, Newmann and Associates' authentic pedagogy, 1996; Productive Pedagogies developed by Education Queensland, 2001; and, the NSWDET, quality teaching model, 2003).

2 Defining Drama-Rich Pedagogy

In using the term 'drama-rich' pedagogy we advocate the use of artistic and creative drama processes to deepen and enhance social and emotional well-being, resilience and engagement in learning (Ewing 2019). A range of other terms can be used from 'process drama' (O'Neill 1995) to 'relational pedagogy' (Prentki and Stinson 2016). All can be positioned under the Creative Body-Based Learning umbrella (Garrett et al. 2019) or whole-person learning (Smith 1994). The emphasis is on imaginative and reflective processes, especially embodiment and enactment and the development of personal agency rather than on a culminating final performance (although the process itself, may, and indeed often, lead to some kind of performance—although this may be rather low key). A range of strategies adapted from those used in theatre including sculpture, role walking, role-play, depiction, still image or

tableau, improvisation, mime, thought-tracking, hot-seating or questioning in role, play-building, mantle or enactment of the expert, conscience alley (Ewing and Simons 2016; Ewing and Saunders 2016) can be used to explore a problem, a situation, a theme or a series of related ideas or themes. Walking in someone else's shoes can be seen as the essence of this approach.

As discussed earlier, many teachers feel unsure about what counts as drama. In a broad sense, drama uses our ability to imagine that we are someone or something else. It is about suspending our disbelief for a time and pretending this imagined being/event or thing is real, so that we can explore other perspectives, motivation or situations through language, movement and space. Educational drama activities can help students understand how important it is to interrogate the many messages they receive through words and images. Any ideology, or particular way of looking at the world, can be contested because it is only one world view of many (Smith and Lovat 2003). These ideologies are always embedded in our language practices and in the teacher and students themselves. Drama activities help us challenge the taken for granted in our worlds and explore other possibilities.

▶ **Activity**

Teacher Alan Blackwood (2009) thinks about educational drama as having three main areas:

- *the physical self using creative movement and mime;*
- *the speaking self focusing on voice and speech including projection, tone and pitch; and*
- *role-play and play-building.*

Is this a useful way to thinking about embedding drama strategies in your classroom?

Blackwood (2009) advocates beginning from wherever the children are, using your own particular teaching strengths and establishing firm rules for ensuring the class stays well managed; the importance of positive feedback; and beginning sessions with physical warm-up and ending with winding down or debriefing.

The most important components of drama, that is, role, focus, tension and symbol, are discussed briefly in the next section together with some commonly used drama strategies. For more details about these, please refer to Haseman and O'Toole (2017); Miller and Saxton (2004, 2016); Ewing and Simons (2016); Ewing and Saunders (2016).

3 Components or Elements of Drama

Role: Stepping into Another's Shoes

By taking on someone else's character or ideas, you can start to see things from another perspective and this is at the heart of drama. The first level of role as

described by Morgan and Saxton (1987) is *dramatic play.* Young children seem to naturally take on roles in their early dramatic play. As one grandparent recently commented:

> *While at the cafe waiting for their milkshakes, three year old Jake and four year old Asher morphed into waiters and chefs without any obvious transition. They happily took our extensive orders and retired behind a nearby vacant table to prepare our requests and then serve us.*

Morgan and Saxton (1987) list four other 'levels' of role that build on this dramatic play:

- *Mantle of the expert* (sometimes known as 'enactment' of the expert) where students are given expert status to explore a phenomenon. They might be en-roled as architects designing better use of their school playground space or zoo assessors evaluating the care of the animals.
- *Role-play* involves adopting someone else's opinion or attitude—not necessarily any of their personal characteristics or manner. At this level students might be asked, for example, to take on the views of an ardent climate change activist or a person who thinks climate change is a fiction—a very relevant debate.
- *Characterisation* is a more deliberate attempt to explore the signs and symbols of a particular character—how might a wicked stepmother walk and how would she speak to her lowly stepdaughter Cinderella.
- *Acting* is a more refined performance after some rehearsal to ensure a particular character is authentically represented through voice, gesture, movement, dress, etc.

Focus

There needs to be a worthwhile point or reason for planning educational drama activities. What are the important concepts, themes or understandings that you would like to address? Anticipated outcomes can be framed as a key question that may provide a useful starting point and may also infer tension.

Some examples we have used effectively include:

- *What does 'happily ever after' really mean?*
- *What does reconciliation look like?*
- *What does it feel like to be a refugee?*

Tension

Life has many competing forces/conflicts/dilemmas. Some kinds of tensions engage learners in drama activities. This does not need to be a surprising or highly energetic

moment in process drama in the classroom. Rather, it can be about finding a way to postpone the resolution to explore the gaps in the text (Bolton 1984) or the 'spaces' (Williams 1987) and 'places' (Gleeson 2007) to play.

Symbol is the use of one thing to represent another and often at a number of different levels. Any symbol may carry different meanings for different individuals. An object, a word, a colour, a ritualised way of moving may all come to have a shared meaning. In one kindergarten classroom, the farmer's question *How goes the work?* became a catch cry of the teacher's to find out how the children were progressing on a task after they had embodied the poor oppressed duck in *Farmer Duck* (Martin Waddell and Helen Oxenbury 1991).

Warming Up with Drama Games and Strategies

Drama games are often used as ice breakers to establish a rapport in a new group, as warm-ups for a lesson or as a game or exercise to fill in time. While these can be fun for students and can provide a useful starting point for creating a trusting classroom community, Ewing and Simons (2016) have expressed concern that often drama stops here. It seems more pertinent to use icebreakers, warm-ups and games that align with the unit of work being undertaken. Suggestions for these have been included in the units below.

Embodiment

There is much to be said for using our bodies to develop a closer understanding of the meanings of particular words, sayings or images.

In beginning a unit of study on Nadia Wheatley's *My Place* (1988), for example, Year 3 and 4 students were asked to embody images of their feelings about their home or a place that was special to them. They were encouraged not to think about material goods but how their home or special place made them feel. Having chosen such words such as 'calm', 'happy', 'safe' and 'comfortable', children were asked to embody these. Similarly, when reading *Bambert's Book of Missing Stories* (Jung, 2008) students in Years 5 and 6 were asked to embody the description of Bambert as a *shipwrecked mariner cast up on hostile shores on the far side of a dream* (p.11). First, of course, it was important to establish the meanings of 'mariner' and 'hostile'. Students can also embody rich descriptive words and phrases. How can we embody the magpie in *Fox* (Wild and Brooks, 2000) who desired at various points to *melt into blackness* and *burn into nothingness*?

Embodiment can be just as effective with students in the younger years of school. Embodying the frog prince and princess at loggerheads in *The Frog Prince Continued* (Sziekza 1991) helps them experience the emotions of both characters and think about what they might do in a similar situation. Embodiment can be recorded with digital cameras and the emotions can later be recorded in speech and thought bubbles alongside the images (Image 6.1).

Image 6.1 Small group depicting a critical moment

A small group depicting a critical moment from *The duck and the darklings*. (Glenda Millard and Stephen Michael King 2014).

Sculpture

One participant's body becomes 'thinking clay' for his/her partner or small group to sculpt into a character, thought or thing (also see 'Living clay' in Chap. 10). How might you represent a dragon according to eastern and western cultural traditions?

Depiction

Identifying and portraying one or more critical moments in a story or historical event (often also called frozen moments, tableau or freeze frames) can be enormously valuable for students of all ages. They can then be asked to justify their reasons for these choices.

In the early childhood classroom this can mean initially asking children to depict a scene from the orienting moments in the story or its complication. Alternatively a story can be read to a certain point and students can be asked to predict what happens next or represent a way that the problem or dilemma can be resolved.

Consider, for example, what might befall the frog prince in the above story who runs into the forest to find a witch to turn him back into a frog or how *The Keys to Rondo* (2008) may be rescued by the children after all seems lost. Finding ways for students to engage in meaningful collaborative talk, genuine dialogue, is important for deep understanding (Barnes et al. 1976). Asking them to explain their thinking to each other and then, if necessary, justify their opinions will lead to higher order thinking. Enacting the scenes chosen and tracking the thoughts of each of the characters at these particular moments in time will lead to more imaginative writing. Saxton, Miller, Laidlow and O'Mara's (2018) *Asking better questions* is an excellent guide to asking challenging questions that probe surface impressions. They make much use of drama strategies to illustrate their thesis.

Hot Seating

Hot seating, or questioning the characters in role, can be used when participants have a need to expand their understanding of a particular character or situation by questioning a character or group of characters in role:

Why is Grandfather cross that his grandson has brought home a wounded duck in *The Duck and the* Darklings?
Is Hannah's father (*Gorilla*) worried about something?
Why is Goldilocks so angry with Herb (*Who's afraid of the big bad book?*)

This strategy allows us to begin to understand motives that underlie particular actions through the use of questions. It also changes the dynamics in the classroom because the teacher is not providing an evaluative feedback loop.

Conscience Alley

Conscience or decision alley can provide an opportunity for students to appreciate multiple perspectives. Students become the voices a character hears in his/her mind when making a difficult decision. The person who must make a decision walks slowly between two lines of participants who are facing each other but have opposing viewpoints. As the person making the decision moves down the alley, participants in turn comment or reflect on the difficulty of choice.

For example, when deciding whether or not to pull down the town's Anzac memorial in Gary Crew and Shaun Tan's *The Memorial* (2000) participants in conscience alley might suggest to the Mayor:

You can't pull it down because it's the most important landmark in this town; and
You must pull it down because it's in the way of the town's progress.

Students are thus provided with opportunities to consider alternative perspectives/rehearse consequences of different decisions, consider characters' reasoning and think about potential resolutions (see for example, Ewing et al. 2008).

Thought-Tracking/Tapping in

An opportunity is provided to tap into a character's thoughts and feelings while they are in a sculpted position or depicting a character in a freeze frame.

Readers' Theatre

A script is developed from a story the students have been studying closely. The students engage in a group storytelling with a focus on their voice and limited gesture, focusing on the audience rather than the other characters (Ewing 1991, 2009). Below is a short excerpt of the beginning of a readers' theatre script developed for Anthony Browne's *The Tunnel* by a Year 2 class.

Adapted from The Tunnel (Browne 1997)

Narrator 1: Once upon a time there lived a sister and a brother who were not at all alike.

Narrator 2: In every way they were different.

Narrator 3: The sister stayed inside on her own, reading and dreaming.

Narrator 4: The brother played outside with his friends, laughing and shouting, throwing and kicking, roughing and tumbling.

Narrator 5: At night he slept soundly in his room. But she would lie awake, listening to the noises of the night.

Narrator 6: Sometimes he crept into her room to frighten her, for he knew that she was afraid of the dark

Example

The following unit provides an example of leading with Drama to explore literature and concepts like memory and the aged in our committee. It was developed by Robyn Ewing as a teaching artist on the *School Drama* programme working with a Year 1 class at Curl Curl North Primary School in 2019. The format used is that used for *School Drama,* a teacher professional learning partnership between Sydney Theatre Company and the University of Sydney designed to help teachers develop confidence and expertise in using drama and literature to enhance student literacy outcomes.

Aim: to use drama techniques to explore a quality text to engage pupils and improve writing outcomes.

Unit Title:	What is a memory?
Text:	*Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox and Julie Vivas
Year Level:	Appropriate for Years 1–2 (and beyond)
English Focus:	Oracy
	Imaginative writing
Resources:	Scarves or sleeping masks to use as blindfolds, enough for one between two; a range of symbolic objects (e.g. a candle, a shell, an unusually shaped piece of driftwood, a brightly coloured scarf, set of keys, multiple copies (6–8) of the books above, oil pastels or crayons, charcoal, large sheets of paper, quiet instrumental music if desired, percussion instruments)
Key Themes:	Memory; history—past and present; hope; trust; friendship; the power of story

Introduction

This beautiful book has huge symbolic significance and places a lot of hope in the compassion of a young child who helps his elderly friend rediscover important memories.

Related Texts:

Gleeson, L. & Blackwood, F. (2013). *Banjo and Ruby Red.*

Graham, B. (2008) *How to heal a broken wing.*

Workshop 1

1. **Strategy Title:** Warm Ups and Name Games
   Grouping: Whole class drama circle
   Purpose: To 'warm up' our bodies and imaginations
   Play some name games: *My name is Robyn and your name is…; Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar?*
   Getting used to conventions with clap sticks
   Role walk
2. **Strategy Title:** What Is a Memory? Group Storytelling
   Grouping: Whole class drama circle, then pairs, small groups
   Purpose: To explore the concept of memory
   Teacher shows children her memory box and plays some guessing games about what might be inside
   Teacher lays out some artefacts (e.g. a candle, a shell, a ribbon, driftwood, a key, an old photo…) and shares some of her memories—she shares a special memory.
   Children asked to walk around and think about the different artefacts laid out—choose one that triggers a memory. In time, teacher asks students to move to a small group of students who have chosen the same object and share their memories. Children are asked to re-form the circle and take some time to visualise this memory, then share this memory in pairs, small groups and with whole group.
   Discuss the importance of memories in our lives:

- Why do we need them?
- What does a memory look like/feel like/sound like?

Follow-Up: students are asked to note a few things about their memory on a post-it note. Students can sketch the object they chose and draw/write about the memory it triggered in their journal.

(Further follow-up: each small group could construct a story based on one or a blend of a number of these memories. One student in the group is appointed as the storyteller while the other students mime the story. These mimed stories can be shared with the rest of the class.)

Workshop 2
Recap: Last Session Through Sharing Some of Children's Writing About a Memorable Moment

1. **Strategy Title:** Warm-Ups
   - Using a scarf to become different things.
   - Role walk as old, young, tired, excited…
   - Clumping to represent 'friendship', 'trust'.
2. **Strategy Title:** Trust Walk
   Grouping: Whole class drama circle, then pairs.
   Purpose: To develop trust and courage, an important theme in this drama unit.
   Teacher explains that this unit is going to explore the concepts of friendship and trusting each other will be important. After a brief discussion about the meanings of these words, children are paired and one student is asked to close their eyes. Teacher explains that their partner will lead them around the open area in the classroom explaining where they are going and helping them avoid any obstacles. After about 5 minutes students can reverse roles.
   Discussion about what it means to trust your partner.
3. **Strategy Title:** Hot Seating
   Grouping: Whole class drama circle.
   Purpose: Start to think about what it might be like to have lived for many years.
   Teacher introduces our special guest and talks about the strategy of hot seating.
   What was it like to go to school 70 years ago? What did Sydney look like? What might it mean to be old?
   Teacher introduces a special guest, 'David', and asks the children in pairs to think about some questions for him.
   Hot seat David. Teachers initially model some questions.

4. **Strategy Title:** 'I Wonder…'
   Grouping: Pairs, then whole class drama circle.
   Purpose: To encourage prediction.
   Teacher shares the first three openings of *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge.*

5. **Strategy Title:** Discussion
   Grouping: Whole group.
   Purpose: To discuss the main characters in the story.
   Teacher asks the students to think about the following questions in pairs or triads:

   – What kinds of people live in the retirement village?
   – How are they feeling as the story opens?
   – Why might they be feeling this way?
   – How would they move when feeling like this?

6. **Strategy Title:** Sculpting
   Grouping: Pairs.
   Purpose: Embody some of the characters.

Introduce the idea of sculpting. Talk about 'thinking clay'.

Students sculpt each other as some of the characters are introduced.

After students have had time to work together on their sculptures, they all present these together. Each of the characters sculptured can be present in a galley. Discuss similarities and differences.

Follow-Up: students can draw their character and add descriptive words.

Workshop 3

Recap: Share Some Examples of Children's Writing About a Memory and Drawing of Their Sculpted Character

1. **Strategy Title:** Warm-Ups
   - Using a scarf to become different things.
   - Role walk as the different characters.
   - Clumping to represent 'friendship' and 'trust'.

Teacher shares next opening—Wilfred Gordon overhears his parents talking about Miss Nancy.

2. **Strategy Title:** Earsdropping—Conversations
   Grouping: Pairs.
   Purpose: To develop a brief improvised dialogue to demonstrate an understanding of Miss Nancy's problem.

In pairs children decide who will be Wilfred Gordon's mum and who will be his dad. They are to create a conversation in which they discuss what is happening to Miss Nancy. After students have had some time to discuss what might be discussed, teacher sets up the signal for the improvised conversation to start and stop. Students have several opportunities to engage in this conversation.

Vary the conversation—the conversation now is between Wilfred Gordon and his mother.

Teacher asks some pairs to share their conversations with the class.

Follow-Up: children record a brief excerpt of their conversation.

Teacher shares the next four openings about memory.

3. **Strategy Title:** What Is a Memory?
   Grouping: Whole class.
   Purpose: To embody the different conceptualisations of memory expressed by the different characters.

Follow-Up: children take one of these definitions of memory and imagine something that responds to the question: 'What is a memory?'

Teacher shares the rest of the book.

Workshops 4 and 5

Recap: Share Some Examples of Children's Conversations Between Wilfred Gordon and His Parents

Teacher revisits the story.

1. **Strategy Title:** Warm-Ups
   - Voice warm-ups;
   - verbal tennis; and
   - embodying the different conceptualisations of memory expressed by the different characters (e.g. something sad, something to make you laugh, something as precious as gold, etc.).

   Teacher reads the rest of the story. Brief discussion.

2. **Strategy Title:** Readers' Theatre
   Grouping: Whole class then small groups.
   Purpose: Learn about the drama form reader's theatre. Think about the use of voice, face and limited gesture to convey meaning.
   Teachers will explain the form reader's theatre and how it works.
   We will model how we use our voice to convey meaning (e.g. pitch, pace, pause, inflection etc.).
   Children will be grouped by the class teacher. They will: read through their scripts, highlight their parts, annotate the words they will emphasise, stick their scripts into folders etc.

Readers' Theatre Developed from *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox and Julie Vivas

Part 1

Storyteller 1: There was once a small boy called Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge

Storyteller 2: and what's more, he wasn't very old either.

Storyteller 3: His house was next door to an old people's home

Storyteller 4: and he knew all the people who lived there.

Storyteller 1: He liked Mrs Jordan who played the organ.

Storyteller 2: He listened to Mr Hosking who told him scary stories.

Storyteller 3: He played with Mr Tippett who was crazy about cricket.
Storyteller 4: He ran errands for Mrs Mitchell who walked with a wooden stick.
Storyteller 1: He admired Mr Drysdale who had a voice like a giant.
Storyteller 2: But his favourite person of all was Miss Nancy Alison Delacourt Cooper
Storyteller 3: because she had four names,
Storyteller 4: just as he did.
Storyteller 1: He called her 'Miss Nancy' and told her all his secrets.

Time in both workshops 4 and 5 will be spent reading through scripts, focusing on reading for meaning with expression and fluency, deciding on gestures and sound effects. etc.
Children will perform their reader's theatre as a grade or school assembly item.◀

Teacher Reflection

The children responded so well to thinking about memory and the unit on past and present they were undertaking. The class teacher was also thrilled with their imaginative writing triggered by the early work on memories. The reader's theatre also improved students' fluency in reading as well as their inferential comprehension. They worked collaboratively in their groups. There were important discussions about care for older community members. (Robyn Ewing)

Example

The following integrated interdisciplinary unit of work explores some of these ideas in more depth. Designed for Year 2, it is easily adaptable across most stages. The unit was developed by Robyn Ewing and is illustrated with drawings by 2R at Curl Curl North Primary School who undertook the learning experiences with great enthusiasm (Image 6.2).

Starting with Drama *Herb, the Vegetarian Dragon* (Bass and Harter)

Purpose: This sequence of activities begins with drama. It will enable the students to develop an understanding of conflict and peace in history. In addition, learning experiences address both English and Creative Arts outcomes. Each session takes between 45 and 60 minutes.

Session 1

Visualise a dragon.

Write down any words that you associate with dragons.

Choose one of your words to share and think about saying your word with as much feeling as you can to communicate its meaning.

Take it in turns around the group to say your word with as much emotion as you can.

(N.B These words can be written on the blackboard/whiteboard/interactive whiteboard and used to create a soundscape—percussion instruments can be added to a subsequent reading.)

Image 6.2 Meathook gives Herb an ultimatum

Session 2

Sculpt a partner into your dragon. Remember the partner acts as 'thinking clay'—he/she does what the sculptor says/demonstrates to be moulded into a dragon. Swap roles.

Divide the group in halves and each half takes a turn to look at the sculpted dragons and note the similarities/differences. (At this point, dragons can be drawn/painted/modelled out of clay, describing words arranged around them.)

Session 3

Read the first half of the book *The Vegetarian Dragon*.

The text lends itself to dramatisation along the way.

Stop reading after Meathook has given Herb the ultimation—eat meat or be beheaded.

Hotseat Herb—how is he feeling at this point in time?

Create a story map of what happens next individually.

Session 4

Divide into groups of four. Share your outcome with the group.

As a group decide on which outcome you prefer or incorporate elements of all group member's stories. Make a still image/depiction demonstrating what happens.

Image 6.3 Herb is going to be beheaded

Each image is viewed and teacher taps into various characters asking them to share how they are feeling at this point in time (Image 6.3). (The still images can be captured on digital camera and the stories can be written down with thought/speech bubbles.)

Session 5

Use conscience alley to weigh up what Herb should do. (*You should eat the meat because…..you shouldn't eat the meat because…..)*

Students create a Plus Minus and an interesting chart about the pros and cons.

Students write in role as Herb or Meathook about how they are feeling at this point in the story.

Session 6

Discuss the different endings predicted.

Read the rest of the story.

Discuss the concept of choices and living in harmony with others who are different.

Children can draw a concept map to demonstrate their understanding of 'peace'.◀

Example

The final exemplar highlights the use of oral storytelling with a range of other drama strategies to help develop both the teacher's and her students' use of these important skills, so often neglected in western classrooms.

Storytelling Exemplar Based on *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak 1963)

This unit of work was designed by Victoria Campbell and has been implemented in several lower and middle primary school classrooms (Early Stage 1, Stage 1 & Stage 2.).

Purpose: the aim of this sequence of learning experiences is for students to develop skills to orally retell a story. The focus is on students making personal connections with the text by using their own grammar and syntax, to develop a sense of narrative structure and encourage expressive use of voice and gesture.

The Importance of Voice

Effective oral storytelling is reliant on expressive use of voice. The two 'warm-up' activities below encourage students to explore the nuances of volume, pitch and tone.

Vocal Tennis

This vocal 'warm-up' allows students to experiment with:

- Volume *(loud, soft);*
- pitch *(high, low); and*
- tone *(angry, cheerful,* etc.*).*

Students, in pairs, stand opposite each other. They verbally *throw* words backwards and forwards to each other. The teacher structures the activity by giving students categories to choose words from and the vocal quality she/he wishes the students to experiment with. For example, the teacher might ask for, 'Fruit— high pitched' *(Some other examples of categories are: vegetables, girls names, boys names, countries, cars.)* Adapted from: NSW, DET. (1998). *Exploring the World of K-6 Drama: Anna and Her Cloth of Dreams.*

Expressive Names

Students form a circle. One by one, the students say their name out loud, and the rest of the class repeats that student's name. Continue around the circle until all students have had a turn. Next time, around the circle, ask students to experiment with volume, pitch and tone. Encourage students to exaggerate the way a name is said. (For younger students, suggest saying their name like a lion, cat, mouse, etc. This automatically changes pitch, volume and tone.)

The Importance of Gesture, Facial Expression and Body Language

The non-verbal aspects of oral storytelling are essential for breathing life into a story. The following drama strategy gives students an opportunity to focus on gesture, facial expression and body language.

Sculpting

Students work in pairs and sculpt each other as characters from the text. While reading the text, choose two to three critical moments, stop at that section of the story and have students sculpt each other. Some examples are, Max making mischief/his mother sending him to bed; Max arriving on the island/a Wild Thing greeting him; Max as king/a Wild Thing as servant. Each person in the pair takes on one of these roles.

Once students have finished their sculptures, ask half the class, that is, one student from each pair, to freeze in a circle, so that their sculpture is facing out *(*e.g. *all the students who were Max making mischief)*. The other students walk around the circle and examine the sculptures for effective use of facial expression and gesture. Teacher invites students to respond by asking questions on the specifics of gesture, facial expression and body language. For example: 'What do you see?' 'What are they doing with their faces, their hands, their bodies to show this?' Have the other half display their sculptures.

The Importance of Narrative Structure: The 'Bare Bones' of the Story

For students to effectively retell a story, they need to be familiar with, and understand, the sequence of events within a text.

Exploring Narrative Structure

The teacher re-reads *Where the Wild Things Are* and asks the students to reflect on:

- moments of surprise (*complications, tension);*
- protagonist/antagonist relationship *(tension);*
- character development/evolution (*the protagonist [Max] moves through various states of emotional being—status); and*
- the sequence of events.

As students suggest critical moments, write them on individual pieces of A4 paper *(this can be modified for use with a smart board).*

For example:

- Max is naughty/creates mischief.
- Max is sent to his room.
- A Forest grows in Max's room.
- Max arrives on the island/the Wild Things roar their terrible roars etc.…(fear).
- Max tames the Wild Things with his magic trick.
- Max is made King.
- The wild rumpus.
- Max wants to return home—(loneliness).
- Returns home—(food).

Ask the students to organise the individual pieces of A4 paper in a chronological order. *(This can be done in small groups or with the whole class, multiple copies will be needed for small group work.)*

Freeze Frame Circle: *whole class enactment with teacher narration.*

Resource: *a crown.*

The crown is passed to each student in the role of Max to wear during the depiction.

Divide the class into groups of three. Each group is given a critical moment to perform as a still image *(tableaux)*. A chair, for each key event, is placed in a circle *(about nine chairs).* The groups are arranged in a chronological order around the circle. One student from each group is Max, he/she sits on the chair. The other students take on the role of the other characters suggested by the scene. *(*e.g. *Max's mother, Max's dog, trees in the forest, Wild Things, etc)* As the teacher narrates the story, each group performs their given scene in chronological order. While one group is performing, the other groups observe. After each scene, the teacher stops and encourages students to improvise dialogue by either *tapping-in* or inviting them to briefly *role-play* the moment. Focus on vocal and facial expression.

NB: See drama definitions for still image (depiction) and tapping-in.

The Importance of the Listener

The relationship between the teller and the listener is crucial. The storyteller must select information and relate it in a manner that is meaningful for the listener. The storyteller need only be familiar with the story, they do not need to memorise it. Students adhere to the narrative structure, the chronological sequence of events and characters; however, they are free to make personal connections with the text by using their own words, grammar and syntax.

Teacher Models Retelling

The teacher retells *Where The Wild Things Are* using his/her own words, syntax and grammar to demonstrate personal aspects of oral storytelling. This differs considerably to Maurice Sendak's written text; however, some words, phrases and dialogue might be the same. After the story is told, encourage discussion about the differences between the text and the teacher's oral version.

Students Retell Where The Wild Things Are: Advance/Detail

Students have an opportunity to tell the story using their own words. There is no right or wrong way to tell a story; however, they do need to include the characters and sequence of events. *(For the younger students, the teacher may like to display the A4—critical moment cards in the classroom.)*

Students work in pairs, student A and student B. They tell each other their version of *Where The Wild Things Are.* Student A tells the story to student B. While B listens he/she asks A to either *detail* or *advance* the story. When asked to give *detail* student A stops in the sequence of events and describes the moment in the story. When asked to *advance,* student A continues with the narrative. Swap roles, so that student B tells student A the story.

Things to consider:

- *Ensure students alternate between the two directions – advance or detail*
- *Encourage students to think about colour, shape, size; sounds, smells, taste, touch; emotional qualities of a character, atmosphere, mood* etc.

- For younger students *'forward/description'* may be used instead of *'advance/detail'*
- *This activity can be used with any story that the students are familiar with, a myth, legend, fairytale or folktale.* (Adapted from: Pierse, L. (1997). *Theatre Sports Down Under.*)◀

Teacher Reflection

This sequence of learning experiences allows students to embody and kinaesthetically engage with the text before retelling it. This is not only an effective and enjoyable way of developing learning, but it is also an efficient way of working toward the often difficult outcome of students confidently being able to orally retell a story. The key to success in this unit is that it allows students to improvise within the given structure of the story, and by doing so, make personal connections with the text. Students are at the centre of the learning experience as they take ownership of the story and make it their own. The greater opportunities students have to develop proficiency with oracy, or with talking and listening skills, the better their overall literacy will be. (Victoria Campbell)

4 Conclusion

It is our assertion that using drama-rich forms, strategies and techniques allows students to enact situations and to empathise with others as they explore the unfinished as well as the taken-for-grantedness of their own life experiences and feelings. In so doing, students challenge the 'saturated consciousness' (Apple 1990) that can often cloud beliefs, attitudes and judgements. Opportunities to story/challenge/question and interpret from multiple perspectives builds students' capacity for deep understanding and so enables them to become more critically literate (Lankshear 1994). Drama strategies, including, readers' theatre, storytelling, depiction, teacher in role, mantle of the expert, puppetry, hotseating, improvisation and thought-tracking (Ewing and Simons 2016), grounded in authentic contexts but distanced from children's actual experiences, can be used in the classroom to support every aspect of critical thinking, problem-solving and literacy development. The imagined and physical contexts of drama worlds allow students to go beyond the superficial or stereotypical to explore the making of meanings in a multisensory medium (Baldwin and Fleming 2003).

While the use of enactment in enhancing literacy development is well documented, drama as critical, quality pedagogy is not as widely used in primary classrooms as it should be given its power to transform learning. Drama-rich pedagogy, through its embodied learning activities, enables students to understand meanings conveyed. Oral and written storytelling helps us explore and reflect on who we are through storying (Gleeson 2010). Drama helps teachers change traditional classroom discourse structures to enable students to engage in meaningful exploration of important themes and issues. The development of higher order thinking and deeper understanding of others' perspectives can equip students with critical life skills.

Questions

Peter O'Connor (2008, p. 24) defines drama as a:

…process through which humanity has sought to define itself and to reflect on who we are and who we might become, must be seen as central to any process that attempts to make sense of the world we live in.

Do you agree that drama can enable us to make sense of our world and life situation or is it an overstatement? Do you have any evidence to support your view?

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Suggested Reading

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Useful Websites

Drama Australia
http://www.dramaaustralia.org.au/
Australian Drama
http://www.austlit.edu.au/specialistDatasets/Drama
Sydney Theatre Company School Drama Program
https://www.sydneytheatre.com.au/schooldrama
Windmill Performing Arts., http://www.windmill.org.au
Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company
www.somebodysdaughtertheatre.com/

Leading with Quality Literature

7

Learning Objectives

- to review the research on the importance of story and imaginative literature in becoming compassionate human beings;
- to consider the features of quality literary texts; and
- to plan and implement integrated units of work leading with literature.

…there is strong evidence over a sustained period that engaging students in imaginative stories that promote talk, cognitive development, empathy and deep understanding is central to their becoming critically literate and able to respond to the changing nature of texts in the world. Ewing (2019, p. 14)

1 Introduction

Whether it is a picture book, a poem, a novel or a piece of creative writing, quality literary texts are art forms that successfully foster children's imaginations and creativities. Even more, rich and evocative language can provide a basis for their own creative play with language or in art-making in drama, dance, film-making, music or visual arts. As Anderson, Hughes and Manuel (2008, p. xi) write, the study of literature has a 'unique capacity to engage the mind, the spirit and the heart: to stimulate imagination through the meaningful immersion with the story of humanity as it is explored'.

In addition, literature can be utilised as an exploratory starting point or as a reflective strategy with other art forms. The numerous possibilities for its inclusion are discussed at some length in this chapter through several units of work based on the close study of a book or several books. These possibilities have been described

R. Gibson, R. Ewing, *Transforming the Curriculum Through the Arts*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-52797-6_7

by Geoff Williams (1987) as using literature to find *spaces* and by Libby Gleeson (2007) as *places to play*. Initially, however, we have provided a brief justification for the need for literature to be viewed as an arts discipline.

2 Literature as an Art Form

There should be no debate that literature is an art form and yet it is too often omitted in lists of and discussions about the Arts (Ewing 2010). Imaginative narratives, poems, picture books and graphic novels should be central features of English and literacy classrooms. They provide exemplars by expert writers demonstrating how language can be used creatively to help us understand the world; imagine new possibilities; and experience people, places and adventures beyond our own. Children are invited to explore and question ('what if'), interpret meanings, evaluate for themselves and think or reflect personally. A range of research (Kidd and Castano 2013; Koopman 2015) has demonstrated unequivocally that reading imaginative fiction improves our capacities to infer, understand different perspectives and empathise with others' experiences and feelings that differ from our own, at the same time deepening self-knowledge. Our expectations and stereotypes are challenged and disrupted pushing us to more sophisticated thinking.

Despite this research, classrooms where children are learning to be literate sometimes focus on technical skills and do not promote these higher order thinking opportunities. Instead the early years of school can too often be dominated by the use of 'readers' or levelled texts in which the language is controlled for particular vocabulary and the syntax oversimplified in the hope that these kinds of texts are more readily accessible to emergent readers. Such reading material fails to engage children meaningfully in the learning-to-read process and often 'dumbs down' their creative imaginings. Even more, such contrived texts fail to make sense beyond sentence level and are, in our view, often responsible for disengaging children in reading. This is very concerning, given Stephen Krashen's (2015) assertion that self-selected reading for pleasure is very important and is based on analysis of research evidence:

> There is overwhelming evidence that those who read more read better, write with a more acceptable writing style, have larger vocabularies, have better control of complex grammatical constructions, and spell better than those who read less. In addition, those who read more know more about a wide variety of subjects, including literature, history, and science. (p. 21)

It is therefore our responsibility as teachers to ensure our students are excited about reading and exploring a wide range of quality literature.

This chapter provides a brief rationale for ensuring that primary and middle school students develop a love of children's literature as a rich, meaningful and empowering art form, and that through this, they come to understand, appreciate and use artistic, evocative and expressive language themselves. This rationale is then exemplified through three integrated units that have been effectively used in

classrooms: first using two picture books *Amy and Louis* and *Banjo and Ruby Red* (Libby Gleeson & Freya Blackwood) easily adaptable for Stages 1 and 2 (Years 1–2 and 3–4), a second using a picture book and a novel and film of the same story, *The Peasant Prince* (Cunxin and Spudvilas), *Mao's Last Dancer* (Cunxin) for Years 4–6, and a final unit focusing on John Marsden's poem *Prayer for the 21st Century* for older primary or middle years students. We have left the format of each unit as the teachers crafted them to illustrate that there are many ways to programme using literature as a starting point.

We advocate a classroom where a range of quality classic and contemporary literature is central to the English programme. Teachers will introduce literature daily in different forms including picture books, novels, poetry, plays, song lyrics, graphic novels and visual texts to be shared, enjoyed, discussed, interpreted and responded to. Favourite authors and illustrators will become expert models for writing alongside the modelling the teacher provides in her own expert reading and writing sessions. Opportunities for guided and independent time for talking, listening, reading and writing are programmed regularly. As Robert Scholes (1985) writes:

> We must help our students come into their own powers of textualisation. We must help them see that every poem, play and story is a text related to others, both verbal pre-texts and social sub-texts, and all manner of post-texts, including their own response, whether in speech, writing or action. (p. 20)

This approach envisages the reader as an active text creator and interpreter. Going further, Iser (1989) suggests that understanding a text involves 'actualising' or performing its meaning. The child thus draws on their own experiences and cultural knowledge together with previous texts they have read or listened to (intertextuality) to position themselves as a reader to interpret and negotiate meanings (Crumpler 2006). Teachers need to provide opportunities for children to engage with texts in a range of different ways:

> …such as talking to a character, asking who is not in the story, asking whose story it is, who acts and who is acted upon, what is valued and how value is determined…. (Crumpler 2006, p. 11)

The different Arts disciplines can therefore help children become immersed in the text and beyond and enable them to explore a range of other possibilities than simply what is there on the surface.

The language of quality literature is rich and meaningful on many levels. If images are embedded in the text, they too are usually interpretive rather than merely supportive of the written text. Kiefer (1995, p. 6) terms picture books 'unique arts objects' because they bring together images and ideas that engage students wholistically with a story. Often they evoke an emotional response in us (Jalongo 1998, p. 67). Interpretive and evocative texts often have many layers and can therefore be understood in different ways by readers at many stages and ages. They can also be enjoyed over and over again (Ewing et al. 2008). Each teacher needs to select images, picture books, poems, novels and lyrics that both address the themes or

issues they have chosen to focus on but at the same time will foreground important elements of narrative (e.g. characterisation, plot, description of settings, use of imagery, foreshadowing, etc.) and particular roles of the reader (Luke and Freebody, 1999) or writer. As Margaret Meek (1988) says, the texts, expertly scaffolded by the teacher, will then do a large part of the teaching. We have provided a starting point for those teachers who would like support in selecting quality children's literature in Appendix 1.

3 Criteria for Choosing Quality Children's Literature

There are a number of lists of suggested criteria that may help teachers when choosing quality children's literature. The following suggestions are extended from those suggested by Ewing, Miller and Saxton (2008, p. 126):

A quality text:

- has the potential to sustain interest/engagement for close study for the particular group of children;
- is multilayered—has multiple or alternate layers/levels of meaning;
- is characterised by expressive language and images;
- features images (if included) that are embedded in/contribute to the story rather than only support it;
- makes connections with universal themes or issues/dilemmas; and
- evokes an emotional response.

4 Leading with Literature: Some Exemplars and Units

The first exemplar given below is a sequence of four lessons based on the picture books *Amy and Louis* (Libby Gleeson & Freya Blackwood) and *Banjo and Ruby Red* (Libby Gleeson & Freya Blackwood). In this unit, Janelle Warhurst, the class teacher at the time, particularly chose to focus on helping primary children in Years 3 and 4 understand, and engage with, how feelings can be expressed through text and images that are interdependent. The unit, however, could easily be adapted for Years 1–2 or for older students.

Example

How Do the Picture Books *Amy and Louis* and *Banjo and Ruby Red* Convey Emotion?

Written by Janelle Warhurst for Stage Two (Years 3 and 4), Curl Curl North Primary School.

Why Did We Choose This Story?

This award-winning book was chosen because it provides many opportunities for students to explore the 'gaps' in the text and suggest other stories and possi-

bilities. The story has a narrative structure that is powerful in its simplicity. It is envisaged that after engaging with these activities, the students will experiment with their own writing with:

- narrative devices which influence the reader;
- narrative choices which engage the reader;
- characterisation;
- settings which affect the reader;
- sustained use of precise words; and
- substantial and elaborate ideas.

Key Understandings:

- What is a friend?
- Why is it important to reach out to others in our families when in time of need?

Resource: *Writing Like A Writer* (Libby Gleeson 2007)
Lesson One: One hour
Getting ready for the story:
Introductory or focus questions:

- On examining the cover, what do you think this story will be about? Why?
- Who are the characters? How do you know?
- How old do you think Amy and Louis are? Why? What do you notice about them?

Getting into the story:

Open the book and carefully look at each illustration without the written text before the story starts. Talk about what is on each page and why.

Read the story until the end of the page without showing the children the illustrations: *One of them would soon come climbing through the gap with secrets to share.*

- Talk about the role of the dialogue between Amy and Louis.
- What kinds of games do they play?
- Why do you think their friendship is so special?
- How does Libby Gleeson give the readers a lot of information about the kinds of things Amy and Louis do together and their special friendship in only seven sentences?
- How does Libby Gleeson create a picture for us?
- What kinds of words does she use? Why are these effective?

Activity 1

Write the sentence which helps you to picture the characters in your mind in your journal. Add these to a class notebook together.

Activity 2

Draw four illustrations on your storyboard to show your understanding of the characters and the setting in *Amy and Louis.* (Remind the students that setting and introduction of characters are the orientation of the narrative.)

Read the story right through and show students the illustrations up to the same point.

Activity 3

Work with a partner and create a frozen moment at the end of a scene where you are doing something you enjoy with a friend. How do you think you would feel if your close friend has to move away?

Create a second still image after you have just received this news.

Whole class viewing of some of these frozen images.

Activity 4

In pairs or triads prepare questions to ask Amy/Louis about how she/he feels about their friend not being next door anymore. One child should scribe. Children might also like to hot seat Amy and Louis' parents; hence, questions will be needed for them as well.

Hot seat Amy and Louis (and their parents, if desired).

Lesson Two: **One hour**

After reading the whole story, talk about the power of the visual images (e.g. look again closely at the illustration of buildings).

Look at the image of Louis who is now, that is, alone. Sculpt him.

Focus questions:

- What do you notice about the colours in the illustration?
- How has the situation in the first four pages been changed?
- Use some of the metalanguage of visual literacy (Callow 1999). (e.g. Why do we feel that the buildings in the city are so enormous?)

Activity 1

What does Louis see as his problem?

In groups of two, enact each part of the story where Louis is trying to solve his problem. Eavesdrop on some of these conversations.

In small groups, discuss:

- Who is the person who helps Louis not to give up? How does she do this?
- How does Libby Gleeson help readers imagine that Amy can still communicate with Louis?
- What is another key factor in the resolution of this story?
- Discuss whether the children feel the story has a satisfying ending? Why or why not?

Share group contributions.

Activity 3

Children discuss in small groups whether they enjoyed this story and describe to the group 'why or why not', giving at least two reasons for their opinion.

Conclusion: listen to the contributions of each group.

Lesson Three**: One hour**

- Discuss the characteristics of quality questions.
- Write a question for Libby Gleeson about her writing of *Amy and Louis*. Write it on an A4 paper and illustrate. Add these to the class notebook.

Selected Activities

Paint a picture of your favourite part of the story which conveys to you a strong emotion in the story using water colours.

OR

Make an animation of the story using interactive whiteboard technology.

OR

Create the storyboard for the problem and resolution of the story.

OR

Write a letter to Libby Gleeson about your response to the story which you can send to her.

Lesson Four: **One hour**

- Read, enjoy and discuss *Banjo and Ruby Red.*
- Compare the narrative structure of the two books *Amy and Louis* and *Banjo and Ruby Red*.
- Are the illustrations so important? Why?
- Who is telling this story?

Activity

Write about how different aspects of friendship are depicted in the two stories (Image 7.1).

n.b. A further unit of work exploring friendship through *Amy and Louis* and Oliver Jeffers' *Lost and Found* can be found in *The School Drama Book: Language, Literacy and Literature in the Creative Classroom,* Ewing and Saunders 2016. ◄

Image 7.1 Libby Gleeson with copies of *Amy and Louis*

Teacher's Reflections

This unit of work was written as a result of my own engagement with the narrative when the author, Libby Gleeson read *Amy and Louis* to a group of educators. Libby Gleeson's visit to my class after they had read and studied *Amy and Louis* revealed that the children had also connected with the narrative so as to be deeply emotionally involved with the text. Libby commented on this during her visit. The story particularly engaged the students' imaginations. Letters written to Libby were insightful and demonstrated quality writing and curiosity about Libby's process and the themes of the book. I believe that the unit of work using drama processes helped the students to engage with the plot and tension around Amy's departure while creating contexts, so that students' own experiences played an important role. One student who had said at the beginning "My Mum says that picture books are for babies" commented on how much she loved the story of Amy and Louis. A class author study project also engaged students in the reading of *Dodger*, *Mahtab's Story*, *I am Susannah*, *Eleanor Elizabeth* and *Skating On Sand*. Responses to these texts were extraordinary in terms of their creativity and connections with the characters. (Janelle Warhurst)

The following unit of work, written by Jenny Pickering for a Year 6 class, uses two books and a film that tell the story of Lee Cunxin, the Chinese ballet dancer.

Example

Year 5 and 6 English unit based on *Mao's Last Dancer*

(Li Cunxin) (Young Readers' Edition) Puffin, 2005 and *The Peasant Prince* (Li Cunxin and Anne Spudvilas, Penguin, 2007)

The following unit of work for Stage 3 uses the Puffin Young Reader's Edition of *Mao's Last Dancer* to address English and Creative Arts for Years 5 and 6.

The unit takes at least a term to complete depending upon the extent to which the teacher wishes to take the readers' theatre to performance.

Unit of Work

Part 1: Study of the Autobiography of Dancer Li Cunxin, *Mao's Last Dancer* (Puffin Young Readers' Edition)

1. **Gathering a Field of Knowledge**

Discuss weddings and their different cultural traditions. Students can do this in pairs and then share the information with the class and make a list. Read the first chapter as a class. Discuss and make a similar list to compare the arranged marriage of Li Cunxin's parents in China in 1946. At this stage, the students may be interested in some cultural traditions. (See for example foot binding through research online.) An interview and photos can be accessed on http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=8966942

Students should also have access to and become familiar with a map of China.

2. **Themes**

Divide the class into six groups and give each a large sheet of paper and markers. Write one of the following at the centre of each sheet: 'survival', 'poverty', 'power', 'education', 'communism' and 'family'. The members of each group then add words, symbols and pictures to the sheet of paper. Allow about 1–2 minutes, then on a signal, each group will move onto the next sheet of paper and add

their own ideas. This continues until each group has added their ideas and thoughts to each 'theme'. When they return to the sheet they started on, group members read and discuss what has been added and report to the class: What is surprising/different? These sheets should then be displayed and referred to as the text is read.

3. **Reading the Text**

The class continues to read the text chapter by chapter as a whole class group, in pairs (taking it in turns to read out loud), independently (depending on the reading ability of the students) or using literature circles/reciprocal teaching strategies.

4. **Hot Seat**

Three students are in the 'hot seat' as Li Cunxin, aged 11. A small prop such as an old jacket or a Chinese cap may help the students get into role. The class then ask the three 'Li's' in turn about life. This strategy can be used throughout the story to clarify the text and gain a deeper understanding of the characters and explore the spaces in the text. Similarly, other characters can be hot seated.

5. **Writing in Role**

This strategy can be used at important stages throughout the story after hot seating Li. Li writes to his family as soon as he arrives in Beijing describing his journey, his feelings and his fears. He writes later about life at Madam Mao's Academy and then writes letters from the United States. Alternatively, students can write in the role of other characters to develop further understandings of the complexities of the story.

6. **Teacher in Role**

This is an excellent way to explain the historical context of the story when it seems appropriate (around Chaps. 4 or 5). A brief history of China can be found at the back of the book to help the teacher in this task. Teacher in role as Li's *niang* is an excellent way to start. The teacher should have a small prop to symbolise the role such as a cap or jacket. Students can then brainstorm questions to ask in small groups for the teacher to answer in role.

This can be done at various times during the reading of the text in order to explain the political and social context. In addition, the teacher in role as dance teacher Zhang, The Bandit or Ben will enable the teacher to explain not only the context of the story but also how propaganda was used.

7. **Frozen Moments/Depiction**

At various times during the reading of the story, the teacher breaks the class into groups and asks them to choose a critical moment in the chapter so far (or at the end of the chapter or when the whole story has been read): What happened before and what happened after this critical moment?

Each group works out the time, place and what each character should do leading up to the critical moment. Give the groups about 5 minutes to discuss and rehearse their actions and write a caption for the critical moment on a strip of paper. The class then observe each group as they bring that part of the text to life and freeze when the teacher claps. On the second clap, they continue their scenario.

The class are then invited to comment on what the group considered a critical moment and why. The performers then have their chance to comment.

8. **Giving a Precious Gift** (See Miller and Saxton 2004, pp. 60–61)

Do this activity before reading Chapter 11 (The Pen).

Students are in pairs. Student A is asked to think of a precious thing that they are prepared to give as a gift for student B. It must be able to be held in the hand and it must be something that will make B happy. A mimes presenting this gift to Student B who mimes his delight at receiving it. Then B does the same. In a circle, share the gifts.

Read the chapter about the pen. Discuss why it is so significant. Use the charts made in Activity 2 to relate its symbolic importance to the story. (Family ties, the value of education, escape from poverty, sacrifice.)

9. **Dance: 'The Frog in the Well'.**

Students view the Guangdong Acrobatic Troupe of China on You Tube as inspiration: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btiBzU9mCgY

Use acrobatic and frog-like movements to tell the story of the 'Frog in The Well'. Swan Lake music can be used or students may choose their own music.

10. **Soundscape**

Provide students with a wide variety of percussion instruments. Students who play other musical instruments may also use them. Students are asked to compose a soundscape to represent Li Cunxin's life or a part of his life.

Part 2: Response to the Movie *Mao's Last Dancer*

After reading the book, students can view the movie *Mao's Last Dancer.*

Discuss how the movie is not structured in a chronological order. The following questions might be useful: Why might the movie have been structured in this way? What choices did the director make that you agree with? What about those that surprise you? Is there anything you would change if you were the director? (refer to Media Arts chapter).

Part 3: *The Peasant Prince*—Picture Book Study and Readers' Theatre

Read the story of *The Peasant Prince.*

Discuss the illustrations and compare the picture book with the text of *Mao's Last Dancer* with the movie.

Divide the class into 11 groups. Each group is to have a copy of the pages assigned to their group. By dividing the story up into 11 groups, each group should have 2 pages of the text to turn into a script, so there will be 11 scenes.

Each group will then perform the following steps:

Step 1. Draw a storyboard of their section of the story on pieces of A4 paper, one page for each drawing. The storyboard should depict the scenes they will need to script in order to narrate the story while others mime the actions.

The pages from each group are then displayed in order so that the whole story comes together.

Step 2. Writing the script. Using the text in *The Peasant Prince* as well as the students' knowledge of the story from the *Mao's Last Dancer* and the movie, the students construct a script that has narration as well as speaking parts.

Step 3. Workshopping the script. Students read the script, assigning parts to each group member. Students should consider voice and facial expression to enhance their storytelling. Careful consideration should be given to which words or phrases need to be emphasised and how.

Step 4. Perform the readers' theatre script. Each group take turns to read their section of the story.

Small props may be used to help students get into role; for example, Mao caps can be obtained from Chinatown. (This means that multiple students will read as the same character—there will be a Li in each group.)

Step 5. Adding movement, mime, sound and music. This is only necessary if the readers' theatre is to become a performance. The best way to do this is to have students from other groups acting while the group that wrote the script reads the characters' parts and the narration.

It will be necessary to add actions and movements to the script for each of the 11 scenes. Dances (e.g. The Frog in the Well dance) and songs can be added if appropriate.◀

Teacher's Reflections

My Year 6 class began the unit of work by reading 'Mao's Last Dancer' (Young Readers' Edition) together in class. I designed a program following Miller and Saxton's (2004, 2016) guidelines and added visual art, music and writing activities. In addition, the students researched some of China's recent history using the interactive whiteboard and a series of websites so they would have a context for the story. They completed independent research projects on topics such as foot binding, weddings, The Long March, Chairman Mao, Madam Mao and the Little Red Book. Teacher in role was a wonderful way to give the students background knowledge and explain the political situation in China. I took on the role of Li's mother, teacher and his American sponsor and the children's questions allowed me to explain situations.

We also used literature circles to read some of the chapters and they sometimes read independently before or after a drama strategy. We also had the opportunity to participate in a video conference with Li Cunxin himself and the screen writer Jan Sardi. After reading the book, we saw the movie and compared the film with the book. The students wrote reviews. We then decided to use the text to develop a musical for our end of year concert. The process drama and writing conducted throughout the unit were major contributors to the performance as the students had gained insights that allowed them to interpret the story for themselves. (Jenny Pickering)

The final unit is based on John Marsden's *Prayer for the 21st Century.* Although published in 1997, this reflection is even more relevant today and is a wonderful example of a book that speaks to all ages. Marsden articulates his hopes and fears in a compelling way and challenges us to do the same.

Example

Prayer for the 21st Century by John Marsden

May the road be free for the journey,
May it lead where it promised it would.
May the stars that gave ancient bearings
Be seen and be understood:
May every aircraft fly safely;
May every traveller be found;
May sailors in crossing the seas,
Not hear the cries of the drowned.

May gardens be wild like jungles,
May nature never be tamed.
May dangers create of us heroes,
May fears always have names.
May the mountains stand to remind us
Of what it means to be young;
May we be outlived by our daughters,
May we be outlived by our sons.

May the bombs rust away in the bunkers,
And the doomsday clock not be rewound;
May the solitary scientists, working,
Remember the holes in the ground.
May the knife remain in the holder,
May the bullet stay in the gun,
May those who live in the shadows
Be seen by those in the sun.

Rationale

This is a highly valuable drama sequence Robyn Ewing has found suitable for facilitating the creation of a safe and collaborative classroom community at the beginning of the year for primary students in Stages 2 and 3 (and beyond). Each of these activities may take a whole session in a primary classroom and could be implemented over a number of days.

Warming Up

Children are asked to close their eyes and imagine that they have a magic wand and can do something positive to change the world with questions such as: What do they most wish for the world? They can talk about this in pairs and then write down their wish in a safe place.

Getting into the Poem

The teacher reads John Marsden's *Prayer for the 21st Century* slowly right through twice. She asks children to listen to a second reading and this time to identify one couplet that 'speaks to them'—that they really like best/identify with.

The teacher provides an example of one that is meaningful for him or her. For example:

My choice as a mother is: *May we be outlived by our daughters/May we be outlived by our sons* because there was a space of a fortnight where my three (adult) children all had very difficult experiences and each could have been lost to me.

Teacher displays a copy of the poem on the whiteboard for ready reference.

Depiction/Frozen Moments

Students share the couplet they have chosen with a partner, then join with another pair to discuss their choices. The groups of four choose one of the couplets to depict as a frozen moment/tableau.

The groups present their depiction and others try to identify which couplet they have chosen to represent. Teacher can tap in to track how the participants are feeling at this point in time, especially if the class needs more information to make a constructive guess. The images can be photographed for use later.

Discussion

Children are also asked to nominate any couplet they don't understand. Others are invited to offer their interpretations of these.

Visual Arts

Students are asked to draw the couplet that now is most vivid for them using oil pastels on an A3 sheet of art paper and carefully write the couplet on the back of the paper (Image 7.2).

Reading

The students are asked to think about how they will read their couplet to ensure that its meaning is emphasised—they should annotate it by underlining important words, indicating where they will pause, etc.

Readers' Theatre

Students arrange themselves around the room with their oil pastel drawing outwards in the order of the couplet they have chosen to draw. Some will have chosen the same couplet but when they read their couplet, each will be different because they will all bring their own understandings to their readings. Each student reads their couplet.

The artwork can then be displayed.

Creative Writing

Students return to the wish for the world that they expressed at the beginning. Students and teacher write their own couplets using Marsden's structure. Some may even write their own poem.

The couplets can be collated, illustrated and read aloud. Later they can be depicted and represented visually as ____'s *Prayer for the Classroom/World/20__* or published on the wall beside their earlier work.

Other renditions of the poem can be developed. (see, for example:

The Dandelion Dance Company's interpretation:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gt9YGpQto_s

and the illustrations by Canadian students in Aldershot school in Burlington with music by Bob Friesen:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPqM9Nseyj0)

Image 7.2 Josh's example of 'Let those who live in the shadows be seen by those in the sun'

Teacher's Reflection

I have used this drama structure with children from late in Year 2 to experienced teachers. John Marsden's powerful couplets never fail to engage participants. Every time I workshop this poem I am struck by the discussion that results from asking participants to share the couplets that are meaningful and those they're not confident about or don't understand.

For example, there are a range of different possibilities explored for each couplet but this one is often queried leading to a discussion about nuclear war: 'May the solitary scientists working/Remember the holes in the ground'.

The structure of the workshop is useful for many poems. (Robyn Ewing) ◀

5 Summary

The language and images of quality literature are artistic, evocative and expressive and can be enjoyed many times over and at different stages of our life. The richness and meaning of literary texts can be explored at many levels. Students' understanding of literature can be deepened through exploration involving the other Arts disciplines. Multilayered and integrated learning experiences can take students further into the text.

Questions

Which unit do you think might be adapted for your class? What are the features you find most useful? The most challenging? Why?

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Useful Websites

Children's Book Council of Australia
https://cbca.org.au
Picture books.: http://picturingbooks.com/index.php

Reading Australia

https://readingaustralia.com.au
Author websites
Premiers' and Prime Minister's Literary Awards

Leading with Media Arts

8

Learning Objectives

- to understand the difference between media and media arts;
- to recognise the value of media arts education;
- to develop skills basic film techniques;
- to explore some starting points for media arts in the classroom; and
- to understand the role of advertisements.

1 Introduction

Today's children live in an increasingly media-rich environment. Many children are both knowledgeable and enthusiastic consumers of new technologies and multimedia (Waheed Khan 2008). Areas included by the term have significantly expanded in recent times. Media arts education now includes traditional forms of media such as television, film, radio and newspapers as well as more contemporary developments like smart phones, DVDs, video games, computers, the internet and digital cameras. But children don't simply consume media as part of their everyday lives. Thomas (2007) argues that for many children, there is a seamlessness about their online and offline worlds. She writes:

> For children, there is no such dichotomy of online and offline or virtual and real – the digital is so much intertwined into their lives and psyche that the one is entirely enmeshed with the other....what they do in their virtual worlds significantly affects how they connect to society. (p.3)

This new convergence culture (Jenkins 2006) of digital and non-digital activities requires that students develop the necessary skills to critically analyse and appreciate the aesthetic qualities of all kinds of media and as a result use them in creative

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processes as with any of the other artforms. In order for students to become media-literate and participate in digital culture as creative practitioners, they require more than technical understandings.

This chapter explores how media can be used as an active and engaging learning tool across the creative arts and other Key Learning Areas. Initially, we offer some simple and accessible starting points to approach media arts in the primary and middle years including video, advertising, photography and storyboarding.

2 What Is Media Education?

According to Pitner (2008):

> Media education celebrates modern society, awash in a constant barrage of information. It encourages people to begin questioning the mass media messages, not taking things at face value. It encourages questioning how technology used to present something may affect how it is received. (p. 1)

In essence, media education encourages students to think about media messages in a critical manner. Through this engagement, they learn the language of the media and increase their skills in how to prepare, read and communicate through media. With experience, they begin to understand that there is a constant reference to the ways in which different media in different ways convey different issues to us.

▶ **Activity**

Keep a 24-hour log of your media usage. How does this compare to the children in your class? What similarities/differences can you identify?

3 What Is Media Arts?

In the last century, 'media' referred to television, radio, film and print media. As mentioned earlier, it now encompasses a range of new media including a growing number of digital devices—mobile phones, iPads and laptops**.** There is no doubt that technology has forever changed our daily lives and children often appear 'to traverse this digital culture with confidence and relative ease' (Dezuanni 2017, p. 129). Yet many teachers would say that not a lot has changed in terms of ICT classroom practice since the introduction of computers in the early 1990s (Buckingham 2013). Media arts may have been designed to address the needs of the digital age but it is a subject deeply rooted in 90 years of screen studies (Dezuanni 2017).

Once relegated to a specialised subject in the senior years of schooling or taken up by young people in their out-of-school practices, media arts is now included in both early childhood and primary curriculum. In Australia, for example, media arts forms part of the *Australian curriculum: The arts* which includes dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts. According to ACARA (2011):

> Media arts involves creating representations of the world and telling stories through communication technologies such as television, film, video, newspapers, radio, video games, the internet and mobile media.

Media arts is now seen as having an essential role in equipping children to deal with the many challenges and opportunities of contemporary life (Goldsmith 2014). As a strand of a learning area in the Arts, it requires students to both make and respond to media works.

In the Arts, the term 'media arts' applies to all forms of time-related artworks which are created by recording visual images or sound. These include video, sound and computer art, both installations and internet projects. Media arts therefore has strong links to visual arts which also uses a range of materials and is processed to create static and time-based artworks that often use digital technologies.

'Making' involves students learning technical production skills such as how to frame and compose a shot, how to record sound, how to edit image or soundtracks and how to incorporate visual and sound effects. 'Responding' requires students to analyse media works with the aim of assisting them to become critical and ethical media creators, users and consumers (Goldsmith 2014).

While we have moved from being passive consumers to becoming active producers of media (Tapscolt and Williams 2008), it is important to acknowledge that not all children have access to computers, the internet and tools of technology or have experiences with all the new technologies. This has been termed 'a digital divide' between the 'digital natives' (young children) and the 'digital immigrants' (their teachers) (Prensky 2001).

4 The Value of Media Arts Education

Today's child is surrounded by a plethora of media images and messages from birth. Many view screen time as detrimental to a child's emotional, social and intellectual development. However, the media also provides us 'with a distinctive and vital means of expression, [is] a dominant and global source of stories, ideas and opinions, and [is] an increasingly important part of our cultural heritage' (Bfi Education 2003, p. 1). It is therefore crucial that children develop the ability to critically analyse the media and use it effectively in the creative arts and across the curriculum (Kervin 2016). For many teachers, teaching about, in and/or through media remains a daunting area and is often neglected despite the knowledge and enthusiasm evident in their own classrooms.

In western cultures the majority of children come to school with extensive experience in film, television and video (Bromley 1999). Buckingham (2013) maintains that many children begin school with a high level of existing knowledge of media materials and messages. Therefore, teachers can 'enable students to build upon this knowledge, to develop new insights and understandings' (p. 5) through meaningful talk and play. It's also important for teachers to acknowledge that their students may indeed be more knowledgeable in some areas of media and that they can indeed

benefit from this expertise themselves. Harel-Caperton (2003) refers to this generation of students as 'the Clickerati kids' since they bring a new set of expectations to technology. 'Pupils who can read a variety of texts and messages critically, and who can produce in a range of media, are best equipped for the complex technological world of the 21st century' (Bfi Education 2003, p. 5).

Working with media can be relevant and engaging. But it is dependent on the current interests, social needs and cognitive abilities of the 'digital natives'. To this end, the content should be negotiable. More than two decades ago, Carol Craggs (1993) identified four key areas of media investigation that underpin what should be taught at the primary/middle years level. These are still relevant today:

1. Selection and construction. What is seen, read or heard through the media has been selected and constructed by media professionals whose decisions are imbued with differing ideologies and values.
2. A sense of audience. Media messages are imparted to an audience. Like all communication, this is a two-way process which involves the interaction of the communication itself and audience diversity.
3. Representations of reality. Distinguishing reality from a range of different representations of reality offers insights into many taken-for-granted conventions.
4. Narrative techniques. Media material is organised according to a narrative structure. Any media product can be analysed in terms of the storyline where it is a documentary film, a newspaper article, a comic strip or a news broadcast.

Craggs' last point draws attention to the importance of exploring narrative techniques, so that children come to appreciate the presence of narrative in all forms of media through:

- drawing storyboards for title sequences;
- creating storylines for magazine advertisements;
- re-sequencing cut-up comic strips; and
- creating picture stories from a series of photographs.

5 Warming Up to Media: Basic Film Techniques

Prior to engaging with any of the media activities suggested in the second part of this chapter, adequate time needs to be devoted to eight basic techniques which are essential preliminaries to any practical work involving film.

These eight techniques have been adapted from the Bfi teaching guide *Look again!* (2003) published by the British Department of Education and Skills (DfES), pp. 7–13. Any of these techniques can be used in short sessions to develop students' critical awareness of how moving image texts work.

- *The language of film*—everything in a moving image text is saying something and in some way contributes to its overall meaning.

1. Freeze Frame

   We have already encountered frozen moments, images or depiction in several earlier chapters; hence, students can develop this further by looking at a shot of a short film or extract. They then discuss what they can see in the 'frozen' image; how the elements are positioned; how colour and lighting affect what is seen; how the camera angle should be set; how much should the distance between the camera and the subject/s be.
2. Sound and Image

   This particular technique allows students to see how important sound is in the interpretation of any moving image text. The teacher covers the screen and asks the students to listen to a short sequence from a film, the television or a video soundtrack. The students are asked to describe exactly what they hear and identify the type of text they think it is. They should offer suggestions about the content and style of the images in the sequence. Finally, the teacher shows the complete sequence and encourages a discussion about how sound and images affect each other. This activity can be followed up using different kinds of music, sound effect, voices, etc.
3. Spot the Shots

   This technique draws the students' attention to the editing process. The students view a short film sequence and attempt to guess the number of shots used. They watch the scene again and mark each change in shot, scene location and sound. On their third viewing, they look at how the shot transitions are created. They also time each shot. Through this exercise students should begin to realise that the number, sequence and duration of shots all contribute to a film's meaning and are created through the editing process.

   - *Production for an Audience*—the following two techniques deal with the ways in which moving images are produced and aimed at a specific audience.
4. Top and Tail

   Show the title sequence of a film or video. Ask the students to identify its genre, that is, comedy, thriller, etc., and its intended audience. Ask them to predict its content and possible 'message'. Show the production credits at the end of the film and quote the following question: What information does this provide?

   In pairs, ask the students to research a particular role that they saw in the credits such as director, lighting engineer or producer. These findings could be presented through a hot-seating/questioning in role activity (see drama chapter, p. 119).
5. Attracting Audiences

   Marketing and promotional strategies are central to most media industries. In pairs or small groups, students find examples of merchandise or promotional items related to a current film or television programme. They then select one item and present their findings via a creative form, that is, poster montage, poem or news broadcast.

   In a following art lesson, the pupils could design their own merchandising items for a real or imaginary TV show.

- *Recognising the Conventions*—the final three techniques enable the students to explore ways of recognising the conventions of moving image texts and then make changes to them in order to investigate an issue or a topic.
  6. Genre: What Happens Next

     The teacher shows a short clip from a film, a video or a TV show with a clearly identifiable genre (science fiction, western, sitcom, soap opera) but stops before the climax. Based on their knowledge of the genre, the students script/storyboard an ending to the scene that counters the generic expectations.
  7. Generic Translation

     Each media has its own language, conventions and genre. To demonstrate this, the students 'translate' a segment of a documentary, TV news item, a commercial or a scene from a feature film into print form; for example, a short story or poem, a magazine feature or a newspaper article. Alternatively, they could translate a printed text into a moving image form; firstly as a script or storyboard and then as a video.
  8. Simulation/Production

     The final activity allows the students to see that content and form vary according to the audience and purpose. Small groups of students are placed in role as producers of a short film to be used in a specific curriculum area, for example, science, physical education, mathematics, etc. (Anderson and Jefferson 2009). They need to consider the age group of the intended audience, how they might 'sell' their idea to this audience and how they might structure their text for maximum effect. They then present their ideas to the class.

     What follows are some starting points for working with media in the primary/middle years classroom. To complement these, we offer other exemplars using *The iron man* (1968) by Ted Hughes as a springboard into a series of creative arts lessons, descriptions of new technology projects and a poetry-rich task for middle years students. The chapter concludes with a unit of work that culminates in a class music video and another based around the theme of 'the great escape'.

Example

Some Starting Points to Work with Media in the Classroom

The Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) free Media Lab Resources may be useful here. They can be found at: https://medialab.aftrs.edu.au

1. *Camera Positions*

Working in small groups, students look through magazines to find examples of different camera shots such as a long shot, mid- or medium shot, close-up, extreme close-up, extreme long shot and camera angles or shot types including high and low angle, eye level, aerial, over-the-shoulder and point-of-view shot. Picture books can be helpful here (see for example, Callow 1999).

2. *Framing*

This activity encourages the students to find different points of interest in an image, rather than the centre of the frame.

1		2
3		4

In pairs, pupils grid up a large piece of paper as in the above example. They then look through magazines to find examples of:

- an image with centre of interest at 1;
- an image with centre of interest at 2;
- an image with centre of interest at 3; and
- an image with centre of interest at 4.

Early finishers could try to locate a photograph that does not obey the 'rule of thirds'.

3. *In Focus*

The following activity is concerned with depth of field. Through it, students will understand that photographers make decisions about which key parts within a frame to emphasise.

Individuals source family photographs for examples of:

- a photo where all the information is clearly focused;
- a photo where the background is slightly out of focus;
- a photo where the foreground is not in focus; and
- a photo where only a small segment is in focus.

4. *Some Simple Camera Exercises*

In pairs, students explore the school environment to find and photograph:

- weeds in odd places;
- litter;
- circles in the environment;
- riangles in the environment;
- patterns and shapes of leaves;
- objects with unusual textures;
- the use of timber; and
- animal life.

5. *Communicating Through Storyboards*

In groups of 3–4, pupils divide an A3 page into eight squares to create a storyboard based on one of the following storylines. Attention should be paid to the sequence, camera shots and camera angles used.

- what it feels like to be lonely;
- what it feels like to be bullied;
- what sunshine feels like;
- what a rainy day feels like;
- a dog's view of the world; and
- the world as a busy, bustling place.

6. *An Introduction to the Video Camera*

Students work collaboratively in groups of 5–6. The first student takes 4 seconds of film on any subject. The group walks on until the second student finds something that has a similar shape or colour. Using a different camera angle and shot distance, the next student takes 4 seconds of film. This process continues until each student in the group has filmed for 4 seconds.

In the consecutive sessions, the groups can edit their films, add music/sound effects, titles and credits before presenting them at a year/grade's 'Short Film Festival'.

7. *Ideas for Animation*

Social studies themes and science topics offer some interesting possibilities in terms of simple animation. Consider volcanoes, the weather cycle, flight, the life cycle of a chicken, etc. ◄

6 Advertisements

Advertisements saturate our visual environment. If we wish our students to become informed consumers and active producers in this visually rich world, we need to expose them to the many genres of advertising and the advertising techniques used to persuade audiences to buy, watch, use or learn more about a product.

► **Activity**

Activity: Advertising Hunt

As a class take an excursion around the local/school community. In groups of 3–4, students take digital photographs of advertisements, that is, in bus shelters, on noticeboards, in shop windows, on buses, etc. Students should aim to take 6–8 clear images. They can also add some of those in the print media.

At school, these photographs are loaded onto computers and then imported into PowerPoint or a similar program. Space should be left on each slide for the pupils to annotate, that is, type of advertisement, location, intended audience, visual techniques, etc.

Example

Exemplar *The Iron Man*

Setting the Scene

As a class watch the beginning segment of the film *The iron giant* (1999). Prompt a discussion about the film techniques used and their effect on the audience. Consider the use of colour, music and the feeling of suspense as the giant emerges from the ocean.

Compare with the first few pages of the novel, *The iron man* (Ted Hughes, 1968).

Ask each student to invent a sound and action that is reflective of a giant robot. They then pair up and combine their sounds and movements. Three pairs then join together and combine their sounds and movements into one creative piece. These are then performed and videoed for later use.

Visual Images

In groups of 5 or 6, the children look at the covers of various editions of *The iron man* (Ted Hughes). For example, the 1980 text was illustrated by George Adamson, 1999 by Andrew Davidson and 2005 by Tom Gauld.

Each group looks closely at one cover. They are asked to describe the giant's physical characteristics, his personality, his purpose, etc. Individuals record their observations on post-it notes and attach them to the cover of their book. They then read pages one and two of the story and sketch from the description.

Creating a Recycled Robot

Begin this activity with a disposable bottle that has an interesting shape, that is, a detergent or cleaning bottle will make an effective base. Attach a corrugated cardboard, icy-pole sticks, matchsticks, buttons, bottle tops, malleable wire, etc. to create a 'robot'. Use polyvinyl acetate (PVA) glue or masking tape to secure these items to the 'body' of the robot (Image 8.1).

Spray each robot with grey or silver paint.

(Please note that, given the health and safety concerns of using spray paint, this needs to be done outside in a ventilated area by the teacher, NOT the students.)

Moving into Drama

Return the robots to the classroom upon drying. The students begin the final activity by giving their robot an appropriate name, that is, Clunk, Nuts and Bolts, etc.

They are then asked to list any words and phrases that could be used to describe him: What sound/s does he make? How does he move?

Individuals then combine with two other class members and develop a scenario that tells the audience about their 'Iron Man' via his interaction with the other two robots. Once again, these are performed for the rest of the class and videoed.

In the following sessions, the students can edit their short film and add sound effects, music and credits before showing it to the 'film critics' (members of another class) who will critique their efforts using established criteria. ◄

Image 8.1 Robot made from recycled materials

7 Some Media Examples

As previously stated, we live in a technologically diverse, post-typographic society. People in today's workplaces are doing jobs that did not even exist when they were born. Moreover, these people will enter a dozen or more careers in their lifetimes. Thus, teachers need to take full advantage of technology to promote student learning. At the same time, with technological innovation comes obsoleteness: as soon as we put pen to paper or fingertip to computer keyboard to describe a 'new technology', we find that it has been superseded by a newer, a better, and a faster one.

Students appreciate the interactivity of digital mediums. New computer-based digital technologies are often highly relevant to the everyday cultural world of today's student and provide them with access to new forms of arts experiences. Video games, the internet, interactive web-based games, etc. are not essential to the creative arts, but the impact of these new technologies has been profound. As contemporary teachers, we cannot ignore the intense engagement by students as a result of such highly sophisticated technology. We must provide an environment that enables students to understand that artforms such as drama, music, dance or visual arts can be created without any technological assistance but that each can also be enhanced by technology, if appropriate or desirable (Morris 2003).

In the following section, we discuss two websites which enable students (and their teachers) to research, experiment and explore the digital and online world.

- *Inanimate Alice*

Inanimate Alice is an ongoing digital novel, an interactive multimodal fiction about an eight-year-old girl, Alice Field and her imaginary digital friend, Brad. It is suitable for students from primary ages upwards. The level of interactivity starts out low in episode 1 but increases with each subsequent episode reflecting Alice's own growing abilities. *Inanimate Alice* has been used successfully as an example of a digital literacy resource. It has been widely recognised both in the United States and Australia as an early example of transmedia storytelling that can take an audience unfamiliar with multimedia fiction on this journey. Students can begin to see the possibilities of multiple literacies (literary, cinematic, artistic) in combination with a participatory online environment.

- *Shakespeare Reloaded/Better Strangers Project* (https://shakespearereloaded.edu.au)

Beginning in 2007 with the challenge of introducing Shakespeare to Year 7 boys, middle years teachers at Barker College and academics at the University of Sydney united in a major research initiative. Now in its fourth phase, the research project combines Shakespeare studies with tertiary and secondary learning and teaching. It seeks to understand and accelerate the literary-critical research competence of Barker's students by engaging them and their teachers in cutting-edge Shakespeare research.

Unique features of the project include:

- the *Shakespeare Reloaded/Better Strangers* website that gives teachers and students online access to the latest research on Shakespeare and his works;
- Imaginaria—professional learning courses delivered initially to English and drama teachers and now more broadly across disciplines;
- travelling fellowships for Barker teachers;
- a Shakespearean Academic-in-Residence located at Barker College once a month and working closely with teachers, for the life of the project; and
- an international Shakespeare conference to share and celebrate the project's findings.

As Professor Liam Semler explains 'Shakespeare is just a very productive lens through which we can look at the way students are learning English literature, and attempt to enrich their learning experience. His active vocabulary is immense, and very creative, so he's someone who delivers texts which are very rich, and they're very rewarding to study, and they are endlessly reinterpreted, generation after generation'.

Example

'Our Music Video'

This creative arts experience will take several sessions to complete and has been designed for students in Stages 3 to 4. Each activity builds on the skills, experience and knowledge developed in the previous and culminates in the production of a music video.

Setting the Scene

Watch segments of contemporary music videos. Break the students into groups of six, so that they can discuss and record what they have observed, that is, the performers, the clothes, the music, the lighting, the audience and the overall theme of the video. Students could also investigate the history of music videos, the types of music videos used by a particular performer, music videos from different countries, etc.

The Elements

Present the idea of a class music video based around the four classic elements of fire, water, earth and air (possible link to a STEM unit).

In the same groups of six, randomly assign one element to each. Students now spend time discussing colours, shapes, textures and patterns associated with their particular element; for example, fire: reds, oranges and yellows; sharp, angular shapes; shiny textures and flamelike patterns.

Experimenting with Materials

Each group selects a 'model or models' to dress using a range of disparate materials such as cellophane, polystyrene, tissue paper, masking tape, string, newspaper, clothes pegs, etc.

Allow time for the students to 'play' with the materials; for example, how the material could be manipulated, that is, crumpled, pleated, gathered, torn, etc. and how it could be joined, that is, tied, slotted, stapled, taped, etc.

Musical Accompaniment

Students are provided with tuned and non-tuned percussion instruments to create a piece of music reflective of their element, that is, air: soft, high-pitched sounds. If appropriate, simple music software can be used to add other musical effects.

Ample time should be spent refining these musical compositions before they are finalised for use in the music video.

Dress and Movement

The students can dress their model/s using the materials available. They may also want to suggest and practice the manner in which their models should move/dance in response to the music. For example, slow versus quickly, jerky versus smooth, straight versus, curved, etc.

Filming and Critiquing the Music Video

Members of each group video their element's component of the music video based on their understanding of the basic film techniques previously discussed. Groups critique each other's performance based on a criteria sheets collaboratively developed by the class. ◄

Teacher's Reflection

Although this unit of work has evolved over the years, it has always been a huge success with the students involved. The theme of the music video can be negotiated with the students thus encouraging them to take ownership of the entire project. Furthermore it demonstrates the ease with which media arts can be integrated with the other Creative Arts in order to create authentic learning experiences. (Robyn Gibson)

Example

'The Great Escape' as Digital Storytelling

The following unit was developed by Kirsty McGeoch, digital storytelling facilitator and Media Arts educator. It is based on a former unit, *The great escape as digital storyboarding*, developed by Miranda Jefferson and offers students an imaginative way to explore the suspense of storytelling using:

- a location in the school or classroom;
- a digital camera;
- movie making software;
- voice recording; and
- music and sound effects.

While the unit has been developed for use by upper primary and middle school students, it has been adapted for younger students who have had prior experience working with multimedia software. Over several sessions, the students collaborate in small groups and create their own short digital story based on the idea of 'the great escape'.

The focus of the learning is to tell a clear story with characters, action and suspense based on the great escape genre. A small number (usually 20) of carefully chosen images are used presented as a short movie of up to 1.5 minutes. Still images, voiceover, transitions between slides and music as rhythmic devices tell the story. As such, it becomes an introductory unit for students to go on to explore moving images and film storytelling as other media artforms. The students experience the learning and creative process of 'digital storytelling' in the following eight steps:

1. **Watch and Learn**

Begin by viewing short escape scenes from films such as *The great escape* with Steve McQueen, *Chicken run* and *Toy story 1, 2, 3 (the bathroom scene).* In groups of four, the students discuss the beginning, middle and end of the escape sequences.

Then as a class, discuss that a beginning has to establish the characters and their situation and their need to escape. The middle has obstacles, action and reactions to create suspense. The end is whether the characters escape or not. The 'great escape' story is like a steeplechase; the obstacles become more difficult as the character(s) try to escape.

2. **Brainstorm 'Lazy Susan'**

Before brainstorming with their group of four, students have some time individually to come up with an idea for a great escape—either a human escaping or an inanimate object. The escape must be located in the classroom or school; for example, an escape from the classroom, the library, a cupboard, a school bag or a lunch box. There can be up to four characters—usually one main character who is trying to escape and others who may be obstacles.

The following process is designed as a scaffold for collaboration, following the elements outlined by Jefferson and Anderson (2017). Divide a piece of A3 paper into quadrants. In the top left quadrant, students write down their initial ideas for a great escape. After a few minutes, everyone passes their paper to the left. In the top right quadrant, their peer will read the idea and then write some ways to extend it, for example, *I like that idea and you could also do x.* The paper than moves to the left again. The next peer reads what is on the paper and then, in the bottom left quadrant, poses some questions or constructive challenges, for example, *How might you show x? I'm not sure there is enough tension there. How could we build it further?* The paper then moves once more to the left. This peer, having read all other boxes, completes the remaining bottom right box with an evaluation: for example, *I like this idea because…. I'm not sure about this idea because….* Finally, the paper is returned to its original owner to read and review. After this, the group can discuss and collectively decide on one or a combination of ideas for their great escape story, and break it down to consider the following:

(i) where is the escape from;
(ii) where is the escape to;
(iii) which characters are escaping;
(iv) what obstacles are in the way; and
(v) how do the characters feel at each stage of the story?

3. **Action Slideshow**

The group acts out their escape in order to develop ideas for the images they will eventually shoot. There will be one storyteller who will narrate using the first person as if they are the voice of the main character. The other group members will form a freeze frame for the following five scenes:

– the beginning showing character, their situation and their need to escape;
– the first obstacle and how it is overcome;
– the second obstacle and how it is overcome;
– the third obstacle and how it is overcome; and
– the ending and whether the escape is successful or not.

These will be acted out for the whole class for feedback on the clarity of the story and whether the features of a great escape are present.

4. **Composition and Framing**

Using the *Toy Story 3 Bathroom scene*, prepare a series of screen shots to explore the following aspects of composition and framing:

- shot types—long shot, mid shot, close-up, extreme close-up, cut in;
- camera angles—high, low, equal;
- the rule of thirds—the placement of a focal subject on intersecting points of the grid or along vertical or horizontal lines.

Images could be printed out and played as a matching game with prompts; for example, *which image depicts the character as powerful and what angle is used to show that.*

5. **Storyboarding**

Groups can use up to 20 images to tell their great escape story. In addition to the initial slideshow the groups prepared, groups can also visit the location in the classroom or school where they plan to shoot their digital story to get further ideas. Groups then sketch out the scenes and add details of the shot types and angles they will use. The storyboard also includes a script of what the character(s) will say. Rather than using the third person, first-person narrations from the point of view of the escapee tend to be the most compelling.

6. **Capturing the Character**

Using strategies like hot seating and role walk can help students get into character before being photographed and/or recording their voiceover. Facial expressions are key to bringing characters to life. In the case of inanimate objects, facial expressions can be drawn on, attached on small pieces of paper, or added in after production using apps or programmes like Photoshop.

7. **Snap the Action**

Each group uses a digital camera and shoots the moments they have selected. They must think about whether it is clear, what each shot is about and where the **focus** is in each shot.

8. **Testing, Tesing, 1, 2, and 3**

Before the final edit, it is good for the group to rehearse the voiceovers and coach each other until satisfied with the characterisation in the voice and the level of emotion and urgency—it is an escape after all.

9. **Play and Edit**

The groups download the digital stills onto the computer and use movie editing software to sequence their images, record voices of the characters, add appropriate transitions and include slides for the title and credits. Music and sound effects appropriate for the action of the escape sequence can be sourced from iMovie or Creative Commons sites. Sound levels should always be checked to ensure that the voiceover can be clearly heard over the music.

10. **Screen Review**

The students view each other's work in a screening and discuss each 'great escape' by quoting the following questions:

(i) Did the images tell a clear escape story for the audience?
(ii) Did the obstacles create suspense?
(iii) What effect did the voiceover have?
(iv) What was the impact of the music and sound effects on the storytelling? ◄

Teacher's Reflection

This 'Great Escape' unit demonstrates the clear connections between the media arts and storytelling. Using resources available in most schools, students can see that media is not simply a technological tool but can be used to create imaginative 'stories' that can engage an audience. Not only is the unit described as 'fun', but students also have the opportunity to develop their capacities to collaborate through a creative shared group endeavour. (Kirsty McGeoch)

Example

'Tropfest Jr in 1 minute' as Film-Making

This unit was also developed by Kirsty McGeoch. It offers an engaging way for students to demonstrate and deepen their knowledge of story principles and media elements through the process of short film-making. Tropfest is the world's largest short film festival, and Trop Jr is open to entries from young people aged 15 and under. Films can be up to 7 minutes in length and must incorporate the Tropfest Signature Item (TSI) in some way, either literally or metaphorically. Past TSIs have included jump, fly, button, mask, rainbow and pizza. This unit takes its inspiration from Trop Jr and involves students collaborating in small groups to create a shorter 1-minute film based on a given TSI, using:

- a location in the school or classroom;
- a digital camera or smart phone;
- movie editing software; and
- soundtrack music.

Developed for use by upper primary and middle school students, this unit assumes some prior knowledge of narrative elements, shot types, camera angles and basic movie editing. The focus of the learning is to craft a story with a clear structure, action, dramatic tension and characters using moving image, music and little or no dialogue. In creating a short film to engage their intended audience, students will gain experience in the four stages of production: pre-production, production, post-production and presentation. Here are the 10 suggested steps:

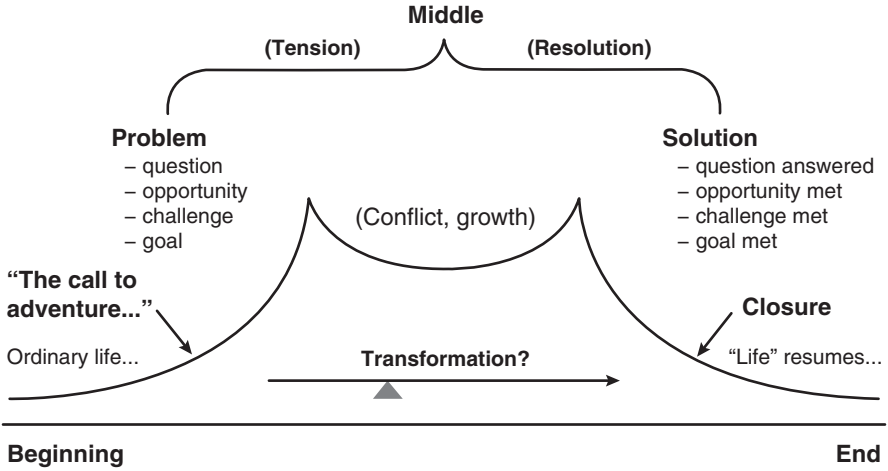
Watch, Review and Learn:

Students can be enrolled as film-makers from the top studios of the world, who have been asked to judge this year's Trop Jr film festival. In groups of four, give students a moment to devise the name of their film studio. Then invite them to judge the first entry (an example of a past Trop Jr film). Students discuss what they notice in terms of the features of the beginning, middle and end of the story and what makes for a strong film narrative.

Then invite a volunteer from each group to stand up at the 'Bus Stop'. The bus stop is a strategy to enable voice in the classroom and reflect on learning (Jefferson and Anderson 2017). Everyone at the bus stop responds to the same open question. Anyone can go first and, once given their answer, can sit down 'on

the bus'. The remaining people at the bus stop cannot repeat what has already been said but can sit down if they contribute a new idea or extend on someone else's previous idea. The 'bus stoppers' can be asked what they noticed about the film they just judged. This process is likely to elicit many of the elements of story and film narrative.

As a class, introduce them to the idea of the story map (see figure below).



Story map

Through whole class discussion, map the short film story to the map. Then watch another short film. Each group will then have an opportunity to create their own story map and annotate it, considering the following:

- the setting and how this was established;
- the characters and how they were brought to life for example, through costumes, props, physicality, facial expressions and voice;
- the beginning, middle and end of the film, and overall clarity of the story;
- the level of tension in the film and how this was built;
- the journey of the main character and any change or transformation that came about; and
- the way that the TSI was incorporated.

Once finished, invite the class to do a 'Gallery Walk' to see what other groups have mapped.

This is done in silence. Students can then go back to their original map and add anything they think is important. Invite different volunteers from each group to do another bus stop to share what they noticed about the story maps by quoting the following questions: Were there any similarities? Were there any differences? Were there some new ideas they hadn't thought about?

Story Storming

Explain that their group has an opportunity to be part of an adapted version Trop Jr and create a film that is 1-minute long (not including credits), contains

little or no dialogue and is based on the TSI. Reveal the TSI and allow time for individual brainstorming/mind mapping/drawing of ideas.

Rotating Pitch

The following process allows for students to practice the elements of collaboration articulated by Jefferson and Anderson (2017). Each student has the same amount of time (approximately 2–3 minutes) to present their initial 'offer' and have the listeners acknowledge the idea and develop it further by discussing its merits, extending it, asking questions and suggesting what might work or what might be a challenge. This process is repeated for each group member. Before proceeding to the next stage, invite students to share what they noticed about the process of sharing their story ideas and how this might be linked to the collaborative process of film-making.

Developing a Shared Idea

Having heard and explored all offers, the group then discusses which one will developed by the group. It could well be an amalgamation of several ideas that were presented in the rotating pitch phase. The following prompts can guide the process:

- Who is the main character?
- Where is it set?
- What happens at the start of the film?
- What's the complication/problem?
- What twists or interesting story points will keep the audience interested/maintain tension? Will you play with the audience's expectations?
- How is it resolved?
- How does the character change or grow?

Everyone in the group creates a story map. Each student will need a copy of their group's story map for the next activity.

Jigsaw Pitch

Jigsaw the groups so that there is one representative from each film studio in the new group.

Each person has 3 minutes to pitch and then receive constructive feedback from the group.

Representatives return to their original film studios to share feedback and make any adjustments or enhancements.

Spot the Shots

Returning to the first example Trop Jr film, watch a segment and either use screen shots or pause the recording to 'Spot the shots'. Do this as a review of the following:

- the choice of shot types (long shot to establish the setting, mid shot to show the character in relationship with others, close-up to show emotion, extreme close-up to further amplify characters emotions);

- the use of particular camera angles (high angle to make the subject look more vulnerable, low angle to make the subject look more powerful, or eye level for equal power relations);
- the use of the rule of thirds in composing the shots; and
- types of camera movement and its effect (e.g. panning to show discovery). In student film, it is recommended not to use zoom but to jump to a closer shot or have the subject walk towards the camera.

Storyboarding

Groups then begin storyboarding their films including sketches of each frame, details of the shot types, angles and camera movements. Films that are 1-minute long tend to have around 20–30 frames depending on the genre. Prior to filming, groups can draft their own production schedules listing the scene, location, props needed and who will be acting, directing, filming, using the clapper board, checking for continuity (e.g. that if filming occurs over several occasions, the actors are wearing the same costumes and hairstyles) and so on. This helps in planning for sharing the roles, so that group members each get an opportunity to experience different tasks. It also affords efficiency in terms of when and where the scenes are to be filmed (not necessarily sequentially according to the storyboard).

3-2-1 Action

Each group begin the filming process using their production schedule and storyboard as a guide. Shots can be immediately previewed as they are filmed. Groups may well decide that a different shot is needed to convey meaning more purposefully. In this way, the storyboard is a working guide and not a prescription.

Editing

Using a movie-making software, group members share the process of editing their film. Editing is a key component of storytelling and can be used to convey emotion, manipulate time and ensure continuity. Considerations for the group in this phase include:

Transitions—while in most cases ‘cuts’ are used, when might we use a fade in or a dissolve.

Music and sound effects—what will suit the mood of the piece and the tempo of the action. Music is freely available in iMovie. There are also many Creative Commons resources available to avoid copyright issues.

Viewing

Groups can present drafts of their short films for viewing and feedback based on their successful control storytelling and media elements to engage an audience. After receiving feedback, groups work to finesse their films for a final screening, celebration and reflection on learning. ◄

Teacher's Reflection

> Through this 'Tropfest Jr in 1 minute' unit students are able to develop and demonstrate their understanding of how narrative and media elements can be purposefully controlled in order to make an engaging film. The unit can form the basis of or be adapted to meet the submission requirements of Trop Jr, or other local or international film festivals for young people. Having an authentic purpose, of either screening for the school community or for a broader audience ignites learner investment in the task. The unit also provides opportunities for capacities in the 4Cs to be explicitly taught, practised and reflected upon. (Kirsty McGeoch)

8 Conclusion

In our current world, media is all-pervasive. Media arts offers both student and teacher a new way of making meaning in the twenty-first-century digital economy. It is important that children develop the necessary skills to think about the media creatively, safely and ethically. In this chapter, we have attempted to unpack media education and its value in today's contemporary classroom. As a highly relevant learning tool, we have provided several activities in which use video, photography, storyboarding and advertising as springboards for creative and engaging learning.

As teachers we need to 'forge boldly ahead with our eyes open and with analysis', (McGuire 2012, p. 122) realising that media literacy is as vital as reading, writing and numeracy for our children's futures.

Questions

1. *Working with a colleague, look at Cragg's four areas of media investigation on page 134. Can you map these to the literacy outcomes in your class?*
2. *How might you integrate 'media arts' into an already overcrowded curriculum? Present a case that you could share with the school executive.*
3. *A common argument used against media activities in a primary/middle school relates to a lack of resources. Take an inventory of 'any resources' available in your class, school and local community. You could be pleasantly surprised!*

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Useful Weblinks

Inanimate Alice
http://www.InanimateAlice.com
Media Lab
https://medialab.aftrs.edu.au
Shakespeare Reloaded/Better Strangers
https://shakespeareReloaded.edu.au/

Leading with Music

9

Learning Objectives

- to understand that music is a 'way to perceive' and 'a way to engage interactively with the world;
- to consider what music is, what music can be and the role that music can play in school-based learning experiences; and
- to enable students to become deeply engaged with music as an enjoyable and relevant mode of meaning-making.

It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge (*Albert Einstein*)

1 Introduction

In the twenty-first century we have come to take the ubiquitous presence of music for granted. Regardless of our conscious level of engagement with music, we hear music everywhere! Inevitably virtually all of us have some kind of relationship with music: as a passive listener at the least, or perhaps as an engaged and active appreciator of music, albeit within the range of a particular style that suits our taste, sense of identity or sensibility. We may engage occasionally as an active participant in a music-making activity or we may have a deep commitment to pursuing musical participation as a major and significant part of our lives. We may choose to think of ourselves as musical or unmusical.

The rapid development of digital technology in the past two decades has resulted in an exponential increase in the availability, range and contexts within which music listening and musical participation are readily available. Alongside the 'invasion of

R. Gibson, R. Ewing, *Transforming the Curriculum Through the Arts*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-52797-6_9

recorded music via multiple technological means in everyday lives' (Lines 2005, p. 2), there has been an expansion of the tools available for creating, making, listening to and sharing music. In addition, technology has contributed to a 'shrinking' of the world, as cultural experiences associated with distant locations are now accessible, in the virtual sense, at the push of a keyboard button or the soft sweep of a finger across an iPhone or iPad surface. This is the only world that the students we teach have known. At the same time, at this moment in the twenty-first century, we face the frightening prospect of environmental catastrophe, alarming ever-increasing socio-economic disparity and a range of unstable and confusing political developments.

The educational experience cannot be tidily compartmentalised into a five-hour day or a sequence of 30-minute lessons, which bears little relationship to the world that our students live in or to the knowledge and skills the students bring as a result of living in that world. Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) coined the term 'funds of knowledge' to describe the 'historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being' (p. 133). As teachers we need to ask ourselves how we can make visible, draw upon and celebrate these rich funds of knowledge that our students bring with them to the classroom? Therefore, the challenge to the teacher in the twenty-first-century classroom in relation to 'leading with music' is not merely how to integrate musical skills and knowledge into a classroom programme, but how to engage students in musical experiences that are meaningfully connected to the world—both musical and non-musical—that they inhabit now and in the future.

Schmidt (2005) asserts that music must be thought of as a 'way to perceive' and 'a way to engage interactively with the world' (p. 9). Utilising a Freirean perspective, he calls for music education as transformative practice. He challenges the efficacy of any music education approach in which music is treated as an 'object' or a 'discipline', somehow disconnected from the real world of sociopolitical concerns within which we all live. In his view and the view of others, at the heart of the educational enterprise is a concern with social justice and human well-being. That is the position I will be adopting in what follows.

This chapter offers you, in a small way, the opportunity to think about what music is, what music can be and the role that music can play in school-based learning experiences. Loosely framing this chapter are the questions: how can we lead learning with music? What does it mean to learn through music, to learn about music and to learn in music? It is intended that through reading and reflecting on what follows, and by following up on some of the leads that the activities suggest, you will become more deeply engaged with music as a mode of meaning-making and more motivated to lead your students to an enjoyable and relevant engagement with music in their lives.

2 What Is Music?

Small (1998) coined the term 'musicking' as a descriptive, non-value-laden term, intended to convey the active, participatory nature of all of the activities involved in what we call music. The term musicking allows us to acknowledge an activity that is shared by most of the population on our planet and encompasses everything associated with the musical experience. Available to every human being, musicking fulfils a multitude of social purposes and functions. It follows that each different form of musicking can be, and should be, valued in its own terms.

Bowman and Frega's (2012) description of music, not as 'a single, uniform entity but a far-flung, ever-shifting constellation of human practices' (p. 21), recognises both the 'doing' and the diverse nature of music. Music is a contextually situated set of practices constituted by a wide range of activities in many settings; these include listening, responding, moving, dancing, using the voice in all sorts of ways and employing widely diverse sound sources/instruments (acoustic and digital) for expressive purposes. Subscribing to this view of music we can ask ourselves: where/when/how/why (or why not) am I musicking?

3 Music Education in the Twenty-First Century

The ubiquitous and infinitely varied nature of music readily accounts for diversity of musical style and practice. This diversity leads logically to a rationale for inclusive and contextually responsive music education.

Phelan (2012) argues that the shift in understanding towards music as a pluralistic practice also involves recognising ways in which music education systems based on a western way of knowing have been predicated on derivatives from the mind/body dualism such as concepts/skills, theory/practice and knowledge/action. Global music traditions not only call this dualism into question because of the embodied nature of traditional music-making but also because of the way in which performance in many settings is not separated from transmission but is rather a central aspect of teaching and learning. Phelan calls for an approach to music education which places *music-making* at the centre as an 'integrated performed approach to musical knowing' (p. 67).

Elliott (1995), in arguing for what has become known as the praxial approach to music education, acknowledged that music is a purposeful human activity, in which socially and culturally contextualised artistic practice involves many and varied forms of musical knowing. The praxial approach has enabled a departure from an elitist view of music education in which the primary goal has, to a large extent, been the identification of 'talent' and the subsequent development of evermore technically virtuosic performance. Elaborating on the purpose of praxial music education, Regelski (2007) called for 'a rehabilitation of musical amateuring as a valid and valuable curricular action idea' (p. 39). School, he suggests, is a place where the

opportunities for musical amateuring should be maximised through the inclusion of a wide variety of musics and opportunities to participate in ensembles and community musicking events. The praxial approach, has at its heart a commitment to accessibility and inclusivity.

Questions

- *What place does music have in your life? Specifically, what activities involving music are you involved in on a regular basis?*
- *How would you describe the new knowledge you develop as a result of your 'musicking'?*
- *What kind of learning activities that lead with music would you like to set up for the students in your classroom?*

Music-making has the potential to be transformative when guided by principles such as those argued for by O'Neill (2012). These principles, summarised below, inform the pedagogical process in music but find ready application across arts disciplines and, indeed, in all areas of the curriculum:

- Teaching begins with student knowledge.
- Skills, knowledge and voices develop from engagement in the activity.
- Teaching and learning are both individual and collaborative processes.
- The role of the instructor is one of facilitator, organiser, leader and a source of knowledge but not the primary source of learning.
- Teaching and learning are transformative processes. Learners share creative representation and engage in processes of dialogue and shared meaning-making. (O'Neill 2012, pp. 177–178)

4 Music in the School

Since the inception of public schooling in the mid-nineteenth century, music has been, to a greater or lesser extent, a designated part of the official curriculum in most parts of the western world. This historical and to date ongoing inclusion of music in the public-school system is an implicit acknowledgement of the significance and value placed upon music as an important form of human expression and meaning-making.

In the Australasian compulsory schooling context, 'music' is designated as a specific learning area and guided in an overall sense by an official curriculum. However, some researchers, here and elsewhere (e.g. Hennessey 2012), draw attention to a lack of confidence in many teachers to engage their students in musicking experiences. In part this is due to the low priority accorded to music education in pre-service and in-service teacher formation.

5 Learning in, About and Through Music in the Classroom

We may say that we are learning *in* music when we participate actively in any of the behaviours associated with musicking (listening as a participant or as an audience member, using the voice, moving to music, playing an instrument etc.). We *may* also be learning *about* music and *through* music as we do this. However, learning *about* music also implies an ability to stand back from the music itself and describe with words how music in general, or in relation to a specific instance, works. In this situation, we use language to express musical concepts, which demonstrate our understanding of these. Learning through music may be seen to encompass learning in and learning *about* music but also implies learning about 'something else', as we engage with music. The 'something else' is generally knowledge associated with another disciplinary field, for example, we learn about the civil rights movement as we sing 'We shall overcome'. We learn our tables by rote as we chant them in time to a rhythmic accompaniment.

The following activities/units presented offer opportunities for cross-curricular learning *in, about* and *through* music. At any given point in a learning journey, the role of the teacher is to decide where to place the emphasis. In working within an integrated cross-curricular approach, the boundaries between 'subjects' inevitably become blurred. For example, a lesson may shift from a focus on a musical skill, such as chanting a text in time, to a focus on the language features of text itself, in order to clarify understanding of vocabulary or themes. Another sort of shift may be from curricular content to skills and attitudes related to key competencies (Ref NZC) or (Ref Australian curriculum), or to addressing certain ethical issues as referred to earlier. Informing the teacher's decision regarding where the focus should be will be influenced by a host of intersecting factors such as the goal/aims of her lesson, students' pre-existing knowledge, their in-the-moment responses and available resources both material and non-material (e.g. student or teacher expertise).

6 Listening to Music Actively

Music surrounds us every day in public and private spaces through amplified recordings and through the use of personalised digital devices. The exposure to constant sound can numb our ears, given the effort required to cognitively or emotionally engage with music. When this happens, we are hearing without listening. Learning the art of *active* listening has the power to deepen responses to music through close attention to musical features and engagement with the thoughts and feelings induced by different kinds of music.

Active listening is purposeful listening. It does not require sophisticated musical training but is rather an accessible musical experience that can be provided in the generalist classroom. Active listening usually necessitates stillness and attentiveness, in order to search with our ears for detail as we attempt to make sense of transient aural experiences. In the classroom context the teacher mediates this experience, in the first instance by simply offering the opportunity to listen purposefully

to music on a regular basis. The choice of recordings and the purposes to which the listening experience is harnessed will be governed by curricular and programme orientations.

Thomas (2015) suggests four principles which support the development of active listening:

1. **Model good listening.** Active listening is an activity which requires full engagement from all present. The teacher participates fully.
2. **Repeat, repeat, repeat.** Repeated listening is necessary to engage deeply and thoughtfully with music. As we become familiar with a piece of music, we are able to anticipate, and this deepens engagement.
3. **Highlight salient points.** The highlighting of salient points should serve to heighten interest. Providing a kind of road map for listening helps to provide signposts for your listeners.
4. **Give listening directives.** Suggest a focus for listening. It is usually most effective to ask listeners to focus on no more than two or three aspects at a time.

There is no one single way to listen and respond to music. A variety of teaching approaches is appropriate and will help to keep the students motivated and excited. Sometimes, you might encourage students to move as they listen, particularly if you want them to identify and respond to the *beat, metric accent* or *tempo* of the music. For other pieces of music, you may encourage them to lie down with their eyes closed and listen in a quiet, relaxed way. Alternatively, you may prefer students to sit still and attend inwardly in preparation for a follow-up sharing of ideas and discussion.

7 Listening Focus on the Imaginary and Multi-Modal Experience

Focus on	Directive
Describing feelings	What feelings do you have as you listen to this music? Do your feelings change as the music goes along?
Connecting sound with colour	What colour do you see as you listen to this piece of music? On repeated listenings: Using selected coloured crayons creates a map of the music as you listen to the music.
Imagining musical participation	Imagine you are a part of this musical performance. See yourself in the ensemble and imagine what instrument you are playing as the music goes along. Mime playing this instrument as the music progresses.
Imagining narrative action action/narrative	Imagine this piece of music is accompanying a movie. What is happening on the screen? Turn to a friend and describe what is happening.
Creating symbols and images	Draw images that are inspired by this music as you listen (This is most effective once the piece of music has become familiar.)

- For example: *The horizon from Owhiro Bay,* Gareth Farrhttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnSf6K66vaQ

- Without giving the title (or showing the YouTube graphic), ask your students to allow this piece of music to conjure up a *natural landscape* in your mind. On repeated listenings, ask the students to explore that place as they listen to the music. After several repeated listenings, ask the students to:

- use simple hand gestures to communicate some of the features of their imaginary place (teacher may wish to lead by example) This should be done simultaneously, that is, it is not a performance;
- sketch their imaginary place, using simple materials;
- describe their imaginary place to a partner, or a small group; and
- Extend to a writing activity if appropriate.

Task Try matching these suggested listening examples (or others of your own choice) to a relevant cue above:

- *Berlin* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcnzqKpFZ0I
- *Flowering Jasmine* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkhukhITcm8
- *In the hall of the mountain king* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIz3klPET3o
- *Orinoco Flow* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lg1t56JucE4
- *Tango to Evora* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCz2TsxNmbo
- *Kotahitanga* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlbrJLDFrkc

8 Listening Focus on 'Musical Analysis' and Developing the Language of Musical Concepts

Elements of music	Listening directives/cues *Focusing on one element at a time is necessary to develop understanding of these so-called musical elements*
Duration Music moves through time, using rhythm and pulse or beat with a metrical accent (metre)	Does this piece have a strong beat? Is there an instrument or an effect that helps you to feel the beat as you listen? Do you hear any repeated rhythmic patterns? Can you beat time to this piece and figure where the metrical accent falls (on the first of 2, 3 or 4 beats?) Discover the *tempo* by feeling the beat. Does the music move quickly or slowly?
Expressive Dynamics and articulation	Can you hear changes in the *dynamic* level of the music? Listen for loud and soft? Does the music create a *mood* for you? What is it about the music that creates this mood or a feeling? Can you hear sounds that are short and detached and sounds that are sustained and smoothly joined?

Context Who? What? Where?	Who is performing the music? How is the music performed? From a score? Memorised? From a chord chart? Does the music tell a story? Where might the music be performed? (On a stage? In a church? In a recording studio?)
Tone colour	What instruments can you hear? What words would you use to describe the sound of one of the instruments you can hear in this piece? How is the sound made? Blown? Plucked? Struck? Electronic Instruments? Synthesisers?
Texture	Can you identify a number of different sounds happening at the same time? Can you hear changes from a lot of sounds at the same time to few sounds at the same time?
Melody	Did you hear a simple melody? Is it easy to sing? Is there a melody that repeats? Can you hear a lot of high notes? low notes?
Harmony Vocal harmony and non-vocal harmony	Are there harmonies that you like? or dislike? Can you explain why you like some and not others? Can you hear harmonic changes in this piece?
Style	Do you recognise the ***style*** of this music? (Rap, blues, jazz, country, dance, classical folk, heavy metal, easy listening, opera, reggae, pop, techno, something else?)
Form (Structure)	Do you hear repetitions of sections? Can you hear contrasting sections, that is, do you hear something the same and then something different? Can you identify a verse? Chorus? Bridge? Interlude? Introduction? Coda? Can you identify *binary form* [2 sections: AB]? *Ternary form* [3 sections: ABA]? Improvised sections?

Purposeful active listening to music lends itself to a cross-curricular focus. When focusing on occasions and/or events (historical or contemporary), careful choice of a related piece of recorded music offers the opportunity to deepen understanding of the event itself and, at the same time, learn how to listen to music attentively in order to discover and describe features of the music and explain how certain musical features work to communicate meaning.

▶ Example: Cross-Curricular Focus— Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) Commemoration
The *Last Post:* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McCDWYgVyps=

Introduce this piece by explaining that in the military tradition, the *Last Post* is the bugle call that signifies the end of the day's activities. It is also sounded at military funerals to indicate that the soldier has gone

to his final rest and at commemorative services such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

1.) Ask the students to listen to the piece and think about how the purpose of the piece is expressed through the music.
2.) On repeated listening, attention can be drawn to the following aspects of the piece though listening directives.

Listen to the way the piece begins and ends: *The same melody is used.*

What happens in the middle section of the piece? (*There is increased rhythmic activity.)*

What do you notice about the tempo of this piece? *There are lots of pauses.*

Can you identify the different pitches that are used in the piece (Some students will be able to do this!) *Three notes, C E G, in two different octaves*

Task Listen to some further examples of music that can be used in relation to cross-curricular themes. Use the table of the elements of music and the example mentioned earlier as a guide to designing an active listening learning activity.

Musical examples	Possible cross-curricular focus
Mojo juju Native Tongue https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLQ4by3lUJo	Identity and difference
Protect the world https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-b6TW57la5I&feature=youtu.be *Fading* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u4Pe2YHH-Y	Climate change
Individuality https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_5hKpQwHJI	Being me

9 Creative Music-Making with a Cross-Curricular Focus

In addressing the question of contemporary relevance, Morton (2012) advocates for music education that embraces a cross-curricular emphasis on ecological and social justice. She challenges music education (and the Arts in general) to participate in the provision of eco-aesthetic experiences (p. 477) and activities, which foster participation in and reflection upon human inter-dependency. In her view, in order to

justify a position in the school curriculum, all subjects including music must critically examine the moral and ethical dimensions of their subject. Cross-curricular programmes based on agreed, common and ethical dimensions can then be planned and implemented, which, to a greater or lesser extent, address complex social and ecological problems.

Despite the widespread recognition that Indigenous musics provide opportunities for curriculum integration, research suggests that many teachers are ill-equipped in terms of both content and pedagogy in relation to Indigenous performing arts (Marsh 2000; Whitinui 2010). In an Australian study, Dillon and Chapman (2005) drew attention to the importance of teachers understanding the historical and contemporary relationship between dominant white cultures and the marginalised Indigenous cultures as a precondition to an adequate grasp of Indigenous arts. Pointing out that music and story are closely aligned in Indigenous cultures, Boyea (2000) suggested that Indigenous musics may become more accessible to non-Indigenous ears and minds through story. The music may sound 'alien and incomprehensible', but 'stories help ease the relationship, expose the beauty and soften the initial exposures to what may seem 'odd and difficult sounds' (p. 16).

In the light of the above paragraph I have chosen to illustrate the use of story as a starting place for music with the use of two picture books, each drawing respectively on Indigenous perspectives from Aotearoa and Western Australia (Noongar people). The combination of words and illustrations is a powerful one and both *Tangaroa's Gift* and *Mamang* lend themselves to adaptation for use across a wide range of ages. The content, themes and text of these two stories suggest a cross-curricular focus across arts disciplines and other curriculum areas. Language is itself inherently musical. In order to explore and appreciate language with a musical ear, it may help to name the prosodic features and figures of sound in language and give each of these equivalences in musical terms.

Language	Music
Pause, pace and emphasis	Rhythm: Pulse, rhythmic pattern, tempo, accent and metre
Intonation	Pitch and timbre
Volume	Dynamics
Figures of sound onomatopoeia, assonance, consonance and alliteration	Timbre, instrumentation and articulation

The activities suggested in relationship to each story should be seen primarily as starting places, which enable teachers and students to develop creative learning pathways of their own.

Example

***Tangaroa's gift* by Mere Whaanga-Schollum**

This New Zealand picture book in both Māori and English is a recently composed legend which could have been called: 'How the paua (abalone) shell got its

colours'. However, the title 'Tangaroa's gift' indicates something of the referencing to the natural world via a Māori tikanga lens, and the subtlety and depth of the themes explored in this story. The natural ocean setting as well as the attribution of human characteristics to various sea creatures lead to possibilities for cross-curricular work in a wide range of themes beyond the obvious ecological one.

WARM-UP I: Sensory Exploration of the Pāua Shell

Provide a number of pāua shell for students to engage in 'close-up' sensory exploration. Using the following cues, ask students to find some words to describe:

- What does it look like?
- What does it feel like?
- What does it sound like?
- What does it smell like?
- What does it taste like*?*

Rhyme to extend exploration (explore, imitate and improvise)

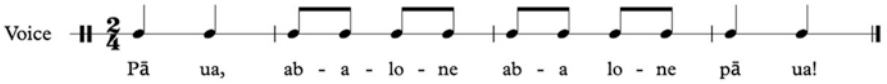
Round the shell, my fingers glide
LOOK at the shiny colours inside.
1st reading: *Explore and describe the colours*
2nd reading: *Chose an untuned percussion instrument to express colour effects of shell*
When I overturn my shell
I FEEL the rough outside as well
1st reading: *Feel with one finger, two fingers, palm* etc.
2nd reading: *Chose an untuned percussion instrument to express texture of shell*
Can you COUNT the holes with me?
Of this rainbow abalone?
1st reading*: Count together*
[1]Tahi [2] rua [3] toru [4] wha [5] rima
[6] ono [7] whitu [8] waru [9] iwa [10] tekau
2nd reading*: Play same number of strikes on chosen instrument*

WARM-UP II: 'Playing' With the Spoken Word

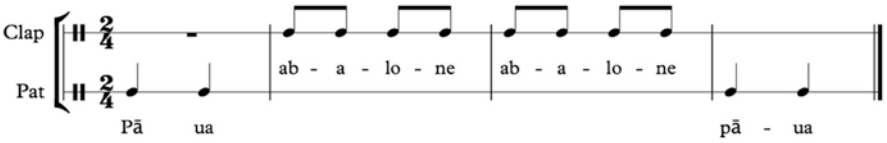
Acknowledging the way in which language is inherently musical (see above) use variation and contrast in dynamics, tempo, timbre, pitch and so on explore ways of saying each of the names for pāua as follows:

- Pāua (Māori)
- Haliotis iris (Latin)
- Perlemoen (South African)
- Abalone (American)
- Black foot pāua (English)
- Sea snail, Sea ear (Literal)

Create small-scale chants by combining two or more names for pāua, with repetition as desired, for example:



Transfer rhythmic pattern of each word to a different body percussion sound and then an untuned percussion sound source



Introducing the Story

Research the meaning of camouflage and the place of camouflage in New Zealand's native species: Kōura (crayfish) and native frogs

Explore a theme of the story through movement and music**.**

Clumping in small groups of different sizes to quickly depict a key theme of the story: for example: 'loneliness'; friendship'; 'taunting'; 'protection'; 'defensive'; and 'jealousy'.

Create a musical accompaniment for these themes and depictions, using voices found or other sound sources.

Explore aspects of the ocean setting through movement and create a musical accompaniment, using voices found or other sound sources:

- surging water and moving seaweed;
- swirling dancing sand; and
- bending swaying seaweed caressing rocks.

Reading the Story

Use an episodic approach in which short sections of the text are read to the students after which an interactive, arts activity occurs.

Structure of the story		Page No	Episodes which provide entry points for drama and or music focus
A1	Problem/ predicament	pp. 3–10	p. 3 Loneliness I
			p. 4 Loneliness II
			p. 7–9 The characters
			p. 10 The gift
B1	Resolution	pp. 11–15	
A2	Complication	p. 17	
B2	Resolution	p. 19	
A3	Complication	p. 21	
B3	Resolution	p. 23	
	Finale	p. 25	

First Reading (p. 3): Exploring Loneliness I

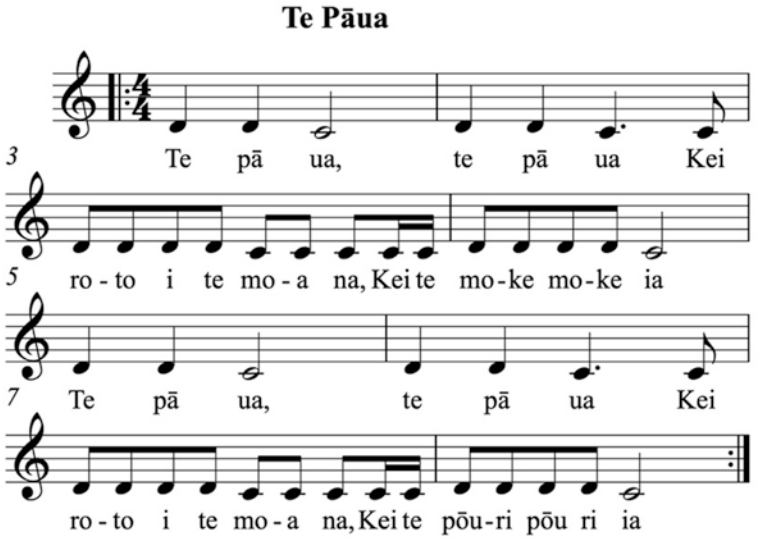
Working in partners, **sculpt** a lonely Pāua. Partners share their sculptures in a sequence in which a move to 'neutral' is cued between each sharing.

Learn the following simple, two-pitch chant to accompany or frame the sharing of sculptures.

'Te Paua' (Melody by Martin Heath)

[Translation: Pāua is in in the ocean. Pāua is lonely. Pāua is sad]

- *Te pāua te pāua Kei roto te moana Kei te moke moke ia*
- *Te pāua te pāua Kei roto te moana Kei te pōuri pōuri ia*



Second Reading (p. 4): Exploring Loneliness II

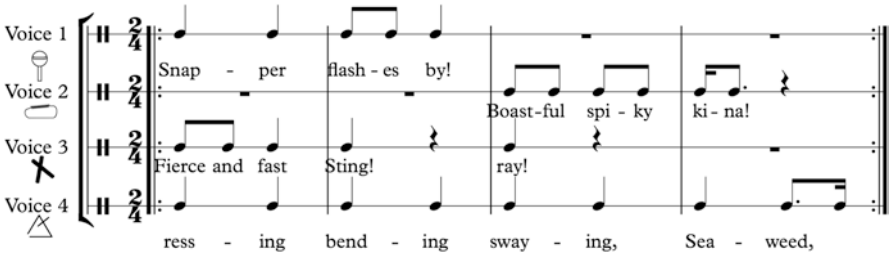
Improvised question and answer sequences/conversations such as: *'Paua, why are you so sad?' 'Oh, Tangaroa I am sad because….'* Add gesture, movement and sound for expressive effect.

Third Reading (pp. 7–9): Exploring Characterisation

Explore through discussion gesture and visual imagery (viewing and representing):

- strong, powerful, compassionate, omnipotent Tangaroa;
- sad, lonely Pāua; Ugly, slow, defenceless Pāua; Steadfast tenacious Pāua; Artistic clever Pāua;
- taunting snapper with bright blue spots;
- Graceful stingray;
- Boastful spiky kina; and
- Flaunting vain creatures with delicate intricate shells.

Create rhythmic phrases (e.g. below) about different characters to develop as speech piece, using repeated patterns, which become contrasting layers. Can be extended through incorporation of movement and playing of untuned percussion (found sounds or conventional instruments).

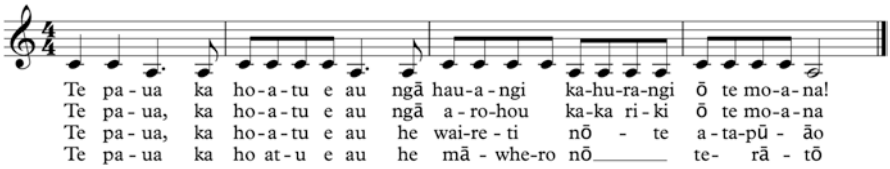


Fourth Reading: (pp. 11–15)

The 'gift' is bestowed with a chant that works like a magic spell. The simple two-pitch chant based on story text (pp. 11–12) uses two pitches: do (C) and la (A). This chant can be learned and once known enjoyed as an 'A' section for a rondo[1] in which B sections are improvised interludes in a 'la'-based pentatonic[2] (A C D E G A) on whatever melodic instruments are available to students.

[1] Rondo: Refers here to the use of a musical form consisting of 'episodes'. A repeated 'A' section is interspersed with contrasting 'B' sections.

[2] Pentatonic: A musical scale with five notes. In this case, the pentatonic scale contains no semitones and lends itself to elementary improvisation.



Translation

Paua I will give you the coolest blues from the ocean, the freshest greens from the forest, a tinge of

violet from the dawn a blush of pink from the sunset

The rest of the story can be read in one sitting and the musical activities revisited as is relevant. Repetition of repertoire is an opportunity for further development and refinement of artistic ideas and musical skills. ◄

Teacher Reflection

The above-mentioned activities provide ways into responding to the content and themes of the story and at the same time offer students the opportunity to shape sound to express narrative, image and qualities associated with a natural object. Allowing plenty of time for sensory exploration of the pāua shell provides a stimulus effective with all age groups. The chants can be taught as is, or improvised and/or composed anew by respective student groups. Engagement with Te Reo can be supported with reference to online resources.

► Mamang *An old story retold by Kim Scott, Iris Woods and the Wirlomin Language And Stories Project: With artwork by Jeffrey Farmer, Helen Nelly and Roma Winmar.*

This story is one of several that have been published as a result of a language preservation project undertaken among the Noongar people of South Western Australia. For more information on this project, please visit http://wirlomin.com.au/

Mamang is a wonderfully evocative story, rich in imagery, symbolism and cultural reference. It has at its centre the repeated musical motif of 'the singing of a very old song' referencing the aboriginal concept of song lines. (For a brief explanation of this, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYziHh98AC8). This motif is woven into the story as a metaphor for the preservation of heritage, journeying and bringing the world into being through song. In the first instance, the story of *Mamang* deserves engagement for the story's sake alone, in order to allow the development of some knowledge about the 'human, cultural pulse of this part of the oldest continent on earth' (p. 34). You will find a reading of the story in the Noongar language on the website.

Acquaintance with this story *will* arouse curiosity about the 'very old song', which can lead to researching the relationship of the people to

the land and the way in which knowledge can be preserved and passed on through the act of song.

The activities suggested earlier, which involve the exploration and exploitation of the musical features of language, can be adapted to the text of *Mamang*. In addition, there are several themes that emerge in the story that provide a potential stimulus for composition in sound. Some of these are listed below, each with a possible associated group composition brief. The design of a composition brief, as well as being referenced to an idea, is also inevitably influenced by the availability of sound sources (e.g. found sounds or instruments), and the knowledge and skills of the composers. Each of the following composition briefs serves as an example and may be modified as appropriate.

Images/Themes	Group composition brief
The long sea journey	Using voices only, compose a piece that involves several repetitions of the same material. Include an introduction and ending
The vast ocean	In response to the image on p.15 compose a short piece, using four different sound sources which conveys something of this image. Include layering of sound in your piece.
The beating heart of the whale accompanying the repeated song	Compose a piece with an introduction middle and end. Your piece will be a song with accompaniment
Landing on the beach	Using a range of untuned percussion create a soundscape that represents the part of the story when the man and the whale landed on the beach (pp. 18–19)
The return journey	Arrange the compositions above in the order of your choice. Link each piece with a bridge or interlude.

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Leading with the Visual Arts

10

Learning Objectives

- to understand the value of visual arts learning;
- to recognise technical activities masquerading as visual arts;
- to develop skills to design an effective visual arts programme;
- to understand the components of a quality visual arts lesson;
- to expand the use of art appreciation strategies in the classroom; and
- to develop skills in using art language and vocabulary with children and their art.

When my daughter was about seven years old, she asked me one day what I did at work. I told her I worked at the college – that my job was to teach people how to draw. She stared back at me, incredulous, and said 'You mean they forget?' (Howard Ikemoto)

1 Introduction

At the heart of visual arts is self-expression—a central force within each of us to communicate the language of the imagination. According to art educator Elliot Eisner (2005), human creativity, the Arts in particular and the visual arts specifically promote the realisation of the potential that our students have for creative development. But as Ikemoto's quote suggests, children begin with enthusiasm and confidence in their artistic capabilities but often this confidence is, sadly, socialised out of them.

In many primary schools in Australia and around the world, visual arts is construed as 'marginally academic' and as such, is often used as a service to more 'academic' subjects such as English, mathematics and science. Yet there is intrinsic

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value in art-making since some things are learned best while being actively engaged in making sense of the experience. This kind of learning should not be demeaned by labelling it 'a soft option.' It should not be underestimated or understated since students learn what's meaningful by what they do and how others respond to their efforts (Chapman 2005).

This chapter offers a number of strategies for preparing students for rich art-informed lives, using specific visual arts subject matter and art forms as authentic springboards to enhance student learning in an increasingly visual age.

▶ **Activity** *Before you continue reading this chapter, brainstorm any words or phrases that come to mind when you hear the term 'visual arts'. What do you notice about the major themes in your response? Are there surprises in your choices?*

2 What Is Visual Arts?

Like any of the creative arts, visual arts is concerned with 'creative manifestations of the human imagination' (Lynn 2002, p. 7). Through visual forms such as painting, drawing, collage, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, craft, photography, textiles and electronic media, we communicate to others—we express our feelings, aspirations and dreams, confront the taken for granted and attempt to make sense of our rapidly changing world. According to Eisner (2008), 'with the arts, children learn to see … we want our children to have basic skills. But they also will need sophisticated cognition, and they can learn that through the visual arts' (n.p.).

From the beginning of our existence, we have been creating visual images to help expand both individual and cultural identity. The evidence of art in galleries and museums, public buildings and libraries and in our own homes points to a fundamental need within each of us to visually express who, what and where we are. As Eisner (1972) argues, art can vitalise life by drawing attention to the quality of experience. He further comments:

> Art reminds us that the act of looking intensely, of opening one's sensibilities to the environment yields a qualitative reward in the process of living.

3 The Value of Visual Arts Learning

Many consider art an intrinsic need that defines us as humans. If art is valued 'for Art's sake', it becomes an important means of self-expression whereby imagination, play, spontaneity, experimentation and risk-taking are enhanced (McArdle 2012). For others, art is acknowledged as useful in improving cognitive processes. According to Wilks (2003) '… the visual arts, properly taught, encourage multiple solutions to problems, prize innovation and imagination, and rely on the use of judgement and sensibility' (p. 27). Clearly problem-solving, divergent thinking and

creative judgement are crucial skills for all levels of the twenty-first century workforce.

Numerous studies have demonstrated art's capacity to improve students' self-esteem, motivation and engagement with learning (Deasy 2002; Fiske 1999; Hetland and Winner 2001; Martin et al. 2013), especially for those who are underachieving, disengaged and/or at risk of failure as mentioned in Chap. 2. In addition, art is seen as a language system, a way of communicating through a means other than verbal and as such invites understanding of cultural change and difference (Image 10.1).

Researcher Lois Hetland and colleagues believe that the visual arts teach students not only dispositions that are specific to art such as the craft of the visual arts and an understanding of the art worlds but at least eight other dispositions that have the potential to transfer to other areas of learning. The term 'dispositions' (Tishman et al. 1995) refers to a trio of qualities—art skills, alertness to opportunities to use these skills and the inclination to use them.

Hetland et al. (2013) refer to these dispositions as 'Studio habits of mind', as they encapsulate both cognitive and attitudinal aspects of thinking and working. They are non-hierarchical and include:

Image 10.1 Beau's artwork

- *understand art worlds* including domain and communities;
- *stretch and explore*;
- *reflect*—question and explain—evaluate;
- *observe*;
- *develop craft* including technique and studio practice;
- *engage and persist*;
- *envision*; and
- *express* (see *Studio thinking 2: The real benefits of visual arts education* for more detailed discussion).

Clearly, 'students need to be given the opportunity to think like artists, just as they should be given the opportunity to approach the world mathematically, scientifically, historically and linguistically' (Hetland et al. 2013, p. 4). Art is another way of providing the critical connection that engages a child in learning and coming to know about themselves and the world.

4 Technical Activities Masquerading as Visual Arts

> A number of years ago, I was supervising a pre-service teacher on a professional experience placement. Wanting some feedback from the Year 2 co-operating teacher, I arranged to meet her at lunchtime in her classroom. At the agreed time, I entered the room to find her 'redoing' the children's art works. It seems that the previous 'art session' had been devoted to making cows' faces using brown paper bags. The teacher was now refolding the cow's ears so that they 'looked perfect' for her upcoming display … Please replace 'looked perfect' with stereotypical, identical craft! (Robyn Gibson)

In the following section, we examine several key principles, which contribute to an effective visual arts programme and a rewarding visual arts lesson. It is probably prudent at this point to identify those activities which are actually substitutes for art-making. As such they should be avoided since they are not art at all as the above anecdote so clearly demonstrates.

When visual arts is taught well, children are engaged in art-making and produce original works of art. The later point needs to be stressed—no two pieces of art work look the same. Creating original artworks is both stimulating and rewarding while producing work that looks just like its neighbour confirms in children (and their teachers) that there is a right and a wrong way to do art.

Students who produce work that follows a step-by-step sequence of instructions make very few informed decisions themselves. Moreover what they produce is generally less skilful than the adult example which ultimately leads to disappointment and frustration. By controlling a step-by-step procedure to produce art, a teacher does nothing to foster invention and creativity. Any activity can be made more creative with a little effort and enthusiasm.

Another cause for concern is the use of templates especially with young children. At the heart of this practice is the desire to produce an image which looks better than what the child could create themselves. But we learn to draw by creating images

ourselves. Recent evidence suggests that drawing should be a curriculum essential (Taylor 2014). Noella Mackenzie's (2011) work on drawing found that tapping into young children's drawing and storytelling improved their literacy goals. As a primary visual language, drawing has creative, expressive and educational value. Visual Arts as a subject is about experiential learning and if we wish to move the STEM to STEAM agenda (see Chap. 11 for more detailed discussion) then drawing may be the answer.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that we as teachers can unwittingly dilute children's learning which integrates visual arts with other subjects in a tokenistic manner. Often in an integrated curriculum, art, craft and design are treated as 'services' and/or decorative to other more important subjects such as literacy and numeracy. Thus children may be required to provide illustrations for science projects and social studies posters or construct costumes, props and backdrops for theatre productions. While such activities may generate valid design and craft learning, they have little or nothing to do with authentic art learning.

5 An Effective Visual Arts Programme

Our role as creative teachers is to provide authentic experiences in a variety of challenging art forms that promote individual invention, aesthetic exploration, problem-solving and skill development (Brown et al. 2017). For the teacher who is not confident in their own creative abilities, designing and implementing art experiences that are meaningful, relevant and connected can prove problematic. Unlike language learning or mathematics, there are very few art resources that require the teacher to be inventive—to have faith in their own creative efforts and act as a facilitator as children engage in an art-making process, which involves experimentation, risk-taking and the unexpected!

Finding the right balance between teacher-led skill-based instruction and student-centred open-ended learning is not an easy task (Brown et al. 2017). So, when developing your visual arts programme, consider the following:

1. Think about the students in your class. What are their previous experiences working with art materials? At this stage of development/readiness, what are they genuinely interested in? Don't forget yourself. What art content appeals to you?
2. Teach *how* to use a variety of media, tools and techniques, but link these to authentic types of creative expression.
3. Connect visual arts to the students' lives. Instead of isolated art activities or art used as a reward for finishing other work, integrate art *with*, *about*, *in* and *through* the other creative arts and the curriculum.
4. Provide an aesthetically stimulating classroom that displays (and regularly changes) children's artworks.
5. Limit direction giving and offer descriptive feedback rather than praise (see Sect. 9, p. 165).

6. Integrate opportunities for students to respond/reflect on art, that is, write or tell stories about their art, create musical compositions to accompany their art, develop role-plays using actual art-making processes and products.
7. Provide opportunities where students can work individually, in small collaborative groups and as a whole class on in-depth art projects that can be worked on over sustained periods of time.

▶ **Activity** Recall an 'art experience' you had at school. It could have occurred in kindergarten, primary or secondary school. Identify those aspects that made it a positive or negative experience for you. Compare your observations to the suggestions above. How do they compare?

6 The Quality Visual Arts Lesson

Like any effective lesson, a quality visual arts lesson requires considered planning, sound organisation and authentic assessment strategies all within a time period that can span from 30 minutes to more than one hour. Given the amalgam of creativity, self-expression and disparate materials, the mix is often daunting to the less experienced teacher. It is therefore important to keep in mind a number of key attributes when developing a visual arts lesson.

A quality visual arts lesson allows students an opportunity to make and respond. These interrelated strands are identified in *The Australian curriculum: The arts*. It is not a time to construct 25 identical 'artworks' (refer to Sect. 4, p. 158). This dual focus—making and responding—can be achieved through a learning and teaching process that incorporates three interrelated components: exploring/experimenting, making/developing and responding/appreciating. Each is vital to the success of a well-rounded visual arts lesson in any early childhood, primary or middle school classroom.

1a) *Exploring*: Despite the best intentions, a visual arts lesson can flounder if students are not given adequate time to 'explore' the topic or theme prior to art-making. Here is a perfect opportunity to incorporate other KLAs especially the other creative arts disciplines.

A relatively easy option is to ask the students to brainstorm the topic and while this may be effective in the first couple of instances, it becomes stale if repeated at the beginning of every art lesson.

Instead, consider the following possibilities:

- read a quality picture book, short story or poem (sadly poetry seems to have faded in popularity in recent years);
- watch a segment of a film followed by a brief but animated discussion;
- listen to a piece of music and develop movements to accompany it;
- select a character and walk/talk in role;
- learn/sing a song; or

- engage in a direct experience which involves the senses, for example, feel the texture of an old pair of boots. NB: This strategy is especially important for young students.

The purpose here is to excite, enthuse and engage the students in the upcoming art-making process.

1b) *Experimenting*: In some cases, you will be asking the students to work with a new material, tool or technique. Without the necessary time to experiment, this is likely to yield less than desirable results. For example, if students have had no prior experiences using hand building clay, the teacher needs to devote time for them to 'play' with this new material. This could include brief experiments such as:

- Close your eyes and tell the person beside you what it feels like.
- Does it have a smell?
- Make the tallest structure you can.
- Can you make something inside something else?
- Can you make a texture on the surface using only your fingertips?

Such simple activities allow the students to become acquainted with the material and learn what it can and cannot do.

2) *Developing/Making*: Usually the body of the visual arts lesson will be taken up with art-making. Depending on the age of the children, all instructions may be given at the beginning of this stage or staggered throughout the activity. However very clear expectations regarding behaviour and safety need to be highlighted early. Referring to the previous exploration of clay, the teacher needs to develop a strategy for quickly gaining attention over the obvious noise that accompanies clay work. If playing background music then turning the music down can be very effective while asking students to repeat a clapping, clicking, tapping pattern may not (especially with hands covered in clay)!

Many teachers assume that art-making is an individual pursuit, and while it can be, there should be ample opportunities for children to work in pairs, small groups and collaboratively as a class. There may also be times within a visual arts lesson where responsibility for art-making shifts. The exemplar on 'Cubist Faces' on p. 169 details this shift in 'art ownership'.

3) *Responding/Appreciating*: After the artworks are completed (or even if they are not), time needs to be devoted to reflecting on the process and/or responding to the product. It is extremely difficult for students to develop their skills, techniques and understanding of art if they are denied an opportunity to look closely at their art, the art of their peers and that of professional artists and make informed judgements about what they see, what they like and what they might change when given an opportunity.

Not surprisingly, this is the component of the visual arts lesson that routinely fails to occur for obvious reasons: lack of time—the lesson took longer than expected; it is replaced with clean-up tasks—or sadly, teachers fail to realise its significance to the students' artistic development.

Like the exploring component of the visual arts lesson, in terms of the responding/appreciating stage, teachers tend to resort to a tried-and-true but tired strategy. 'Tell me about your artwork' may be fun for the first one or two students but by number 22 this process becomes tedious. Therefore teachers should opt for an activity that complements the art-making that has occurred. This can be done as a class, in small groups or individually. It can be done in writing or verbally or it can incorporate other KLAs to make a truly integrated experience (see next Sect. 7).

7 Art Appreciation Strategies

Current visual arts curricula are based on the educational premise that children should actively participate in making and developing but also be afforded time to respond and appreciate artworks. While the concept of the child/artist is important in establishing the foundations for creating using artistic media, children need opportunities to look at and respond to works of art not just as objects but as 'aesthetic objects' (Mai 2013). Lea Mai's work with three- and four-year-old children's aesthetic experiences in an art museum revealed that young children deploy complex strategies for engagement with chosen works of art, are able to connect with artworks through multiple communicative forms and sustain their aesthetic experiences for substantial amounts of time.

> Through reflecting on and responding to their own artworks and the works of artists, children develop the skills of talking and thinking (and later, reading and writing) about the arts. When they engage in art criticism, children describe, analyse, interpret, judge, challenge and value artworks and artistic ideas. (Wright 2012, p. 239)

Students don't automatically know how to make appropriate judgements especially when they are looking at art. Like many adults, without instruction and guidance, children tend to either express love or hate for a work. However, through a range of well-planned activities, students can decode artworks and begin to grasp the concept that to *appreciate* art means to understand it—not that you have to love or even like it.

'Just as there are many ways of seeing children, there are many ways of seeing art' (McArdle 2012, p. 33). But for many teachers, art appreciation conjures images of tedious lectures concerning dry, boring facts about dead, white European males! This is definitely not the case in the primary or middle school context. In fact, art appreciation does not aim to fill children's heads with facts about art, but to develop their strategies for looking at art and making sense of what they see.

One of the main purposes of art criticism (or learning about art) is to encourage people including children to hesitate before artworks, to take time to really see/experience them and to initiate dialogue. For those who may feel intimidated by this process using an established method of critique may be a useful place to begin. Feldman's (1994) *Inquiry method* uses four main steps:

1. **Naming**—this is a stalling process as it requires people to stop and look. Describe objects but don't interpret. List images that can be seen in the artwork (i.e. a man, the horizon, etc).
2. **Analysing**—collecting evidence and discriminating/describing (i.e. the man is pale and asleep, the horizon is high, etc).
3. **Interpreting**—an explaining step. Collecting evidence from Stages 1 and 2 to create meaning (e.g. Why do you think the young man is in the water?).
4. **Evaluating**—making a qualitative judgement. It requires an opinion about the artwork based on the three previous steps (e.g. What do you think of it? Why?).

Students who understand the basic elements of art and the concepts that artists use will be more able to think and talk intelligently about art using its metalanguage. In turn, they will be able to apply this knowledge to their own artworks and those of their peers, which increases understanding, enjoyment and confidence.

How do we as teachers and art educators foster such substantive communication (*NSW quality teaching model* 2003; *Productive pedagogy* 2001)? How do we encourage children to talk about their art and the artworks of others? What mechanisms can we utilise so that they look more closely at an artwork, make sense of what they see through decoding, describing and interpreting and thereby develop strategies for responding, discussing and reflecting on these artworks in meaningful ways? (Gibson 2002).

In recent years, *Visual Thinking Strategies* (VTS 2013) have been employed in a number of galleries and museums as a teaching method to improve critical thinking skills through teacher-facilitated discussions of visual images. VTS uses art to teach thinking, communications skills and visual literacy. Three questions are essential to the strategy:

What's going on in the image?
What do you see that makes you say that?
What more can we find?

Such simple prompts can be handled individually, in pairs or small groups while responses to these questions can be delivered verbally, in writing or perhaps via another art form.

8 Encouraging Children to Talk About Their Art

Traditionally, any number of approaches have been, and continue to be, used by teachers to elicit verbal comments from children about their art. Robert Schirrmacher in *Art and creative development for young children* (1998) has identified six of the most common approaches used by adults to respond to children's art:

Complimentary

Using this approach, the teacher tells the child that their art is nice, pretty, lovely or even beautiful. But as with any compliment, the opportunities for rich verbal dialogue are usually limited to 'thank you'. In addition, what are the criteria for a 'nice' drawing? Words such as 'nice' and 'pretty' are superficial ones and need to be replaced with terms that provide specific feedback to the student.

Judgemental

Teachers tell children that their art is good or even great. However most teachers don't want to rank students' art as good, better or best and so to compensate, they simply tell all children that their art is good. As a result, these judgemental terms are routinely repeated and become meaningless. Not surprisingly, teachers may lose credibility in the eyes of their students by using this approach.

Valuing

In this approach, the teacher tells the students that she likes or even loves their art. However, Schirrmacher (1998) warns that 'rewarding and encouraging the child for processing is very different from putting the teacher's "seal of approval" on the finished product' (p. 166). We need to emphasise that we hope children will create to express themselves not to please their teacher or other adults.

Questioning

Much of children's art is private and egocentric. Smith (1983) maintains that it is unwise and can even be harmful to ask 'what is it?' of children who are making non-representational art. For many young children, the end product is of no consequence, while others may be hurt or even insulted that their teacher does not recognise what they have created.

Probing

Typical comments when using this approach are 'Tell me about your art' or 'What can you say about this?' According to Schirrmacher (1998), probing has merit but it should be used sparingly, as there is a tendency for this approach to grow stale with repeated use.

Correcting

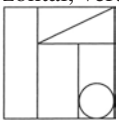
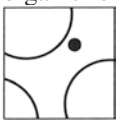
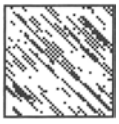
The teacher attempts to provide children with specific feedback that will enable them to improve their artworks. Using this approach, the teacher encourages the student to approximate reality in their art. However, it must be stressed that art and children's art, in particular, is not a copy of the real world. In fact, Lowenfeld (1982) argues that a teacher's corrections or criticisms do not foster children's artistic growth but rather discourage it.

Clearly there are concerns with each of these 'art dialogue' approaches. The question becomes one of 'What is a teacher to say or do?' Eisner (1982) maintains that 'what the arts make possible … is an invitation to invent novel ways to combine elements' (n.p.). Therefore rather than looking for representation in children's art, teachers should focus on the abstract, design qualities or the 'syntax' of their art. With little effort, teachers can use the aesthetic elements of art as a framework for verbally responding to children's art (Image 10.2).

Image 10.2 Pia's artwork

9 Art Language and Vocabulary

There is little agreement regarding a generic list of the elements and principles of art. In fact, there has, and continues to be debate between artists and designers regarding the 'true' tools and applications of design. However, teachers may want to consider the following:

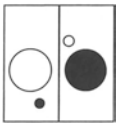
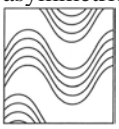
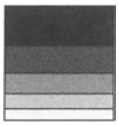
-  *line*—continuous linear mark. All lines have direction, that is, horizontal, vertical or oblique;
-  *shape*—two-dimensional, self-contained area of geometric organic form;
-  *size*—variations in the proportions of objects, lines or shapes;
-  *value*—the lightness or darkness of a colour, also called tone;
-  *texture*—the surface quality of an object either tactile or visual; and

-  *colour*—refers to specific hues and has three properties—chroma, intensity and value.

as appropriate elements to use when working with early primary-age students. These students could work with one element at a time. They could then identify the most important colours, lines or shapes in a work of art and eventually compare colours, shapes and/or sizes in two or more artworks. Perhaps they could develop questions about similarities and differences among the artworks since this process 'encourages closer inspection of the visual representation' (Hartung 1995, p. 37).

Depending on artistic experience, principles of design are as follows:

- 

repetition—the recurrence of elements within an artwork;
-  *balance*—a feeling of visual equality either symmetrical or asymmetrical;
-  *rhythm*—a movement in which some elements recur regularly;
-  *harmony*—brings together a composition of similar units;
-  *contrast*—is the occurrence of differing elements, such as colour, value or size;
-  *gradation*—a series of transitional changes, that is, lighter-to-darker colours or larger to smaller shapes;
-  *movement*—visual flow;

-  *emphasis*—refers to areas of focal interest;
- 

proportion—involves relationship of size between objects. Also known as scale; and
- 

unity—a sense that everything belongs together.

may be useful for discussions with upper primary and middle school students. The teacher could structure the session to elicit and use words descriptive of specific compositions and utilise these to construct comments and questions of the artist. Besides identifying and describing the elements and principles within an artwork, older children may be able to make connections, create narratives, interpret intentions and ultimately develop the ability to critique a work of art in terms of compositional or structural aspects.

This is significant, in that the critique not only builds confidence in the students' dialogue about their own and other's work but it gives the students practice in receiving constructive criticism. Once again, it is important to recognise the often-damaging effects of negative criticism especially with something as personal and subjective as art. Elizabeth Hartung (1995) has suggested that the easiest way to minimise this is to begin the process of critiquing unfinished work. In this way 'students might be instructed on how to make the composition more effective as well as to offer comments about its successful aspects' (Hartung 1995 p. 37).

Visual Arts as a Springboard

In the second half of this chapter, we offer practical art ideas that can be adapted for use in any primary or middle school classroom. Many can be integrated into existing programmes. However since we are keen to demonstrate the logical connections across the creative arts, we have developed exemplars and units of work that lead with the visual arts but bring together the other KLAs.

10 Strategies to Encourage Art Dialogue

Here are a number of strategies which illustrate the different ways teachers can use writing and talking, drama and movement during art appreciation activities. Remember that these activities can be based on students' own work as well as on the work of professional artists, on reproductions as well as original artworks (collect photographs, postcards, old calendars, etc., as sources of inspiration).

The Missing Part

A section of an artwork is covered. Students are asked to imagine what is 'hidden'. They draw this section and give it a title. Questions are then asked to identify who has come closest to discovering the missing part. For example, who drew a curved section? Does your image mirror part of the larger object?

Telephone Art

Working in pairs, one student phones another using an actual phone, mobile or prop to talk about a new piece of art they have just purchased. Through careful observation and explicit language, an informative conversation can be developed.

A What type of artwork is it?	B It's a ….
A Who created it?	B It's by a famous artist named ….
A How big is it?	B It's very large. About ….
A What colours are in it?	B Oh, it mostly ….
A Where are you going to hang it?	B Well, it would look really good in …

Living Clay

Six artworks are displayed. In pairs, one child becomes the 'sculptor', the other a lump of clay. The sculptor moulds his/her clay either physically or through verbal instruction, into something in one of the artworks. The rest of the class needs to decide which artwork and specifically what, within that artwork, has been sculpted.

Every Picture Tells a Story

In small collaborative groups, students are assigned an artwork. These could be related to an English, history, geography or science unit. They discuss how they might create a still image that either reflects the artwork itself or their reactions to it. These are 'presented', and other class members are able to 'tap-in' to ask relevant questions. Students may respond with words, sounds and/or movements.

Art Auction

Each group is assigned a 'unique' artwork which will be auctioned by a world-famous auction house. Collaboratively they compose the blurb to be used at the auction, which describes the artwork and gives insights into the artist and their practice. An 'auctioneer' from each group then attempts to sell their artwork for the highest price, thereby combining both language and drama into a fun yet informative activity.

Example

Cubist Faces

This exemplar focuses on portraits and can be easily linked to the *Archibald Prize* at the New South Wales (NSW) Art Gallery (or another portrait exhibition). The subject matter could also be adapted to align with an English or Social Studies topic or theme. N.B. It assumes that the students have had a prior instructional lesson on how to draw a face. A number of cross-curricula activities are suggested for use before and/or following the Visual Arts lessons. Teachers can decide which are most appropriate for their students. The Visual Arts component is unusual in that it begins with the individual artist moving to a group of artists and then returning to the original creator.

Exploring Through Drama

In groups of 6–8, a volunteer is blindfolded and then tries to identify other group members by feeling their facial features. Students may stand, sit or kneel to add a challenge to this task.

In pairs, students mirror various facial expressions. With older students, ask them to attempt more complex emotions such as rage, alarm, bliss and so on. Take photographs of these expressions for later use.

Students form small, collaborative groups. Each group is given a reproduction of a famous portrait, for example Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* or Van Gogh's *Self portrait*. The groups need to compose a still image of the minute before the image was created or the minute after the image was created. The teacher can tap in to learn more about these scenarios.

Experimenting with Visual Arts

Divide a piece of cartridge paper into eight sections using a ruler. The sections do not need to be of uniform size.

Students select two colours (e.g. red and orange). Each section is painted using either colour (or both) utilising a different technique each time.

For example:

- add water to paint and apply with a roller;
- painting in one colour and applying the second colour using a toothbrush;
- using fingertips;
- using small pieces of sponge to print a pattern;
- scrunching paper towel and printing onto a painted section; and
- using a spatula or other kitchen tool to apply paint in various directions, etc.

Developing/Making

Sitting diagonally opposite, students create a 'representation' of this person drawing on their knowledge of the placement of facial features, hair and other distinguishing characteristics from previous lessons.

When complete, the portrait is divided into four sections using a ruler.

For example (Image 10.3).

The back of each section is labelled with the initials of the artist and two colour choices (i.e. purple and green).

Image 10.3 Lisa's portrait of Chloe

All pieces are jumbled and individuals collect any four pieces, none of which may belong to them.

Students paint these pieces using any/all of the techniques developed as a result of their experimental paintings. However they are restricted to the two colours specified on the back of each section.

When dry, individuals collect their original four facial pieces and bring them together to create a face. Pieces are taped together (at the back) and a black continuous line may be used to add lost detail but only to one part of the face (i.e. the right third; around the eyes; the left eye and nose, etc.) rather than the entire face (Image 10.4).

Responding/Appreciating: 'Whose Portrait is It?'

The teacher selects one student who sits at the front of the class wearing a headband onto which has been attached the name of an artist or famous artwork. Artists and artworks should relate to the portrait theme. For example, Picasso and *Weeping woman* (1937), Warhol and *Marilyn Monroe (*1967), Van Gogh's and *Self portrait* (1889), Da Vinci and *Mona Lisa* (1503–1506) and Frida Kahlo and *Self-portrait with monkey* (1940).

The 'celebrity' asks yes/no questions of the class until they guess who they are or which portrait they are.

Taking It Further

Portraits show more than what a person looks like, and artists throughout history have been drawn to this particular subject matter. In pairs, students research

Image 10.4 Completed Cubist face

an artist who has focused on this genre. They then present their findings to the class via an art form (i.e. role-play, musical composition, movement performance, an art exhibition, piece of poetry or narrative).

Teacher's Reflection
I initially developed this exemplar for use with the pre-service teachers in my visual arts classes. Many were fearful about the prospect of drawing, so it was important to develop some strategies that would take the focus away from them. By giving a 'how-to-draw a face' lesson prior and then allowing other students to paint the various sections, the students experienced 'group ownership' of their portraits.

Many of these preservice teachers have trialled this exemplar with their own classes and always the results are positive both for the preservice teacher and the students engaged in the artmaking. (Robyn Gibson)

Example

Wheels

'Wheels' has been selected as the subject matter for the following visual arts unit of work for a number of considered reasons. Almost all children in western society have had direct experiences with wheeled objects albeit the family car, a bicycle or scooter, a supermarket trolley or a movable toy. Moreover the diversity

of wheel types offers unlimited art-making possibilities that integrate effortlessly with the other KLAs, including science and technology, mathematics and studies of society and its environment. It is also a unique topic in that it draws together experiences from home, school and the local community thereby creating meaningful connections across contexts.

Starting with Social Studies

Ask the students to bring to school an object with wheels (i.e. a toy car, a scooter, a pair of roller blades, etc). In groups of 4–6, students categorise these objects. Possible categories may be based on size, purpose, number of wheels, toy versus a piece of sporting equipment and so on.

Descriptive Writing

Students write a description of one of the 'wheeled' objects. The description must offer clues without stating what the object actually is.

There are four of me.
Often one of us likes to go in a different direction.
You find us in the supermarket.

Break the class into two teams, a pupil reads their description while their team attempts to identify the object. Points are awarded/deducted on the number of clues necessary.

Exploring with Visual Arts

Students close their eyes and visualise a wheel—any wheel. In 3 minutes using a lead pencil, they draw their visualised wheel. No other instructions should be given at this point and drawings should be collected to avoid any 'improvements' that might occur.

NB: Display these memory drawings in the form of a large wheel, using string to create spokes.

Making/Developing

Either in the school car-park (during class time), using the wheeled objects from home or large photos, or images of various wheels, ask the students to make a detailed representation focusing on size, shape, line, tone and pattern using a range of lead pencils (if possible).

Prior to this lesson, the class could create a chart of possible drawing techniques including dark, coloured lines, dotted lines, cross-hatched, smudged areas and so on.

Ask the students to place themselves in different positions (i.e. directly in front of the wheel, standing, seated, etc.), in order to encourage a variety of perspectives of the same object. Allow 20–30 minutes for this drawing task (Image 10.5).

Responding

In pairs, compare the similarities/differences between the memory drawing and the direct observation drawing. The students should discuss and record their observations. For example, the memory drawing has fewer details. The direct observation is larger and more realistic.

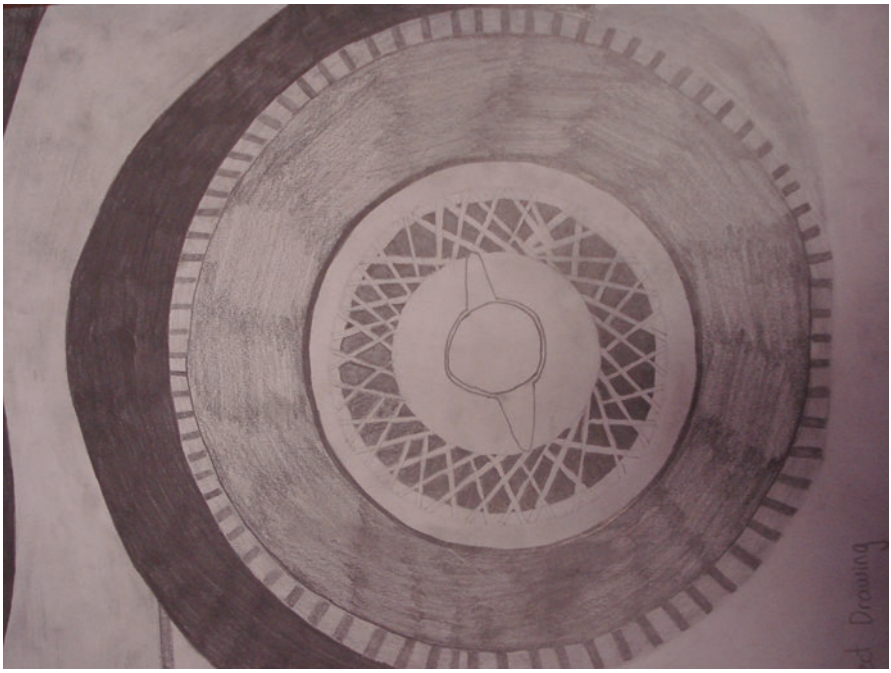


Image 10.5 Direct observation of wheel

Moving into Music

As a class, learn a song about wheels. 'Wheels on the Bus' is an obvious example, but there are numerous songs about trains, cars, trucks and bikes. Also consider singing in the round, thus replicating the movement of wheels.

The following lesson draws on both the experiences and artwork from the previous visual arts lesson and demonstrates the imperative of connection versus the one-off art lesson on a Friday afternoon.

Experimenting

Each student is given either a small piece of telephone/newspaper or brown paper. In groups of 6–8, they 'invent' a collage technique (i.e. cutting the paper into strips, tearing it into small pieces, scrunching then flattening it out, cutting it into squares to create a mosaic effect, etc.).

These 'experiments' are pasted onto large sheets of paper to create a collage design bank and displayed around the classroom for future reference.

Developing

Using a simple cardboard viewfinder, each student selects a visually interesting area of their direct observation drawing of the wheel from the previous session. Students should be encouraged to move the viewfinder to more unusual areas rather than positioning it in the centre of their drawing.

Image 10.6 Wheel collage

On an A3 piece of cartridge paper, the students create a simple border which will contain their collage. Leaving the viewfinder in place, the selected area is enlarged onto the paper using a lead pencil. Only lines and shapes are captured; no shading is necessary.

Using only telephone/newspaper and brown paper, these areas are collaged. Students can refer to the classes' design bank for inspiration on various collage techniques.

When completed, black paper or aluminium foil is added for detail (Image 10.6).

Responding

Words, phrases and/or sentences referring to materials, techniques, design elements and so on are used to create an effective, integrated border around each collage.

Moving into Drama

Students watch a video of the history of transport paying particular attention to the wheeled vehicles. In groups of 4–6, they select a time period/type of wheel and create three frozen moments which reflect the wheeled object, its use and so on. Photographs should be taken so that after their 'performance', the pupils can add thought bubbles or speech clouds to their frozen images thus linking it to literacy.

Other Art-Making Possibilities

The earlier activities lend themselves to any/all of the following extension ideas:

1. The students move from 2D to 3D art-making. Using malleable wire and stiff cardboard, they can create 'objects' that suggest movement.
2. As a class, study Alexander Calder, an American sculptor and artist, most famous for inventing the mobile. Students can then develop their own Calderesque mobiles, incorporating wheels and spokes.
3. Using crayons or charcoal, pupils can take rubbings of the various wheel treads on cars, motor bikes, bicycles and so on. These could then be cut out and used to create textured artworks.
4. After watching a video segment about future travel, the students design and make their own futuristic wheeled vehicles, using a variety of recycled materials. When complete, these are spray-painted silver or bronze to create a futuristic look.

Literature

There are numerous quality literary texts and poems that can be studied in a meaningful way as part of a unit of work about wheels. Here are a few suggestions:

Mrs Armitage on wheels by Quentin Blake.
Mrs Armitage queen of the road by Quentin Blake.
Mr Gumpy's motor car by John Burningham.
Oi! Get off our train by John Burningham.
Mulga Bill's bicycle by A.B. 'Banjo' Patterson.
*Please don't chat to the bus driv*er by Shen Roddie.

Teacher's Reflection

In this unit of work, there is a natural movement from drawing into collage which appeals to many students. Once again, I have used this with pre-service teachers who have then replicated it in their various classrooms. I have also replaced the subject matter with others such as bottles, shells and so on since it requires any object from which to create a direct observation which then forms the basis of the collage.

The unit also lends itself to endless integration possibilities utilising drama, media arts, movement and literature in order to create meaningful connections across the curriculum. (Robyn Gibson)

11 Conclusion

In this chapter, we focused on developing a clear understanding of what constitutes the visual arts. We then proposed a well-grounded rationale for its value to a child's learning and development. Time was devoted to identifying those activities, common in many primary and middle school classrooms which continue to masquerade

as art-making. Suggestions were made regarding developing an effective visual arts programme and a quality visual arts lesson which incorporates exploring/experimenting, developing/making and responding/appreciating. With a dual focus on making and appreciating, Feldman's (1996) *Inquiry method* plus a number of other innovative strategies were offered as a starting point for art appreciation to occur in and across the curriculum. Finally, several practical ideas leading with the visual arts but integrating a number of KLAs were provided. An exemplar using portraits and a unit of work around the theme of wheels were used to demonstrate the ease with which the visual arts can become an authentic springboard into innovative student learning.

Questions

1. *Refer to the words and phrases generated from the first activity. Have your ideas/opinions about the visual arts altered after reading this chapter? If so, in what ways?*
2. *Consider the reasons why a classroom teacher continues to use templates with their Kindergarten class. Create a short role-play or interview scenario with a colleague to capture these reasons.*
3. *Select a child's artwork. Develop three to four questions that refer to either obvious elements or principles in the work. Ask these questions and record the child's responses. What have you learnt?*

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Useful Websites

A number of art gallery and museum websites worldwide offer excellent teaching resources. Here are a few to get you started on an exciting journey of discovery!

Art Gallery of New South Wales
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au

Museum of Modern Art, New York
www.moma.org

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
www.nga.gov.au
National Gallery of Victoria
www.ngv.vic.gov
National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
www.portrait.gov.au
Tate Gallery, London
www.tate.org.uk

Embedding the Arts in the Humanities and Social Studies

11

Learning Objectives

- to consider what HASS means and understand its place in the primary curriculum;
- to introduce history's conceptual framework and major concepts; and
- to understand the integral role that arts and creativity can play in generating and expressing historical knowledge.

Gather round people let me tell you a story
An eight year long story of power and pride
British Lord Vestey and Vincent Lingiarri
Were opposite men on opposite sides

Vestey was fat with money and muscle
Beef was his business, broad was his door
Vincent was lean and spoke very little
He had no bank balance, hard dirt was his floor

From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow

Gurindji were working for nothing but rations
Where once they had gathered the wealth of the land
Daily the pressure got tighter and tighter
Gurindju decided they must make a stand

They picked up their swags and started off walking
At Wattie Creek they sat themselves down

R. Gibson, R. Ewing, *Transforming the Curriculum Through the Arts*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-52797-6_11

Now it don't sound like much but it sure got tongues talking
Back at the homestead and then in the town

From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow

From little things, big things grow.
(Kev Carmody and Paul Kelly, 1991, first four verses)

1 Introduction

Kev Carmody and Paul Kelly's iconic song, *From little things, big things grow,* tells the story of Vincent Lingiari and The Gurindiji Strike, and traces the events leading up to the Commonwealth Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act in 1976. The song is a story about injustice, activism and Aboriginal rights and conveys ideas about Country, history, citizenship, democracy and culture. It is a protest song that highlights 'people power' and what happens when individuals stand up for what they believe in to bring about change. It also is a song that sets the stage for this chapter, capturing the essence and rationale for embedding the Arts in teaching history within the learning area of humanities and social sciences (HASS).

The HASS curriculum area, also known in Australia as human society and its environment (HSIE) in New South Wales (NSW), and Studies of society and environment (SOSE) elsewhere, is a learning area in the primary curriculum encompassing the disciplines of history, geography, civics and citizenship, business studies and economics. Through the recent development of an Australian national curriculum, in HASS primary students have been introduced to the disciplines of history and geography, signalling a shift away from multidisciplinary and generic inquiry approaches in the classroom, to disciplinary-based inquiry, skills, concepts and tools.

My own interest in the learning area of HASS, and specifically, history and geography, stems from teaching in both local and international primary classrooms, and from working as a HSIE K-6 curriculum consultant in the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education. Now working at a tertiary level in primary teacher education, my interest in learning and teaching in this area has not weakened, and my current research focuses on how new historical knowledge is generated through creative experiences. I have been fortunate to build professional partnerships over the past decade with primary classroom teachers and principals who share my passion for teaching history and geography through creative pedagogies. Their voices are heard in this chapter.

This chapter particularly focuses on the integral role that the Arts play in generating and expressing historical knowledge. It begins with an overview of HASS within different educational contexts before examining the pedagogical implications of a disciplinary-based Australian curriculum: history. It then enters a primary classroom, where students in Years 5 and 6 grapple with the complex topic of war, as they examine the development of Australia as a nation, through creative pedagogies. The

chapter concludes with suggestions and resources that can not only be used across different years to enable primary students to generate historical knowledge and understanding but to also equip them with the agency, knowledgeability, cognitive skills and creativity to be active, engaged and future-ready citizens.

2 What Is Humanities and Social Sciences?

'From little things, big things grow'

HASS equips students with the knowledge, understanding, skills and tools to make sense of the past, the present and the future. Where once the skills of remembering, synthesising, evaluating and so on were addressed through a generic inquiry process based on Blooms Taxonomy (1956, 2001), *The Australian curriculum: History* and *the Australian curriculum: Geography* specifically emphasise the methods and processes of each discipline. Although the content was familiar, many primary teachers have traditionally regarded themselves as generalists rather than subject specialists and lacked confidence in teaching the specific disciplines. For primary teachers, the pedagogical implications of this disciplinary shift across multiple subjects in the primary curriculum have been significant, and somewhat overlooked.

Deborah Green and Deborah Price (2019), who define HASS as, 'the study of human behaviour and our interactions in social, cultural, economic and political contexts' (p. 11), suggest the HASS learning area addresses four key ideas. These are:

1. who we are, who came before us, and traditions and values that have shaped societies;
2. how societies and economies operate and how they are changing over time;
3. the ways people, places, ideas and events are perceived and connected; and
4. how people exercise their responsibilities, participate in society and make informed decisions.

These key ideas highlight the purposes of learning and teaching in HASS during the primary years.

3 The Purpose of Learning and Teaching in Humanities and Social Sciences

A broad aim of HASS, then, is to equip students with knowledge, skills and tools to be able to:

> Understand their world, past and present, and develop capacity to respond to challenges, now and in the future, in innovative, informed, personal and collective ways. (Australian Curriculum.edu.au)

The future- and citizenship-focused orientation of the Australian curriculum—HASS—echoes both national and international calls for school education to equip students with what they need to navigate a 'rapidly changing world' (OECD 2018). According to *The shape paper for the Australian curriculum* v.4 (ACARA 2013):

> Education plays a critical role in shaping the lives of the nation's future citizens. To play this role effectively, the intellectual, personal, social and educational needs of young Australians must be addressed at a time when ideas about the goals of education are changing and will continue to evolve.

Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) position paper titled, *The future of education and skills: Education 2030* (OECD 2018) states:

> Education has a vital role to play in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable people to contribute to and benefit from an inclusive and sustainable future. Learning to form clear and purposeful goals, work with others with different perspectives, find untapped opportunities and identify multiple solutions to big problems will be essential in the coming years. Education needs to aim to do more than prepare young people for the world of work; it needs to equip students with the skills they need to become active, responsible and engaged citizens.

There are three main characteristics of future-ready students. First, a future-ready student is a learner with agency. Learner agency is when a student takes responsibility to participate in, and contribute to, society. A learner who has agency begins to develop the ability 'to frame a guiding purpose and identify actions to achieve a goal' (OECD 2018, p. x). As such, teachers must plan learning experiences through which students' curiosity about the world is ignited.

A second characteristic of a future-ready student is knowledgeability. This means being able to hold, use and connect different types of knowledge and ways of knowing, including disciplinary knowledge, procedural knowledge and different ways of thinking. By implication, learning and teaching experiences in HASS enculturate students to the disciplines of geography, history, civics and citizenship, business studies and economics. Through disciplined inquiry, they begin to grasp 'how new knowledge is generated from raw materials' (OECD 2018, p. x). For example, in geography, students generate knowledge about place, space, sustainability and so on, through a geographical inquiry process of acquiring, processing and communicating geographical data. In history, however, students construct knowledge through a different process, using, analysing and evaluating historical sources. Through HASS, young children are introduced to different ways of thinking about the world. They begin in the first years of school by learning to think like an historian and a geographer, and in upper primary, through civics and citizenship, economics and business studies, they learn to think like an economist, a citizen or an activist like Greta Thunberg.

The third characteristic of a future-ready student is their ability to hold and use a range of cognitive skills such as creative and critical thinking, the ability to self-regulate and the ability to reflect on learning. Social and emotional skills such as

empathy and collaboration, combined with practical and physical skills such as being able to use information and communication technology devices were also identified as necessary characteristics of successful learners.

▶ **Activity**
Should any further characteristics to these future-ready suggestions be added? If so, what would they be?

4 Four Types of Knowledge

The International Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) *Future of education and skills learning* project (2018) identifies four different types of knowledge students will need in the future. These include:

1. *Disciplinary knowledge*: subject-specific concepts and detailed content, such as that learned in the study of history or geography;
2. *Interdisciplinary knowledge*: relating the concepts and content of one discipline/subject to the concepts and content of other disciplines/subjects;
3. *Epistemic knowledge*: understanding of how expert practitioners of disciplines work and think. This knowledge helps students find the purpose of learning, understand the application of learning and extend their disciplinary knowledge; and
4. *Procedural knowledge*: understanding of how something is done, the series of steps or actions taken to accomplish a goal. Some procedural knowledge is domain-specific, some transferable across domains. Transferable procedural knowledge enables students to use across different contexts and situations to identify solutions to problems.

OECD's future-ready students will thus need both broad and specialised knowledge. Disciplinary knowledge will continue to be important, as the raw materials from which new knowledge is developed, together with the capacity to think across the boundaries of disciplines and 'connect the dots'.

5 A Discipline as a Form of Knowledge and Inquiry

A discipline is defined as a branch of knowledge or field of inquiry. From a sociocultural and cognitive perspective, disciplines are viewed as unique forms of knowledge comprising: (1) distinctive concepts; (2) characteristic ways of using these concepts; (3) unique procedures for gathering evidence to construct and validate theory; and (4) distinctive ways of conducting investigations (Taylor et al. 2012, p. 2). Carmel Fahey (2012) argues, the emphasis on the conceptual nature of a discipline in teaching and learning provides a way to 'organise content, formulate questions, undertake inquiry, generate theory and communicate information' (p. 2).

6 The Disciplines of History and Geography

The disciplines of history and geography, which sit within the broad learning area of humanities and social sciences (HASS), play an important and essential role in primary students' sense-making. Through history and geography, primary students begin to understand that there are different ways to make sense of the world and answer their questions of inquiry. By engaging in a disciplinary inquiry process and adopting the methodologies inherent to the discipline, students are learning to take part in different practices and cultures. The exposure to the unique practices and culture of history or geography opens up the opportunity for students to think in new ways and develop new knowledge using the specific concepts, language, skills and tools that are unique to the discipline.

The following section explores the discipline of history in primary contexts.

7 History as a Discipline

The shape paper: History (National Curriculum Board 2009) defines history as:

> The study of the past. It provides knowledge, understanding and appreciation of previous events, people, practices and ideas. It orders them, renders them intelligible and discerns patterns of continuity and change. It provides the means whereby individual and collective identities are formed and sustained. It enriches the present and illuminates the future. (p. 4)

Written by a disciplinary expert to guide the development of *The Australian curriculum: History* (ACARA 2012), the Shape Paper illuminates history as:

> a distinctive and indispensable form of understanding practised across many generations. Human civilisation is marked by a preservation of the past in oral memory, documents, artefacts, monuments and traditions…History is a discipline with its own methods and procedures. It deepens our understanding of humanity, creativity, purposes and values. History draws on and contributes to other bodies of knowledge. (n.p.)

Through history, we begin to understand the complexity of the past and the interplay of human agency and conditions. Aboriginal perspectives open up a way to understand the different social, cultural and intellectual contexts that shaped people's lives and actions in the past (*The shape paper: History*, 2009), and we begin to see the way a sequence of events lead to a particular outcome.

The interpretive nature of historical understanding, as the Shape paper: History (2009) suggests 'differs from intuitive, memory-based understanding of the past because it requires negotiating between the familiar and unfamiliar and involves investigation' (p. 5). There is no suggestion that facts are unimportant, but rather that facts need to be understood through the big ideas or concepts that help us to understand the past. In other words, learning starts with key ideas.

8 The Conceptual Framework of History

Concepts are essential in sense-making, problem-solving and inquiry (di Sessa and Sherin 1998). In the discipline of history, concepts serve as a way to categorise and organise the past. *The shape paper: History* (2009) identifies several concepts that historians use to understand previous events, people, practices and ideas. These include:

Historical significance. The principles behind the selection of what should be remembered, investigated, taught and learned. Establishing historical significance involves going beyond what is personally interesting or congenial: it requires judgements of contemporary import, consequence, durability and relevance.

Evidence. How to find, select and interpret historical evidence. This involves comprehending the nature of a primary source, locating its provenance and context, asking questions about it, distinguishing between the claims it makes and the assumptions and values that give it its present shape, and the ability to compare competing primary sources.

Continuity and change. Dealing with the complexity of the past. This involves the capacity to understand the sequence of events, to make connections by means of organising concepts including periodisation, and to evaluate change with an informed understanding of the principles of progress and decline.

Cause and consequence. The interplay of human agency and conditions. This involves an appreciation of motivation and contestation, short-term events and embedded circumstances, the ways that the legacy of the past shapes intentions and the unintended consequences that arise from purposeful action.

Historical perspectives. The cognitive act of understanding the different social, cultural and intellectual contexts that shaped people's lives and actions in the past. This involves an understanding of the dangers of anachronism and an appreciation of diverse perspectives on the past.

Historical empathy and moral judgement. The capacity to enter into the world of the past with an informed imagination and ethical responsibility. The discipline of history constrains the practitioner from imposing personal preferences on the evidence, but all meaningful historical accounts involve explicit or implicit moral judgement, and historians require an awareness of their own values and the impact of these values on their historical understanding.

Contestation and contestability. Dealing with alternative accounts of the past. History is a form of knowledge that shapes popular sentiment and frequently enters into public debate. This requires the ability to connect the past with the self and the present, and appreciation of the rules that apply to professional and public debate over history.

Problem-solving. Applying historical understanding to the investigation, analysis and resolution of problems. History seeks explanation with a particular awareness of context and contingency. Through the components of historical understanding, the study of history fosters the capacity to formulate problems in a manner amenable to informed reasoning.

Concepts play an important role in disciplinary learning and teaching in the primary classroom. The conceptual framework, outlined earlier, highlights how a historian thinks about, and makes sense of, the past. Having these concepts in mind, enables us to organise, sequence, analyse, explain, connect, debate, understand, categorise, appreciate and imagine the past.

9 Concepts Organise Content

Another important aspect of history are concepts that are substantive, or put another way, ideas relating to the subject matter or content of history. Table 11.1 presents categories of substantive concepts identified by the UK Historical Association, alongside substantive concepts connected to topics and embedded in the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) *Syllabus for the Australian curriculum: History* (2012).

Table 11.1 Substantive concepts

Categories of substantive concepts	UK Historical Association definitions	NESA examples students learn about
Highly specific	Some concepts and terms (such as Calvinism or Menshivism) are highly specific to a particular period or place—and it is easy to recognise that their meaning needs to be explicitly taught	First Fleet, ANZAC Day, Stolen Generation, Botany Bay, Federation, the importance of Country to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
Concepts that originated in specific contexts	Other concepts (such as Puritanism or Bolshevism) that originated in specific contexts may come to be applied more widely, so that students' more general awareness of their meaning can obscure a lack of precision in their historical knowledge	World Exploration Convicts Colonies (development of the Australian colonies)
Concepts that are applied in many contexts	Others (such as 'the Church' or 'revolution') have a much wider application and are applied in many contexts other than history. In dealing with this category, teachers need not only to ensure that students understand their meaning rather than simply assuming that they do because they are works in common usage; they also need to plan for learning about how that meaning changes over time and in different contexts	Celebrations and commemorations Technology Family Migration Democracy citizenship

▶ **Activity**
Use this table to compare the substantive concepts found in the curriculum documents relevant to your own context.

10 The Role of Creativity, Imagination and the Arts in History

> …the historian's picture of the past is…in every detail an imaginary picture…. (Collingwood 1946/1994, p. 245)

The historian and early twenty-first-century scholar R.G. Collingwood opens up a way for us to understand the role of creativity, imagination and the Arts play in history. Collingwood (1946/1994) stated:

> history is partly a narrative of events, partly a description of situations, exhibition of motives, analysis of characters. Each aims at making his picture a coherent whole, where every character and every situation is bound up with the rest that this character in this situation cannot but act in this way, and we cannot imagine him acting otherwise. (p. 245)

It is important, then, to understand that historical imagining in Collingwood's view is:

> simply a process we use to construct or reconstruct pictures, ideas or concepts in our minds and he points out that this process should not necessarily be correlated with either the fictitious or the real. (Lemikso 2004, p. 2)

According to Collingwood there are two important elements that distinguish historical imagination from fanciful imagination. Firstly, in history a construction or explanation of the past must be based on something that actually happened or existed. Secondly, historical imagination differs from fanciful imagination as it is based on evidence derived from historical sources. Lemikso (2004) argues that Collingwood's claims not only offer teachers sound reasons for using constructivist approaches in their classrooms but are an acknowledgement of the important and essential role that imagination plays in the learning process. An important point to remember is that imagination is not only used to produce fiction, it is an essential component of historical thinking.

One of the aims of primary history is for students to construct an historical narrative or explanation using historical sources. Seixas (1994) maintains that learning and teaching activities in history need to expose the 'process of constructing warranted historical accounts so that students can arrive at their own understandings of the past through processes of critical inquiry' (p. 332). It is not enough for students to simply read or observe historical sources; they must be active participants in the learning process. To enable students to develop critical and creative thinking skills in history, the three approaches from Lemikso's (2004) work provide a way to handle primary sources:

Re-enacting: to understand and imagine past human actions and thought, we must think ourselves into the situation—that is, we rethink the thoughts of the persons engaged in the situation.

Interpolating: bridging the gaps in what our sources tell us. Historians go beyond what the sources tell them by constructing a picture of the past, using historical imagination to fill the gaps in the sources.

Interrogating: historians also go beyond what the sources tell them by being critical; the historian asks probing questions to interrogate the source. Statements must be corroborated, the biases of the author of the document and the historian must be taken into account and the historian must judge whether or not the evidence makes sense in terms of the whole picture that is being imagined (Abridged from Lemikso (2004).

▶ **Activity**

…the historian's picture of the past is…in every detail an imaginary picture… If the historian's picture of the past is in fact imaginary, what then is the difference between a novel and a historical account?

11 History and the Arts: Interdisciplinary Approaches in the Primary Classroom

> History then in the primary classroom would seem to have the potential to be a creative process where children can use informed imagination to construct narratives and accounts of events and situations. (Blake et al. 2011, p. 80)

An interdisciplinary approach to teaching history involves the combining of two or more disciplines into one or more activities. In the following exemplar presented, Morgan, a classroom teacher, in a rural primary school combines the disciplines of English, history and creativity to teach a history-based unit of work.

The unit of work explores the effect of war on individuals, communities and the nation. Students develop historical understanding of significance, cause and effect, and empathy as they consider events, from a range of perspectives, using drama pedagogies such as conscience alley and freeze frames (see Drama chapter). Together, students construct historical knowledge as they re-enact, interrogate and make sense of primary sources. Like historians, the students construct historical accounts, using a range of genres. And like historians, they do so for different purposes:

> To tell a story, to explain why something happened, to interpret what happened and why, to explain a process of enquiry, to persuade a point of view, to report on findings, to present an historical problem or a possible solution to one. (Cooper 2018, p. 644)

The following ten-week unit culminated in a presentation to parents and the wider community (Image 11.1).

The following work samples provide a glimpse into what the students gained from the various experiences and highlight how new historical knowledge is

This cross-curriculum unit draws heavily on English, History and creativity. While the content is History based, the English Syllabus has been the foundation of the composed texts and the Creative Arts have given the learners many ways to express their learning. Stage 3 students have been exploring key themes in the NSW History Syllabus including significance, historical empathy and perspective. Students have used these themes to work through a range of process drama pedagogies for deep learning experiences around WW1 and have explored how this significant event shaped Australia as a Nation. Students have identified **change and continuity** and described the **cause and effects** of WW1 on Australian society and individual people through connecting with personal stories.

Throughout this unit, Stage 3 students have had the opportunity to value and understand history as a study of human experiences, the opportunity to develop a lifelong interest and enthusiasm for history and an appreciation of history as reflecting different **perspectives** and **viewpoints**. Stage 3 understand the importance of the contribution of past and present people to our shared heritage.

Our students have created historical narratives that have been written in a variety of perspectives based on characters they have developed through using drama to step into the shoes of another. Stage 3 have created freeze frames based on service, sacrifice, courage and remembrance which have given students the opportunity to connect with moments in time and recreate photographs from the past.

These skills each of us need in life, are transferrable and we have used the context of WW1 as it is an area where we can access many personal stories and remembrances. This presentation is not about war, it is about people. We have used drama within this action research with Sydney University, because while this is part of our set curriculum, it is difficult for young children to understand with these concepts. Drama offers us a way in!

Image 11.1 Order of events

Order of Events

- **Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Indigenous Soldiers**

  Lani Cole

- **iMovie, "Stories of Remembrance"**

  Stage 3 collaboration

- **A dramatic reading of 'Loyal Creatures', by Morris Gleitzman, with corresponding soundscape**

  Reading by Millie Day and Eve van Leest, Soundscape by Stage 3

- **Monologue Performances, written and performed by**

  Cooper Crouch (Soldier going to war), Eve McCarthy (Soldier talking to their horse at war), Pearl McGrorey (The wild waler's perspective of going to war), Hailey Rutkowski (The waler's perspective of being captured), Cecilia Strain (A soldier's letter to his mother)

- **Freeze Frames, showcasing historical concepts of Service, Sacrifice, Remembrance and Courage**

  A drama technique that produces a visual picture, to show characters in a scene. The freeze is held for several seconds to clearly show through the actions and/or facial expressions what the characters are feeling. Students then break their freeze to reveal their character's thoughts and feelings.

- **Conscience Alley, "Should animals be used for service in war?"**

  A drama technique that allows for exploration of any kind of dilemma faced by a character.

At the completion of the Conscience Alley walk through, students will move to a section of the hall. These individual areas display the work of each student, which they have worked tirelessly to create over the last semester: a hybrid text (a work that creatively weaves together imaginative and informational text), a timeline of WW1 events, a portrait artwork, and an artistic statement that supports their art. Each student will also perform a monologue that they have written, edited and rehearsed, based on their imaginative writing pieces.

We now invite you to move around the hall to engage with all of the wonderful work your children have produced.

Image 11.1 (continued)

generated through creative pedagogies including process drama, visual arts and poetry. The drama processes and devices used (Soundscape, Freezeframes and Conscience Alley) are discussed in Chap. 5, and more information can be found in Ewing and Saunders (2016).

12 Other Creative Pedagogies

Visual Art

Blackout Poetry

The poet takes a found document, traditionally a print newspaper, and crosses out a majority of the existing text, leaving visible only the words that comprise his or her poem, thereby revealing an entirely new work of literature birthed from an existing one. The striking imagery of the redacted text—eliminated via liberal use of a black marker (hence: 'blackout' poetry)—and the remaining readable text work together to form a new piece of visual poetry (Miller 2017).

Image 11.2 Visual art image by Imogen

Artistic Statement

Completed by: Imogen Lee

1. Describe your artwork:

My artwork is of 2 soldiers, one Turk and One Australian shaking hands on Christmas day during the christmas truce. I decided not to do any features on their faces because it means they could be anyone and they can be more than one person. My art is different to most others because of the way I have chosen to leave the face without features.

2. How did you create your work?

I created my artwork by tearing and cutting pieces of paper out of magazines. I glued the ripped and cut pieces over top of an image that was printed in black and white so that it had colour. I made changes a lot throughout the process until I had the final product.

3. What is the big idea behind your artwork?

The big idea behind my artwork is to make the art tell a story. The story that I want to show using my artwork is friendships between German and Brithish soldiers were made during the Christmas truce. It also shows that millions of men were at War because I have not included facial features that make it one person, it can be many.

4. What were your goals for the artwork?

To show the friendship between the Geman and Britiash soldiers. My goal was also to make the soldiers really stand out because the way the soldiers came together on Christmas was a stand out during the time of WW1.

5. What are your overall thoughts about your artwork?

I really like the effect that cutting and tearing the magazines gives. I also think I did well at showing the friendship of the British and German soldiers. The end result that I envisioned at first is not what it turned out to look like but I'm quite happy with the way it looks after I have completed the artwork.

Image 11.3 Imogen's artistic statement

Artistic Statement

Completed by: Cecilia Strain

1. Describe your artwork:
My artwork is of an Australian soldier who fought in World War 1. I think that my artwork is different to most others because I got an extra piece of paper and put the Australian flag in the background to show his pride of being an Australian. I decided not to do facial features because I feel like it takes away from the purpose of the art, it's not about who it is it's about what they stand for and in my artwork they stand for the Australian flag.

2. How did you create your work?
I created my artwork by going through magazines and cutting and tearing pieces of paper. I then glued the pieces of paper on to the black and white soldier and flag, this gave it colour and brought the photos to life. I cut the pieces of paper for the Australian flag to make it look professional and ripped the soldiers pieces of paper to give it more depth. It was a longer process cutting the pieces of paper then ripping them!

3. What is the big idea behind your artwork?
The big idea behind my artwork is to show people that WW1 soldiers didn't fight because they had to but because they wanted to do the Australian flag proud.

4. What were your goals for the artwork?
My goal for this artwork was to really show that the Australian soldiers were proud of their flag. I wanted the flag to stand out because that was my main idea. I think my goal was reached because the Australian flag stands out and the colours pop behind the soldier.

5. What are your overall thoughts about your artwork?
My overall thoughts in this artwork is that it turned out really good, almost exactly how I imagined it in my mind. This artwork was really fun to make and I would like to do it again in the future.

Image 11.4 Cecilia's artistic statement

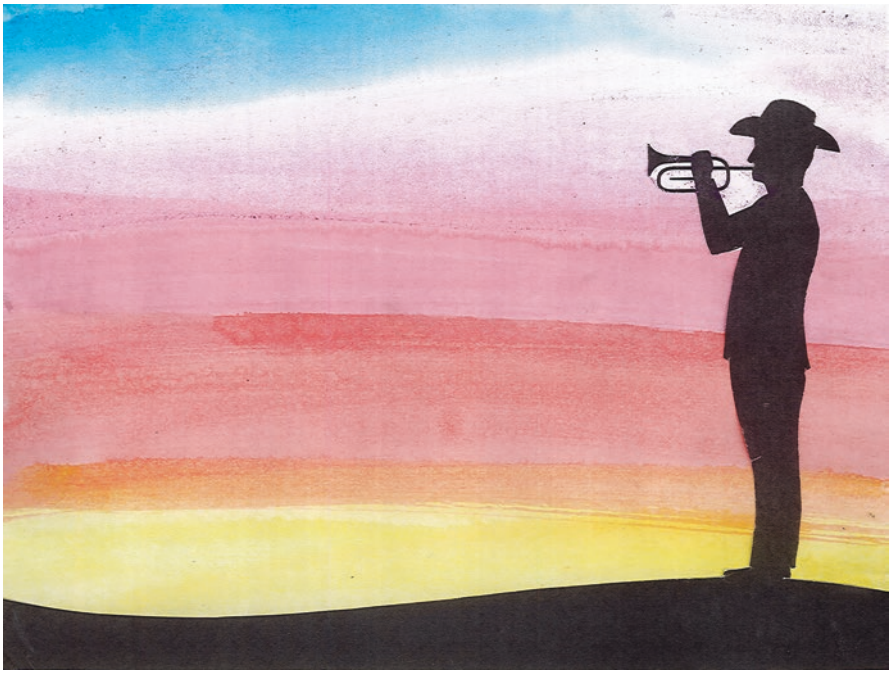

Image 11.5 Student work by Cecilia

Hybrid Texts

Hybrid text is not only an engaging genre that integrates narrative and informational text but also a powerful tool to pique readers' attention and inspire the curiosity to learn (Bintz and Ciecierski 2017) (Images 11.5, 11.6 and 11.7).

Monologue

A monologue is a speech presented by a single character, most often to express their mental thoughts aloud, though sometimes also to directly address another character or the audience.

13 Post-unit Observations and Comments

The unit of work presented earlier employed a wide range of creative pedagogies, which allowed students to build and demonstrate knowledge about a significant event. Through the historical inquiry process, the students actively 'do history' as

Image 11.6 Casseea's work

they engage in the methods of the discipline. Through the assessment tasks, students address learning outcomes from three different learning areas and demonstrate their historical understanding, skills and knowledge in creative forms. Having worked closely with Morgan and her students, Ann Dawson, the school principal, reflects:

> **Principal's Reflection**
> One of the biggest learnings for us came through the use of creative pedagogy as an 'in' to the major themes of our syllabus—significance, empathy and perspective. The use of the creative gave the students a language through which to engage with the themes and a language with which to express their understandings. (Ann Dawson)

14 Conclusion

Leading learners willingly into other worlds is a moral act of the highest order (Bage 2006). Creativity and imagination are integral to the discipline of history. By providing students with opportunities to generate questions, investigate problems and issues from multiple perspectives, and use imagination to make connections, we are not only teaching them to think like historians, we are preparing our students with the knowledge, abilities and tools they need to navigate a rapidly changing world.

CHRISTMAS TRUCE!

Christmas 1914

As I pull my mind away from the thunderous bombs echoing in the distance, I gently pull the picture of Jack and Molly out of my pocket hoping for a short glimpse. Their beautiful chubby faces shine into my eyes. I think back to when it was Molly's first christmas at Kyneton. Lila and I were standing in front of the fire as Jack held Molly in his arms laughing at the sight of her. What would they be doing this year without me? Playing a good old game of cricket in the backyard? Popping party crackers? I can almost hear them singing cheerfully around the glorious christmas tree- ' JINGLE BELLS, JINGLE BELLS.' The merry tune grows louder. It's almost like its not a thought anymore. I nervously poke my swollen head out of the rotten trench. " STOP JIMMY!" Commands Sargent. "IT'S TOO RISKY!" I'm no listening. I gaze across no mans land and there stands a Turk stands bare handed singing the Christmas tune. I don't know what to do? Do I shoot or join in with his Christmas spirit? Without thinking I am walking out of the rotten trench. Looking back I see all the

Image 11.7 Eve's work

boys mouth open in utter shock. I slowly join in singing. Stuttering at first but then I begin to think. What would the Turk be thinking? Is he as scared as me?Is he in as much bloody shock as I am? We walk up to each other shaking with disbelief. The poor block just wants a peaceful Christmas,same as me. I hold up my hand,he then follows. I feel his Christmas spirit tingle through my body as we shake hands. I feel safe. I feel like I'm at home all cosy and snug. We do our best introduce ourselves and share memories from home. His name is Emine. I remember the picture of Jack and Molly that I have been clasping in my hand. I decide to show him. He starts to laugh and then cry. He has kids back at home to that he is missing deeply. I tell my blokes to drop the weapons and come join me. Emine does the same. We all join in a game of soccer. Laughs are being had all round. It feels weird though that I will be trying to kill Emine and all the other Turks tomorrow so that Jack and Molly and all the other kids in the British Empire can grow up in a safe and free country.

Image 11.7 (continued)

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STEM into STEAM

12

Learning Objectives

- to understand the relationship between science and art;
- to differentiate between STEM and STEAM;
- to develop an appreciation of the connections between the creative arts and STEM; and
- to better understand the needs of twenty-first-century learning, which include the 4Cs.

I know that the most joy in my life came to me from my violin. (Albert Einstein)

1 Introduction

Since it was first introduced in 2001, the acronym science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) has become the buzzword in educational contexts worldwide. But if we want our students to be well prepared to negotiate the complexities of an uncertain future, then we must ensure that the education we offer is as broad and comprehensive as possible. With the current focus on high-stakes testing which often requires memorisation not understanding, students are being taught that there is a right and wrong answer. Yet the world is not black and white. Therefore 'we must encourage the youth of tomorrow to seek out multiple solutions to complex problems and the addition of the Arts with the STEM fields can combat this issue [since] well-rounded arts problems never have one answer' (Land 2013, p. 549).

As the premise of this book is to place the Arts at the centre of the curriculum, it probably comes as little surprise that we weigh in on adding the 'A' to STEM to

R. Gibson, R. Ewing, *Transforming the Curriculum Through the Arts*,
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create a richer, more comprehensive approach to learning. To achieve this, we offer relevant and practical activities throughout this chapter in an attempt to encourage teachers and students to draw STEM subjects and the Arts closer together.

2 Science and the Arts

Up until the nineteenth century, the sciences and the Arts were deeply entwined. It was only during the first quarter of the twentieth century that a division between the two emerged. In fact, the concepts of science and art became so estranged that they seemed to occupy different cultural worlds, even though in the previous century the terms 'had been so close that they were often used interchangeably' (Schatzberg 2012, p. 555). It was during this time that a new concept of fine art began to reshape Enlightenment ideas about art and its relationship to science.

Eisner (2002) describes the elevation of science above the Arts:

> Science was considered dependable, the artistic process was not. Science was cognitive, the arts were emotional. Science was teachable, the arts required talent. Science was testable, the arts were matters of preference. Science was useful and the arts were ornamental. (p. 2)

Over the past decade, there has been a push in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and a number of Asian countries to broaden and diversify the science offered in schools, to link it to technology, engineering and mathematics. In other words, the concept of STEM. Despite the widely acknowledged benefits of interdisciplinary approaches to learning, it seems that STEM is not an integrated reality in many schools. The focus often remains on science and mathematics, with engineering and technology left out of the STEM equation. Recently, researchers have argued that art and science, both dedicated to truth and beauty, are better together than apart.

3 Putting the 'A' into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

Art seems to be as old as human existence dating back 40,000 years or more. Science, as we know it, is perhaps a little more difficult to date although calculations for the Earth's movement around its axis are known from Mesopotamian and Babylonian times, that is, 35,000 years BC (Steele 2000). There is no requirement for the Arts, in order for science to exist or proceed (Braund and Reiss 2019). There are, however, numerous ways in which the Arts and the sciences do and should co-exist interdependently.

The idea of integrating the Arts with learning in other disciplines is not new and is a focus of this book. But adding the 'A' into the STEM equation may be a mechanism to re-frame a misleading curriculum concept and provide opportunities for the

self-expression and personal connection that our students desire (Land 2013). According to Immerman (2011):

> As the economic activity of … the world continues to rapidly transform, the need to invest in education that promotes innovation and creativity has become primary to the central themes into this ongoing public dialogue. (n.p)

The STEM subjects alone will not lead to the kinds of innovation the twenty-first century demands. 'Innovation happens when convergent thinkers, who march straight ahead toward their goal, combine forces with divergent thinkers who professionally wander, who are comfortable being uncomfortable, and who look for what is real'(Maeda 2011, p. 34).

Scientists, mathematicians and engineers may discover some solutions to the world's problems and as a result create innovative products that may bolster the economy, but it is the artists who ask the deep questions that may reveal which direction we should take to actually move forward. Progress will not come from technology alone but from a blending of technology and creative thinking through artistic practices. Many are now seeing an obvious connection between the Arts and the STEM fields. A 2008 study by Robert Root-Burnstein found that Nobel laureates in the sciences were 22 times more likely than scientists in general to be involved in the performing arts. Albert Einstein, for example, was an accomplished violinist (see the quote at beginning of this chapter) while Leonardo de Vinci was a painter and a sculptor but also became famous as an inventor, scientist and engineer.

The Arts are an essential part of education and by adding the A into STEM, teachers may be persuaded to find meaningful ways to incorporate STEM concepts (NCES 2009; Piro 2012; Tarnoff 2010) into the curriculum. 'STEAM may actually help educators to build the foundation of science-related knowledge, using the Arts to encourage children to express their ideas in a wide variety of creative ways' (p. 36). Integrating the Arts into these content areas not only helps students to explore an idea from different vantage points but it also encompasses different types of learning—visual, auditory and kinaesthetic—thus leading to the criticality and creativity of mind that tomorrow's citizens require. If creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking (see 4Cs in Chap. 3)—all touted as critical skills for twenty-first-century success (NEA 2013)—are to be fostered, we need to ensure that STEM subjects are drawn closer to the Arts.

► **Activity**
Complete a personal reflection

- *How confident do you feel about teaching STEAM with your students?*
- *Are there specific strands of science that you feel more confident about, that is, biology, physics, chemistry, earth and space and so on.*
- *What strategies could you use to integrate STEAM into your programme?*

4 Draw a … Scientist or Artist

Almost 40 years ago, David Wade Chambers, an educational researcher decided to investigate children's perceptions of the scientist. The Draw-a-Scientist-Test (DAST) was used to learn at what age well-known stereotypical images of the scientist first appeared. Children's drawings were analysed for seven standard indicators: white laboratory coat, eyeglasses, facial hair, symbols of research, symbols of knowledge, products of knowledge (i.e. technology) and relevant captions. By examining, analysing and evaluating children's conceptual images of scientists, Chambers and colleagues concluded that students hold stereotypical images from a very early age. These perceptions influence subject and career choices and are difficult to change (Image 12.1).

Since its publication, several different scientific disciplines have been studied simply by changing the prompt from 'Draw a scientist' to 'Draw a ….'. These have included mathematician, doctor, engineer, physicist chemist, psychologist and archaeologist (Flick 1990; Schibeci and Sorensen 1983; Picker and Berry 2001).

Given that previous studies have focused on STEM careers, we thought that it might be insightful to move DAST to DAAT or Draw an artist. Here is one of the resulting drawings (Image 12.2).

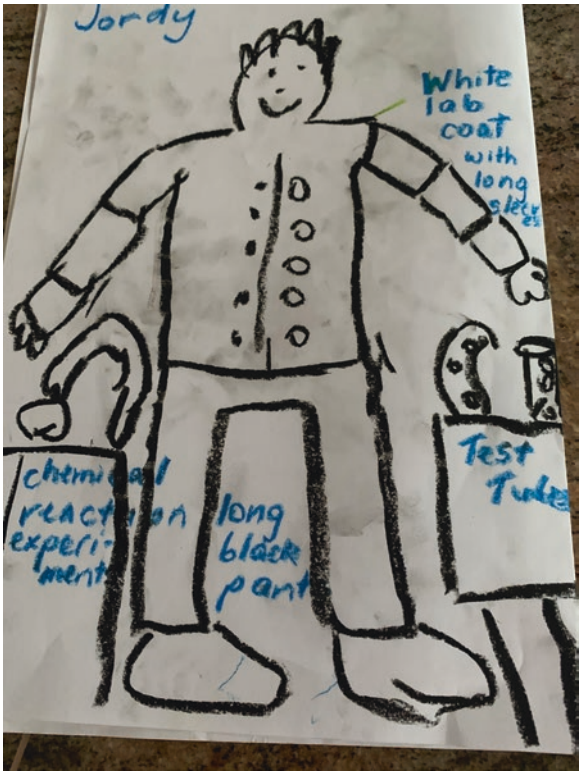

Image 12.1 Jordy's scientist

Image 12.2
Timothy's artist

5 Visual Arts and Mathematics

Many well-known artists have drawn on their understanding of the aesthetic in mathematical conventions (consider, e.g. the Golden Ratio, the Fibonacci sequence, Fractals) for inspiration for their artwork. These artists and their artworks can be a very useful starting point for studying space and shape. Several examples are provided below.

Tessellations

In helping pre-service teachers appreciate spatial patterns, Aldridge and Gibson (2002) first showed an excerpt from the film, *The labyrinth* (1986) concentrating on the 'stair sequence' that is featured towards the end and challenges, even confuses, notions of 'top/bottom' and 'up/down'. They then explored the work of M. C. Escher including *The house of stairs* (1938) and *Reptiles* (1943) and discussed the artist's use of shape and space. The students developed a word back of specific mathematical and art vocabulary (Image 12.3).

The students then worked in trios to select a shape, remove a small section (a 'nibble') to slide and attach to another side of the shape. The activity highlighted the action performed on the shape to transform it. The transformed shape formed a template, which each individual then used to create their own tessellations (Image 12.4).

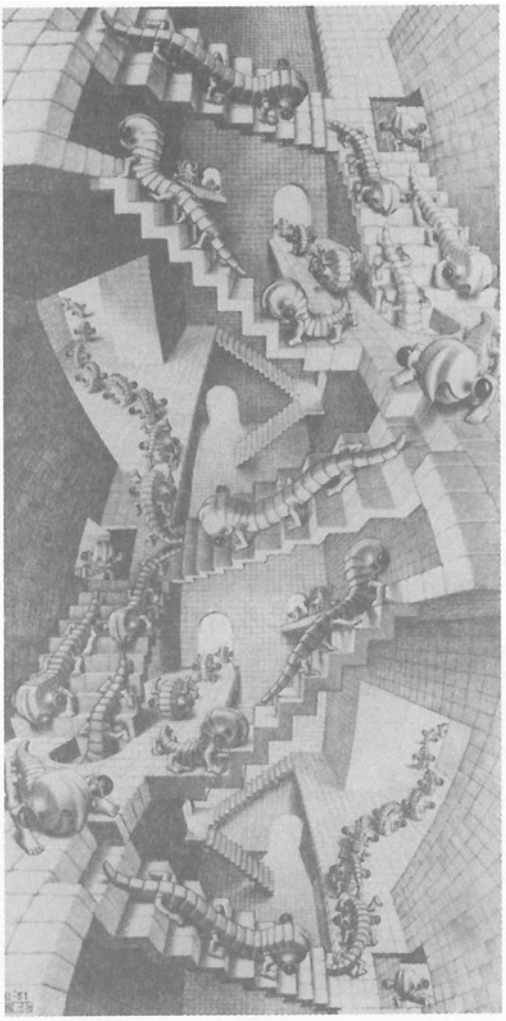

Image 12.3 *House of stairs* by M. C. Escher

In developing their tessellations the students selected a colour scheme (e.g. monochromatic, warm/cool colours, etc). They cut 9–12 shapes from coloured paper and magazine photos of similar colour scheme and experimented with flipping, sliding and rotating their shapes to eventually create their own tessellating pattern.

Shapes and Patterns

There are many real connections between the shapes and symbols used to communicate ideas in everyday life, and the teaching of shape in the classroom. A unit on shapes can be initiated by giving children digital or conventional cameras and

Image 12.4 Examples of tessellation

asking them to photograph as many examples of shapes in the playground, at home, on a bushwalk and so on. These photographs can be shared and compared with the geometric models in the classroom. Students can be asked to use a variety of materials to create a collage using as many shapes as they can (Image 12.5).

A British Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) report, *Learning: Creative approaches that raise standards* (2010), documents examples from inspections of 44 English schools that have developed integrated innovative approaches to learning. One example was from a Year 1 mathematics unit on shapes and patterns. The unit began with a study of Bridget Riley's paintings (see, e.g. *Shadow play,* 1990, represented below). Children

Image 12.5 Shapes and patterns

discussed the style and impact of her work and then music was played to allow them time to think. The teacher probed their responses before dividing them into pairs to analyse another of Riley's artwork. The teacher encouraged the students to identify mathematical shapes and make judgements about the impact of the different patterns. Further discussions as a whole group enabled rich vocabulary to be built (e.g. 'zigzag', 'chequered' and helped the students better understand mathematical language such as 'semi-circle'. Finally, the students created their own Riley-inspired artwork. Several used computers to arrange a set of shapes into as many patterns as they could find. They applied the same kind of evaluation to their own creations as they had to Riley's (Image 12.6).

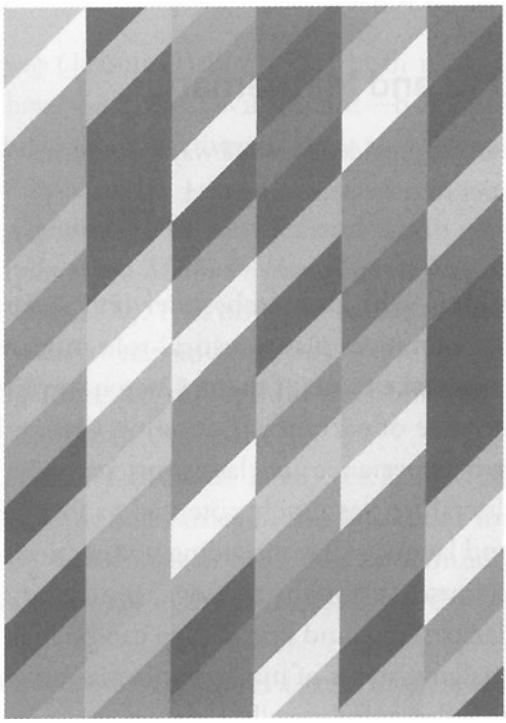

Image 12.6 *Shadow Play*, 1990, Bridget Riley

Science and Embodiment

In light of students waning engagement in science, Carole Haeusler from the University of Southern Queensland believes this lack of interest is, in part, related to poor pedagogy. She has been undertaking research that challenges the assumption that atomic molecular theory is too difficult for primary children to understand. Her research explores new ways of introducing atomic theory including embodiment of the processes to students in Year 4 in Brisbane, Australia. Pre-intervention interviews and drawings explored the children's attitude to and knowledge about atoms and molecules. They articulated children's real interest in learning about scientific concepts and marked curiosity to know more. Experiential activities were used to introduce the relevant concepts. For example, the relative size of atoms was explored by the children through exploring the weight of different metals and non-metals and ordering them in sequence. Electrical charge was introduced through enacting repulsion and attraction. Post-intervention interviews documented evidence that almost all of the participating students demonstrated genuine understanding of matter as particulate eight weeks after the intervention. A smaller but significant percentage were able to represent more details about atoms. For more information, see Haeusler and Donovan (2017). Further work on embodiment and science is continuing.

Example

Probability, Visual Arts and Design

This unit is designed for Stages 3 and 4 to explore probability theory adapted from one developed by the Mathematics Faculty, Sir Joseph Banks High School.

Students were given a rich task, incorporating exploring mathematics, design and visual arts. They were 'en-roled' as designers for a creative games company that produces board games for 6–9-year-olds. Their manager gave them the assignment of designing a spinner using materials of their choice (e.g. wood, metal, heavy cardboard) for a new board game with the following criteria. The assessment was then negotiated.

The spinner must:

- be attractive for a child aged between seven and nine;
- use five colours;
- be designed so that the probability of blue is twice that of green, red three times that of green, yellow twice that of blue and black three times that of red; and
- be functional. ◄

6 STEAM and Stories

Teachers often use fiction as a stimulus for supporting learning across the curriculum. Quality texts can easily be used to provide a starting point for a STEAM investigation. Picture books such as *The hungry caterpillar* by Eric Carle and *The enormous turnip* by Alexi Tolstoy are obvious examples in the early years of school.

Claire Hewett (2008) has suggested how various texts can be used to support the teaching of science or, in our case, STEAM, by providing avenues for investigative thinking to occur. For example, the dramatic story *The iron man* by Ted Hughes (1968) (also see Chap. 8) can be used to explore abstract concepts such as materials and their properties: physical processes—electricity and magnetism; *Stig of the dump* by Clive King (1963) lends itself to the investigation of forces and motion, while *Over the steamy swamp* by Paul Geraghty offers insights into life processes and living things. Oliver Jeffers' book *The heart in the bottle* (2010) provides a starting point for an investigation of the heart as a muscle, while also considering our reference to it as our emotional centre. In an attempt to shed some light on the evolution of certain organisms, Joyce Sidman and Beckie Prange combined poetry, factual information and illustrations in *Ubiquitous: Celebrating nature's survivors* (2010). Clearly, literature can provide opportunities for making connections between STEAM concepts and the students' own worlds and life experiences.

7 Integrating Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics with the Creative Arts

Let's now look at how some creative arts strategies and activities can be embedded in STEM. Where appropriate, teachers can adopt a thematic approach that relates STEM to a number of other subjects, including the creative arts. Topics could include, for example, the natural world, seasons, weather, plants and animals, the environment and machines. Remember that each of the following activities can be used as a starting point to engage the child's curiosity which leads to discovery and exploration.

Visual Arts

3D Habitats—when exploring an animal or plant's habitat, shoe boxes can be used to create representative dioramas. Add clay models, found objects and Papier-mâché in the construction. Ensure that students consider all the needs of the animal or plant.

Scientific Drawings—examine the detailed animal and plant drawings of Beatrix Potter or Sir Joseph Banks. Students complete a careful scientific drawing following this expert model, focusing on significant details. Photographs or actual plants can be used for direct observation.

Rock Paintings—each pupil selects a smallish rock. They carefully study its shape to see what it may become, that is, a frog, a bilby and so on. Add polyvinyl acetate (PVA) glue to paint so that it will adhere to the surface of the rock.

Art Versus Reality—students look at how the same object has been represented by various artists. For example, flowers depicted by Georgia O'Keefe, Van Gogh and Margaret Preston. The class decides on one object, and individuals are invited to interpret it through a range of mediums, including collage, water colour and ink, printing, pastels, clay and so on.

Music

Body Parts Rap—students use the bones of the body to create a rap or chant.

Nature Sounds—pupils tape-record sounds in nature such as magpies warbling, dogs barking, rain hitting a corrugated roof and so on. Using simple music software, they combine these sounds to create a nature composition.

Environmental Rhythms—as above, although this time, pupils record environmental sounds to create a musical composition. For example, a tap dripping, toilet flushing, door slamming, clock ticking and so on. These sounds could then be incorporated into a movement piece.

Musical Changes—after listening to Vivaldi's *Four seasons*, students write and record songs that detail either metamorphosis, growth or change. Some ideas may include seed to flower, caterpillar to butterfly, baby to old person.

Weather Reports—in small groups, students observe and then write weather reports. As the reports are read, the other group members act as meteorologists and provide the sound of the weather as it is mentioned, that is, rain, thunder and lightning, strong winds, hale and so on.

Drama

Conscience Alley—after researching an environmental issue such as global warming and loss of rainforests, students can be asked to generate plus and minuses for a particular issue. Students then form two lines (For and Against) facing each other. One pupil walks slowly down the middle, while students (one at a time) alternatively provide a reason for one side of the argument.

Embodiment—in order to understand scientific concepts relating to materials and their properties, students can embody them. For example, they can depict different states of matter—solids, liquids and gases. This activity can be further extended to processes such as evaporation, condensation, melting, freezing and boiling.

Tableaux (Frozen Moments)—small groups are given an Australian invention to research (e.g. Hills Hoist, cochlear implant, two-stoke motor mower, Speedo swimwear, etc). They research their invention and then create several frozen moments to replicate its first demonstration to the public.

Nature Metaphors—images of natural forms such as rivers, glaciers, sand dunes and so on can be studied closely. Students can choose a metaphor to represent their form and present it. For example, 'dark as a bottomless hole' (cave). Other members of the class attempt to guess the natural form being depicted.

Dance

Environmental Dance Moves—small collaborative groups are given an environmental category to research:

- seasons—spring, summer, autumn, winter;
- weather—sun-shower, thunderstorm, hail;
- life cycles—water, plant, butterfly; and
- places—beach, desert, the bush.

These can also be explored through movement using basic dance elements such as body, energy, space and time.

Machine Movements—observe things that move in a non-organic manner, for example, a toaster, a forklift, a mechanical toy and so on. Discuss the observations. In pairs, explore these kinds of movements, then demonstrate how different body parts at different levels/speeds can represent mechanical movements.

Walking Like—on cards write how to walk under different conditions:

- across slippery rocks;
- on hot sand at the beach;
- up a steep flight of stairs; and
- at an ice rink.

Students walk normally around the room. When the teacher calls out a description, they alter their walk accordingly. This activity could also include walking on the Moon which encourages students to consider the force of gravity.

Weather Dancing—in a unit on weather, students can select a weather condition preferably one that begins small and slow, escalates, slows and then stops, that is, a raging hailstorm, a bushfire and so on. All students start in a frozen position, when the narrator announces the weather condition, they respond by changing levels and shapes (one at a time) until they are all moving. When everyone is moving, they then reverse the process until all students are frozen again (Cornett 1999).

Example

A STEAM Unit Based on the Topic 'The Sea'

Aims

- to demonstrate that STEM and the Arts can be integrated with integrity;
- to explore the theme of 'The Sea' using recycled materials; and
- to acknowledge critical environmental issues around climate change, pollution and endangered flora and fauna.

Exploring (depending on age of students):

1. Watch a video segment which focuses on the beauty of the sea OR environmental concerns affecting our oceans.
2. In small groups, brainstorm what the term 'The Sea' means to you. Consider specific colours, sounds, shapes, living things, objects, activities and so on. This can be done via words, images or both.
3. In these same groups, use the brainstorming to create a piece of poetry or prose. Share with the other groups. Consider the similarities and differences between the different responses.
4. Students can digitally upload their poems adding images, video clips and/or sound effects.

Developing/Making

1. Create 'treasure boxes', using empty transparent CD cases or small cardboard boxes. The CD cases should have both a foreground and background while the boxes will have top and sides decorated.
2. Use different types of recycled/reused papers— Cellophane tissue, gift wrapping and magazine pictures. Small shells, driftwood, sand and other found objects can be used to decorate the treasure boxes. Use PVA glue versus clag as it will dry clear.
3. Students may also consider adding letters/words from magazines to their 3D forms.

Responding/Reflecting

1. Each group is given an artwork that in some way is associated with the sea.

Suggestions from *Beyond the frame* include:

Big shark in a small ute by Susan Fischer (1992);
Gift from the sea by Jorg Schmeisser (1990); and
Manly beach—Five girls on longboards by Ray Leighton (c1940).

From *Aspects of Australia:*
The bathers by Anne Zahalka (1989).
From *Sculpture by the Sea Education Kit*:
In your own backyard by Marianne Hulsbosch and Robyn Gibson (2002).

2. As a group list the similarities and differences between the artwork and the treasure boxes that have been created.
3. Students use their bodies to 'replicate' their artwork. All artworks are displayed and the rest of the class attempts to guess which is being displayed. Photographs should be taken so that each group can critique its own representation of the artwork.
4. As a class read some art auction blurbs from Sotheby's catalogues. Students then use this 'persuasive' style of language to write their own in order to sell their treasure boxes.
5. The teacher selects an 'auctioneer/s' who is tasked with selling each artwork to the highest bidder!

Extension Ideas

1. As a class discuss the children's concerns about the current state of our oceans, for example, raising sea levels, bleaching of coral reefs, sea life caught in disused fishing nets and so on. Play some quiet, contemplative music and ask students to write 'a prayer (message) to the sea' on small pieces of coloured card. These could be personal, community-focused or from a global perspective. They are to be enclosed inside each treasure box.
2. The treasure boxes can be incorporated into subsequent drama activities where they can be offered as 'gifts', and recipients respond with their understanding of:
   a beautiful sea;
   a dangerous ocean; and
   a sad coral reef. ◀

Teacher's Reflection

This series of lessons can be adapted depending on the age, backgrounds and interests of the students. Teachers may want to take a 'hard look' at current global concerns or focus on a more positive appreciation of this natural resource. It does however demonstrate the ease with which the Arts can be integrated into a traditional science topic and result in truly unique artefacts! (Robyn Gibson)

Example

The Art and Science of Toys

This following unit of work links the science of toys with the creative arts. It was developed by Chris Preston, a science educator with extensive experience working with both primary students and pre-service teachers.

Visual Toys

To Begin

Image 12.7 Flip 'n flyer

In pairs examine the surfaces of the visual toys provided and discuss the following:

What do they have in common?

What colours, shapes, patterns and textures have been used to decorate these toys?

Think: have these features been used randomly or chosen with purpose?

Predict

These toys are all designed to spin and when they are moving, you see the surface travelling very quickly. Predict what will happen to:

(a) colours and

(b) shapes

as the toys spin. Record your predictions before testing them out.

Observe

In pairs play with the toys and observe what they look like when they are moving.

Do the colours change or remain the same—when the toy is moving fast or slow?

How do the surface patterns compare when the toys are in motion or still?

Make sure your partner has a turn.

Explain

Can you explain how this toy works? How does spinning these toys change the way in which we see them?

Create

The surface features of these toys can be changed without altering how they work. Design an add-on to the toy that would make it more artistic or appealing for the observer.

Consider: colours, textures, shapes, reflective or absorptive materials.

How would you change the toy if you were a toy designer?

Use either the modification you made to the toy or the toy itself as inspiration for an artwork. Think about what the toy looks like when it moves fast or slow, before it starts and as it slows down before it stops. You could use video or digital photography to capture the visual effects and use these as inspiration for your artwork. Consider whether your artwork should be 2D or 3D.

Extension Ideas

1. *Creating a visual toy*—look at the features of the Flip 'n flyer.
   What is it made from?
   Do you think you can make a toy that works the same way?
   Consider design features such as materials, shape of parts, weight of the disc, thickness and elasticity of the elastic.
   When you make your toy make sure the hole is exactly in the middle of your disc—why is this important? Also make sure any additional features, streamers, weights and so on are arranged evenly around the disc—why is this important?
2. *Illustrating how a toy works*—draw a labelled diagram of one of the toys you experimented with. Underneath list each part and explain its role in making the toy work. Imagine you were provided this illustration for a technical book on the science of toys.
   Consider: audience, visual appeal, clarity and key scientific concepts.
3. *Dancing with toys*—Visit the Flip 'n flyer website—watch videos of the toys being used. Each student plans a dance movement to correspond to the action of one of the toys. Pairs then combine their movements; two pairs join and create a continuous dance sequence that complements the action of the toy.

Flying Toys

Allow children to explore the range of flying toys available. These might include pump rockets, model aeroplanes, Frisbees, rubber band–powered helicopters, hand-driven rotor blades (linear), string-pulled rotor blades (circular) and flying saucers.

In pairs, have students select one of the toys and examine its features to try and work out what enables it to fly. Have them consider—what energy is applied to the toy and the energy changes that take place as it lifts, continues in motion and finally comes back to the ground. Ask students to draw a labelled diagram of their toy, showing the four forces involved in flight—gravity, thrust, lift and drag.

Image 12.8 Examples of flying toys

Have students write a brief explanation about the interplay of these forces in the operation of their toy.

As inspiration for an artwork about flying toys children might consider some of the following:

attaching things to the toy that add to its physical appearance or interest as it flies;

recording and representing the flight trajectories of the toy;

combining different toys, their size, shapes, features, way they fly and what they look like when they fly into one artwork; and

showing toys from different viewpoints (from on top, below, side on, front on) as they fly.

Extension

1. Pairs join together to form a group of four to compare and discuss the flying toys they examined; list the similarities and differences between them.
2. Develop a dance or a play using flying toys as inspiration; and
3. Listen to the sounds the flying toys make; can you put together a musical compilation based on these toys?

Marine Toys

Show children a range of marine animal toys, for example, octopus, squid, Grey Nurse Shark puppet, turtle, anemone fish, Blue Tang, crayfish, (pictured). As children handle and observe these toys from all sides ask questions to stimulate their thinking.

Which animals belong in the same group? What are the similarities and differences between the fish or between the squid and octopus? Look at the patterns on the fish, do you think they have a purpose or are just for decoration? (See interference colours and eye spots used in animal camouflage.) How accurately do the toys represent the real animals: colours; size; shape, fins or appendages?

Provide children with some photos (printed or displayed around the room or on an interactive whiteboard). Discuss the shapes that the patterns make and

Image 12.9 Marine toy display

ways that the pattern could be used to create an interesting artwork. Have children think about emphasising or exaggerating markings by focusing on details, using distortion and elongation, changing the viewpoint, or enlarging or reducing the scale. Rather than using the colours of the real marine organism have children experiment with changing the colours to alter the appearance and effect of the pattern.

Extension

As a class create a large-scale frieze of an environment that the marine organisms could live in. Groups of students can make their own habitat within the environment suitable for their organism to live in. Consider where the organism

lives in the ocean, shallow or deep water, weed covered or rocky area. Place the organisms in their environment; display the frieze at the front of the room, while students move to the back to view. How many organisms are highly visible, visible, slightly visible, hardly visible or totally concealed?

Musical Toys

Provide children with a range of toys—some that are musical toys, for example, wind tube, rain stick, xylophone, maracas, toy castanets, hand drum, and some that are standard toys that make interesting noises, for example, spinning tops, slinky springs, balls, clappers and gravity toys.

Have children play with the toys, listening to the sounds they make. In preparation for the next part you might have them label or group the toys as those that make—high, low, loud and soft sounds—rhythmical or repetitive sounds—those that can be combined to make desirable sounds.

Before moving onto the next part, discuss the similarities and difference between the toys that make high sounds. What features of the toy control the type of sound it makes? Could you modify the toy to change its sound? How? Is this possible without damaging the toy? Repeat for low sounds, loud sounds and soft sounds.

Use the range of musical toys to construct a piece of music that emulates the sounds and sight of a particular environment, for example, rainforest, seaside, city street or outback plains. Children may need access to recordings of these environments to pick out characteristic sounds to incorporate into their piece of music or, alternatively, show static pictures and have children develop a sound scape to 'bring the picture to life'. ◄

Teacher's Reflection

This unit of work shows a variety of means of integrating science topics with creative arts that preserves the authenticity of each learning area. Toys are a resource that is readily available and can be provided by the students themselves linking learning with personal experiences. Using toys as teaching resources promotes positive attitudes towards learning because they are inherently fun and fascinating. Focused learning activities built around Science and Arts concepts lead children to consider familiar objects (toys) from different perspectives. The students learn to observe actions and features more closely and with purpose whilst thinking more deeply about how things work and what makes things happen. Essentially such activities open students' eyes and minds more about the world around them. (Christine Preston)

Example

The following integrated unit explores The Water Cycle. Written for students in Years 5 and 6 it can easily be adapted for other grades.

The Water (Hydrologic) Cycle

Purpose: students will come to understand the principles of the water cycle and that there are two important concepts to be aware of: change in shape and change in state.

Building the Field Knowledge

Session 1

Teacher and students discuss what they know about water and where our water for use at home comes from. Students will be amazed to learn that we may have just poured this glass of water but in actuality, it's ancient! Explain that we are going to learn how the water journeys from land to sky and back again.

Session 2

If possible, take students on an excursion to a local dam.

Sessions 3–5

Students undertake a range of experiments that demonstrate that water changes state. They boil water and see that it turns to gas, and then see it change back to liquid again. Water will also be frozen to see that it changes to ice (and that the ice has more volume). Introduce the terms evaporation, transpiration, condensation and precipitation.

Students record their observations with diagrams in their notebooks. They can also enact the various experiments with their bodies and think about how to represent what is happening. For example, they can change pace to indicate the water particles speeding up as they change to gas.

Session 6

Enact the water cycle in the hall, on a shaded part of the playground or in your classroom cleared to enable a lot of movement. Guided by the teacher, students become droplets of water and embody the change process as they are led through the various parts of the cycle (Image 12.10).

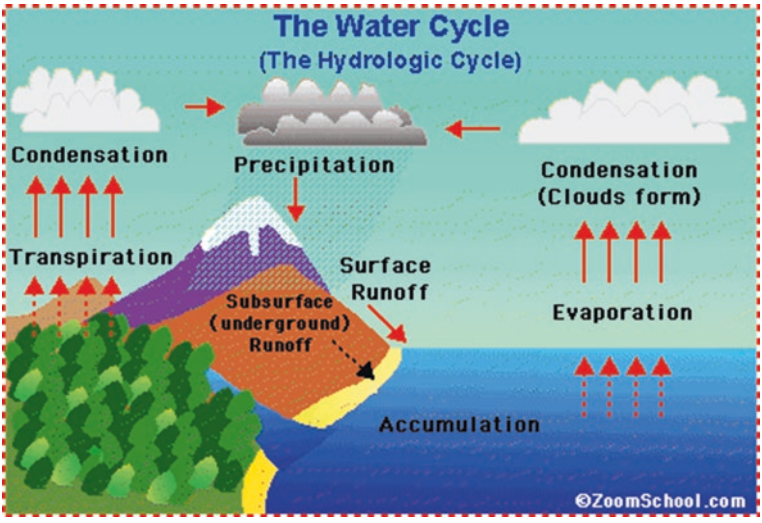

Image 12.10 The water cycle. (Source: http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/ocean/Watercycle.shtml)

Session 6

Students work in small groups to take one of the important processes (evaporation, transpiration, condensation, precipitation, infiltration and run-off) to embody in a series of movement. Their presentations to the class can be used as an assessment task.

Session 7

In the same groups or new groups, students can translate their understanding of the various processes into a creative dance using music (e.g. Handel's water music).

This can be extended further to exploring the importance of clean water, conservation, the threat of water being contaminated and so on.

There are many resources to support the development of a unit of work around the water cycle. For example: http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/Homework/swater.html; http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/ocean/Watercycle.shtml; Oxfam. ◄

8 Conclusion

If we want our students to be prepared to address the challenges of an uncertain future then we must ensure that the education we offer is as broad and comprehensive as possible. By adding the 'A' into the STEM equation, teachers may be persuaded to find meaningful ways to incorporate STEM concepts into the curriculum. This in turn may provide opportunities for self-expression and personal connection so often missing in today's schools.

Questions

1. The ancient Greeks promoted no hierarchy of subjects but a continuum of learning. They made no firm distinction between the Arts and the sciences. Were they the first proponents of STEAM?
2. What is the next STEM topic that your class will be investigating? Explore ways in which you could infuse the creative arts into this learning.
3. If you were to teach one of the units of work described in this chapter which would it be and why?

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Suggested Reading

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Useful Websites

http://enhancinged.wgbh.org/research/eeeee.html
https://educationcloset.com/what-is-steam-education-in-k-12-schools/

Concluding Comments

Simon Braut (2005) Vice President of Canada's Council for the Arts summarised the inter-relationship of the Arts, culture, creativity and imagination well. He wrote:

> *Regular and constant contact with the arts and culture contributes to cultivating the components of creativity which are: a critical sense, the ability to stimulate the imagination, transcend rigid thinking, the ability to dream, emotive distancing, the capacity for transposition, and being able to move away from conventional, predictable intellectual and physical behaviours.* (pp. 58–9)

We hope this book has enabled you to consider the imperative of an arts-led curriculum.

It is difficult to understand why it is that, despite the body of international evidence affirming how the Arts can ensure children are more engaged in deep learning and critical, creative thinking processes, to date many Western education systems have afforded the Arts little funding, few resources and a dearth of teacher professional learning to enable teachers to develop the confidence and expertise to lead with the Arts when it is appropriate and relevant.

From the outset, we acknowledged that each Arts discipline provides intrinsic benefits to the individual and should be explored and enjoyed in its own right. At the same time this book also demonstrates the transformative potential of embedding quality Arts experiences in learning across the early childhood, primary and middle school curriculum.

We have argued strongly through multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary exemplars and units of work that education in, through and about the Arts can improve learners' self-esteem and self-efficacy as well as enhancing their academic, social, emotional and personal outcomes and, thus, ultimately, positively affect their life chances and choices. This is especially the case for those learners who are disadvantaged or disengaged and less likely to have opportunities to experience the Arts through extra-curricular activities.

We have included units of work, reflections and students' work samples where it is possible to give some idea of the excitement about the impact the Arts can have on student and teacher learning in real classrooms. Further, the Arts can revitalize formal or intended curricula in classrooms fostering the development of much

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needed creativity and imaginative thinking in school communities. Arts processes and experiences can provide an excellent starting point for exploring quality teaching, learning and assessment practices more broadly.

In her book, *Not for Profit. Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, Martha Nussbaum (2010) laments what she terms the current 'bleak situation of the arts and humanities' (p. 140) in the United States of America. She argues that the role of the Arts and humanities at all levels of education includes empowering learners to think critically; understand complex and diverse human stories empathetically; and develop daring imaginations.

And Maxine Greene (2007) sums up the need, perhaps more than ever before, for the Arts and our imaginations to find ways to deal with the uncertainties, ambiguities and dilemmas that face us today.

> Now it seems clear enough that, of all human creations, *the arts have the greatest potential for stimulating or releasing imagination*. That may be because, when attended to, when interpreted on any level, *a work of art brings* into existence for a reader or perceiver *an alternative 'reality'* (or, we might say, it transmutes the ordinary by means of imagination). *When we encounter a great work of art …our way of seeing the world widens; we see in a different light*. (p. 1, our emphasis)

It is our view that *all* children deserve the transformative opportunities Arts can provide. As educators we must realise their potential for our lives and learning.

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