

The background of the cover is a photograph of a coastal landscape. In the foreground, there is a sandy area with a single, weathered wooden post standing upright. Behind the sand, there is a grassy dune. In the middle ground, a small white, conical lighthouse sits on the dune. To the left of the lighthouse is a palm tree, and to the right is a large, dark green, needle-leaved tree. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

# *Good* Teacher Magazine

Term Two 2007

*What is Quality Learning?*

*What to Do With Mary Lou?*

*There is a Little Town by the Sea ...*

*San Francisco in the Slow Lane*

*Children Delivering the Mail*

***New Zealand's teachers magazine***

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Term Two in 2007. While that has a lovely ring to it, it is also an indication that the year is flying by and winter is really on its way! Good Teacher Magazine hopes you will leave this copy on your staff room table for everyone to enjoy. If you decide to collect specific articles please take out a subscription and ensure the magazine which comes to your school free is available for everyone.

Sadly Anne Sturgess has had to pause in writing her fantastic articles - the pressure of completing her doctorate is an excellent reason to stop writing and we wish her well in her studies - we also hope, once they are completed, that she will be able to continue to make you think in depth on a wide range of topics.

Andi Adder returns - having had a longer holiday than most and along with Lucy Literacy has provided food for thought and ideas for your classroom. Mary Loveless had an enchanting time in San Francisco and offers numerous suggestions for entertaining children (of all ages) when visiting there.

Pauline McLeod shows how a country school can really investigate it's community and the interaction between the special people who help that community run smoothly.

Gwen Gawith, John Hellner and Karen Bennett are all questioning and being reflective. Totally different topics but well worth the thinking they engender.

The book reviews continue to amuse me as they arrive. While they are all noteworthy a special mention must be made of the conversation between father and son, Sean and Seamus, on a book Seamus's mother thought was 'stupid'.

Unfortunately there were no correct answers to Richard Crypt's first crossword ... so you get another chance this term! However the Mystery School competition hots up with both of the schools being recognised (pgs 30-31). Don't wait for your school to be featured. If you have something innovative happening in your school which you would like to share, contact us with your story and photos on info@ed-media.co.nz and we'll see if we can let the rest of New Zealand know.

As always the Travelling Teacher has written in. I wonder sometimes if his view on authorities and what they are saying is actually a little divorced from reality! However he is again meandering through Europe managing to find the mundane interesting and putting an entirely different perception on what to anyone else would be everyday trivia

As always your feedback on the magazine is appreciated but for now ...

Enjoy

George Hudson and the GTM Team

Good Teacher Magazine covers tend to have the theme of 'reflection', whether that is visual or mental is for the viewer to decide. This cover photograph is taken on the beach at Mount Maunganui and is titled 'Sentinel or Centennial?'.

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# KAWM COMPUTERS UPGRADED IN EAST CAPE

By John MacGibbon

In 2001, a crash programme to increase numbers of computers in schools started off in the East Cape region, under the umbrella title of *Kaupapa Ara Whakawhiti Matauranga*, generally known as KAWM. Penetration of computer technology into the region's schools was low at the time, and KAWM aimed to fast-track schools into a computer:student: ratio of 1:3 or 1:4 – at that time well above the national average.

The goal was achieved after more than 2000 refurbished ex-government computers were installed. Some were networked into thin-client systems that allowed the relatively slow Pentium-I 75-100 Mhz computers to perform well with the programs typically used in schools at that time.

More recently, school abilities, expectations and software design have moved ahead of the capabilities of the original KAWM computers. They could still handle traditional 'bulk' classroom activities with program suites like Microsoft Office, but all of a sudden the education world had turned multi-media and the computers could only do part of the job.

There were five 'clusters' in the original KAWM roll-out and one of these was the Wairoa region, extending from about 45 minutes north of Napier to 45 minutes south of Gisborne. Leon Symes, the contracted maintenance technician for the cluster, has been looking after the computers and now he's rolling out



*Christina and Roberta enjoying their speedy new CANZ computer at Nuhaka School, near Mahia Peninsula on the East Cape.*



*Te Wairama, a year-eight student at Nuhaka, researching information for a class project.*

about 400 replacements for the 12 schools involved, which range from the 12-student Ohuka primary school near the Urewera National Park, to Wairoa College.

About 330 replacement machines are refurbished desktops formerly leased by commercial businesses. They are relatively new Pentium-IV-2.8Ghz machines, supplied by CANZ-accredited refurbisher Remarkit Solutions. Two schools, with a further 80 computers, decided they could afford to buy new.

"The original machines and thin client networks handled the work they were required to do, but school computing is now more than simple desktop publishing, Microsoft Office and basic internet stuff," says Symes.

"They're doing low-end multimedia work as well now, and some of the programs, and a fair bit of the online learning media, use Flash graphics. The thin client architecture can't handle that and the networks tend to shut down."

While the original KAWM computers became too slow, they had been a cost-effective solution at the time and they had been reliable.

"They ran on the smell of an oily rag," Symes said. "If they needed any parts they were cheap and there were always plenty around."

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# What is quality learning?

by Gwen Gawith

*In a recent TC Record article Fenstermacher and Richardson ask;*

*"What is quality teaching?*

*Would we recognize it if we saw it?"*

*Most teachers would agree with their comment that*

*"Perhaps we cannot define quality teaching, but we know it when we see it."*

*We all know that warm glow of success we feel after a lesson has really 'worked', when students are totally 'with' you.*

*The article then goes on to discuss the connection of teaching to learning. This is what interests me because it addresses what I see as the submerged portion of the learning/ teaching iceberg – LEARNING.*

*While no one would seriously question the need for good teaching, the assumption that what we see as good teaching always leads to good learning is simplistic and unsustainable.*

Let's, instead, look at the submerged portion of the iceberg and ask, "What is quality learning? Would we recognise it if we saw it?" If we know what quality learning is, surely it will help us to refine our teaching methods and materials to ensure that the relationship between teaching and learning is a cause and effect one?

## **What is quality learning?**

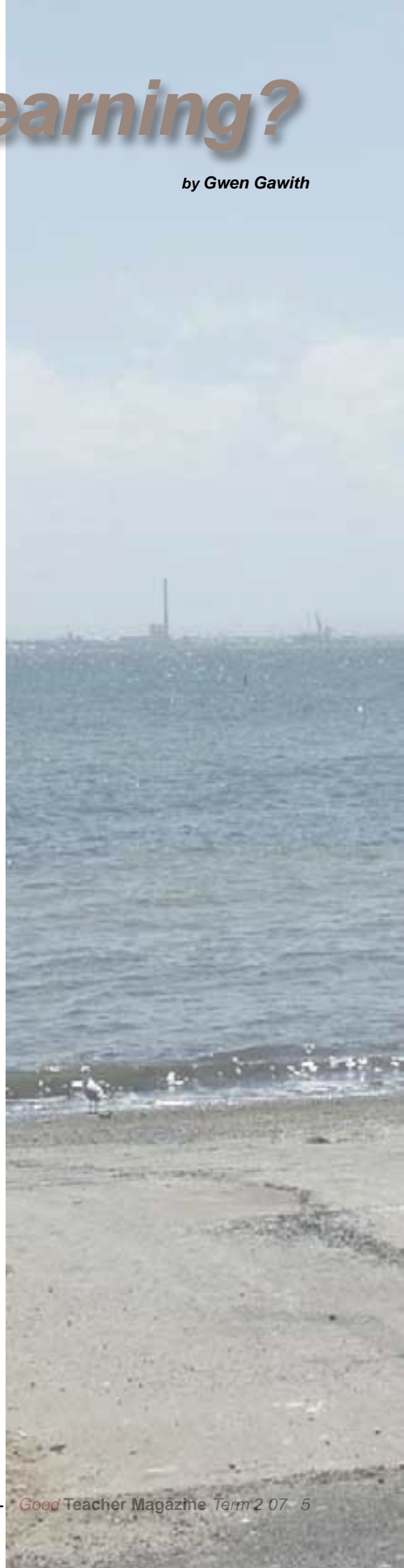
Fenstermacher and Richardson define the factors that contribute to good learning and say, "Note that good teaching is but one of four ingredients in this mix":

- 1 Willingness and effort by the learner
- 2 A social surround supportive of teaching and learning
- 3 Opportunity to teach and learn
- 4 Good teaching.

They continue: "Just as teaching requires effort, competence, and forms of support, so does learning... Learning does not arise solely on the basis of teacher activity ...it follows that success at learning requires a combination of circumstances well beyond the actions of a teacher... There is currently a considerable policy focus on quality teaching, much of it rooted in the presumption that the improvement of teaching is a key element in improving student learning. We believe that this policy focus rests on a naive conception of the relationship between teaching and learning."

I'm sure those behind the lasagne layers of suffocating 'curriculum statements' PD in recent years would say that the intention was to improve teachers' teaching. The cynics amongst us might mutter that it might have had more to do with mopping up the mess of an unworkable additive approach to curriculum development. However, forget the past and all that nonsense. The new draft curriculum addresses more clearly and more economically what we are supposed to teach and makes some suggestions as to how.

We have always been, by world standards, good teachers so it's time to acknowledge this, stop self-flagellating about our teaching





and look at what makes for quality LEARNING. It is inevitable that understanding more about learning will feed back into better teaching, but let learning be the horse leading the teaching cart, not vice versa.

Specifically, we need to consider the first three factors in the list above:

- 1 Willingness and effort by the learner
- 2 A social surround supportive of teaching and learning
- 3 Opportunity to teach and learn

Factors 2 and 3 are fairly well catered for in most New Zealand schools. We all know, and some teachers have experienced, schools that are hostile environments for both teachers and learners and individual classrooms that closely resemble battlegrounds rather than harmonious social surrounds supportive of teaching and learning. But these are, fortunately, in the minority. Most of us, by this stage of the term, have established classroom rules and routines for the year and are well on the way to building a 'social surround

supportive of teaching and learning'.

So, what about no. 1 - willingness and effort by the learner? Given that there can be no learning without the participation of the learner, how do we develop the learner's willingness to learn and learning efforts? How do we get students engaged and motivated to learn, and how do we keep them engaged and motivated and actually *learning* as in understanding, remembering, interpreting and applying information to build knowledge?

### Willingness and effort by the learner

Fenstermacher and Richardson say:

"An everyday view of what makes teaching good rests, to some extent, on how students react to what the teacher does. We are aware that certain kinds of behaviors and actions by students are indicative of their substantive engagement in what the teacher is doing, and when we observe these behaviors we note that the students are "with" the teacher: They are engaged, motivated, following, excited, connected, and

the many other words we have for describing the ways students participate in lessons. We do not, however, generally wait to assess what the students have learned to decide whether good teaching has occurred... We do not generally believe that the learner must learn what is taught for the teacher to be well and properly engaged in his or her craft."

The last point is a key one. What's the point in having children engaged and motivated if they are not learning anything (as in understanding, remembering, being able to interpret and apply)? If learning were just about engagement and motivation we could replace teachers with classrooms full of computers, playstations, cellphones and referees, and retire!

When I started my PhD research I asked two simple questions: "What does good information literacy learning look like? What do information

literate learners *do* to learn? I spent a year probing these questions in research literature and a further year probing them with a small group of outstanding New Zealand teachers as they worked with their classes. It took another year of analysis and reading before the patterns became clear, and it was clear that the findings related to *all* learning, not just information literacy learning:

- a) Good learners (of all ages) *and* information literate learners were engaged and motivated.
- b) Good learners (of all ages) were engaged and motivated to learn precisely because:
  - they knew **WHAT** they were learning
  - they knew **HOW** they were going to learn it (could employ strategies)
  - they knew **WHY** they were learning the particular topic
  - they knew **WHEN** and **WHERE** - the learning plan, and what they were expected to do as a result.

### Ownership and control of learning

The two 'essential ingredients' that emerged from analysing good learners and learning and comparing their practices with those of students who were struggling to find, understand, interpret and apply information on learning tasks were those of *ownership* and *control*. Good learners owned the learning and felt that they were in control of it.

Ownership of learning was about feeling that the topic was worth learning, that it related to you and your life in some way; that learning it was important or valuable or interesting. Control of the learning was knowing the *what, how, why, where* and *when* of the learning, as outlined above. It was also knowing that you had the *tools* for the job.

Knowledge building emerged as a useful analogy! Builders need tools. They need to know what different tools are for, how to use these tools for building what they have to build. Ditto learners.

As my research progressed it became increasingly clear that the 'missing link' of information literacy learning, and by extension, most classroom learning was that learners simply didn't have tools for learning. They couldn't explain *how* they were going to go about the learning, and couldn't articulate the required skills or strategies. Many simply didn't own



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the learning. They waited to be told what to do and how to do it, and had no vocabulary for, or understanding of which tools (skills and strategies) to use for which learning tasks. This, in turn, appeared to compromise their engagement and motivation.

So, for my EdD I set about developing and testing a set of tools for learning – not just for the cognitive aspects of learning (comprehension, reading, thinking, etc) but also for the aspects embraced by the concept of ownership and control. I'd already taught tools like de Bono's, like Jonassen and Hyerle's 'tools for thinking' and Costa's habits of Mind and innumerable tools for flexible reading, notemaking and questioning. While Costa's Habits of Mind addressed some of the 'missing links' of ownership and control, I wanted tools that *students themselves* could use to work with the teacher to plan their learning. I wanted tools that helped authenticate the learning for the learners, helped them to visualize what they were going to do and HOW they were going to do it; how they would actually *build* their knowledge. In short, I wanted tools that were for *learners* – simple, student-friendly, action-based skills/strategies that helped students to *plan* and *do* learning.

### Who plans learning?

Planning *learning* is NOT the same as lesson planning. 3Doors® learners have tools in their AIM cupboard to help them work with the teacher to design their learning. Together they:

- work out WHAT they will be learning – overview the topic, work out what they know already, work out the gaps in their knowledge...
- work out WHY they are learning the particular topic, its relevance and value to them and their lives, and what they might do to apply the knowledge when they've done the learning...
- work out WHERE they'll get what they need for the learning and WHEN - the learning plan and timeframe.

Then they open the CLAIM and FRAME cupboard doors to take out the tools for getting and processing the information they need to plug their infoGaps and apply their knowledge - the literacy and cognitive tools they need to read, listen, view, understand, analyse, synthesise, organise, interpret, communicate and apply their understandings.

In short, if learners are involved in planning their learning - real

involvement not just token "We are doing such and such..." – they will be more engaged and motivated. If they have a set of tools, know what they are for and have lots of guided practice in using them, they will also develop greater self-efficacy, confidence in their ability to learn. With this in place they will be better able to take advantage of the supportive surrounds and rich opportunities for learning that most teachers and schools provide. My contention is that if we work on Fenstermacher and Richardson's *first* component of good learning, the other three will fall into place easily.

Happy to respond:  
gwen@metacog.co.nz

### Reference:

Fenstermacher, G. D. & Richardson, V. 'On Making Determinations of Quality in Teaching.' *Teachers College Record* Volume 107 Number 1, 2005, p. 186-213, <http://www.tcrecord.org>, Date Accessed: 2/8/2007

**PS** For the principals and teachers who emailed me asking for copies of the Mindskills chart published in the Term 3 06 Good Teacher Magazine, NEMP has just published the research booklet I was working on. Called "Integrating Mind Skills into the Design of NEMP tasks". It focuses on comprehension, analysis, summary and synthesis, interpretation, application and communication and how to design these skills into NEMP type tasks. NEMP have a few spares, so contact them if you want a copy of the booklet.



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# ***“What to do with***



*For some reason, even unknown to herself, Mary Lou refuses to engage in schoolwork: a task refuser.*

*She does little class work at best and sleeps or dreams at worse.*

*On occasion, she might listlessly listen to something said in class, but never offers any input. She says, “I’m bored.”*

In years 9 and 10, she maintained high energy and enthusiasm levels, but only in her efforts to obstruct the teachers’ ability to teach and impede other students’ opportunity to learn: chatting, wandering, leaning back in her seat, defiance, calling out, dumb insolence and chronic disruption. Telling one of her teachers “I’m not f----- lazy” proved the crowning achievement of her year ten, for which she earned a stand down and a well deserved reputation as incorrigible.

During years 9 and 10, Mary Lou’s teachers used behaviour management strategies in an effort to gain compliance. Otherwise, Mary Lou would hijack the lesson in cahoots with five or six other disaffected students in the room. Sometimes she complied, under duress and with considerable interruption to the flow of the lesson and a drain on the teacher’s energy levels: “you always have to keep one eye on Mary Lou so she doesn’t get up to something.”



# Mary Lou?"

by John Hellner

Late in year 10, Mary Lou gave up on misbehaving and started to cruise. Her teachers welcomed the change, as it let them get on with teaching the rest of the class and made it easier to manage some of the marginal class members who used Mary Lou's diversions as an opportunity to do mischief themselves. As one teacher remarked, "let sleeping dogs lie."

From the start of year 11, Mary Lou began a concerted effort to dither her time away sleeping and dreaming until her parents gave up trying to get her to apply herself and she reached the school leaving age. A few teachers tried to motivate Mary Lou with threats of punishment. Mary Lou would respond with a measured retort along the lines of "What's the point of this subject anyways? I just want to get a job."

The teacher would reply, "Be that as it is, you still have to do the work or I'll have you back at lunch to do it."

Mary Lou would say, "Go ahead, see if I care."

The teachers could only console themselves with "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink." Mary Lou didn't want to drink: she didn't even want to gargle.

After one or two lunchtime sessions bickering with Mary Lou and extolling her to do her incomplete work, which Mary Lou then defiantly dropped in the waste bin as she left, her teachers shrugged their shoulders and said, "why should I spend my lunch time with someone who doesn't want to learn? As long as she doesn't bother anyone else, why should I care – she doesn't?"

The teachers didn't feel good about it, but it did provide "the greatest good for the greatest number". Although Mary Lou never appeared to feel good about anything, at least she didn't have to put up with detentions, lines, telling offs or any other sort of "teacher crap", as Mary Lou stylishly put it.

The school year rolled on and Mary Lou did less and less, fell further and further behind and became more disaffected. The teachers talked tough, but felt helpless to do

much to intervene. Because they were teachers it hurt them to see a person as young as Mary Lou opt out, failing to realise her potential: Mary Lou represented a constant and irresolvable reminder to teachers that the system didn't always work the way it worked for most students.

But now and again, the Mary Lou types encounter teachers who never give up on them and do it in a subtle and dignified way, which not even Mary Lou can object to. Those teachers might small talk with Mary Lou after class and on the playground about topics having nothing to do with school, but everything to do with Mary Lou being a special person. Those teachers might accept that Mary Lou isn't a "long term problem"; she just doesn't like school, like some people don't like a dip of vanilla; they don't take it personally that Mary Lou hates school. Those teachers believe Mary Lou will be a valuable member of society someday. Those teachers depart from the curriculum to help Mary Lou find something interesting to her; and create special learning activities designed individually for Mary Lou. Those teachers will never stop encouraging, supporting and helping Mary Lou whenever Mary Lou shows even a flicker of interest.

Those teachers may feel a persistent sense of failure in trying to deal with Mary Lou. Those teachers may never get a kind word or a "thank you" from Mary Lou. Those teachers may never know the effects of the efforts they make and there might not be any benefits. But those teachers never give up and they never stop smiling when they see Mary Lou.

If those teachers get lucky, Mary Lou might "accidentally" find herself mildly interested in an aspect of the curriculum and who knows where that could lead. But Mary Lou might leave school with something other than disgruntlement and bitterness about teachers and education. Mary Lou might leave school with a positive image of teachers as caring people – which they are – and education as something that teachers passionately believe is important – which they do.

Someday, Mary Lou might call on those images to help her make the decision to become an adult learner and gain the skills she missed out on so long ago.

And if those teachers get real, real lucky, they might bump into Mary Lou, twenty years after she left school and Mary Lou might tell those teachers, "I'll never forget how you always talked to me and tried to get me interested when everyone else thought I was a big loser."



*In April 2006, John presented to the "Making a Difference" symposium in Wellington. A 45 minute audio-video CD disc of John's presentation, entitled "Classroom Fun", is now available. For information email [kobrien@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:kobrien@waikato.ac.nz)*

*John's books on: building interpersonal relations in the classroom; using humour in the classroom; what makes a good teacher and relief teaching are available from "Essential Resources" in both New Zealand and Australia.*

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# The New Zealand Curriculum: A submission on the draft for consultation 2006.

The Education Forum, 2007.

Kevin Donnelly

Reviewed by Gwen Gawith

BA MA PhD EdD Dip Ed Dip Lib

*Donnelly's 2002 review of the curriculum was scathing in its condemnation of what he saw as an outdated outcomes-based approach. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that this remains his main criticism of the 2006 draft curriculum.*

Donnelly has examined recent curriculum development initiatives in Australia (he is Australian), UK, USA, Singapore and South Korea. In particular, the 'second wave of curriculum renewal' in Australia and his analysis of international 'best practice' calls into question our continuing adherence to an outcomes-based curriculum model. He sees this as closely related to student-centred education and what he sees as a concomitant 'constructivist view of pedagogy', 'developmental approach to learning', and 'inquiry-based approach' which lead to 'an emphasis on process to the detriment of detailing essential content'. In contrast, he claims that closer specification of content in syllabus-type prescriptions lends itself better to more standards-based approaches that are being adopted in some of the countries listed above.

Is there anything that Donnelly *does* like? Yes, he likes the reduction in the number of achievement objectives and strands.

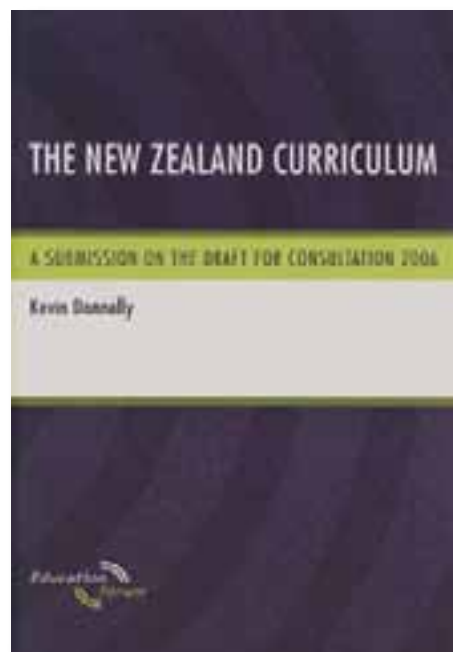
Like me (see last issue) he dislikes the preponderance of edu-babble. Like me he wonders why the five key competencies (managing self, relating to others, participating and contributing, thinking, using language symbols and texts) are what they are and not the many other things they could have been. He cites, for example, the Australian Mayer competencies. These were considered when we developed our 1993 Curriculum skill areas. These include:

- collecting, analysing and organising ideas and information
- expressing ideas and information
- planning and organising activities
- working with others and in teams
- using mathematical ideas and techniques

- solving problems
- using technology

I agree with him that there is 'no robust or convincing rationale justifying the competencies selected'. The new draft curriculum is, in fact, a skill-free document. I also agree that the draft's acknowledgement of the need for more formal approaches to teaching is welcome (see previous articles). However, as you will see from my article in this issue, I do NOT agree that helping students to integrate new learning with what they understand, helping them to understand *what* they are learning, *why* they are learning it and *how* they will be able to use their new learning is 'new-age and progressive'. And I challenge, in particular, his conflation of constructivist pedagogy with inquiry-based learning, developmentalism, real-life and life-long learning, and his dismissal of them as 'new-age and progressive'. So Ashton-Warner and Beeby (not to mention Dewey, Bruner, Vygotsky and countless others) are to be labelled 'new-age and progressive' because Donnelly seems to see anything child-centred, anything other than direct teaching as 'new-age and progressive'? He clearly doesn't understand that many constructivists acknowledge a clear and essential place for direct teaching within constructivist pedagogy. Nor does he elaborate on what could substitute for 'new-age, progressive' pedagogy other than direct, 'formal' teaching.

I think it was the Stocktake report that highlighted teachers' lack of defined pedagogy. I see this as the heart of the problem. Any philosophy of education and approach to curriculum development (child-centred, outcomes-based, standards-based curriculum-centred, whatever) needs well-articulated pedagogy. I think every school should be systematically developing appropriate pedagogy to complement the draft curriculum (see last term) unless we want pedagogy imposed from On High in the form of yet another round of



suffocating Curriculum Statement PD's selling us teaching tricks.

So, in summary, Donnelly challenges our national philosophy of education and what he sees as inevitable consequent curriculum approach, pedagogy, and methods of assessment. What he suggests we change *to* is less clear, but clearly he favours the American standards-based approach. While I, like him, would love to see history reinstated as a subject, I remain to be convinced that working backwards from a standards-based curriculum to changing a philosophy of education that has underpinned some of the best educational practices I have ever experienced (and yes, I have experienced education as both student and teacher in South Africa, UK and Australia as well as New Zealand) is worthwhile.

I prefer to go back to 'best practice' as I experienced it when I first came to New Zealand 28 years ago and to try to examine what, in recent years, has compromised it. I keep on coming back, not to philosophy, and not to the 1993 Curriculum with its clear structure of essential skills and essential learning areas, but to the subsequent and absolutely nonsensical explosion of Curriculum Statements with their myriad of objectives/ outcomes. I look at the confusion in the documents and in the Curriculum Statement PD between outcomes, objectives and pedagogy (last issue), and I look at the way we have emphasized *teaching* at the expense of *learning* in our PD (this issue), at the way we have seen so-called inquiry learning as the best, the only, the preferred way of teaching (previous articles) and I can see many explanations for why we seem to have lost our way. I can only repeat



what I said in my Term 1 article – I am *delighted* that the draft curriculum spells out relatively clearly WHAT we have to teach, and I hope that this frees us up to focus on how children demonstrably/ measurably LEARN so that we can finetune our teaching.

In short, I agree with much of Donnelly's criticism, but I don't see the problem as inevitably progressing from our educational philosophy > outcomes-based curriculum > pedagogy, and the only solution being standards-based curriculum > standards-centred (vs child-centred) pedagogy > revised national philosophy of education imposed, by default, through curriculum redesign.

I think there are LOTS of lessons to be learnt from Australian practice (and I am appalled, for example, at the lack of acknowledgement/ awareness here of the work being done in Queensland addressing the issue of deeper learning). Yes, I am concerned that there are pitifully few academics involved in teacher education who have specialized in the

field of *learning* and *pedagogy*. Yes, the domination of teacher education by so-called 'critical theorists' in the 80's and 90's left little room to focus on learning and pedagogy. Yes Michael Matthews' reaction to the prevailing ethos by way of his trenchant criticism of flabby nonsense passing for constructivist pedagogy was all too embarrassingly real. Yes, a clearly defined and articulated pedagogy understood implemented by each and every teacher is what we need and, yes, we could learn a lot from overseas developments. However, I can see very little to recommend much American practice, and, in particular, the substitution of testing and performance on tests for simple teaching and learning irrespective of the nature of their syllabi or curricula.

My preference would be for the International Baccalaureate approach, for example, where the curriculum is both child-centred and values-oriented and quite specific about the learning outcomes and the preferred pedagogies and assessment methods to be employed. This might not suit

right-wing teach-to-test traditionalists, but it represents a pragmatic approach to ensuring that we retain an ingrained and cherished national philosophy of education AND have a tightly focused content AND a values-rich curriculum with clearly defined pedagogies (yes, including constructivist pedagogy) and built-in expectations that there will be testing to establish what children learn. And it works and is standardised – internationally.

We've also got our NEMP findings – a unique resource showing quite clearly where the weaknesses in children's learning and teachers' teaching lie. And ATOL has placed welcome emphasis on the need for teachers to establish exactly what children are learning from our teaching.

But that is not to say that I think we should dismiss what Donnelly is saying – just that I think that he sees something as a problem that isn't and his remedy might leave us with a system more closely resembling the USA than that evolving in most Australian states.

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# What is that teacher's smile worth?

by Karen Bennett

*"A smile happens in a flash, but its memory and effects can last a lifetime."  
- Kaz Benae 07'*

*Are the things you are doing  
in your teaching life making  
you intrinsically happy?*

*What would you give to  
love your job so much that  
entering your classroom  
made you smile?*

As you are sitting there reading or thinking, playing sport or talking with friends, doing your day to day chores or driving in the car....are you smiling?

Think about this scenario for just a moment. The sound of fun, energetic music is pumping on a classroom stereo from the front of the school library. The Jump Jam Crew from the local school has set up on the veranda to lead this week's whole school aerobics session.

Classes Year 0-8 are lined up on the courtyard, buzzing, awaiting the new actions and music to move their bodies to. (Got a picture yet? ... sounds fun doesn't it?) 15 minutes of exercise to take the students at Hinds School into the lunch break. Watching everyone is not an option, joining in is a must – seeing all those students following the lead of their peers is fantastic, a pleasure and brings a smile to a teachers dial.

Are the things you are doing in your teaching life making you intrinsically happy? What would you give to love your job so much that entering your classroom made you smile?

Let us think back to our own school days.

Are you that smiling teacher who's in love with her/his job?

Can you remember a teacher who scowled at you, and another teacher who was real glad to see you each day?

Feeling happy at your job isn't just a pie-in-the-sky concept for "lucky" teachers blessed with dream students. It's a do-able reality any teacher can create. What you must do is put yourself on an equal footing with your dreams and expectations. If there is something in your job that is getting at you, the paper work, the meetings, the parents or the students then you need







to have a game plan to get away from these feelings because in the end this will pull you away from the job...and we can't have that because ... education needs you, the children need you and apart from that, if you are feeling down about the job in some way it probably is because you care! And that alone sets you aside from other teachers.

First of all you need to know what it is that you want.

I have been in this position and it's not easy but I care enough about my happiness and these kids to roll up my sleeves and find a better way. But you can only do that if you

know what you want,

have a game plan to achieve it, and

carry the proper mindset to make sure it happens for your classroom.

Teachers should, and most do, make every effort to plan for a positive working environment, catering for mixed abilities and have thoughtful routines for smooth day-to-day running of the class. This along with well planned lessons and positive disciplining all adds to achieving the 'happy in your job' feeling. Of course there is the side of the job where the students are learning...that always puts the golden smile on my face and nothing makes me feel better in class when I see a kid's face light up with that golden smile "Oh I get it Miss B...1 + 1 = window" or "thanks for

organizing the hockey tournament, it was awesome!"

I want to brush over a wee topic at this point; positive discipline. If we aim to correct students' behaviour in a positive manner, managing it in such a way that it minimises unnecessary stress and considers self esteem for those being corrected, this will help keep everyone smiling and the classroom atmosphere positive.

Keeping the positive smiley teacher rather than the stressed destructive teacher in school is always my aim. And when I look back on the teachers who taught me, the ones that definitely, without a doubt, stick out in my mind are the ones who smiled. The ones who smiled and encouraged, who corrected without being destructive, laughed when life was funny and took pride in their students achievements and interests, those are the kinds of teacher behaviours I strive to portray.

So what is the teachers smile worth I ask you? Well let's consider the students ideas for a minute; I asked my Year 2s does your teacher smile?

*"it is nice when I can see your teeth Miss B, but why do you have a gap in your front ones"*

*"You didn't smile at me when I spilt the dye Miss Bennett"*

*"We feel happy when you smile with us and give us high fives when we write super stories."*

So you can see once we have discussed the scary part about me smiling and the time I didn't smile, the children feel good when you feel good.

In my opinion the teachers smile is worth an arm and a leg. The stress and work load we wade through for the love of the game is tiring at the best of times and if you can be one of these smiley positive creatures at the end of the day and develop your game plan to achieve the 'happy in your job' feeling then I am sure you will be cheerful in your job and have that lasting smile.

This has been a piece from the plains.



# *There is a little town by the sea where:*

*by Lyn Rogers*

*The children come home singing songs about saving dolphins and the 6 R's.*

*The 6 R's?*

*The 6 R's is a rap song, composed by the students at the end of a unit about sustainable practices.*

*"Respect, rights, responsibility  
For Papatuanuku and the deep blue sea.  
Reduce, reuse, recycle, yeah!  
For the Earth and the creatures and the atmosphere!"*

*The residents recycle so much that 75% of their waste (by volume that is) is diverted away from the landfill. This is 2-3 times the proportion of recycling that happens in large urban centres.*

People are involved in all sorts of sustainable practices: art from recycled materials; "organic music" as well as organic gardens; permaculture; sustainable business; community owned and operated recycling; some visitors levied to offset their carbon footprint; building out of recycled and natural materials; numerous community groups with their own environmental kaupapa.

Conversations spring up about things you don't hear mentioned much elsewhere, like council plans, submissions, community planting projects, waste management and the latest art venture or recycle event. For example a recent conversation at the beach with a local artist was about the partnership between some students, their teacher, their mentor and the artist to create a large Hei Tiki out of old volkswagon parts.

Sounds like Paradise? Sustainably speaking, there are a lot of things being done. But it wasn't always that way, and it isn't "there" yet. There is a vision of building a sustainable zero waste community that is shared by many and interpreted in different ways.





What drives a community to create the changes, that we who are living there have watched and participated in over the years?

I got to thinking and observing.

Not very objectively, I must admit.

These ideas aren't a thesis based on valid research, but simple observations.

Inspired(??) by the song I quoted above, (which **does** get into the brain when rapped often enough) I came up with the idea of "6 C's". It occurred to me that each of these C's might be an essential, or at least a very important, ingredient in the creation of change. As a teacher, dealing with attitudes, values and behaviours on a daily basis, I know what a challenge it can be to bring about the changes we desire. I thought the model for change that has succeeded so far in my community might be transferred in some way to effecting change in schools, if I could work out what the ingredients were.

The 6 C's I came up with after discussions at the beach, at the cafés and in the sitting room with friends, are

Commitment;  
Communication;  
Consistency;  
Celebration;  
Creativity and  
Community.

In fact it was hard to restrict it to only six. The more we discussed this the more we realised that there are a lot of good C words out there like:

Challenge;  
Collaboration;  
Co-operation and of course  
Change.

First things first. There was a first a small group who challenged themselves to make a start toward a vision of becoming a Zero Waste community. They started small, collecting cardboard and paper in their own vehicles from around the town. These people were **Committed** to the vision from the start, knowing it was long term, and that it wouldn't be easy. Starting small and growing from success to success, despite political, economic and social barriers along the way, they never gave up. Now there is a self managed business that: employs local people; runs a recycle shop offering us the opportunity to re-use much of our "waste"; makes and sells compost and mulch; deals with

recycling metal, glass, plastics (1's, 2's and 5's), paper, cardboard, and also manages the transfer of leftover waste to landfill. They offer education, with people coming from all over to learn. They are a role model to other communities and something our community is proud of. They've been doing this for over 7 years now and recycling has now become "just what we do". Most of us are surprised at the very least, and challenged in our habits and ideas, when we visit friends or relatives elsewhere, because often the answer to our question "where's your recycling?" is "oh' just put it all in there", which comes as a bit of shock! Some of us actually take our recycling away with us, to put out next week at home. Perseverance is a key word that comes to mind (but it doesn't start with C).

As a community, we were under no illusions as to the Zero Waste vision. It was **Communicated Consistently** in a wide variety of ways. The goals, vision, achievements and passionate belief in the process was **Communicated** through local radio and newspaper, events and marketing. Wherever you turned, if you ran across a message about zero waste or recycling, the message said the same thing. There was no confusion about what could be recycled, when, how or why! Whoever you talked to or whatever you read, the messages about sustainable practices were **Consistent**. The services offered were also, not running hot and cold as new initiatives sometimes do.

The fourth C is **Creativity**. Recycling became fun! Oh, the days of the Recycled Trolley Race down the steepest street in town. Sadly this is now a non-event due to OSH requirements. But it did raise the profile of recycling and that profile and energy is now put into the annual Recycled Raft Race, where competitors build their own rafts, with prizes for creativity and "most recycled". Increasingly, when you participate in an event in this town it will involve recycling. It is "just what happens". A big music festival held recently had 90% of the waste on site dealt with by the on-site recycling centre set up for the event! There are artists all over town making amazing works of art out of re-used or recycled materials. By targeting their message in creative ways, modeling desired behaviours, people have become accustomed to the message.

**Celebrating Community** are the last two C's. We are kept up to date about meeting our Zero Waste targets as a

*Commitment*

*Communication*

*Consistency*

*Celebration*

*Creativity*

*Community*

*Challenge*

*Collaboration*

*Co-operation*

*Change*

community. There is a definite sense of community feeling here regarding the achievements made toward sustainability. **Community** events like the raft race, the festival, art exhibitions, the creative market held once a month, are all aspects of celebrating a shared vision, interpreted in different ways, depending on skills and interests of the people involved. Having a shared vision allows people to come closer together, having something in common and developing a sense of **Community**.

It all sounds pretty good doesn't it? It does for me. I grew up in a "waste-not want-not" household in another small town by the sea. There were a lot of sustainable practices that were "just what we did" then, like vege gardening, washing out the plastic bags to use again, and raiding the dump for wheels to build the go-kart. In the meantime while I turned my back for a moment (?) to grow up, something happened and the world changed. It is almost like coming full circle for me, again practicing and now celebrating sustainability. I have those people in our community to thank for supporting this return for me, but the journey isn't over yet.

One key point to remember is that this has all taken time. The greater wisdom of the team moving our community forward to Zero Waste was in allowing the time for us to see for ourselves the need to make change. They encouraged us in many ways, and although it still remains our choice whether we involve ourselves in this kaupapa or not, most of us do, one way or another.

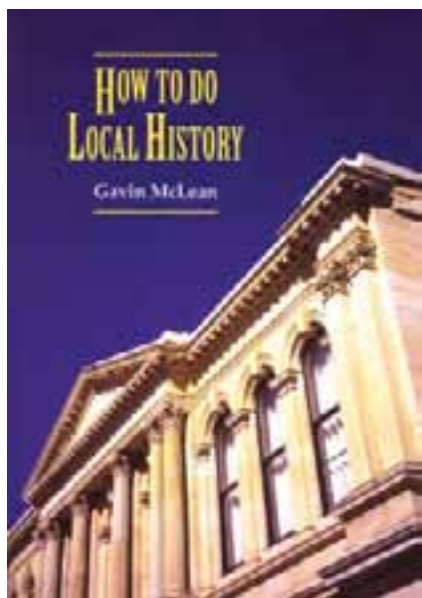
*Continued page 16*

Continued from page 15

We aren't indoctrinated, but I would say we were more educated, and from my perspective, making better choices as a result.

So what does this mean for me in my teaching practice? Upon reflection, I think all the 6 C's are essential for change: **Commitment** to an idea and a willingness to pursue it;

**Communicating** the ideas in **Creative** ways to bring others on board; maintaining **Consistency** in approach and message; **Celebrating** achievements in wonderful ways; building a **Community** who can work together, learning from each other and supporting each other in their endeavours. With community come the extra C words: **Collaboration** and **Co-operation**, without which, a sense of community would be difficult to achieve. I have to also realize it will take time before change is embedded and new practices become "just what we do". I can apply all this to my own practice. All teachers are wanting to allow their students learning opportunities that offer them the best future. The world is changing, and equipping our students with the skills they will need to cope with this is essential. I can see big parallels between the learning journey of my community and the learning journey of students as their teacher scaffolds it for them, perhaps using sustainability as a context while they do it.



### **How to Do Local History**

By Gavin McLean

Otago University Press

RRP \$24.95

**A guide for historians and clients.**

**Reviewed by Gwen Gawith**

### **Rubbish!**

*Everything you wanted to know about rubbish, landfills, recycling and worms*

By Rachael Goddard

Photographs by  
Cheryl Reynolds

Illustrated by  
Moira Corridan

Reed Books

RRP \$19.99

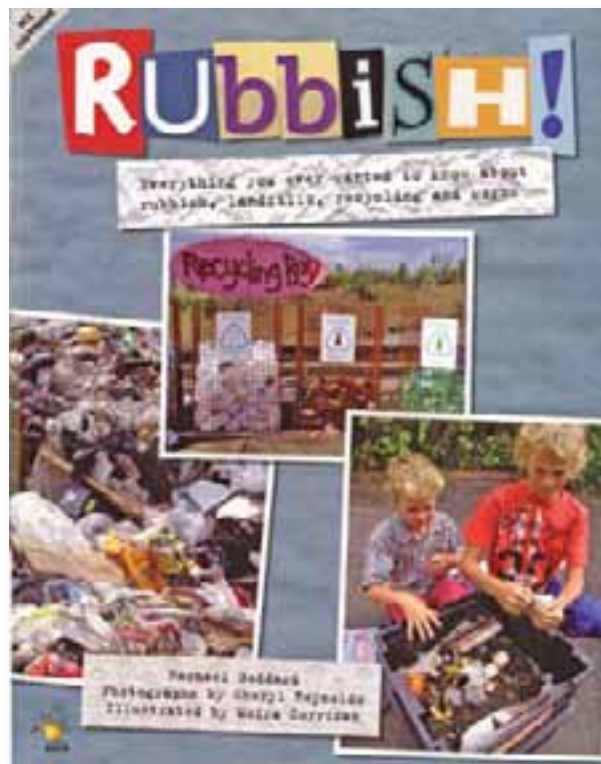
Kevin Cockroach and Waru Worm guide you through this book which is both delightful and informative.

Chock full of activities it is an extremely useful resource book which children will also find entertaining to read or to simply to dip into.

The interactive nature of the book is appealing and it contains answers to many questions on our increasing production of rubbish and its byproducts

Rachael Goddard is the *Author of Filthy Flies and other Bad Bugs*, published by Reed in 2005. She works as a conservation agent in the Kaipara Area.

An excellent book for both homes and classrooms its new Zealand content making it especially relevant. - Another gem from Reeds.



## *books and things*

Gavin McLean is senior historian at the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, and clearly knows his stuff. As the author of several local histories he is also extremely well versed in both Internet and conventional publishing. This book is particularly useful for starting at the beginning and going right through from getting the idea, researching and writing, to publishing and marketing the finished work.

Dividing local history into types (chronological, thematic, 'slice' illustrated, essays) and suggesting aspects to be covered (for example, environment, community, culture and recreation, education, local economy/ work, domestic/ family life, religion/ belief systems, transport and technology) makes it easy to focus student research.

Any of our commonly used research frameworks such as Action Learning or DART would integrate well with his research hints. There's also an excellent chapter on resources

for research, including archives, museums, library resources and online help and how to use these resources. I found the section on oral history particularly helpful.

The chapter on writing covers things like endnotes and footnotes, quotations and captions. The advice on structure and style would apply to any report or essay writing.

The chapter on publishing and marketing would be invaluable if a school were to consider researching and publishing a local history (or even the history of the school itself) as a fundraising project.

Level and language-wise it's clear and interesting - highly recommended for all teachers. It provides valuable help for primary teachers whose students are doing local or oral history work. Secondary schools should also consider buying copies for senior students.



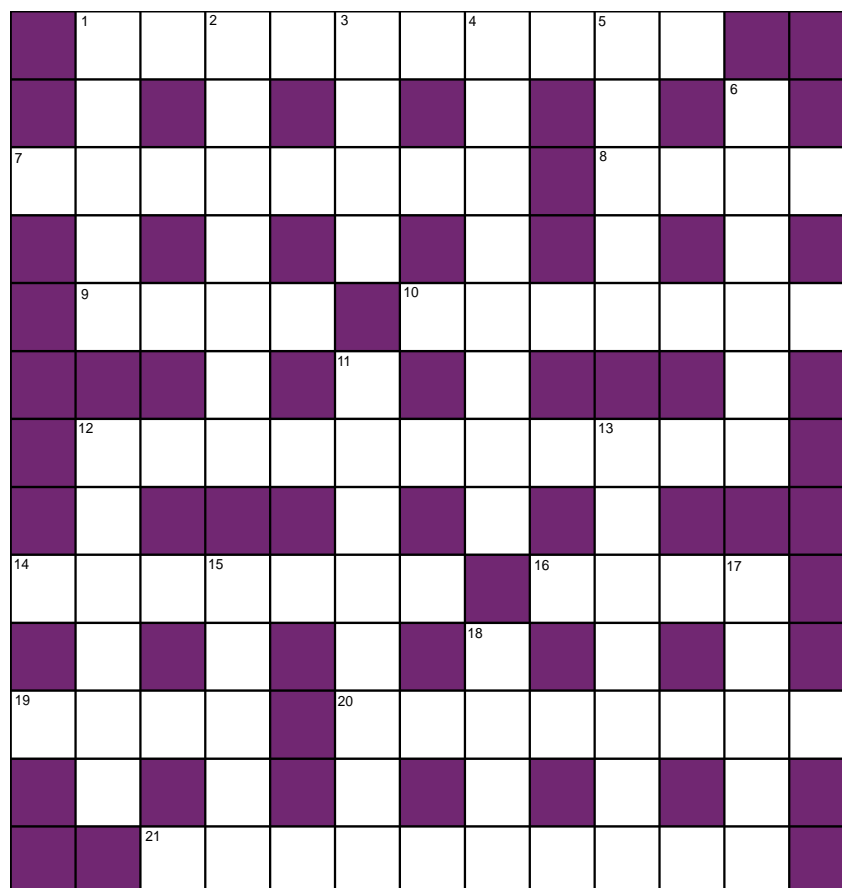
Please photocopy and attempt this crossword ... this ensures it can be enjoyed by, or can frustrate, more of you!

Answers will be published in Term Three Good Teacher Magazine

Those of you who enjoy a challenge might like to send your completed crossword to Good Teacher Magazine before the 30th of May. The first correct one pulled from a hat wins a small prize and the dubious honour of acknowledgement.

Term One Crossword Answers created by Richard Crypt

1	B	E	D	A	Z	Z	L	E	D	A	S
2	D				E					I	M
3	A	D	V	E	R	S	A	R	I	E	S
4			I		O		S		P		N
5	O	V	E	R	S	E			F	E	R
6	V		W				S				E
7	E	N	I	G	M	A		W	O	O	E
8	R		N		P		M			L	E
9	D	O	G	S			A	D	A	M	A
10	R						S		M		N
11	I		W	I	S	E	C	R	A	C	K
12	V	I	E		A		O		S		M
13	E		B		P	O	T	A	S	S	I



#### Across

- 1 Grasps and arrests (10)
- 7 A bit feel upset but it's a little irritation (8)
- 8 Little wolf article shows Fidel's place(4)
- 9 Fish missing right to solicit business (4)
- 10 Tidy above and take the lot (5,2)
- 12 Cronies must change. Not understand (11)
- 14 Total last parts like 2 and 2 (7)
- 16 She's backward around a hundred. Action song (1,1,1,1)
- 19 Food from a little lower (4)
- 20 Rolled oats pays for abandonment of principles (8)
- 21 Thin sniper shot to provide occupational experience (10)

#### Down

- 1 Silver permit for lace end (5)
- 2 Schulz' strip for a very small reward (7)
- 3 Old record in charge for long, historic verse (4)
- 4 Look at girl who's after a thousand dollars. Could help someone with a singular vision (8)
- 5 District attorney and half dance reveals Ivan's villa (5)
- 6 Thick angle (6)
- 11 This type is heavy (8)
- 12 Snake after thousand makes more angry and red (6)
- 13 About lighter Another game (7)
- 15 She can be located in a kennel. Length of rope is involved (5)
- 17 A fabulous writer (5)
- 18 Peter, Harry and others were one. Continue if split (4)

## books and things

### Draw New Zealand Birds

#### A step-by-step guide

Heather Arnold

Reed Children's Books

RRP \$24.99

It is great to see relevant drawing subjects; the New Zealand Birds. This lovely book encourages appreciation and facilitates the need to look in detail and provides a formula to ensure success.

The formula is the breaking down of the image into simple geometrical shapes. This teaches the young (upper primary/middle school) artist to really look and be able to place the 3 dimensional form of the bird easily on to the page. The exploration of drawing techniques and materials to record tone is also easily accessible to teachers and students. This winning

formula could then be applied to any photographed subject.

However I was disappointed at the lack of action shots. The falcon flying with its magnificent wings and the diving Gannet capture our attention in a new way and encourage the young artist to explore alternatives to analytical drawing. Drawing movement and gesture for feathers on mass seems to be missing. The Gannet as a subject to introduce colour seems a strange choice when we have magnificent ranges of greens and blues in the



wood pigeon and kingfisher.

Heather Arnold will celebrate at the sense of excitement from both teachers and students as they achieve immediate success using her formula to reproduce photographic images.

# San Francisco in the slow lane:

## discovering the magic of the Bay City through the eyes of young children

by Mary Loveless



*In February this year the opportunity arose for my husband and I to spend nine days in San Francisco helping our daughter-in-law look after our two young grand children while Dad attended a conference.*

This proved to be a wonderful and magical learning experience for us all. We shared the enthusiasm, excitement and sheer exuberance of two young children as they interacted with the myriad of novel experiences in a new environment. As children do they communicated through smiles and giggles with the locals on the buses, in the shops and on the streets. Even the Spanish speaking residents of the Marina district recognized, Row, Row Your Boat, Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star and Incy Wincy Spider when chanted at volume by a smiley blonde toddler and we evoked broad smiles when we walked down the streets.

We chose to stay in an apartment in Cow Hollow, part of the Marina District, as it was within reasonable flat walking distance of the attractions at Fisherman's Wharf, the Presidio, Crissy Field, and the Golden Gate Park. San Francisco is called the city of hills but we were into avoiding hills if we could, with a double push chair and wheel chair in our entourage. Chestnut Street, the Ponsonby Road of San Francisco was opposite the apartment and provided a fascinating selection of delicatessens, coffee shops, bakeries as well as boutique style shops. This was the area to see and be seen in and the most popular accessory

was a dog; the more fluffy the better, and also invariably attractive to small children. Very small canines that could be carried around in specially designed hand bags with only the dog's head protruding were also popular. The different coffee houses provided a welcome refreshment stop as we returned home in the late afternoon rather weary, with two sleeping children in the pushchair. We were regularly tempted by the intricately decorated cakes that were displayed in the glass cabinets in these shops; they definitely looked too good to eat.

Every morning we set out in the sunshine with back packs full of the accoutrements necessary to sustain two toddlers during the day, eager to discover new experiences, and savour the sights and sounds of the Bay area.

Refreshment stops included the Rainforest Café at Fisherman's Wharf, where eating is secondary to the experience of being in the tree tops of a tropical rainforest. We were surrounded by butterflies, monkeys, a huge waterfall, and mechanical life size elephants who swing their trunks and flutter their eye lids at small boys – the expression on James' face when

the elephant responded to his greeting with a shake of it's head was priceless. Eight month old Emily was transfixed by the huge tropical fish tanks behind our table. The phrase having a long lunch took on a whole new meaning as we took about 3 hours to eat a meal and explore all the nooks and crannies and find all the animals. Rain was drifting down the greenery in the upper tree top level, gorillas lurked in tree tops and Caribbean music played in the background – just the place to do some dancing with Grandma!

Of course we had to sample the local specialty of clam chowder in a hollowed out sour dough loaf, our small boy was fascinated to watch and we were encouraged to talk to the bakers at Boudin's Bakery as they made sour dough into a variety of shapes including crabs, alligators and turtles. Bins full of writhing Dungeness crabs, another local delicacy, filled any available space between the sidewalk stalls.

Rainforest Café at Fisherman's Wharf







Fisherman's Wharf also provided street entertainment and Emily in the pushchair had a ring side seat for the musicians, jugglers and mime artists scattered along the water front. The area is the heart of the tourist centre, but during mid week in February it was not too crowded and provided a fascinating place to stroll, watch the boats and explore. However, we had to make difficult choices when deciding to have an ice cream, not only did we have to decide the flavours, it was choosing the size and type of container, the flavours and combinations of coatings, eat in or take away and on it went.

Pier 39 in the wharf area is also home to Underwater World. The design of the aquarium is reminiscent of Kelly Tarlton's with its acrylic tube walkway complete with moving pavement, the design of which fascinated James – the fish just couldn't compete with a small boy who is fascinated with all things mechanical and he was mesmerized by the way the floor shapes moved and moulded around corners. It was Emily who was entranced by the swirls of fish swimming over her head and the elegant gliding rays. However, the touch pool with leopard sharks and bat rays that we could stroke were a new experience, for both children and adults. Despite the effort and expense put into attracting tourists to the area, one of the major draw cards just appeared in January

1990 shortly after the 1989 earthquake. It was then that Californian sea lions began to congregate on a section of walkways beside the pier. Today there are as many as 900 of these boisterous barking pinnipeds basking in the sun; enjoying the plentiful herring supply, and the ample dock space; since people and boats have been banned from the area to protect these noisy and playful residents.

Crissy Field was once a grassy landing field for land and sea planes and before that home to the Yelamu people. Today it is a wildlife refuge, the protected long sandy beach, lagoons and tidal marsh is home to a variety of sea birds and the occasional seal or sea lion. It provides a natural environment for people wanting to walk, jog and cycle all within walking distance of the city. The area forms a gateway to San Francisco where the city meets the bay in the shadow of the Golden Gate bridge. We explored the wildlife centre and James took advantage of the seats and binoculars strategically placed in front of the large picture windows to peer at the antics of the birds on the lagoon opposite.

Definitely the highlight

of the week was the visit to the Exploratorium. This is a museum of science, art and human perception, housed in the Palace of Fine Arts, a pseudo-Roman-ruin style building surrounded by a lake and ducks. The Exploratorium features over 650 hands – on exhibits, where the curious of all ages can experiment with electrical circuits, magnets, forces, light and shadows, sound, music, land yachts, build bridges and dams and experiment with optical illusions. The emphasis is on the interactive discovery of scientific principles and it catered for our young explorer by providing stools so that small people could reach the knobs, wheels and buttons. James was an example







of perpetual motion as he ran from exhibit to exhibit, exploring, experimenting and excitedly telling us what he had found out. An afternoon nap was not on the agenda that day!

Another icon of the city was the Crookedest Street, where a portion of Lombard Street zig-zags down a steep hill, the numerous steps at the side of the street providing an added attraction to someone who has only mastered climbing steps unaided in the past few months. During our stay we experienced the many forms of public transport; the Muni's Historic Streetcar 'F' line, and the frequent trolley buses, the Caltrain and the

BART or Bay Area Rapid Transit system. By mastering the public transport systems and combining these cheap options with lots of walking, we never had to resort to taxis.

A boat trip around the bay and under the Golden Gate bridge out to the Pacific Ocean also circumnavigated Alcatraz Island, a bleak and dismal place, and gave us the opportunity to view the city from the harbour. In addition we learnt a little more of the history of the area courtesy of the

excellent personal audio system.

Would I go back to San Francisco with small children? The answer is definitely, yes!

You do need to do some research before you visit, find a convenient place to stay, identify the nearest large supermarket for those essential supplies and think about some alternatives if the weather is wet.

We were very fortunate, spring had arrived, the blossom, daffodils and tulips provided bright splashes of colour, the sun shone and it was warm enough to wonder around with only a light coat.

San Francisco is populated with friendly helpful people who were interested in where we from and why we were visiting.

The infrastructure is well developed, clean and well used by locals and visitors alike.

There is plenty to see and do within a relatively small area, and most of our exploring could be achieved at a very small cost. San Francisco seems comfortable with its image and place in the world, it has been said the city is a crossroads of many things and many diverse people living happily side by side.

We thoroughly enjoyed being part of that culture even if only for a short time and gaining insights into a city and what makes it tick through the eyes of two young children.

*Give me life in the slow lane  
any day!*



# books and things

## **Who's Driving?**

By Leo Timmers

Published by Gecko Press

*Reviewed by Catherine George*

Who's Driving is a wonderful read aloud picture book for preschool and new entrant children. Gecko Press specialises in producing English translations of award winning foreign language children's books, and this story is another fine choice. Written and illustrated by Belgian's Leo Timmers, the story has been translated into English by Bill Nagelkerke, a Christchurch writer and librarian.

Each page shows a vehicle, and the reader is asked to choose "who's driving" from a line of animals using visual clues from the animals' clothes.

The vibrant pictures have plenty of detail to reward repeat readings, and the somewhat eccentric animals provided lots of chuckles for readers in our house! Another sure bet from this great publisher.

*Reviewed by Miles Ford, age 6*

The pictures were the best thing in this book. They put in lots of details, you could even see the hairs on the hippopotamus and elephant's chins! The colours were bright, and the animals all wore different clothes. That was how you got the clues to who was driving. My favourite character was the turtle at the end of the book, because it was winning the race of who was going to get there first.

I would recommend this book for children ages 1 and up (but if they were 1 and 2 they would need a grownup's help).

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## **How Big is Your Brain?**

By Ian Livingstone and Jamie Thompson

Published by Allen & Unwin

RRP \$27.99

*Reviewed by Michael Grant*

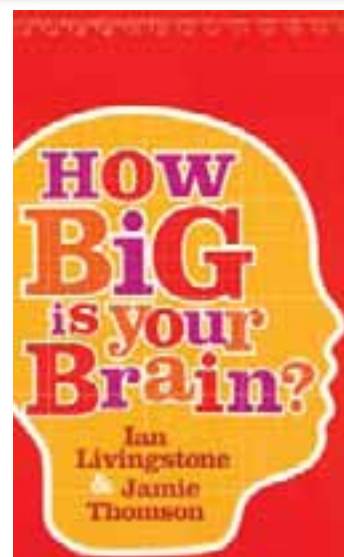
I often take time out of my busy schedule to ask important questions. Things like what is on the TV tonight?, and Where's Wally? Fortunately I have been able to turn to various books help me solve those riddles. So I was pleasantly surprised when I found this book, as it's title is another question that I have often asked myself, but had not been able to work out.

How Big is Your Brain? is filled with a variety of puzzles ranging from fiendishly difficult, to the simply obscure.

Unlike 'ordinary' books, where you read one page after another, with this one you follow a path as prescribed by the book itself, following the conundrum path through the book. At several places you get the option to choose between different puzzles. This means that you can replay How Big is Your Brain?, choose some different puzzles the second time round, and see if your brain is any bigger.

You have to keep track of the time you spend on each question, because this is how you work out your score. You also need to keep track of what section you are up to, as if you get lost, it can be hard finding your way back again.

The questions, interactive puzzles, riddles, enigmas and brainteasers (including code-breaking, number-crunching and logic conundrums) can range from simple questions that have you slapping your head wondering how you could have been so stupid, to harder ones that will have you wondering for days.



You are not allowed to use a calculator, which can be a challenge for people who haven't done secondary school level mathematics in a while (you know who you are).

Some of the answers given provide solutions, to show you how to work out the answers. This helps especially when you have quite a few questions that are similar.

I would recommend this for anyone who wants a challenge. It's a lot like an IQ test, but takes much longer to sit.

However when you get to the end, you have the advantage of knowing the answer to, How Big is Your Brain? and that's something everyone should know.



# books and things

## **The Dragon Detective Agency – The Case of the Missing Cats**

By Gareth Jones  
Published by Allen and Unwin  
Recommended for ages 7-9  
RRP \$15.99

*Reviewed by Catherine George*

'You may be wondering what a dragon was doing working in London as a private detective. The answer is that if you are going to be a private detective, London is a large city with lots of people with lots of problems. The other advantage of London... is hardly anyone ever looks up.'

Dirk Dilly is a dragon detective who would be right at home in a Raymond Chandler novel. When he receives a phone call from Holly asking him to help track down her missing cat, he thinks it will be a walk in the park. But Dirk and the intrepid Holly (who could teach Nancy Drew a thing or two), are soon engaged in a life or death struggle in which the missing cats play only a small part.

The character of Dirk, a detective with the added challenge of hiding his true scaly identity, creates a lovable image that carries the adventure. But the book isn't just a dragon mystery, as it delves into issues of loneliness, isolation and family troubles through Holly's character. This gives the book more depth than many quick reads aimed at this age group, but doesn't overshadow the appeal of a secret world hidden from humans, where dragons live and work hidden from us – an almost muggle like scenario! Other minor characters such as the eccentric Mrs Klingerfilm help keep the reader involved in the plot.

Funny and fast moving, this is a great start to the series. I'm looking forward to reading the next instalment.



*Reviewed by Gabriel Ford, Age 8.*

What's unusual about this book is that the detective isn't just some kid with special gadgets, or magical powers – he's an actual dragon! . When Holly calls Dirk Dilly for help finding her missing cat Willow, little does she know she's come across a fire breathing, smoke blowing dragon. They have their differences at first, for example they have a big discussion about what things exist (dragons) and what don't (the Loch Ness Monster). And as for St George....

'You call him St George. We just call him George the cold-blooded murderer. He killed a defenceless pregnant mother. Very heroic. Nice guy to chose for your patron saint,' snapped Dirk angrily.

But once they get over their differences they make a good team. There's a lot of good conversation in the book that makes it fun to read. Bits of it are funny and bits of it are exciting.

Dirk was kind of funny. He really overreacted when he thought he heard a gunshot, but really it was a car backfiring!

I'm hoping in the next book there will be more about Holly, because without giving too much away, the book ends with her safe but not neccesarily happy.

After I read the book we found a website about the Dragon Detective Agency, [www.thedragondetectiveagency.com](http://www.thedragondetectiveagency.com). The webiste has a story that Holly has written about how she found Willow, and some other fun things, so that was a bonus.

I would recommend this book to children aged at least 8 and up, because some parts of the book are kind of scary. People who like mystery and adventure books will enjoy this series. I'm definitely going to read the next one.

## **Mr McGreevy's Absolute Howlers**

By Norman McGreevy  
Published by Allen & Unwin  
RRP \$23.99

A man with an obsession with (mis)communication, Scottish born Norman McGreevy has painstakingly collected together the best of the worst efforts of generations of English school children.

Under headings like schooldays, politics, animals, music and religion the offerings are funny, irreverent and, on occasions, silly. The book is interspersed with amusing line-drawing illustrations by Zoë Sadokierski.

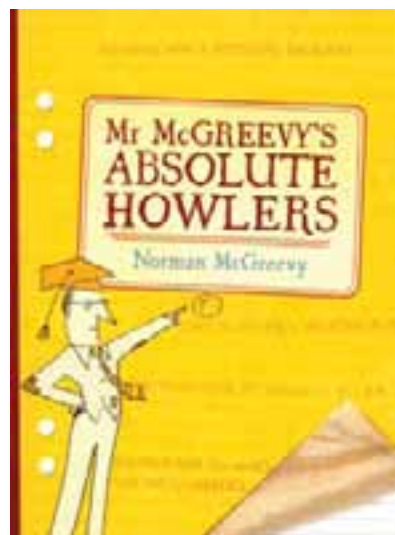
Some examples:

*The USSR and the USA became global in power, but Europe remained incontinent.*

*Laissez-faire meant  
'let the farmers pay  
the taxes'.*

*A caucus is a sort of  
big parrot that has  
been taught to swear*

This book would make an ideal stocking filler at Christmas; extra present for boys who find the world amusing; and is probably perfect for that uncle who spends his life as the family practical joker.



# books and things

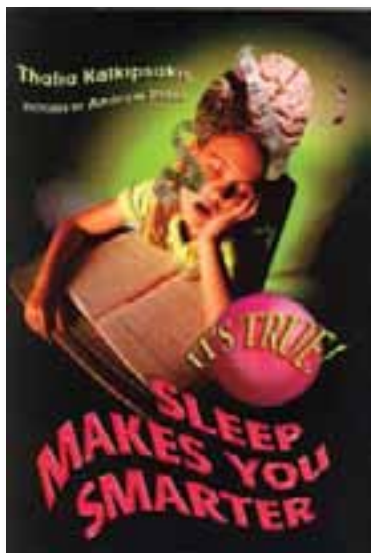
## **It's True! Sleep Makes You Smarter**

By Thalia Kalkipsakis  
Pictures by Andrew Plant  
Published by Allen & Unwin  
RRP \$13.99

### **Reviewed by Seamus Ford, Age 12.**

Sleeping is one of my favourite hobbies, so I was pretty keen to read this book. The idea that I can sleep AND get smarter at the same time is definitely one I'm looking forward to telling my parents and teachers about.

This non-fiction book has heaps and heaps of facts about sleep. How we sleep, why we sleep, what happens when we're sleeping and



much more. Did you know that astronauts don't snore in space because gravity makes you snore? Or that ducks sleep with one eye open to look out for danger? Well, read this book and you'll find out all this and more!

Now, the bit about sleep making you smarter. Apparently sleeping makes you feel more refreshed, and it's easier for your brain to learn things. In some big cities around the world there are little sleep capsules you can hire to have a nap! Some schools in Japan have a 15 minute nap time after lunch, and since they've started doing this students' work has improved!

The book goes into detail about dreams, and the stages of sleep such as REM, when the exciting things are happening in your dreams. It also tells you about how if your sleep stage is interrupted you can have trouble getting back to sleep – something for those insomniacs out there.

So I might be a little way off convincing my teachers that having a sleep is better for my education than doing my homework. However I'd definitely recommend this book to anyone wanting to find out more about the mysteries of sleeping. An easy read recommended for non-fiction fans aged 10 and up.

## **The Joke Trap**

By Richard Glover  
Illustrated by Gus Gordon  
Published by ABC Kids Fiction - Allen & Unwin  
RRP \$14.99

### **Reviewed by Sean Ford and Seamus Ford**

Seamus Ford: So Dad, how come you and me are reviewing this book together?

Sean Ford: Well, I think we got the job because Mum didn't understand it.

Seamus: That's being polite. She told me she thought it was stupid. I thought it was hilarious.

Sean: I thought it was corny..... but good! I also read a lot of jokes that I can readily imagine coming out of your mouth Seamus.....

Seamus: Mum said that the joke about the cemetery being the dead centre of town was one she remembered her dad saying years ago!

Sean: Yeah – people are dying to get into it.

Seamus: Ha ha ha.

Sean: I thought the bits about people getting song lyrics wrong was particularly funny.

Seamus: "Oops I dated a pen" - Britney Spears song "Oops I did it again" - Whatever! Me and my friend Christian came up with our own one - "Wonderduck" instead of "Thunderstruck".

Sean: Its the whole "excuse me

while I kiss this guy" thing..... Does that mean anything to you?

Seamus: No.

Sean: Ah youth – Jimi Hendrix and all that – you can probably Google it.

Seamus: Aren't we supposed to be saying why the book's good? We're going to get in trouble with the Editor of this magazine if we don't get on with it.

Sean: Good point – I enjoyed (mostly) the jokes, and also the way the story developed with the guys getting a better understanding and appreciation of their dads. The car ride home was quite poignant I thought.

Seamus: Well, I thought it was good because it was funny.

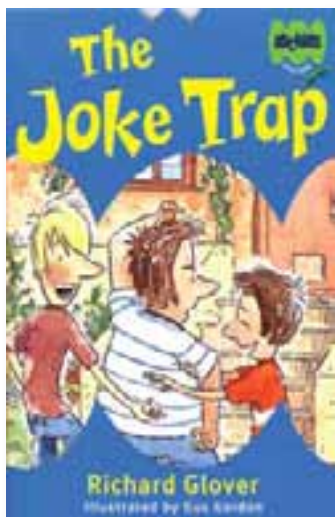
Sean: Deep Seamus. Well, are you hungry?

Seamus: Why?

Sean: "Cause its a long way to the shop if you want a sauasage roll" ACDC ROCKS!

Seamus: Groan.

Mum: Well, maybe it's a guy thing. A fun book with a message about tolerance and family values. Recommended for reluctant readers, corny Dads and 12 year old boys who like cheesy jokes.



books and things

# What do I do with the others?

by Andi Adder



*This is a question we are often asked in relation to independent activities at mathematics time. You may like to try some of these during math time.*

## Meaningful Independent Activities

- Should reinforce and extend children's learning
- Should involve student using higher order thinking skills
- Provide opportunities for children to work interactively with others, sometimes from different groups
- Children should have knowledge of appropriate games and activities to be able to use these independently
- Participation in and completion of independent tasks needs to be valued and rewarded

## Some suggestions for meaningful independent practice activities:

### Make a poster:

What I have Learned  
about Multiplication



### Make a class or group book

What we know about place value.

### Agree or Disagree? -Debates

Choose a statement or question and say whether you agree or disagree with it.

Give your reasons why.

How can you be sure?

Is a square a rectangle?

Are there numbers before zero?

Are triangles the only  
shapes with three sides?

Do you always have to subtract a  
small number from a big number?

### Create a riddle

What Number am I?

I am a number between 400 and 600

I am more than 2

I am greater than 450

I am odd

I am a multiple of 100

I am less than 7

I am a multiple of 500

I am half of 10

What number am I?

### Make a model or representation to show your understanding and the solution to the following:

$7 + 5$ ,  $21 - 13$ ,  $5 \times 7$ ,  $250 \times 10$ ,  $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4}$ ,  $0.5 \times 0.5$

Make a mobile using a net

Label faces with a problem

Equipment needed

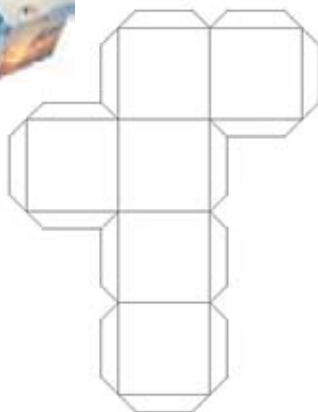
Strategies used

Word story

Explanation

Draw a picture or diagram

Own choice



### The Answer IS...

Write 5 questions



### Pose a Problem

As an independent task students in the teaching group write a problem for the rest of the group to solve. The problem should reflect the current learning that the students are doing.



## Mini Investigations

### Investigation A

Think of a Number

Add 5

Double it and subtract by 10

Divide by the number you started with

What do you get?

Try others

Write a statement about  
your investigation

### Investigation B

Numbers 1-9

Arrange the numbers 1-9 in the  
boxes to make the statements true.

$$\square + \square = \square$$

$$\square - \square = \square$$

$$\square \times \square = \square$$

How many solutions are there?

Have you found them all?

How do you know?

### Choosing A Game

Be clear on what the mathematical  
purpose of the game is

Does this game clearly address that  
aspect of mathematics?

Will it help to further develop the  
child's understandings?

### Other Activities

Create a game

Make a puzzle (e.g. bubble puzzle)

## The Value of Games in the Math Classroom

- *fun to play*
- *engage children intellectually*
- *Motivate children to learn*
- *Children take control of their own learning*
- *Skills practice/fact recall/concept development*
- *Challenging but non threatening*
- *Assist children to learn about logic and strategies*
- *Build and strengthen links between mathematical ideas in their minds*
- *Happy to play at other times*

Sullivan P., (1993). Short Flexible Games

### True/ False Statements

These statements make students  
think.

They also need to explain their answer  
by demonstrating how they know and  
how they worked it out.

True/false statements may be used as  
starters – these lead to great math  
conversations as you discuss the  
issues that arise.

### Examples are

$$6 = 6$$

students say false because  
they perceive that no  
operation has occurred

$$7 = 4+3$$

students think it is false  
because you can't go  
backwards

$$7+0 = 7+0$$

challenge children to  
understand meaning of =  
sign.

$$4+3 = 4+2+1$$

$$6 \times 3 = 3 \times 6$$

$$4 \times 20 = 8+0$$

ask students why true or not  
true?

$$2 \times 3 + 4 = 2 \times 7$$

$$\frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4}$$

$$3 \times 7 = 7+7+7$$



### Website Update [www.nzmaths.co.nz](http://www.nzmaths.co.nz)

#### Basic Facts

Enter basic facts into the search engine.

Check out the Staff Tutorial on basic facts.

Locate – Constructing basic facts knowledge.

You will also find many other references for  
basic facts information.

#### Digistore - the digital learning objects

Have you registered your school yet?

Register through TKI  
<http://www.tki.org.nz/r/digistore/>

These learning objects provide other  
meaningful independent learning activities.

The author would like to acknowledge the expertise and assistance of  
Marilyn Holmes and Rachel French Otago University, College of Education.

# On a Mission: Meandering from Paris to Turkey

**Dear Editor**

*How quickly the last months have flown past. Ever since my epic school trip through the Louvre almost a year ago I have been like one of those aimless brown leaves being blown from one corner of the playground to another.*

However just to bring you up to speed on the news. After that excellent trip to the Louvre I was asked to appear before the Board and told in a very Gallic way that although I was an excellent teacher the exuberance I brought to my subjects was a little flamboyant for the school. I was also informed that the fact that I had been Frogmarched (pun intended) out of the Louvre by a regiment of the foreign legion was bad for the reputation of the school and would I consider another posting say to somewhere like say Turkey.

So as I hadn't been to Turkey and because I could see the writing on the wall so to speak I agreed to be transferred to Capadoccia.

I raced home to my garret looking over the square that was beside the road that ran close to the boulevard that was almost on the banks of the Seine and looked up in my glossy atlas where in Turkey Capadoccia was.

Obviously because of my great attributes as a teacher and as a reward the Board had insisted that I leave immediately and take a week to get to my new school. (No pressure) I think that they wanted to send over all of my inspection reports to ensure that my new school fully appreciated the sensational teacher they were about to acquire.

I hopped on the earliest flight I could get and the cheapest, as money was a little short and winged my merry way to Istanbul. Turkey's gateway to the West and East. Did you know that the bridge that spans the Bosphorus is the official transition point between Europe and Asia. If you go to

the centre of the bridge you can stand with one foot in Asia and the other in Europe.

If you ever get the chance to go to Istanbul –take it. What an amazing city.

I was lucky to be staying in a small hotel about 300 metres from Ayah Sofya. It was very quaint and amazingly convenient to all of the attractions in the old city.

Its amazing the hospitality of the Turkish people. The hotel had provided, unbeknownst to me in the next room, a young lady from NZ who was also looking to extend her horizons and was happy to share the cost of a car to Cappadocia.

She persuaded me to venture out immediately to see Ayah Sofia. For those of you who don't know, Ayah Sofia is one of the largest churches ever built in Christendom and was named after "holy wisdom" (Sancta Sophia). (Although St Peters in Rome is larger it wasn't built until 1506, a thousand years later). Built in 537 by Emperor Justinian it was turned into a Mosque by Mehmet 11 when he conquered the City on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 1453. Ataturk turned it into a museum



**Ayah Sofia**



**Ayah Sofia Interior**

in 1935. One of the wonderful things about it is that because the Ottomans don't allow art that shows God they plastered over all of the ceiling mosaics in the church. This preserved them and the plaster has now been removed to show this wonderful art in its original colours.

We were very lucky to meet a young university student (read brother of a cousin who owns the carpet shop next door) who offered to show us through the church. It is absolutely stunning in its beauty and among other items we were shown was the handprint of Christ the Child on one of the building stones. We found this hard to believe but after going through the museum in the Topkapi Palace where amongst other things they had: the staff of Moses; the cooking pot of Abraham; the arm (encased in gold armour but with a small window cut out to show the bones) of St John the Baptist; and one of the gates of the city of Babylon, you start to wonder "what if".

Istanbul is populated by about 12 million carpet salesman and one or two other people. On



**Bosphorus Bridge**



every corner is a carpet shop with the relatives all out on the sidewalk dying to show you their extensive range, which, they tell you, is so much better than those cheats down the road. You are their best friend and will always be so. Just come and look, there is no need to buy. Yea right! Be aware that if you accept the offer of a cup of apple tea and then buy carpets from another shop you immediately become persona non grata

In the evening we went out for a meal in the Taksim Maydani district, where all the trendy young Turks hang out.



**Taksim Maydani**

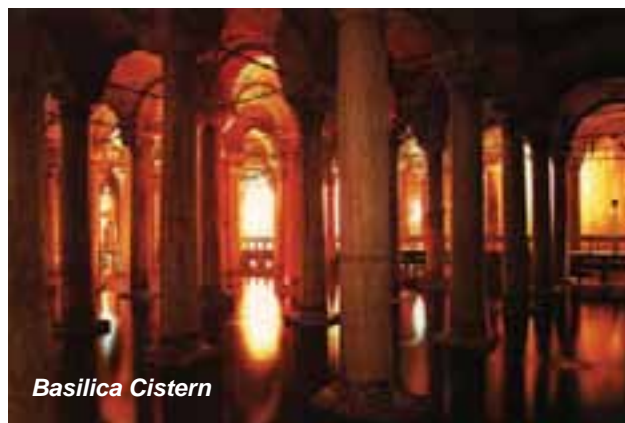
Fantastic experience - the streets were packed and noisy, hustle and bustle everywhere as the call to prayer rang out. After walking through the streets, we turned into a covered avenue full of restaurants, tables out in the lanes, waiters trying to tempt us in from all sides. With the dull roar of voices, music, laughter; faces looming from either side, it was just magical. Once we'd chosen a restaurant, we had a traditional mezze - a selection of hot and cold appetizers accompanied by copious amounts of bread and water. We tried some mashed aubergine, mint yoghurt, a kind of salsa dish, and some pickled mushrooms, followed up with some fried goats cheese in breadcrumbs, absolutely fantastic and cheap as. Along with the Turkish wine it was a night to remember. I topped off the experience for my new friend from NZ by doing a big twirl as I put my leather jacket back on and subtly knocked all the glasses off the neighbouring table.

Next day we took in some of Istanbul's cultural delights starting with the Blue Mosque. Very strict dress code especially for ladies,



with long sleeves, long skirts, scarves to cover their heads, and - at the sign outside the entrance, that said remove your shoes - we removed our shoes... we were then told off for taking off our shoes outside where it was dirty! Just can't win!! The mosque was impressive, but not as good as Aya Sofia.

Next was the Basilica Cistern, which was hard to find. We didn't realise it was underground and it turned out to be a large reservoir built in Roman times (isn't everything!) You go through a small doorway down some stairs and whacko the goose you're in a huge underground cavern, filled with rows of pillars supporting arched, brick ceilings. A boardwalk led through the large room, over water filled with strange looking fish, and water dripping from above. In a far corner, two stone images of Medusa had been used to prop up two columns, strangely one was upside-down, and the other on its side...apparently no one knows why!!



**Basilica Cistern**

Our last day we spent in the Grand Bazaar. If you can imagine a site bigger than the whole of Eden Park with shops about the size of a normal bathroom, selling every imaginable item you could think of then that is the Grand Bazaar.

We both bought leather jackets here and were amazed at the prices. Obviously bargaining is an art form and is expected. We normally started at about 1/3 of the asking price and would normally agree at about 1/2 of the price.

Having decided to move on, my new friend and I caught a boat to the other side of the Bosphorus and stopped at Yalova just long enough to hire a car and leave.



**Yalova**

Our next stop (other than a brief one at Troy, where we saw the original but rather modern looking wooden horse, amazing what they can do with wood preservative these days) was Behramkale, the closest point to Greece from Turkey.





Behramkale was set at the bottom of a very steep windy cobbled road which when rained upon becomes so slippery that

- a You can't get back up.
- b If you do manage to get halfway up, the road is nicely tilted so the car and the occupants slide over the edge of the 400-foot cliff and into the Mediterranean.

The Turkish army had a small garrison there and it was a little disconcerting to see so many soldiers with submachine guns ready to repel the Grecian Army like they have been doing for thousands of years.

Behramkale called Assos in ancient times was built about 800 BC. Aristotle lived here from 348 to 345 BC.

It was here that I wrote my soon to be published pamphlet on how to change a tyre in rural Turkey. The necessary ingredients are:-

After the excitement of the puncture we retired into the hotel where we noticed that the porters were playing Backgammon. Stupidly I accepted the offer to play a game. The Turks play very fast and once the dice are thrown they immediately remove them off the board. So fast that unless you are watching very carefully you won't see what was thrown and you then need to rely on what they tell you. Surprisingly they usually seemed to get exactly the right dice. I ended up having won one game and lost one. A bit like Gallipoli I suppose. Stalemate.

When the rain cleared and the road dried out we headed off to our next stop on our way to Cappadocia.

This was the town of Selcuk, close to the ancient town of Ephesus. Apart from the Roman ruins the main claim to fame here is the supposed tomb of St John. For those of you Philistines who don't know the Bible, Jesus

### Ingredients Checklist: for tyre changing in rural Turkey

- A town at the bottom of a steep slippery cobbled road made impassable by the rain. **Check**
- A small car backed into a parking space at the front of the hotel. **Check**
- Said Parking space to be sloping downwards from left to right. **Check**
- Puncture in rear right wheel on downward side of car. **Check**
- Nearest garage 300km away assuming they can get down aforementioned road. **Check**
- Right side of car jacked up, with car tilted onto jack because of slope. **Check**
- Dent in side of car where jack is stopping car from toppling over. **Check**
- Left wheel of car off the ground. **Check**
- 20 helpful young macho male Turks all with a different method to resolve problem and all determined that their solution is to be the one that we choose. **Check**
- One NZ male teacher determined to show these Turks that although we didn't get far at Gallipoli by god we would prevail here. **Check**
- One long 100mm diameter steel pipe found by a helpful Turk on instruction from Young NZ female. **Check**
- One large piece of rock to use as a fulcrum and found by NZ male teacher. **Check**
- Greek mathematician Archimedes theory on leverage which had to be explained to young Turks which states "Give me a lever and a place to stand on, and I can move the earth." **Check**
- 20 young Turks pushing down on lever and lifting back of car. **Check**
- One very nervous NZ teacher changing wheel extremely quickly and hoping that young Turks would not let go of lever. **Check**
- 4 bottles of Ouzo to help ease inflammation in throats from too much shouting. **Check**

Selcuk



Selcuk



from the cross said to St John and referring to the Virgin Mary "This is your Mother" and to the Virgin Mary referring to St John "This is your Son". The story goes that shortly after the crucifixion St John and Mary travelled to Ephesus where they lived out their last days and died there. Up in the hills overlooking Ephesus is the supposed house where Mary ascended to heaven. This is now converted into a Church with its necessary wall of taps all pouring out holy water for the faithful who arrive by the busload. Best to go in the late afternoon.

The ruins at Ephesus are truly remarkable, especially so because it is here that it was discovered that the Romans had an underground Sewerage system, which ran from the

Selcuk



**Goreme**



communal toilets away from the city. It also had a brothel with signs set in the stone streets pointing out the way.

Our last stop before we got to Cappadocia was a small town called Olimpus. Renowned throughout backpackerdom for its isolation, no shops carpet and otherwise, cheap accommodation and the presence of the old wacky backy, its a young holidaymakers dream come true. We had only stopped there because of the presence of the Chimaeras.

These are gas plumes that spring from solid rock and ignite spontaneously as they hit the air. Nobody has really explained where the gas comes from or why it ignites but it was a great place to spend the night and explore.

The rooms we were allocated were absolutely wonderful. Not. The sheets were damp and smelt of mildew, as did the rest of the room. The restaurant was cheap, the food lousy with the only bright spot being the bar which was well stocked. Not a great place to stay, but hey, it was cheap. We were lucky to get a Kurd to drive us to the Chimaeras and he did so with all the gusto of a man without a care in the world. They have a speed limit in Turkey. The signs have F/O which I suppose means flat out because that's how they drive. It was nice to be driving down these narrow winding roads on the left side until I realised that we were meant to be on the other side. Thank God there were no other cars coming.

We stopped about five minutes walk

from the mountain and when we got to the area where the flames were, we all sat down, opened up a couple of beers and had a sing song. It was hard to get the rest of the group to comprehend that NZ and Aus were different countries so we compromised and sang Waltzing Matilda which most of the group had heard of.

Our trip to Goreme in Cappadocia began in earnest the following morning when we left at daybreak looking forward to a long drive with a change of climate including the expectation of snow ahead. This is because Cappadocia is a bit like the volcanic plateau with an altitude higher than it is on the coast thus being a lot colder.

By lunchtime we were driving through high mountain passes with snow on

the side of the road. We had time to stop and build a snowman before we continued on our lonely trek towards what I was hoping would be my next step up in my teaching Career.

Onwards and upwards I thought to myself as we swept around the bend and there ahead of us were the strange looking houses that make up Cappadocia. I saw the small school on the outskirts of town and they even had a herd of tiny looking sheep in a large caged area just to the side. They looked a bit like cats but why would they cage cats? Anyway we had arrived in one piece and I was looking forward to this new career move with great expectations. See you next time and keep on talking.

Yours,

***The Travelling Teacher***

**Goreme**





# COMPETITION ...

## CAN YOU IDENTIFY YOUR SCHOOL??

If you think **your** school is one of the two mystery schools pictured below ...

- a Write to us identifying your school
- b tell us some of the great things going on there (with photos if you like)

We will publish what you write in the Term 3 2007

**Good Teacher Magazine** and send you a book for your library.

**Mystery School 1**



**Mystery School 2**



Send your entries by June 15th 2007

to:

Mystery School Competition,  
George Hudson  
PO Box 5531  
Mt Maunganui 3150

or email to:

georgehudson1@gmail.com

## COMPETITION RESULT FROM TERM ONE 2007

**Mystery School 1... Moerewa Primary School**



My name is Sarah Copeland-Ridgway and I know Mystery School 1 as I was a teacher there in 2005 and 2006.

Moerewa School, as it is today is a vibrant emerging school of year 1 to Year 10. It has a philosophy based on Maori concepts of culture and definitely is a school of change! This school has emerged out of the school reorganisation that occurred in 2004, and has tried to combine the love and history of Moerewa School and Otiria School to fully unite the Moerewa community on one site.

Moerewa School has a vision of creating a concept of "from the cradle to the grave", allowing Moerewa community to access education at any age and for any goal. It now provides community education workshops as well as delivers a supportive curriculum to Year 9 and 10 on site.

Moerewa School operates a breakfast club, mau rakau, kapa haka, before school and after school programme. That doesn't include all of the exciting teaching programmes that goes on in an ordinary term. The school is all about whanau, being maori, and success on many levels.

This year they have their new funky school uniforms! They are also a Health Promoting school, and participate in the Ministry of Health Fruit in Schools programme. They are very lucky students!

Though I am not currently a teacher there this year, I couldn't let Moerewa School go unnoticed like Hobsonville Primary! I currently work for Parkside School, specialising in delivering education to students of special needs. Working at Moerewa School has been a pleasure and has ensured I took with me a kete full of ideas and inspirations to share with my new class and staff colleagues.

I wish Moerewa School all the best of luck in their future developments and hope me email puts some light on your mystery school number 1.

Noho ora mai,

Sarah Copeland-Ridgway



## Mystery School 2... *Hinuera School*



Having a quiet read this morning when hey-presto there was a picture of our school!

Hinuera school is a seven class school situated nine kilometres from Matamata, so we have children from the surrounding country side as well as from Matamata itself.



Last week the two senior classes went on a four night camp to Aongatete, a camp near Katikati. In near perfect weather we were able to do a wide range of outdoor activities-bush and stream studies, waterhole jumping, archery, orienteering, outdoor games etc. There is also an indoor rock wall and a qualified instructor on hand to get most to the top and down again!!



We were able to enjoy the murals in Katikati as well as the museum. There we were transformed into pupils of 100 years ago, marching into class, sitting up straight and being quiet! Quite a challenge. Dividing into groups we then had a hands on approach to griddle scone making, butter churning, hand sewing, and washing by hand.



We sampled the delights of Sapphire Springs hot pool, had a great concert and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

There was an excellent band of parents as well as three staff and myself, a teacher-aide. Roll on next year, we will probably have to turn some helpers away!!!



**Shirley Hickson**

Here goes Lucy again...

# Getting the Most out of that Picture Book

by Lucy Literacy

*Grappling to make sense of text often challenges young beginning readers.*

*Picture books provide an important structure for unlocking the message and inviting the reader to make a connection between the illustrations and the text.*

*For our younger readers, the illustrations support and reinforce the text and for our more fluent readers this relationship extends to integrating all the elements to enhance the depth of meaning. "Many picture books are very sophisticated, both in the features and conventions of visual language they use, and in the effects and meanings they communicate."*

*(Exploring Language Handbook, pg. 191)*

I have been having a great time recently sharing picture books with older students (years 6-8). We have been trying to find out:

- how text and illustrations work together to create a message
- what effect an illustrator has on the visual interpretation of the text
- how would this differ if the author was also the illustrator

A book we shared together was "Voices in the Park" by Anthony Browne. In this case Browne was both the author and the illustrator.

"Voices in the Park" has four different voices that tell the story of a walk in the park.

**Warning!** Be prepared to look really closely at the pictures.

We began by looking at the front cover.

This helped us to identify some key questions that we hoped the story would answer for us as we read. Eg.

- How many voices might they be?
- Do the characters on the front cover know each other?
- Who do the dogs belong to?
- What is there to do in the park?
- Why did the Browne choose the title "Voices in the Park"?

These were listed on the board and returned to as the story unfolded.

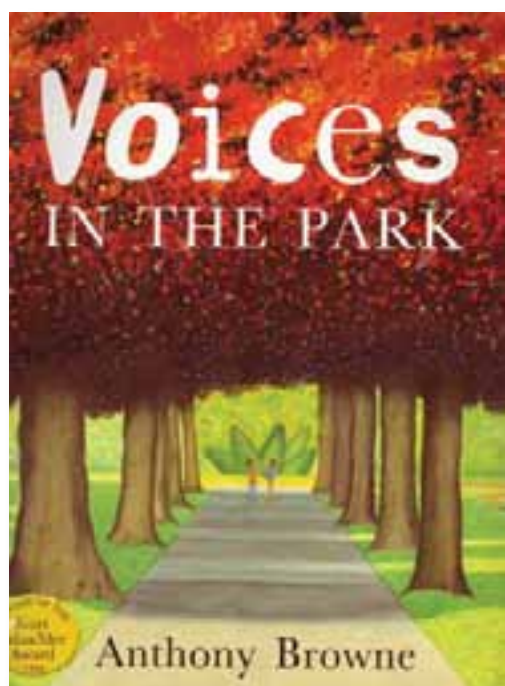
As we read each voice in turn, we took some time to think about what we had seen and heard.

Working in pairs, the students talked about their impressions of each character and identified some key words or phrases that they felt reflected that character.

These were noted down on an A3 sheet. (divided into four)



Sharing these impressions and attributes allowed others to add to their charts and to begin to get a feeling for a variety of interpretations. This activity has a strong link for writing, especially when students are writing to entertain and need to think carefully about characterization. This chart becomes a valuable resource.



First Voice	Second Voice
Third Voice	Fourth Voice





So what did we decide?

- What were the key messages?
- Why the author would write a book like this?
- How did the illustrations support the text?

It was interesting to hear the students talk about their impressions of each character.

They were amazed that four characters could be so different and have such different perceptions.

One student commented that it was the same for them.

*"Isn't it funny how one person can see something that another didn't."*

Having the time to talk helped to clarify and confirm ideas.

It was exciting to investigate the techniques used by the illustrator and to identify the links to the text.

In 'Voices in the Park' Browne used the facial expressions of his characters to enhance the text.



He also allowed the inanimate objects in his illustrations to join in.

Browne's use of colour added another dimension that worked together with the text to develop the many layers of the story.

An interesting discussion ensued regarding the merits of illustrating your own text or inviting someone else to contribute the illustrations.



The group felt being the writer and the illustrator can give the story a strong connection between the text and the pictures on the one hand.

On the other hand working with someone else could bring a new dimension to the text – it would be their interpretation of your ideas.

As an adult I found Browne's sense of humour delightful. I had to laugh when I was introduced to the dogs – Victoria and Albert.

The implications here were great. There is so much in this book for so many different ages.

Give it a go.

There are so many wonderful picture books out there that you will be spoilt for choice.

## Voices IN THE PARK

A Picture Corgi Book: 0 552 545643

Published 1999

NZ Contact Random House New Zealand Ltd, 18 Poland Road, Glenfield, Auckland 10

# Children delivering the mail

by Pauline McLeod

*A real hands on experience to answer a question... Who are the people who live in our community and what do they contribute to make our community such a special place?*

*What better way to get to know your community than join them in their daily duties.*

This was the belief Rosemary Cook principal of Wharepapa Sth took as her students set out to find out who the people were who made up their present community and what contribution do they make to it.

The students were like ferrets as they used a range of technologies to gather people's stories. Prior to this inquiry students had been focusing on asking open questions and set these out ready to personally interview community members.

The juniors began by taking home the digital camera and bringing back family photos of their family. With the assistance of their teacher a slide show was made up of families in our school to present to the senior class.

Then the search was on for more community members. The local mail lady, the vet, the firemen, the ambulance drivers and the local cafe all belonged to this community. Students formulated questions and set off to find the answers.

The mail lady is a regular visitor to school so the students in the principals car followed her to the Post office and on her rounds helping to deliver the mail.



"One 5 year old told me the mail brings my dad money so he can pay for the groceries."



The Junior school found out that the local café provided a place for Mothers to have a latte after dropping their children off at school or when they needed to meet with friends.



Another child was most impressed to discover that old people in our district ask the mail lady to bring them out (from Te Awamutu) some milk and bread if they run out and can't get to town.



Sometimes my Dad gets a load of wire from the mail lady."







At the fire station students asked the firemen how come they can get to a fire in their community so quickly and why do they do that job.

They found that the vet in a rural community looks after all sizes of animals

The children concluded that people who live and contribute to a community all have responsibilities to other people and that's what makes their community so special.



Not to be out done the senior school produced a community newspaper called...Wharepapa Bulletin. This concentrated on highlighting the contribution people had made and were making to their community. People enjoyed being interviewed and in some cases offered to demonstrate their contribution with a cooking lesson where an apple crumble was made and shared for lunch.

A merit award was received for this newspaper from the Y4 to Y6 students which gained them a placing in the intermediate section.

The process of Inquiry learning began in this school when the staff wanted to improve their ICT skills but quickly realized that there had to be a context for this learning.

"A change in teaching practice had to be made," said principal Rosemary Cook. "We just had to bite the bullet and get on with it and I'm so glad we did as this change has brought about the best teaching I've seen in all my 30 years of teaching. I just can't stop talking about how exciting learning is for our students."



The students asked the ambulance driver what he had inside the ambulance to help people in an emergency.

He was called to a real emergency (a car accident) before they finished interviewing him.

*Note: Wharepapa Sth School is in the central Waipa Valley between Cambridge and Te Awamutu. It is a 3 teacher school with a roll of 28 students*

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