



Good Teacher Magazine

Term Two 2008

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Another term starts and we look into the chillier months of winter.

It is, however, a chance to read those books that you have been saving for in front of the fire and perhaps spend a few moments in the staffroom reading the stories in Good Teacher.

Mike's first solo flight, Robyn's trip experiencing the history and reality of Korea, the Travelling Teacher - who is so unpredictable we look forward to each new missive with bated breath!

Lucy, Andi and Lyn continue with their ideas and suggestions within their curriculum areas and in this issue we welcome Leeana Herewini writing on Māori Medium Education.

The regular thought provoking articles by Gwen Gawith and John Hellner are there and the feature article this term is 'Yes but is it Boot Camp?' a look into the Fitco Gym boys class at Tauranga Intermediate School. With both photos and text it is an insight into what is an extremely successful experiment which has children and their parents, queuing to be considered for admission for year eight. The experiences and learning encouragement the boys get from their teacher Barry Allen, with the support of the school management and the wider community is eyeopening.

As always this magazine comes free to your staffroom (our grateful thanks to those of you who have taken your own subscriptions). The magazine is paid for by advertising and we thank our advertisers and would welcome any new interest in supporting a magazine which we think has a niche to fill within the education community.

All our articles are sourced for this magazine and are not syndicated (except for occasional academic texts which need a wider audience). Our puzzles are created specifically, and our writers are dedicated. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoy creating it for you.

Please don't hesitate... contact us if you have any interesting things happening in your school that you would like shown to a wider audience.

Enjoy... **the GTM Team**

NB: Due to popular demand we are gradually uploading all the book reviews since Term 3 2006 to our website <http://www.ed-media.co.nz>

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This class is an inspiration.

It encourages boys like my son to expand their horizons , it encourages mothers like myself to let our boys become men.

I am grateful to Barry Allen for his vision and commitment.

Kia Maia – Be resolute!

Deb Reweti



Yes but is it...

Tauranga Intermediate School, New Zealand's largest intermediate school has an interesting class which is now in its fourth year. A Year 8 boys only class.

Is it just a glorified boot camp?

Do the boys have freedom to be boys and express themselves?

Is it wise to put a group of boys in a co-ed intermediate school into a class of their own which differentiates them and definitely makes them stand out from the rest of what is a very large school?

These were questions which had been posed to me and I approached the class with interest. What I found was what I expected and more.

Is it a boot camp? No I don't think so .. though the boys have realistic expectations placed on them, which they appear to enjoy meeting.

Do the boys have freedom to be boys? Well lots of physical exercise and the ability to 'let off steam' is a dominant feature so I guess that one is a yes too!

Can they express themselves? The boys are encouraged to progress both their literacy and numeracy, Reading has a competitive edge and expectation that everyone will take part.

The boys are expected to show respect to their elders and courtesy to classroom visitors. They are, even this early in the year showing their progress to becoming confident public speakers who are more than willing to stand up in class, introduce themselves and offer their opinion on any subject.

They have responsibilities which are spelled out, understood and accepted as being part and parcel of the honour of being one of the 30 selected from 140 students (and parents) who have applied to be considered for inclusion in this sponsored alternative to a standard state school intermediate class.

As an experiment it possibly relies on the drive, faith and passion of the teacher who guides each group of year 8 boys through their last year in the primary system. Barry Allen's dedication and belief in the positives offered to the boys in his care is testament to the results achieved. The support given to this endeavour by the principal and senior staff along with the financially freeing interactive sponsorship by groups outside of the school environs, all assist in ensuring success.

The Fitco Gym Boys boys class is very cool because we learn how to develop our academic skills. We also learn to take care of our bodies through regular fitness.

If we put in a big effort we get rewarded.

The Fitco Gym Boys class is an awesome privilege to be in.

Joseph Hapi (11)



Boot Camp?

In Barry Allen's Words

The Fitco Gym Boys Class is a year 8 class.

The selection process is extensive and each year there are more applicants for entry. Far reaching interview and goal setting meetings are held each term. The boy, his caregivers and I meet and discuss a wide range of issues. We set academic, social, personal and sporting goals. These meetings often take some time, Each boy acts as the host during these meeting, offering tea, coffee etc to his guests.

The boys like my 'availability' some are at school at 7.30 am and the boys and their caregivers have my home, cell phone numbers, and home and school email addresses. They use them often!

There are *routines/procedures* for most activities (written, a copy for each pupil, often revisited,,, constantly reinforced). *Boundaries* established at the beginning of the year never move.

Timing – appears to be very significant to the majority of the boys, I regularly count down the time left when the boys are reading, writing etc.

Lesson structure: what we start today, we work on today, we complete today. Recall appears to be remarkably improved.

Communication: oral and written with pupils, parents/caregivers. Colleagues, management and BOT. The boys and I undertake presentations at BOT and PTA meetings.

Literacy is our all consuming focus. Each term there is a novel reading target and genre theme for their novels e.g. term one adventure, term 2 classics. The boys are expected to read a novel a week. With 10 minutes after morning tea and lunch they are also encouraged to read for 20 minutes a day at home. Each novel goes through an analysis process and we operate a 'Book Sale' regularly where the boys 'sell' their latest book to the rest of the class.

Words, words fascinating words, we delight in words like synopsis, turbidity. The boys seem to get a buzz from knowing, saying, spelling and using the current crop of words. I often hear boys repeating such words over and over – like some sort of mantra.

Homework structure. The boys set up their homework for the week at the beginning of each week and must have their homework completed, signed and to me by 8.30 am each Friday (a time management issue).



Expectations. I set high expectations in all areas of our lives. I constantly reiterate the expectations I set and talk about and explain the whole concept of Action – Consequence.

We have a wide range of *consequences* for inappropriate behaviour. I have found that there are fewer and fewer behavioural problems as the first term rolls by. We pride ourselves on our reputation around the school and in the community for our outstanding manners and behaviour, We celebrate every little bit of positive behaviour reported to us by people outside the class.

We have the 'Tools of Trade – a small list of essential items each boy must have on hand at all times.

'Green Card' – a list of 16 Habits of the Mind which along with our class codes drive all aspects of our class and its activities.



First in our class we have an intensive reading program which we are expected to read a novel a week. Honestly I have never read an entire novel in my life! But already this year I have read five in four weeks, for me that's a huge milestone for myself. I would not have known how easy it was without this class.

Manners is another big one in our class. I have always known how to use them but Mr Allen just makes sure of it or else NO GYM. Fitness is crazy in our class. We run at least two to three times a day. I can already feel the effects. Every Friday we go to the gym, which is a part of our programme. The gym is everything to us, no manners, no homework, no gym. Simple as that.

Whenever we run we always wait for our last man, Mr Allen doesn't. There's a phrase he quite often uses "there's only one person I wait for and I married her" ha ha ha! it makes me laugh every time.

Clayton Commerer (12)

The Fitco Gym boys class is a lot better than my old class because it is so much quieter and I can be a lot more focused on my work. It's also really good the we can ring Mr Allen whenever we need help for our homework or anything outside school. We can even have breakfast in the morning if we miss out on it before we get to school, We read one novel a week and do a lot of reading in class.

Cosmo Goode (12)

The Fitco Gym boys' class has changed my attitude toward school. I look forward to going to school in the morning, rather than last year, when I didn't like going to school, my attitude wasn't good, because of how I felt. But now I enjoy school again and always have something to look forward to, like being able to go to the gym each Friday. And going on class trips no other class goes on, like Bowen town, the army day and the trip to the airport where we go on a plane called the Hercules. I feel lucky to be in this class and I wish everybody had a class like this,

Matthew Huxham (12)

Sponsors – We have a growing number of 'full time' and occasional sponsors. Fitco Gym was the first to come on board, hence the naming rights. What do they offer? – my biggest carrot – the weekly gym session. Rotary international is our single largest cash contributor. What do they offer? - the financial freedom to try things. Active PR and the snowball effect brings in more supporters and sponsors.

Food Daily breakfast and a weekly formal lunch. The boys plan, budget, prepare, serve, host a guest and clean up a 'Naval Dinner (silver Service) once a year. Having our own kitchen and laundry as part of our classroom is essential. The boys mostly raise the money to pay for the food, they sell raffle tickets, chocolates, groom staff cars, polish pupils winter shoes – there are all sorts of fund raising activities.

There are formalities: when a visitor arrives or parents/ caregivers spend time with us, at our meals, when it is cleanup time (dishes etc) using initiative is an essential element in the learning process.

No 1's – We have our own special uniform, we call them our number 1's. These are worn on special occasions, to the gym, on sports days and when we speak to a sponsor groups or large gatherings. The boys wash and iron their No 1's at school each week,. Each year the colour and logo changes. The boys take amazing care of their No 1's.

Tidy tidy tidy – we constantly emphasise and talk about 'men' being organised and tidy people. Gradually we notice that the boys are self starters in the tidy organised stakes,. The boys have extra areas to keep organised and tidy. Their desk, their lockers, their 'No.1' clothes, our laundry, our kitchen.

Trips: Kaimai Tramp and Training. During terms 2 and 3 the boys and I begin training for our Kaimai tramp. Daily we 'run' up and down a nearby steep side street. We wear back packs containing a growing number of cobblestones. The Kaimai transport involves three days of training , about 33 kilometres. We carry our own food, water and a sleeping bag. The rule is, where I get tired, we sleep. Last year the boys asked to spend an extra night in the bush.

We spend three days at *Ohinemutu* in Rotorua. We stay on Otawhiwhi marae, we undertake the entire process, cooking, cleaning, welcoming guests – the total kawa.

Waimarino is a day spent kayaking the Wairoa river.

Bowentown is the annual 'carrot'. The boys and I go to Bowentown for a week. We stay on a marae which is 10 metres from the harbour high tide mark and 300 metres from the sand dunes and waves of the Pacific Ocean. We waterski, fish, swim, sea biscuit and generally work on our suntans. A huge carrot the whole class strives to preserve.

Rewards: We almost always work for reward, Call it salary, hug, smile, a chocolate bar.

We operate a 'Student of the Week' structure. This boy gets a trophy and a twenty minute session with our class remote control car. We have a weekly raffle draw, tickets earned for a wide range of positive activities.

There is a lot of 'blokes stuff' happening constantly and in lots of areas of school life there is competition.

Fitco Gym ... my biggest carrot is the weekly gym session



Dealing with: the grot and the gruesome in the digital age

by Gwen Gawith

It's easy to throw around terms like 'knowledge age', 'information age', 'infoliteracy', 'digipops literacy', and the like, without asking what these words really mean in terms of what we want learners to learn and be able to do, and what we teach them.

The Ministry seems to have latched on to the concept of 'future proofing' education but what exactly do they mean, and how do we do it in the classroom?

From what I read, 'digital literacy' seems to be a key FP ingredient, but what exactly is it?

Does 'digital literacy' mean being able to use your fingers and toes, or does it mean being able to use the features of Microsoft software? Is it just a question of making sites much more 'user-friendly' - DigiPops - because children are technological naturals and absorb this thing called 'digital literacy' without adult intervention?

Jakob Nielsen's Alertbox, February 26, 2007 on www.useit.com challenges what we are teaching tech-savvy children in the name of digital literacy. He points out how the Excel software features American teachers taught so assiduously and painstakingly over recent years were made redundant in one hit by the radical 2007 revisions. He says:

"People will learn how to use [software] features on their own, when they need them -- and thus have the motivation to hunt for them. It's the conceptual things that get endlessly deferred without the impetus of formal education."

He lists several 'conceptual' things he thinks we should teach, and teach better, including:

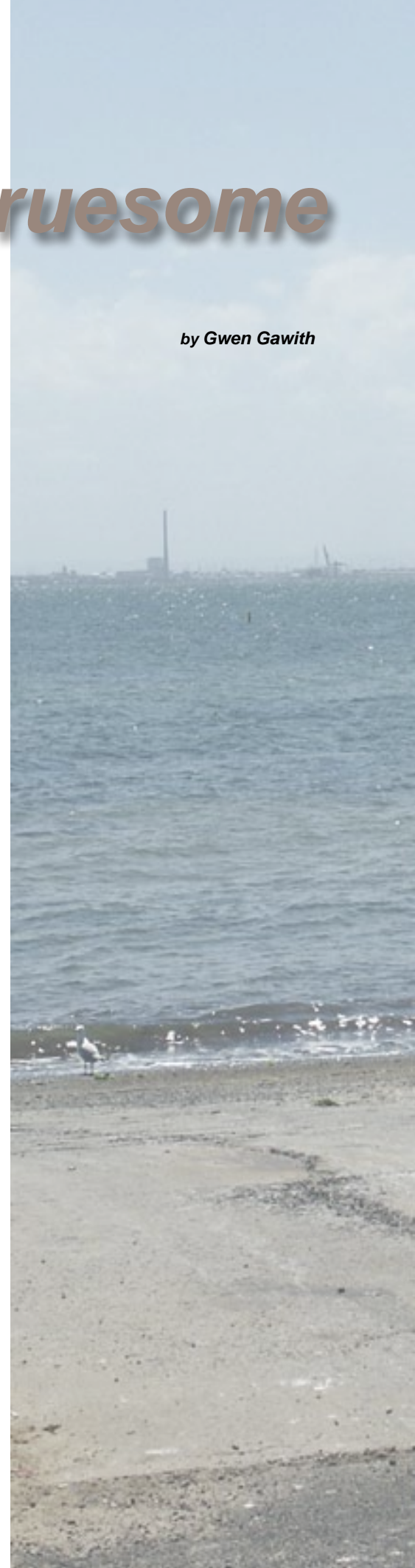
- search strategies
- Information credibility
- Information overload

We need to think about these concepts. What is the concept base we need to teach that will remain constant through generations of software updates and feature enhancements?

1. Search strategies

We have got to learn to ask (and show children how to answer) the question 'Where could I go to find this info, and how do I search for the specific things I need to know?'

People don't even talk about search strategies any more. They just talk about Googling, as if just typing any old words in the Google search box is the be-all-and-end-all of searching for information. Nielsen points out that Google will eventually go belly-up, the way of search engines like Alta Vista and other previously dominant market players, but claims that:



“... the general search concept will only become more important in the future, as we get ever-more information that will be ubiquitously accessible. Strategies for how to formulate good queries, how and when to use query reformulation or other search refinements, how to use scoped search, how to judge search result relevancy, and how to combine multiple search engines of different types will remain important, even as the specifics of how to implement such strategies change.”

I agree! The point I want to make is that effective search strategies apply to a lot more than just Googling. It's just as important to understand what's in a phone book, to be able to read time tables, indexes, etc, how to locate an organization, how to locate information about where to get..., pay for..., find out..., query..., complain about... Simply, the issue is that there is more paper-based and online information now than ever before and you've got to know what there is and

how to get at it.

Yes, of course it's vital to be able to select precise search terms, use Boolean operators to refine a search, and the like, but all this is just the icing on the cake if you don't know *precisely* what you're looking for in the first place, if you're just doing the equivalent of window shopping or fishing in cyberspace.

So before you even get to search strategies, you need to know what you're searching for. This involves a lot more than just generating (or even worse, being given) a few questions and told to go and look up 'answers'.

What we do in 3Doors® is map the topic, show children how to recognize the gaps in their knowledge (their infoGaps) to focus their searching on finding info to plug those precise infoGaps. It sounds easy, obvious even, but it is quite different in practice from the usual brainstorm> questions> go and look up stuff to find answers to your questions sequence that has become normalized classroom

practice. How is it different? By focusing on searching for specific info to plug specific infoGaps, the search is immediately focused because the child knows what she/he is looking for. This helps them, not just to choose appropriate infoSources, and not just to select information relevant to their infoGaps, but also to reject what may be fascinating, but is simply not relevant to their infoGaps.

Being conscious of *rejecting* is just as important as being specific about *selecting* because the more information there is and the more sources of information there are, the greater the role *rejection* plays. You can only know what you *don't want* when you know what you *want*.

Online search strategies (Boolean operators and all that) are *less* necessary than they were when I started with phone-coupled links to the ERIC database thirty years ago! (Help! Next stop a zimmer frame?) It's *never* been more important to have a

good basic understanding of the *whole information infrastructure of society* – where you go for what. It's also never been more important to have good *non-digital* skills such as working out *exactly* what you need to know before you start looking, being able to surf text on screen or in print to spot info which plugs your infoGaps. For both online and hard copy surfing you also need really sophisticated alphabetic skills, and you *must* be able to evaluate infoSources (sites and hard copy) and work out which are likely to yield the best information in the quickest time. These are *cognitive*, not digital, processes.

2. Information Credibility

This begs the next lot of questions: 'What is best information? What is good (versus 'bad') information? Good for what? What do we mean by credible information and how do we know it's credible? Simply, how do we know what to believe?

Crucially: What are the criteria we teach children to discriminate between the gold and the grot?

No one would challenge the fact that exposure to the Internet has exponentially magnified our exposure to the grot and the gruesome. Nielsen points out that children click adverts much more than adults do, and that teenagers are victims of their own impulsivity and impatience and that this makes them proportionately even more vulnerable. Of course we can text and drink and drive and race our mates, and can shove lurid details of our social lives on FaceBook where we assume no adult (or employer) ever goes! So whose job is it to prevent teens from being themselves (just as we were, but without the cars and technological trappings)?

And how can we preach what we don't practice when so many adults are duped by current and ex-sports stars recommending financial, property, medical, dietary, food and retirement products, when PR releases masquerade as 'news'; when it is the publications and media that adults own and run that have promoted the celebrity culture where it's hard for anyone to get a message across without having a 'celebrity' to front it. Celebrity = credibility? Yeah, right!

I don't think any teacher or parent would debate the need for children and teens to be media savvy, so the question remains: Who exactly does teach children to use information with discrimination, and what exactly do they teach?

The temptation is to assume that we're too busy 'doing' the curriculum; that somehow someone else must have done 'it' at some time? Surely it's the 'librarian's' job? Which librarians? The



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trained librarians or trained Teacher-Librarians only a handful of schools employ? Get real! Just as all teachers, like it or not, are teachers of English, so all of us need to make information literacy (if not digipops literacy) our teaching concern. What we, as teachers, can do and must do is show children and teens how to be discriminating users of information, online info, print info, financial info... This is easy to say, but, actually, it's one of those things that is really, really hard to teach because it's not cut and dried. What does it involve?

To begin with, any information seeker needs to know quite a bit about a subject to appreciate whether new information is 'good' information. Secondly, you need to appreciate what 'good' means. It can mean 'relevant', but relevant to what? Everything is relevant to something. And my research shows that most children tailor their topic after they've found one source of information that they perceive to be good simply because they found it! 'Good' can also mean 'accurate', but knowledge is changing, and there are many who say that nothing is accurate (for long). It can also mean 'reliable' or 'authoritative' but how on earth do you know whether the site or book or Wikipedia entry is reliable and authoritative, and what do

these mean anyway? Reliable must surely mean supported by some sort of credible evidence, research or such like? Authoritative, similarly, must mean written by a credible authority, published by a reputable publisher or on a reputable site. So how does a marginally literate 9 year old know who is an authority and how to recognize her/ him? How do you teach them which publishers and which sites are 'reputable'?

3Doors® tries to simplify it by offering simple, straightforward filters for selecting 'good' information. These filters might be seen by information specialists as a simplistic travesty of what is a very complex judgment. Too bad! Teaching something simple and practical is, surely, better than not teaching it at all because it's too complex. But, simple or not, I still find that few teachers see the need to go beyond just getting children to 'find and present information'. 3Doors® has three infoFilters:

a) Info is relevant if it relates to one of your infoGaps (Tool 2). If it doesn't, it may be absolutely fascinating, but it isn't relevant on this occasion to these infoGaps. In other words, if you haven't specified exactly what you need to know (formulated infoGaps), you're stonkered, because everything is relevant.

b) Information is accurate if you can find the same facts in two or more different infoSources, for example, on a website and in a book or encyclopaedia (to avoid the fact that many websites and linked sites pirate unchecked content from each other). You also need to check the publication date because old sources may be less accurate than recently researched info. (Most children see any website as more 'up to date' than anything published, but many sites languish untouched on the Web for years and years). These two criteria are sufficient for under 9/10's. Though most 9/10's could understand that World Book or Britannica are more authoritative than Wikipedia because the first two are written and checked by experts, whereas anyone can contribute to Wikipedia, I don't think many would understand (or want to) the concept of authoritative publishers, and the difference between .ac, .com, .org and the like. But for older children and teens...

c) Information is authoritative if it is written by authorities or experts in any field. It's easy to understand that you are the authority on your own life, so your FaceBook entry is authoritative, whereas something

else said by someone else on their site about something someone said about you is not likely to be authoritative simply because they are not an authority or expert on you. Ditto with encyclopaedias and websites. It's not rocket science to understand that materials on sites with .ac in the address are more likely to be authoritative than sites with .com which are commercial, and .org sites may have interesting and persuasive material, but where you may have to go wider to ensure that you get other/balanced viewpoints.

All it requires is finding two contradictory 'facts'. Then it becomes a fascinating shared (with teacher) journey to work out which site/ book/ document is more authoritative and more recent and find confirming evidence in other infoSources. One 3Doors teacher did this when her class found quite different heights for Mt Taranaki (I think!) on different websites. Every child in her class ended up desperate to find out what was the correct height, and how were they going to know which source to believe? This sort of learning is a fascinating shared exploration for both

teacher and class. There's no right and wrong. It's a matter of guiding the class to make judgments.

3. Information Overload

Nielsen says, ***"In the future, there will be even more email, more IM/ SMS/voice mail/phone calls/video mail, more websites, more podcasts, and richer intranets. And all of it will be available in your office, at your home computer, on your mobile, and on various ambient devices."***

Again, I don't think anyone would contradict him, but I see few teachers attempting to teach time management strategies to children. Not only is it important that children learn to manage their own time, but it's critical to realize that just telling children to go off and 'find the answers to their questions by such and such day' is the best ever recipe for getting the parents to manage children's time by taking them to the public library, or, worse still, going to the library themselves because their children are too busy, and then sitting down at home and printing off screeds of Web info for the child to take to school. Sound familiar?

Just as you can't know what is

relevant if you haven't worked out exactly what you want to know (your infoGaps), you can't manage your time if you don't know what you want to produce, and what the steps in the process are. Think about baking a cake. You can visualize the end product. You have the ingredients (the information), and you have instructions for mixing them, and for how long it takes to bake the ingredients into a cake, so you can manage your time. How does this relate to classroom practice?

What we do, as teachers, is often to set a

topic, ask children what they know already (we call it brainstorming), give them or ask them to generate one or more questions and go and look them up. Often they haven't a clue about what they're going to do with the information other than 'present' it. So how on earth can they manage their time if they don't know what they're going to do?

3Doors® has a tool which, early on, asks children to consider (with teacher pulling the strings) what they will do to apply their knowledge, to demonstrate it (their Product), and then to visualize, working backwards from the deadline (again with the teacher pulling the strings) to plan each step in the learning process, allocating one, two or more lessons to that step. Any child who can count how many sleeps there are till Christmas or the holidays can do it, but teacher reluctance amazes me. Many can't see beyond collecting and 'presenting' information and get distressed when I say this is regurgitating, not demonstrating understanding or knowledge, as a result of learning. But those who believe me and try it find that it helps enormously if children can see what they're doing (their Product) and have a timeframe, ticking off the steps as they go. It's the beginning of learning how to manage time.

The second point is that it's enormously motivating for children because knowing what they need to know (Tool 2), knowing how they're going to demonstrate their knowledge (Tool 3) and knowing the plan and timeframe (Tool 5) gives them an enhanced sense of control over their learning (self-efficacy).

So, while I agree with everything that Jakob Nielsen says in his column (and if you want to read good horse sense on online learning, check out www.useit.com - great material for staff meeting debates) I think the issues he raises relate to much more than just online learning. They relate to all learning and carry powerful messages for how we, as teachers, 'future proof' our teaching instead of just reacting to software features and new geewhizzery!

If you think this is a load of cobblers, do yourself a favour and video (or observe with a gag in your mouth) children 'searching' the web. I did it for a fortnight at one of the Technology High Schools in Sydney way back in 1994. It was a life-changing experience.

Happy to respond!

gwen@metacog.co.nz



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Winners of the Jacknohi Competition 2007!

Congratulations Tangiteroria School!

Last year Jacknohi Productions held a drawing competition for primary schools.

The task was for children aged 8 - 12 to draw a picture which outlined 'how they can reduce rubbish'.

The children of Tangiteroria School, a small primary school in Northland, situated between Whangarei and Dargaville, created some great artwork which won them the first prize.

Well done Tangiteroria! The school is involved in local and Northland initiatives for Environmental Education through the Northland District Council, and is constantly working on improving their 3 Rs (Reuse, Reduce and Recycle).

Their teacher, Mr Eades, was supervising the class.

Mr Eades - environmental teacher -
and his class. Names from left to right:

Marjanne Hodgson, Grace Rhynd,
Mr Braden Eades, Jayden Tuhiwai,
Trayvaughn Tango, Theresa Hodgson.

We have asked the students to outline what their motivation, intention and thoughts were when creating the artwork. Here is what they thought:



My name is Grace Rhynd I am 11 years old and I live on a farm and at school recycling is a big thing. I love art and when I heard about Jacknobi I had a very clear picture of what the earth would look like if we didn't reuse, reduce and recycle. I drew that picture to show what a dirty earth would look like. So come on clean up! (age 11).



Mary Anne Hodgson writes: My picture is about people cleaning the environment, parks and gardens. It has trees, bushes, rubbish bins and people. The heading is "Clean up our city" (age 10).



Theresa Hodgson writes: My picture is about cleaning the environment and has flowers, grass, trees and seeds (age 9)



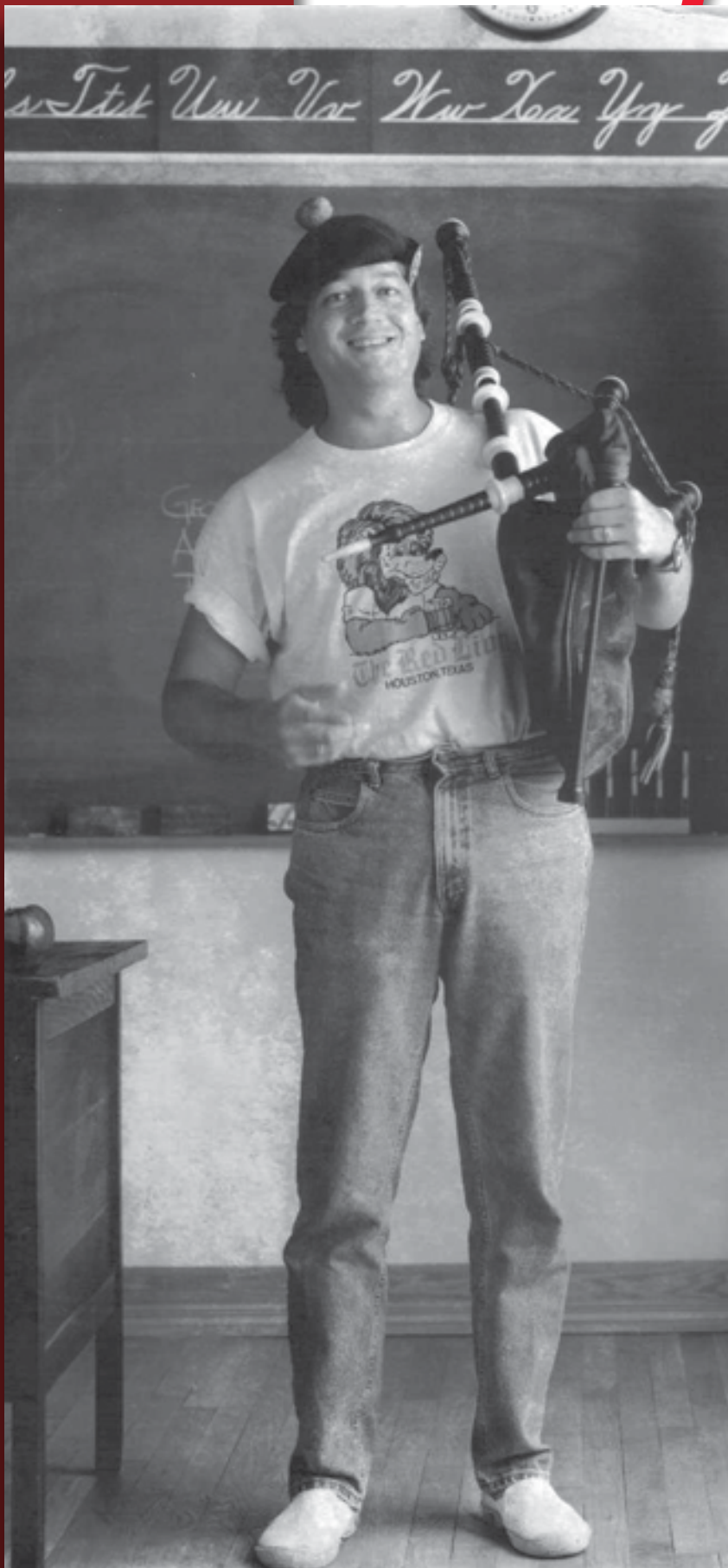
Trayvaughn Tango writes: My picture is about trying to inspire and set a good example to younger children so later in life they won't have to worry about rubbish waste destroying the planet and the environment is good and healthy (age 11).



Jayden Tuhiwai writes: My drawing is about setting a great example to the kids and schools in the future. It is about cleaning the environment and using the worm farm to reduce our waste so it keeps the school clean and the environment healthy and clean (age 12)



“Too much



During the “upfront” phase of the lesson, the teacher demonstrated effective classroom practice in delivering the information: a comprehensive knowledge of the subject; a range of questioning skills; an engaging personality; refined presentation techniques; teacher-pupil question and answer with a whiteboard summary (T.-P./Q. & A. with a WB summary) – all good practice and the class responded accordingly.

The session delivered important information. The difficulty arose as the teacher tried to engage the students for too long. Too much time focussed on the teacher – too much of a good thing.

Attention Spans

The class lacked the capability to maintain their attention spans for nearly 30 minutes of teacher information giving and verbal interaction: for some juniors, 3-4 minutes marks the attention span boundary.

The lesson came somewhat unstuck as students started to fidget, chitchat and wander. The teacher needed to rely more and more on low level behaviour management and warnings, to the point of interfering with the flow of their own delivery. And the cycle self perpetuated: the more the teacher tried to manage behaviour, the more they interrupted their flow and the less able the students could focus.

The teacher needed to sense the student drift, to judge the inattention, to monitor the diminishing quality of the learning atmosphere. The sensitivity to the situation proves the crucial factor in addressing the problem. Instead, the teacher ploughed ahead, sticking to the lesson as planned, determined to impart the designated information and the lesson deteriorated in direct ratio to the lengthened focus on teacher talk.

of a good thing”

by John Hellner

Variety

As a rule of thumb, a learning episode should contain time for teacher talk (openings, information giving, learning task instructions), for quiet, student on task time, and for student talk (groups, desk mates, report backs). Sensing when too much of any of these ingredients becomes enough, proves the challenge.

Once the teacher senses the need for a change of activity – change it – alter the plan if necessary. If the teacher has been the central focus of the lesson for too long, the students need to engage in a student centred activity, to refocus and revitalise them. They might need a learning task in which they can speak with a desk mate, or work in groups, or work quietly on an individual task, arriving at an end product in either case. Logically, they report back their findings, or the teacher checks the work.

Just as catering to a range of learning styles suggest teachers design a variety of learning tasks to provide for diverse student needs, so too teachers can think about adding variety to the ratio of teacher talk – student talk – student quiet time – to assist learners in staying focussed. The ebb and flow of this ratio proves true within a single lesson, within a given day and within a unit of work.

A cautionary tale

Sometimes we may think maybe we can get away with it: enter Hector.

Hector thought he was “da man”; red hair, freckles and an obstinate cowlick: a glint, a squint, and a twinkle in his eyes; a bit like Clint Eastwood in the old “Fistful of Dollars/Dirty Harry” movies. Hector could say, “Yes, sir” in such a way that it left little doubt he really meant, “up yours doc”.

Just before lunch, in Hector’s year 10 social studies class, the teacher offered an animated exposition of the Nazi tyranny – one of the great aberrations of modern times. The teacher’s account contained all the

great operatic themes of human passion, suffering, and the eventual triumph of the human spirit: power politics, secret police, bravado, militarism, pageantry, genocide, love, death, and war: for 30 minutes.

In ringing tones the teacher quoted Churchill: “never so much, owed by so many, to so few”, “their finest hour”, “jackboot of Nazi oppression”. The teacher paused, goose-stepped, and saluted: “Heil Hitler!” He lowered his voice to a whisper, he altered his cadence, measured his tone, and dramatized his points with voice inflection. Maybe even a tear in his eye at one point: powerful stuff.

They didn’t breath, didn’t talk: transfixed. Even Hector appeared spellbound. The teacher, a masterful storyteller, recognised the moment as one all teachers cherish: he had the students in the “palm of his hand.” The memorable occasion when a teacher feels they have reached every learner; alerted them to the imponderable curiosities of our life on earth; unleashed a bent up student passion for history; set students on the pathway to lifelong learning; and, touched a noble core of shared humanity residing in us all.

The teacher looked around the room. Hector’s mouth hung ever so slightly open, his eyes fixed on the teacher. Seizing the opportunity to consolidate the grandeur of the moment, the teacher looked squarely at Hector and said, “So Hector, what do you think of that?”

A bit startled, Hector furrowed his brow, lowered his chin, slouched back in his chair, concentrated deeply, and replied, “What’d ya mean, ‘W’had I tink?’ I tink I’m hungry.”

The class laughed. The teacher smiled, and handed Hector a chocolate fish from the stash and asked, “Will that hold you over till lunch Hector?” The impassioned monologue ended and the teacher set a learning task.



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

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.

The website is: <http://www.essentialresources.co.nz/>

You can read blurbs for the books and the CD on John’s website: www.johnhellner.co.nz

Curriculum Connections

Lyn Rogers

The new revised NZ Curriculum, the English version and the Marautanga documents, both describe the sort of attributes and qualities we want our students to develop through their schooling, to set them up to be successful adults.

The focus of education this century will be on providing opportunities to develop those skills and attributes, as we prepare our 21st century students for a future we can't even predict.

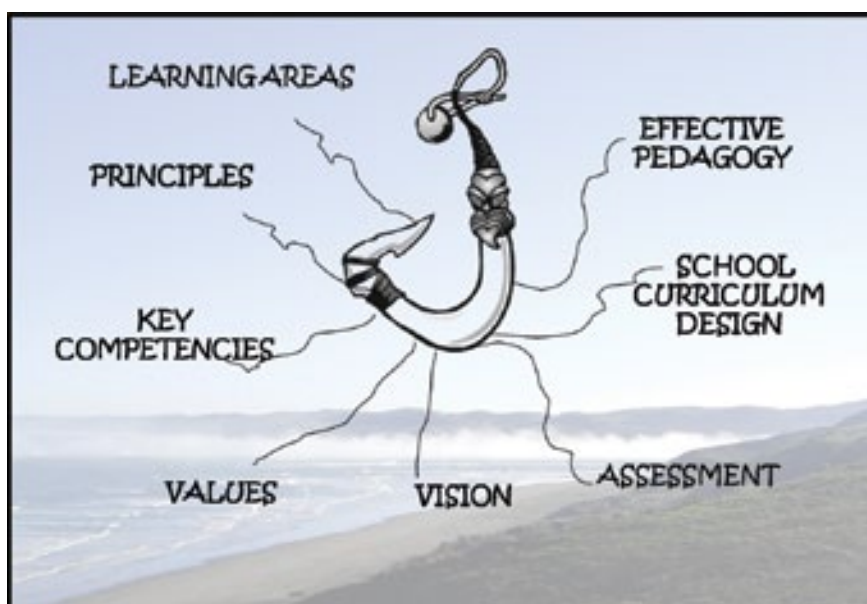
As teachers, the questions we will be asking about our students won't be so much "What do they know?" as tends to happen now, but rather "What do they need to be able to do?" and "What sort of people do we hope they will be?" As "good teachers", we have instinctively known these questions were important, and have planned and responded intuitively to the needs arising from them. Now we are being encouraged to focus on those things that help our students learn to "be" and "do", be explicit about them, and bring them to the foreground of our thinking and planning. Many "good teachers" are celebrating this return to a more holistic way of knowing our students and catering for their learning, which tended to be sidelined in the era of Tomorrows Schools.

The "front end" of the English medium document is all about generic skills and attributes, and the vision we have for our students' future. The emphasis put on these in the new document is exciting from my point of view, because it will be turning our focus around. Rather than framing all our thinking about, planning for, and assessment of, learning around the

achievement objectives of the learning areas, we will be making those more generic skills and attitudes an explicit focus when planning learning opportunities for our students.

Research indicates that these things will be developed more readily in contexts which are meaningful and relevant to our students and their world(s). We can't just try to tack them on to what we are already doing. The approaches we need to take, to establish and meet our students' needs and help them with their learning, are different from the way we have traditionally done things. There are lots of "good teachers" out there, and "good schools", who are already embracing these things. They see the benefits in their students' learning, which is viewed in a more holistic way, not just through the lens of traditional content knowledge. There is heaps of research supporting this and a great many examples demonstrating this "new way" of planning and teaching.

The diagram below shows the key aspects of the revised curriculum. The "newer" parts are in bold and the parts that are a little more familiar are not. Learning areas are still important, but rather than being privileged as they have been in the present curriculum framework, now they stand alongside the other aspects.



There is quite a bit in this new document to challenge us, and that demands us to deal with it more explicitly, and in a different way!

And that's pretty exciting!!

So, what has this all got to do with sustainability and environmental education? Well, sustainability provides a perfect context to put many of these "new" ideas into practice. Sustainability education is essentially integrated, cross-curricular, student oriented and action focused, and the teaching and learning involves, includes and even requires many of the new "front end" aspects of the curriculum to be considered and practiced. Not only that, but sustainability is now a Future Focus, which is one of the underlying principles of the whole document. Environmental and sustainability educators have always had a vision for their students very similar to that expressed in the revised curriculum, and have consistently encouraged the development of similar skills, attitudes and attributes.

Let's look at a couple of traditional examples of environmental activity:

"The Stream Study"

Depending on the intended purpose of the activity, the way it is conducted,

the learning surrounding the activity itself and the involvement of the students, this activity would include different aspects of the "front end" learning I have been talking about.

This is a fairly common activity, done by a range of age groups from junior primary to senior secondary. There tend to be two major reasons for doing a stream study: Either it is an activity focusing on water quality, as assessed through using various indicators such as stream life, or it is an activity focusing on stream ecology. As a stand alone activity it is great fun, with lots of supporting resources available. Student learning during this activity usually involves gathering information through exploration, curiosity and observation; connecting ideas about the data gathered; processing information and making conclusions. It is a great motivating activity, stimulating discussion, allowing students to connect with the environment and with each other, and easily satisfying the environmental education dimensions of learning "about the environment" and "in the environment".

The learning fits well within the science learning area, and easily includes aspects of the art, social studies, english, and maths learning areas also, without much difficulty.

Often there is not much done with the information gathered, maybe displayed and discussed, and generally the results are kept within the class.



If this was used as an activity intended to satisfy the "front end" aspects of the curriculum, the students would have opportunities to really explore what their results and conclusions meant, to ask the "So What?" questions. What have we found out about stream health, water quality or ecology? What does that mean? What are the wider implications of this information? What do we do with our results? Who else might be interested? How did it get to be like this? Is there an issue? What could be done about it? How do these results compare with other places, times, years, data sets? Is there action that could be taken to mitigate or improve the situation? What could we do?

In order for the experience to lead to deeper learning, it needs to be embedded in a learning programme that engages the students in thinking past the activity to its connections with the wider world, by asking questions like those above. Students could also legitimately ask why they bothered to monitor the stream in the first place, especially if the results weren't required for any more than a passing interest (or in the case of senior secondary, to complete an NCEA assessment)

Deeper "front end" learning occurs through gathering, evaluating and using relevant knowledge, researching the answers to the questions above, exploring the values and perspectives surrounding any issue identified, planning and taking any action if appropriate. If this activity was expanded and approached as an inquiry, possibly leading to action, and you were to look at the individual aspects of the Values, Principles, Vision and Key Competencies in the context of this, you would see the potential for much of the "front end" to be satisfied





ideas, assessing values, critically thinking about information, decision making etc. The activity itself may well become an action students decide they could take personally. This would ideally only be part of the action taken to solve the problem, but allowing them to determine this for themselves provides opportunities for richer learning. The environment will also benefit more, as the real causes of the problem are explored, and the students will have developed skills that they will be able to transfer to action, and to other environmental contexts.

So the challenge is to re-think what we are doing. Keep up the great activities but extending,

“The Beach Clean Up”

This is another very common activity. Like the stream study, it is fun; getting outdoors, removing rubbish from the beach, and has a high “feel good” factor.

The beach clean up is considered by many to be a simple example of environmental “action for the environment”. However, I would argue that this activity is only tackling a symptom of a bigger problem, and although it is a useful activity, it doesn’t constitute true “action for the environment”. It needs to be repeated over and over, year after year, as the underlying issue isn’t solved, and rubbish always keeps building up on the beach. It is very often done as a one off, stand alone, teacher directed activity as part of an event such as Seaweed. It is sometimes embedded into a wider learning programme but more often bears little or no relevance to the current classroom programme.

In order to make this experience more meaningful, in terms of student learning and environmental outcomes, we can approach this activity differently. I would use

this activity as a starting point for exploring the underlying problem; encouraging students to think, ask questions, and start off an inquiry using questions very similar to those listed above in the stream study example. This might lead to action that is student initiated, and tackles the root of the problem. The process of inquiry around the beach clean up allows a lot more opportunities for that “front end” learning, such as exploring

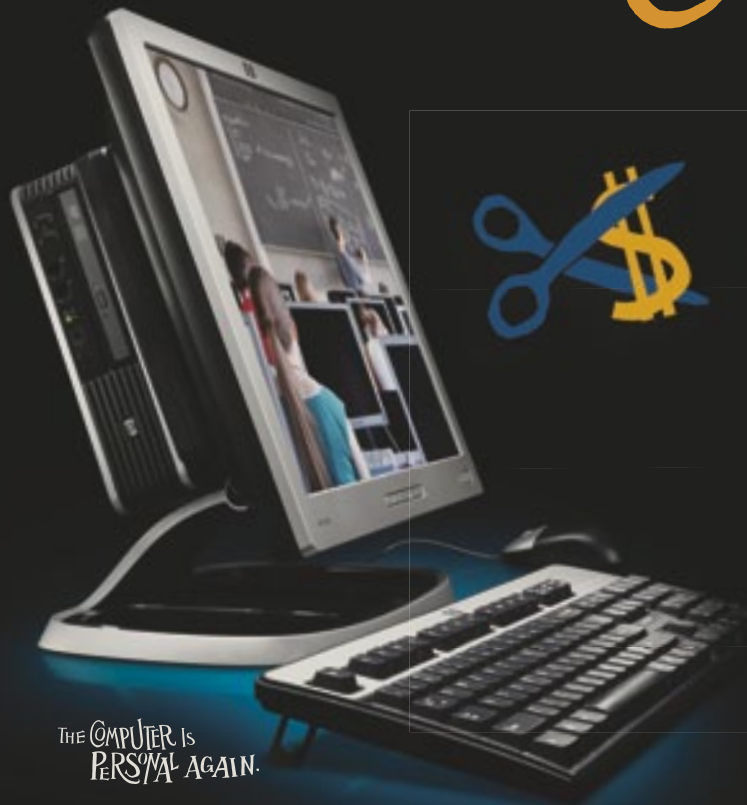
planning and expanding them to include more opportunities to cater explicitly for “front end” learning. It might mean we have to drop off some of the content knowledge that is superfluous to a particular context, and concentrate on the knowledge that supports the “new” learning for our students, helping them develop those “front end” skills and attributes. And, if we do it well, both we and the students can be having fun while we learn!!



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A Step Over the Edge

I started to learn to fly when I was eighteen.

I had seven lessons.

Then I stopped.

Over the decades since that time I often pondered why I didn't continue. It was easy to blame lack of money, or time, but I had a niggling feeling that perhaps there was a serious deficiency in my psychological makeup, a lack of "moral fibre." Perhaps I was just too chicken.

With this momentous existential question hanging over me for several decades (no doubt impeding my progress towards Nirvana), I decided to try again.

Flying instructors are renowned for their sanguine qualities. "Anyone can learn to fly" was often stated in my early days, a mantra not entirely comforting. Sometimes I felt I regressed with each lesson. Occasionally there was a glimmer of hope. I've never been a brilliant dancer and I often equated trying to land an aeroplane with executing (unfortunate choice of words) a fast waltz, whilst simultaneously doing that tummy rubbing-head-patting thing and whistling "Also Sprach Zarathustra." All this done on ice, backwards, with my eyes shut.

Slow though my progress was, nevertheless, progress it was and as my hours mounted up, I began to realise that the day was approaching. The S word!

Instructors have this little ritual. For hours they sit beside their students, enduring the tedium of a procedure innocuously termed circuits. Here the student coerces the aircraft off the ground, steers a course around the airport and attempts to land correctly. Then, without stopping, the aircraft is again persuaded to take off and the whole manoeuvre is repeated and repeated.

Back to the ritual. Something alerts the instructor that perhaps the student is capable of doing a circuit alone, with a reasonably good probability that the aircraft will be still flyable afterwards. Possibly it happens when the student recites correct landing checks rather than the Lord's Prayer, or it could be that the latter's deodorant is ineffectual. Whatever the motivation, the instructor waits until the aircraft has touched down and instead of uttering, "full power," it's "stop here and I'll get out."

Get out? We're in the middle of the runway! Arrggh it can't be!

Solo!

For me, after an initial feeling that I wasn't ready, a feeling of detachment came over me and then, as I lined up, a huge sense of euphoria. The control tower operator, who had been let in on the idea that a student was to be let loose in his domain, told me to "hold."

I held.

After a very long hold came the clearance to take off.

Full power. Rolling. Right rudder to stop the aeroplane making a beeline for the passenger terminal and it's climbing. Funny how the absence of a 90kg instructor with heavy sarcasm frees the aircraft. It's climbing so quickly. Check forward, ease throttle, trim, turn left, check brakes, undercarriage, mixture, fuel, harnesses and hatches. Hey, there's nobody beside me. Freedom! Call the tower.

"Foxtrot November Victor, um, downwind grass um 18, full stop."

Yes! The rich, eastern accent reaches out to me over the ether.

"Foxtrot November Victor. Grass 18. Clear to land."

Yes!

"Foxtrot November Victor. Cancel. Continue downwind."

What?

Continue downwind for more than a few seconds means going away from the safety of the much practised routine. Distances and heights will be unfamiliar. Come on, where's the landing clearance?

Look left. There's the end of the runway. Straight ahead is Hamilton, Then Auckland, Then the Pacific,----- Fiji? Better slow down. Throttle back. 1600 revs. Carb heat on. Trim.

Silence. Perhaps the radio has just died. Come on!!!

"Foxtrot November Victor. Grass 18, clear to land."

"Cleared to land-um grass 18, Foxtrot November Victor." Or something like that, uttered through a desiccated larynx.

Turn left. Now it doesn't want to descend. Less power, full flaps. Point at the runway. Funny how long it's taking. Of course, there's a strong southerly. 300 feet, carb heat in. (Great, I usually forget that). Trim OK. Yep, still pointing in roughly the right direction. Speed 70, too fast. Nose up. Speed 60. That's better. Think I'm too high. Throttle off, there's the threshold. Let it sink. Hold off. Hold. We're down.

"Foxtrot November Victor, taxi right to club.....congratulations."

Bugger radio protocol. "Thanks."

Ever had an irrepressible smile?



Mike Rogers

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The New Zealand Team Lto R Laurie Hawea, Georgia Yates, Adam Jamison (c) Aaron Church, Te Maringa McKenzie, Johnson Davis, Paddy Church, Courtney Haitana, Sam Greenwood, Reagan Broughton

Trans Tasman Riding

Warm weather and the local hospitality greeted the Australian and New Zealand High School Rodeo teams to the small rural town of Raetihi for the annual Trans Tasman Challenge. The 15th and 16th of March brought a full weekend of Rodeo to this small Ruapehu town and with the addition of the representative teams the stage was set for action, entertainment and students taking the step up to represent their countries, proud to have been chosen from the many students who travel to the Rodeo's in each country's rodeo season..

Both teams had 3 contestants competing in the following events ;

Junior steer ride (under 15 boys)

Saddle Bronc Ride, Bucking horse event (under 17 Boys)

Girls Barrel race, Ridden Horse event (13-17 yrs)

Bull Ride (under 17)



Paddy Church in the junior steer ride



Teenagers High!

Equine Flu made it impossible for the Australian team to bring some of their own gear into New Zealand. The logistics of kitting out the team with horses and saddles for the Barrel Race, and sourcing saddles for the Bronco riders added a lot of pressure to the organizers. However, Friday saw a good selection for them to choose from. Practise followed for the girls and the Australian girls soon felt they had mounts that would give them a good chance of winning against the Kiwi's.

Midway through the day 'The Grand Entry' was the chance for these colourful teams to be welcomed into the arena and the Kiwi team laid down a challenge with a haka that made sure there was no doubt there was national pride at stake.

Back to the chutes they headed to find the bucking horses waiting to be saddled. Horses of average bucking ability had



Courtney Haitana Barrel Racer NZ



The Australian Team at the Grand Entry

been carefully selected to allow for good competition and, to keep it fair and square, the stock was swapped around the next day between the two teams.

Time for action the gate cracks open and horse and rider take an 8 second dance across the arena, an Australian first then a Kiwi next. Buck offs disappointed four of the six riders in this event, leaving the NZ team captain Adam Jamison in the lead and Joe Polkinghorne from Australia a close second. 40 points to NZ and 30 to the visitors.

Next the Steers were up to the chutes for the young boys and boy did they put up a show! I can say with pride - as I announced the event that if you put a National uniform on a average competitor you turn them into wolves, hungry for victory and hunting for success. However once again, the stock won overall, and the winner and only competitor to ride the 8 seconds was a happy young man from Turangi, Paddy Church. Another 40 points for NZ. All of the other five contestants in this event were bucked off at the last second of their ride, not making the required 8 seconds. Guilty perhaps, of trying too hard and over riding their stock, causing them early dismounts.

The feature event for contestants and spectators alike, the bull ride for the U17 boys, was next. Again Adam Jamison, the boy from Harwarden and New Zealand's team captain took the lead with a huge score and top ride. This was his time to shine. Johnson Davis for New Zealand was second and Zane Cosgrove took out third for Australia. 70 points for the Kiwis and 20 for third place to Australia. Unfortunately, again the ten points for fourth were not awarded as the rest of the contestants found themselves studying and absorbing a small share of the local real estate

The last event on Saturday was the fast and highly competitive Girls Barrel Race. Up went the three barrels and in came the girls for a dash, hard and fast, around the cloverleaf course. Knock over a barrel and a penalty of five seconds will be added to your time and take you out of contention. Once again a Kiwi then an Aussie on a borrowed horse, They had a great day, the visitors taking out 2nd, 3rd and 4th with the youngest girl Te Maringa McKenzie from New Zealand taking out first place. That evened up the score a little and fortunately we had a leading happy team after day one, the Australians finding some comfort food in the form of the hangi provided by the local shearers.

Sunday morning found a bruise or two, team photos and real friendships developing as this event forged more sporting links between our two countries. The programme was the same as for Saturday. The Grand Entry started the competition and both teams seemed more prepared. Four riders qualify their stock and it's that boy (turning man very quickly) Adam Jamison taking first, Clayton Hech and Joe



Laurie Hawea from Millers Flat in the Junior Steer ride

throughout Australia, so it was important to secure a venue here for the young enthusiastic competitors in the sport to have a weekend to compete and showcase their skills.

The idea behind the High School Challenge is to keep the competitors active in school and to encourage them to consider taking the opportunities that are available both here and overseas in this global sport. Many of these young team members will with help, seek scholarships at some of the big colleges in America as part of their Rodeo Team and eventually find a career by turning professional.

We have a great support network for our sport's young athletes and I hope that when they turn up to school on Monday after competing anywhere in New Zealand from Kaitaia to Invercargill they can feel proud of the sport they do and hope that they can take advantage of any support their school offers them.

*Craig Wiggins
Administration Director and
Commentator NZRCA*

Polkinghorne from Australia second and third respectively and Sam Greenwood fourth. Points again added to yesterdays and we started to sense a Kiwi victory.

Paddy Church made it two for two in the steer ride, with his local friend Regan Broughton taking second. Australian boys Bray Perrett and Juston Paton added points for their team with third and fourth. The spirit of this sport was really showing through as Kiwi kids congratulated Aussies and vice versa after each successful ride.

It always amazes me how at sporting events of this class it comes down to the last event or final five minutes of a test match to decide the result. Pressure got to the first of the two Kiwi Barrel racers with the Australians age and experience showing through, Sam Mcleod taking out first with her Australian compatriot Jocelyn Beahan close behind in second. All the NZ team and one Australian either knocked over barrels or ran off course incurring time faults. However the New Zealand second division barrel racing champion Courtney Haitana managed to slide into third with Jade Fogerty the Australian Captain taking fourth.

A quick tally of points and it was a victory to the New Zealand Team. The presentation of trophies, swapping of gifts and a final speech from each of the team captains completed another successful Trans Tasman Challenge.

This Challenge is a joint venture between the New Zealand Rodeo Cowboys Association and the Australian High School Rodeo Association. It is an event that has been held biannually in both countries when suitable venues have been found.

The Australian part of this year's series was cancelled due to Equine Flu effectively stopping Rodeos



Australian Junior Steer Rider Justin Paton

books and things

The True History of Stuff

by James Valentine

Illustrated by Reg Mombassa

Published by ABC Books

RRP 19.95

Reviewed by Gabriel Ford, aged 9.

Wow this is a funny book! The True History of Stuff is a fiction book that is written to sound like it is real. It is Volume One (and there is only going to be one Volume One, which is quite a strange thing to say) and tells the history of Shampoo, Peanut Butter and the Days of the Week. Except according to this book, most things were invented in the long forgotten nation of Trapezia. In fact practically everything was invented in Trapezia. My favourite chapter is the one about Peanut Butter.

The author said this book will give you some really big snorty laughs, and that is a good description. It isn't an easy book to read because it uses lots of complicated language, but I think it would be good for good readers aged 8 and up. People who like the Horrible History books might enjoy it. My older brother liked it, and my Mum said it was very odd.

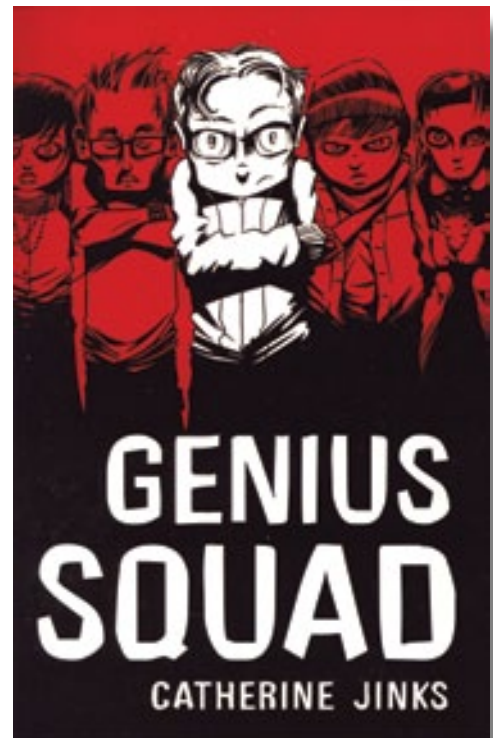
Reviewed by Catherine George (the Mum who said it was very odd).

The True History of Stuff is an odd book, but in a good way. The book quickly builds a brief geographical and social history of Trapezia. For those who may be interested, it is, or more officially was, located just to the east of everything you know as Europe and a little to the north-west of the bits you think of as the Middle East, and a little to the south of the bits that hang about Russia, but not quite as far as everything that ends in -Stan. This is a quirky book that really appealed to the readers in our house, though it won't be everyone's cup of tea. Fortunately we shared James Valentine's sense of humour.

James Valentine is well known in Australia as a writer, musician, journalist and radio and television presenter. He is the author of the JumpMan/Timejumpers books for the 9-13 age group. Those books are much more in the popular sci-fi/adventure genre.

Reg Mombassa is the New Zealand born Australian artist well known for his musical exploits (with Mental as Anything) and art work, including designing for his surf wear company Mambo.

Recommended for primary/intermediate readers, especially those with a quirky sense of humour.



Genius Squad

by Catherine Jinks

Published by Allen & Unwin

RRP 23.99

Reviewed by Seamus Ford, age 13.

Sometimes, when it comes to fighting evil, one genius just isn't enough.

Genius Squad is the sequel to Evil Genius. It is about boy genius Cadel Piggott, who has no idea who his father is or where he was born. He is under constant threat from Prosper English, the criminal mastermind Cadel helped put in gaol.

Cadel is offered a position in the Genius Squad, a group of child genii who say they are dedicated to bringing down GenoMe, a company Prosper set up. But Cadel and his best friend Sonja (who is his conscience and sometimes struggles to keep him on the straight and narrow) question the motives of the Genius Squad – they sometimes seem really close to the methods of Prosper English's Axis Institute.

Deciding between right and wrong is more difficult than Cadel could ever have imagined.

Genius Squad is a very exciting sequel, maybe not quite as dark as Evil Genius – the characters are slightly less evil this time round (though I don't know if that's saying much)! There are lots of turns in the plot, and just when you think things are settling down the excitement builds all over again.

You don't need to have read Evil Genius to enjoy this book, as the first chapters recap enough about Cadel's past. I would recommend this book for ages 12 and up. Fans of books such as Artemis Fowl will enjoy it, and I think it will be really popular in intermediate/secondary school libraries.

What's New in Numeracy?

by Andi Adder

MATH COACHING

A recent addition to the Numeracy Development Project is the mathematics coaches' initiative.

Good classroom mathematics practitioners are identified to work in depth with teachers of year six, seven and eight students to further develop the teachers' understanding of multiplicative thinking.

Each coach works over a two term period, with 10-12 teachers, either from their own school or a neighbouring school. These coaches are released 1 day per week to implement this project.

Coaches are mentored by numeracy facilitators throughout the country and the coaches' role may involve workshops and in class support for teachers.

Recently training days were held in Auckland and Wellington to introduce the coaches to their new role.



Coaching topics included

Coaching and mentoring

Multiplicative thinking

Multiplicative thinking linking to geometry and measurement

Working with students identified as cause for concern at years 6-8



New coaches also heard from two 2007 coaches who related their experiences and outlined how they managed the role.

The next training session will focus on proportional thinking.

NEW RESOURCES



Figure it Out: Financial Literacy booklets

should now be available in your schools. These are Ministry of Education publications which are free from Learning Media. Look for them in your schools, they will be there somewhere! There are :

Level 2-3

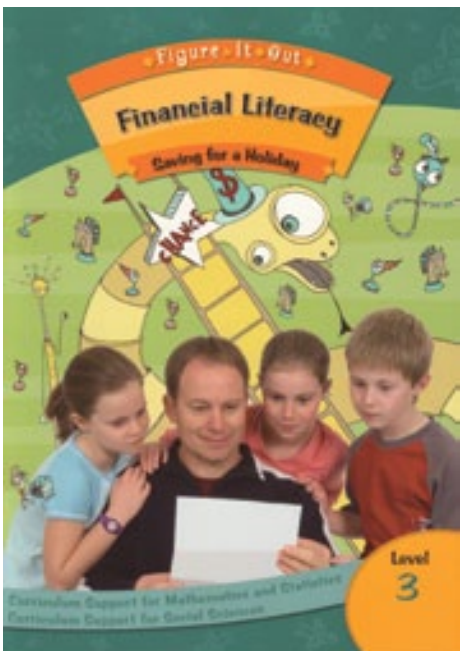
The Real Cost of Pets.

Rawinia's mother works at the animal shelter and Rawinia would love to adopt all the animals.

Her mother decides she needs to learn about the family finances.

About what comes in from where and what it needs to be spent on so she understands the cost of looking after a pet realistically.

Rawinia and her class investigate this problem which delves into the concept of EFT POS.



Level 3

Saving for a holiday

Pete, Alana, Caitlyn and Oscar have been invited to have a holiday with Nana and Grandad on the Gold Coast.

Once again this book explores the family finances and how they save and budget for the holiday.

This time the concept on credit cards and their ensuing costs are a focus.

Level 3-4

Granny's Gift

Granny decides to gift each of her grandchildren \$2000 for her seventieth birthday. For those under 16 she gives them \$1000 now and \$1000 dollars is put in a trust fund until they are 16.

The grandchildren range in age from 9 years to university age students.

The grandchildren make varied decisions about their gift not all of which are the wisest choice!

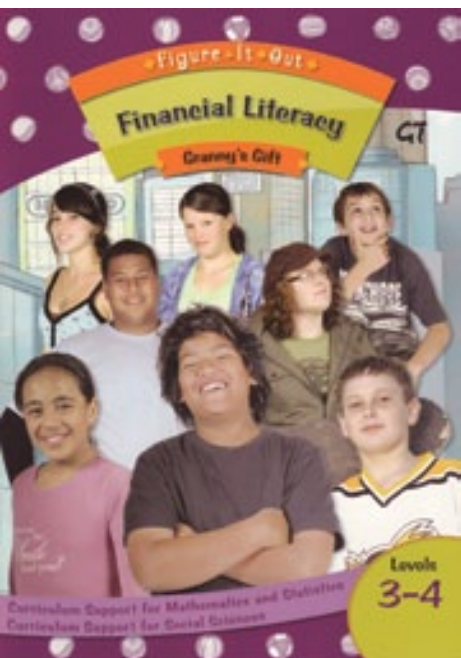
Level 4-4+

Young Entrepreneurs

The book covers 4 different business adventures by young people.

After working through the book the class will decide who will be the "Young Entrepreneur of the year"

Some criteria will need to be discussed and agreed on.



Here goes Lucy again...

Persuasive Writing

by Lucy Literacy

Language experiences involve providing children with experiences that encourage them to explore, think, and feel.

Such experiences enrich children's speaking and listening and lead on naturally to their writing and reading.

Effective Literacy Practice years 1 – 4.

Teachers and students are thinking critically about learning and are using the New Zealand Curriculum and the draft Literacy Learning progressions to develop that thinking. Some schools I have been visiting lately have been putting their writing programmes under the microscope. What follows documents the beginnings of one school's focus on writing.

It all began with the following questions:

- Who writes?
- When do you write?
- Why do you write?
- Where do you write?

Working in groups of 4 the students first recorded their own thoughts in their box (see below).

Structure: Groups of four.

NB. Groups can also consist of 3.

Materials: One sheet of paper and 4 pens per group

Each person record in own section using a chosen colour

Students: Places own name on each side of the outside square.

What is unique to only one person will be listed in the side with that person's name. Each time the group discovers that they have something in common, record it in the common square or after having recorded own thoughts, come up with an agreed version and write it in the middle square.

The next step required the students to share their ideas with the other members of the group, coming up with a set of agreed ideas that are then recorded in the centre box.

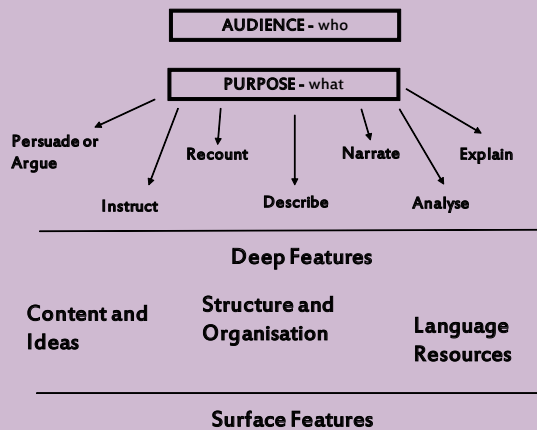
This activity is called 'four of a kind'. I have used it for lots of purposes – thinking about and responding to text eg. A poem. It's a great way to have some personal thinking and then some group conversations. The students who have used this tool have found it to be really helpful. Students appreciated the opportunity to think for themselves first and work together to come up with their agreed versions. Often those students who lacked confidence when speaking to large group, felt able to contribute their ideas.

Hearing each group share their agreed versions with the rest of the class gave the teachers some valuable information about how their students viewed the writing process.

Teachers were also worked through the same questions. As we talked, we found ourselves focusing on the notion of writing for an authentic purpose.

Armed with our questions, the students and teachers thinking about writing and the fact that speeches were looming, the decision was made to look at persuasive writing.

Big Idea: We are learning to write



It was clear that all writers needed to have a purpose for writing and an audience. Once those decisions are made, the writer can confidently make decisions about the text type that will suit.

We also needed to know what that text type looked like so it was time to challenge our content knowledge!

So what does a piece of persuasive writing look like? We

We are learning to write persuasively

What do we know about this text type?

- Focuses on an issue
- Logical sequence of argument related to the issue
- Begins with a statement of position which may be accompanied by some background information about the issue
- Position is justified with an argument
- Each point in the argument should be supported by evidence, statistics, quotes, examples
- All points should relate back to the position statement
- There is a summing up of the position in the light of what has been presented and there may some call for action

sourced from AsTTle writing manual

Stories are everywhere: in childhood memories, in the tales people tell us, in our area of expertise, in our imaginations.

The challenge is to find an idea that has shape, that has a beginning and a middle and an end, that adds up.

*Living Between the Lines
Lucy McCormick Calkins 1990*

made a list and came up with:

But would we be able to identify those key features?

Using a piece of persuasive text and our rubric, we set about highlighting those key features. There were many conversations affirming and challenging our set of criteria. Our text was printed on A3 and laminated. Some teachers then used the text and the rubric with their students. This is a great way to get students to sit around a text and talk about what they notice and to build their understanding of persuasive writing.

As a result of these conversations, teachers felt confident about planning for writing and tackling that annual speech writing. It certainly raised the bar in terms of students being challenged to take a point of view as opposed to writing about their favourite pet.

For some great ideas for writing with a purpose, take a look at the National Writing Exemplars.



For more of Lucy's ideas see page 30

We are learning to write persuasively.

❖ We have expressed an opinion:

Use "I think", "I believe", "I agree/disagree" statements to state my personal position /personal opinion
Include a statement of the issue

❖ We evoke a response in the reader:

Show awareness of audience through content and language choices
Use
Analogy
Simile
Metaphor
to enhance argument
Use persuasive language features such as:
Modal verbs
Emotive words
Rhetorical questions and imperatives.

Student's writing placed here

❖ We use structures and vocabulary appropriate for argument:

STRUCTURE:

Introduction - state my opinion and why.

Justify and support my opinion with

Examples
Evidence
Statistics
Data

Points made relate to the position statement.

Clear and logical sequence to the argument

Sentences vary in
Structure

Beginning and length

Conclusion - reiterate position in an objective way

Use causal conjunctions:
because/ but/ so/ if ... then

Vocabulary:

Use precise, topic related vocabulary, including adjectives/ adverbs/ synonyms to enhance detail

Sourced from Dianne Smardon
ATOL

“For gods sake



“For gods sake turn the light off!” I hiss to Lomlf*. She hurriedly turns the light off in our decrepit garret of a flat in the middle of Goreme. We’re on the second floor and I’m hiding behind the curtain watching a man across the road who seems to be doing nothing. But he has been there for over an hour now. He’s dressed in a long raincoat and dark glasses for goodness sake, even though its night. It looks like the same guy who has been there for 4 days. He seems to be just hanging about there waiting. What for, we don’t know, but it’s getting right up our collective noses. Lomlf seems to think that he’s also been following her to school. There has been a rumour going around the neighbourhood of a stranger in the area and we have come to the decision that he is a stalker and has targeted Lomlf.

It’s really quite scary and there doesn’t seem to be anything we can do about it. We can’t go to the cops because they’d just laugh and say, “you have to stop wearing those provocative clothes... and you too madam.”

The neighbours while being nice are also very conservative and keep to themselves a lot. So we wouldn’t get any help from them.

It’s really at times like this that you start to think of the security of Newzilde and long for the comforting embrace of the Helenanny state with its unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, accommodation allowance, DPB, etc. etc. However back to reality and the man across the road. What do you do? Who do you talk to? How do you manage in a police state when the police can’t or won’t help?

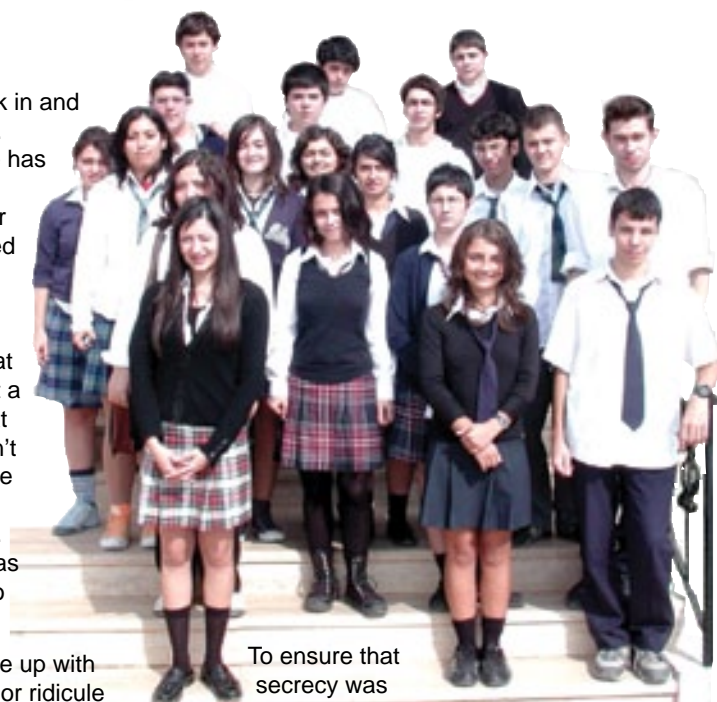
Lomlf and I have spent the last 4 nights curled up in bed like 2 bananas in a small bunch terrified that this

madman is going to break in and do god knows what to us. Luckily up to this point he has been content to stay outside and watch but our nerves are being stretched to breaking point. I honestly don’t know how much more we can take. Lomlf and I have looked at our options. You can’t get a gun and shoot him as that would be murder. We don’t want to run away as we’ve both got jobs and we’ve made some good friends. We can’t just ignore him as you can’t tell what he’ll do next.

One thing that Lomlf came up with was to expose, humiliate or ridicule him so that he wouldn’t be a threat any more. After a lot of discussion and some rather heated moments we decided that this was the only way to go.

The Plan.

Next morning (Monday) I convened a meeting with our newly appointed war council in the war room previously described as my classroom. The war council consisted of me, taking the place of Prime Minister Churchill, and my kids who were loosely described as the war cabinet.



To ensure that secrecy was maintained all

windows and doors were taped up to guarantee no conversation escaped. After two kids fainted due to excess heat one window was opened and the largest, but not the brightest, student was placed outside the window to ensure our planning was not overheard. All kids were told to swear and write an oath in their own blood not to tell anyone about our plans. After one child was rushed to hospital with a large cut to a finger (only 3 stitches) caused by his pocket knife I supplied a pin.



turn the light off!"

Travelling Teacher

Objective:

Organise ambush on as yet unknown assailant. Humiliate assailant to ensure that he leaves area.

Method.

Ensure kids have plentiful supply of ammunition and are aware of target.

Kodak (budding photographer) dispatched to wait outside our flat and get photo of target.

Organise battleground to ensure that we have the upper hand.

Planning.

Discussed with kids what we could use as ammunition.

Ammunition types were

- Old eggs.
- Rotten spuds
- Tomatoes
- Old oranges

Discussion was undertaken on how the soldiers would carry ammunition. Plastic bags were suggested. This was adopted with the suggestion that the plastic bag was threaded through the belt holding up trousers, skirt etc.

Kids were asked to stockpile said ammunition in classroom, in boxes provided.

H day (Humiliate day) was set for Wednesday night. Kids were told to tell their parents that we were having a field day (night).

Tuesday afternoon arrived and the amount of ammunition was accumulating nicely.

Kodak had pretended to be an urchin (he was) and had asked the target if he could take a photo of him for a fee. Target paid the equivalent of \$US 1 for the privilege.

Kodak had blown photo up and it was now plastered all over walls of the war room.

Soldiers (war cabinet) now aware of target.

Meeting held on Tuesday afternoon to discuss battleground.

It was decided we needed to get target into the open.

Best place, it was decided, was the middle of road.

It was also discussed... how to get target away from wall.

Moses (no relation to the late great Charlton Heston who's main claim to fame was his comment on seeing George Bush walk by – ("Where's a gun when you need one?") – came up with the idea of one of Lomlf's students running down the road and being bowled by one of my students on his push bike. Hopefully the target will come away from the wall into the middle of road where he can be bombarded by other kids appearing from doorways.

Positions of children in doorways was ascertained. Timing was... after school and before Target arrived in area. Kids encouraged to act like homeless waifs. It was suggested that they use the loo before they leave school to cut back on inappropriate leakage.

Wednesday afternoon arrived finally though not quickly enough. Lomlf and I had been watching the target outside our flat each night. Our undercover agents had noted the target following Lomlf to school.

Wednesday afternoon and the ammunition was shared out. Most was given to the strongest and most accurate throwers.

It was decided that the throw would be controlled by an order from PM Churchill (me).

Wednesday evening. Dusk. The team are waiting outside our apartment. In disguise. It all looks very real. PM Churchill waiting behind door to flat. Door slightly ajar. PM Churchill watching through crack in the door.

Target seen walking slowly down the road. He looks a little suspicious. Approaches war zone. PM Churchill texts Lomlf to release first child to walk around the corner and down the road.

PM Churchill texts Lomlf to release the next child with its bike.

Bike with child and small child collide convincingly.

Small child lets out a scream as does the child with the bike.

Target looks across. Sees the distressed children and walks into the

middle of road. PM Churchill thinks great, nothing could go wrong from here. Screeches FIRE in best Churchillian way. A fusillade of rotten produce appears from doorways and strikes the Target. Target shudders to a halt. Sees children. Sees PM Churchill now exposed from behind door. Sees Lomlf appearing from around corner.

The Target reaches into inside jacket pocket. PM Churchill recognises that target is going for his gun.

FIRE he repeats. Second fusillade of rotten produce hits its target. Target's rain coat now dripping egg yolk and encrusted with orange and other interesting melange of product. Still keeps advancing toward PM Churchill. Target stands in front of PM Churchill and utters a despairing word as he holds out his wallet showing a warrant card.

.....



"IMMIGRATION" he says.

"Bugger", says PM Churchill.

It appears that we have overstayed our visa and must leave the country immediately. I ask whether there is a chance of leniency. "Not much", he says as he spits out an orange pip.

So to round up the nights action. The ambush was a great success.

The young child knocked over by the bike, One broken leg.

Child on bike, 2 grazed knees.

Target, absolutely pissed off.

Lomlf and I, asked to leave country.

Fun had by other kids.

Priceless.

The next day we were summoned into the headmasters office. With a huge grin he told us how unhappy he was to lose us but he had to comply with the government requirements. However he had a friend who ran a school in Florence. Would we like to go there. "Yes please", said Lomlf without even consulting with me.

Well we start there in 2 weeks so need to finish this and start packing.

Look forward to catching up with you again from the sunny countryside of Tuscany.

All the best

Travelling Teacher

* Lomlf = Love of my life fiona

For privacy reasons all photos are merely representations of the people mentioned in this story. The Editor takes no responsibility for the Travelling Teachers meandering mind!

books and things

The Indigo Girls'

By Penni Russon

Published by Allen & Unwin Children's

RRP 17.99

Reviewed by Jessie Smith

The Indigo Girls' is a story that in a simple yet truthful manner lays out the struggles and joys, the ups and downs, which the modern teenage girl faces.

Zara, Tilly and Mieke, three girls who couldn't be more different, share one thing in common, their family holidays at Indigo Beach. But this year Mieke pulls out at the last minute leaving Zara and Tilly without the glue that held them all together.

Zara has it all, thin, blonde, popular, the works, the antonym of Tilly and as their opposite lives connect, the summer rapidly turns around to become a time of "soul surfing" as Tilly and Zara face their identity and learn to find their place in the world.

From popularity and body image, to family and secrets, 'The Indigo Girls' touches on all these tender topics, if not in depth, then in a realistic style suitable for all teenage girls.



Lucy Literacy's Fast Writing Suggestions

What happens at the zoo after the visitors go home?

How do fish sleep?

Why computer memory is called bytes?

Who makes money?

What are bunions and where do you find them?

Take 5 minutes to fast write on any of the above.

Some ideas to kick off a writing session.

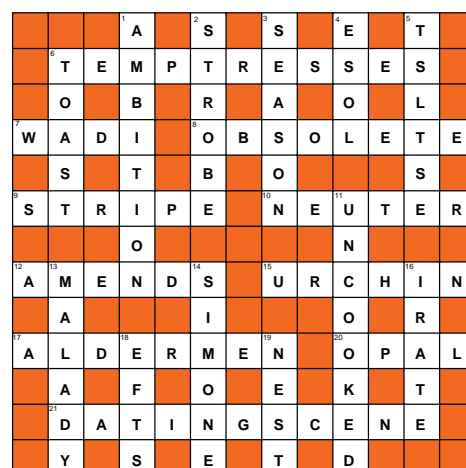
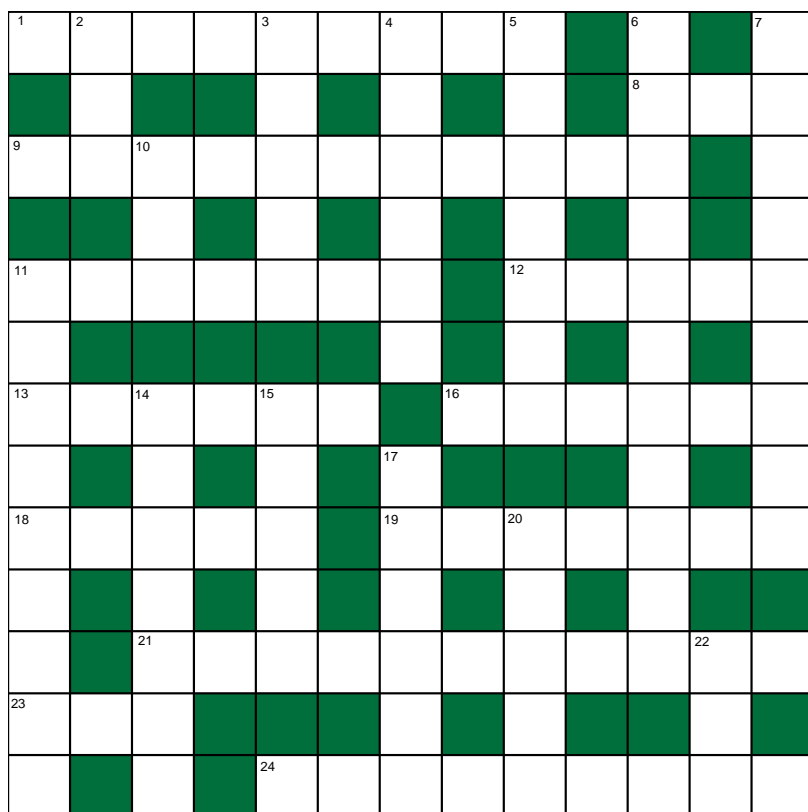
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Richard Crypt's challenging crossword and Mike's number puzzles



9	6	5	4	2	1	7	3	8
3	4	2	5	8	7	1	6	9
7	8	1	3	6	9	5	4	2
5	1	9	6	7	2	4	8	3
4	2	6	1	3	8	9	5	7
8	7	3	9	5	4	6	2	1
6	1	8	7	9	3	2	1	4
1	3	7	2	4	6	8	9	5
2	9	4	8	1	5	3	7	6

Across

- 1 Order oversize for skilled soldiers (9)
- 8 Tritium ducks also (3)
- 9 Cache bomber as a scavenger (11)
- 11 Good French and article surround Australia and New Zealand. Windfall (7)
- 12 Gold, New York surrounds capital of Tibet for Dad's sister (5)
- 13 Latter Day Saints embrace atmosphere. Landowners (6)
- 16 A maths puzzle produces breathlessness. (6)
- 18 Allan is huge. Deadly. (5)
- 19 Such activity could be 18 (7)
- 21 Presenter is disorganised which results in initiatives (11)
- 23 Love between bridge players. Such a long time (3)
- 24 Ye strayed around before today (9)

Down

- 2 Mineral, otherwise point in turmoil (3)
- 3 Like fowl, very pale (5)
- 3 New world man (6)
- 5 Passages for the Nautilus? (7)
- 6 Wrestlers need these fortresses. (11)
- 7 Good in Paris, New York, Graduate and half ruby makes a pretty tot. (5, \$)
- 10 Article points to girl (3)
- 11 Abrazen type? (9)
- 14 Finally. Need hint? (2, 3, 3)
- 15 Back light on measure realises pottery (5)
- 17 In Greece long ago Rastas congregated here (6)
- 20 Upset runes for sister (5)
- 21 Within the rat's nest one can locate a time (3)

To the right the answers from Good Teacher Magazine's term 1 crossword and sudoku, again, no one was brave enough to send in completed crosswords. Have a go at the one above and see how you go! Below, this term's puzzle

2	7	3	6	8	9	1	5	4
4	1	6	5	3	2	9	7	8
8	5	9	4	7	1	2	6	3
7	6	8	9	1	5	3	4	2
9	2	1	3	4	7	6	8	5
3	4	5	2	6	8	7	1	9
6	8	2	1	5	3	4	9	7
5	9	4	7	2	6	8	3	1
1	3	7	8	9	4	5	2	6

				4			2	7
	4		1				8	
6			8		7		5	
7			2				1	
								9
4	8		9	6		2	7	
	5	1	6					
		3			9	8		
				8		7		

Students' perspectives in Māori medium education

Leeana Herewini

There is an increasing field of literature which explores student voice, student perspectives as legitimate perspectives to influence the schooling of children. Hawera (2007), Young-Loveridge (2005), Young-Loveridge et al (2005) and Herewini (2007) have in particular focused on eliciting student perspectives in mathematics.

Māori student voice has been absent in much of the existing literature. Herewini (2007) and Hawera (2007) research projects gives account of Māori students' perspectives in Te Reo Māori and in Māori medium education.

Māori world views are embedded in the language, "Te Reo" is a window to ways of knowing the world (Mead, 1996, p214).

This article attempts to give voice to the perspectives as shared by the students. Subsequent articles will also give voice to issues, highlights and successes in Māori medium education.

Background of the study.

This article focuses on a study undertaken by Herewini (2007). This study involved ten students who had attended two Kura Kaupapa Māori. These students had been identified as successful learners of mathematics during year eight. This study interviewed the students as year nine students. The students were interviewed individually to ascertain their views about a range of ideas pertinent to their mathematics education. The students interviewed attended a range of secondary settings. One student attended a co-educational secondary school, three students attended a single sex secondary school and six students attended Wharekura.

What did the students say? The perspectives shared by students are their opinions, their thoughts and their interpretation of events. This article will discuss a few ideas taken from the research paper.

The children were able to articulate specific incidents of when and how their teacher helped them learn mathematics. When the students were year eight they spoke of their teachers scaffolding the problems, using equipment and grouping students.

"Mēna kāre au i te marama ki ētahi mahi, ka homai ia he tauira, he mea ngawari ake, kia marama ai au". [If I didn't understand she would give an example, an easier example

so I could understand]. (Terina female).

As year nine pupils the students expressed the view that their teachers used explanation as a key means of teaching in year nine.

"She just explains it" (Whata female).

"She just goes and tells us, goes through the question again" (Wai female).

Ka tino whai wā ia te tino whakamarama mai ki a mātou i te ngako o te kaupapa o ngā mahi.....He just takes time to explain the essence of the subject (Kayla female).

This study did support the notion that students form ideas about what is involved in teaching and learning in mathematics which affects their participation.

Relationships between the learner and the teacher.

A few students in this study noted that the relationship with their teacher helped them learn. This is consistent with Bishop et al (2002) Te Kotahitanga study. One student spoke of his year seven and eight teacher's respectful treatment of him.

"Kāre rāua i whakaiti." [They never put me down]. (Turei).

Another student commented on the amount of energy exerted by the Year 9 teacher when teaching mathematics. The student appreciated that the teacher was committed to teaching mathematics.

"He really, really, like put all his energy into teaching us." (Teowai female).

Do you think learning mathematics is important?

The students were asked if they thought that their teacher believed learning in mathematics was important. As the children remembered their year eight mathematics programme, all ten children felt that their teacher regarded mathematics as important.

"I te mea he tino kaha ia ki te mahi pāngarau, ara, I te wā ka tae ki te wā pāngarau ka harikoa ia". [She was very committed to doing mathematics and when it was mathematics time she was happy] (Tia Female).

"Oh yeah, I think she liked teaching it, because we used to do it for a whole long until wa moko." Well it was long. "(Wai).

The students commented in year nine, that their mathematics teacher was a mathematics specialist and therefore should like and be good at mathematics.

"He kaiako pāngarau ia na reira te tikanga he pai ki a ia." [She is a mathematics teacher therefore she should be good at it] (Terina female).

"Yeah cos she's good at it." (Turei male).

Interestingly, the students commented that year nine mathematics was harder than year eight mathematics. There were a range of reasons given for why they thought it was harder. One of the reasons given was the learning of vocabulary.

"Vocabulary, like fractions, I didn't know that was hautau (fractions) and algebra, all those words that are hard, like sum, that's plus. I didn't know that" (Wai).

The complex nature of teaching mathematics is compounded when attention must be given to the language of instruction. The nature of learning and teaching of mathematics in Te reo and the intricacies between language and mathematics content and pedagogy continues to be an area for further research.

Concluding remarks.

In this study it was found that listening and acting on perspectives, can change and inform mathematics pedagogy and professional development. The possible impact of listening and acting upon student perspectives on Maori medium education is exciting.

During November 2007 the Marautanga o Aotearoa was released. The Marautanga o Aotearoa explores the notion of an ideal graduate, (te āhua o te ākonga ka puta). The notion of an ideal graduate had been positively received among many communities. The further challenge will be how does a particular community decide what their graduates leave, being and knowing? Within the next two years communities will be encouraged to explore and develop their graduate profiles. Student perspectives may offer insight into the development of the graduate profile.

It is indeed a privilege to meet and talk with students about their ideas. Students in this study were articulate, their views thought provoking, honest and discerning. The easy part is asking the students for their perspectives, what may be more difficult is the listening and acting on these perspectives.

This article intended to offer some insights into what a small sample of Maori medium students thought about their mathematics learning. Interestingly since the time (2006) of the interview nine of the ten students now attend wharekura.

He mihi ki ngā tamariki, ōtira ki ngā Whanau, ngā mātua, ngā kura me ōku hoa mahi.

He mihi maioha, he mihi aroha ki a tātou katoa.

Whakāhurutia te iho wairua o te tamaiti.

Footnote: Te Marautanga o Aotearoa – Draft curriculum Maori medium.

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Competition results...

Can you identify your school??

Mystery School 1



Pukeatua School



Mystery School 2

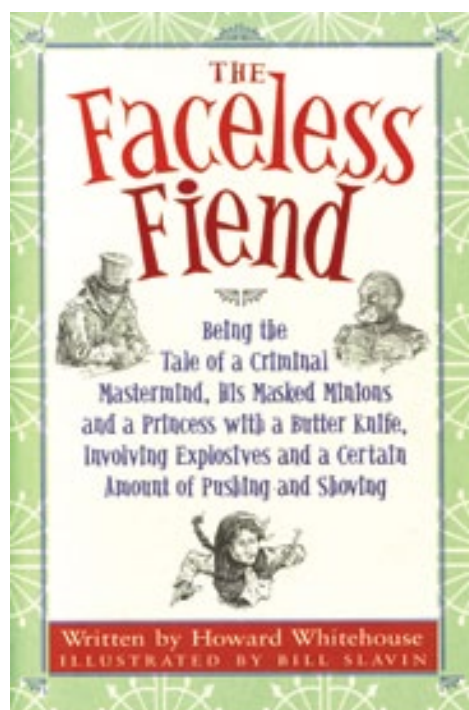


**St Mary's Catholic
Primary School**



Competition result from Term 1 2008

Neither mystery school from Term One 2008 was identified, they were Pukeatua School and St Mary's Catholic Primary School



The Faceless Fiend

By Howard Whitehouse
Illustrated by Bill Slavin
Published by ABC Books
RRP 17.99

Reviewed by Gabriel Ford, aged 9.

The Faceless Fiend is a funny, fictitious story, full of action. This is a tale of a criminal mastermind, his masked minions and a princess with a butterknife, involving explosives and a certain amount of pushing and shoving.

There are three main characters who all live together at Emmeline Cayley's aunt's house. Emmeline is a fourteen year old aviatrix (which is a female aviator or pilot). She is very courageous and likes excitement and leads the others in their adventures. Robert "Rubberbones" Burns could have a brick thrown at him and it would just bounce off. He is Emmeline's co-pilot and relishes their adventures. The third friend is Princess Purnah of Chiligrat. Princess Purnah is very bossy (as you might expect a Princess to be) and causes quite a bit of trouble. Starting with her escape from St Grimelda's School for Young Ladies.

In the Faceless Fiend, people from St Grimelda's are trying to get Princess Purnah back, while Emmeline and Rubberbones try to keep her safe. To complicate matters, the Faceless Fiend is also after Princess Purnah. Can Emmeline and Rubberbones keep one step ahead?

This book is really, really funny. The writing is funny, and the plot is also very humorous. This is the second in a series, and I am definitely going to read the first one. I haven't read anything this funny before! I would recommend it to fans of comedy and action stories, aged 9 and up.

Danny da Vinci, the Flying Machine of Lombardy

By Bruce Whatley and Rosie Smith
Published by ABC Books
RRP 11.95

Reviewed by Miles Ford, aged 7.

Danny da Vinci and his friend Mick Angelo work in a large art studio run by Danny's Uncle Leo. So that is funny already because it's about Leonardo Da Vinci and Michaelangelo who were famous artists. And Danny has a dog called Picasso which is a funny name for a dog but he is a funny looking dog who looks like a strange painting. Danny's little sister is called Lisa which is also funny because he says she's a moaner, and she looks like the famous painting of the Mona Lisa!

As you might have guessed this is a funny book. The Duke of Milan is a rich man who is used to getting what he wants. What he wants in this story is to fly over the Lakes of Lombardy. When people ask why he says "Because it's there!"

Danny's Uncle Leo gets them to help with making a flying machine for the Duke, because he's busy with other projects. This story is all about what happens next.

I liked this book. It was easy to read because there were lots of pictures a bit like a cartoon or Captain Underpants book. And I learned that you should always have a plan B.

Reviewed by Catherine George

Bruce Whatley is a prolific Australian author and illustrator, with over 40 titles published internationally. He has partnered with his wife Rosie Smith to write the Danny da Vinci series. This book is the second in the series, a follow up from the Giant Horse of Milan. Written in a cartoon style, there is plenty here to amuse adults as well as children.

At the end of the book there is a section titled "Lisa's Leonardo Facts", that will interest older readers who want to find out more about Da Vinci's real life that the short tale is based on.

This is a great book for younger children (6-7 and up) who are very good readers, and older children who are fans of science and history. I have often found it difficult around this younger age group to find books that are challenging and bringing in new ideas, but are still accessible and appropriate. It would also be a good choice for reading out loud, so that the ideas from the history behind the book can be discussed in more detail. Highly recommended!





'Annyong Haseyo'

Each year, the Asia New Zealand Foundation selects up to five teachers, lecturers or advisers to attend a fully funded 16 day 'Korean Studies Workshop', and I was privileged to set off with 3 other intrepid Kiwi adventurers to find out about this ancient, traditional (and at the same time extremely modern) society.

A beginning teacher's enquiry about teaching second language learners had lead me to think about my lack of a first-hand Asian experience.

Although I had taught many students from different cultural backgrounds, when I saw the advertisement in the Education Gazette to learn about Korea, I decided to apply – and got accepted!

The Korea Foundation, an organisation which aims to promote two-way cultural interaction and enhance an appreciation of Korean culture on the international stage, jointly with Korea University, were our wonderfully hospitable hosts.

At KU School of International Studies, 43 educators – 20 Australians, 19 from the United States, and 4 New Zealanders – were treated to lectures and discussion on ancient and modern history, art, education, film, language, and contemporary society. These were all delivered by experts and their sessions were complemented by taking a lesson on our country in a local school.

The indigenous cuisine, friendly people, a vibrant, thriving city to explore and get lost in, a 6 day field trip around the country and a visit to the Demilitarized Zone separating North and South Korea all enhanced my understanding of South Korea and its culture.

Seoul, the capital of the Republic of South Korea, is a city of 11 million people, (29 million in the hinterland). Few of the streets are named, which was a challenge, but a hop-on, hop-off around the city tour bus, enabled us to get our bearings and once the mysteries of the subway were revealed, getting round independently was relatively easy!

The field trip to historical and cultural areas, linked the lectures with reality as we perused ancient archaeological sites, museums, traditional villages and temples in this mountainous, riverine country. Forests cloaked in lime green early summer foliage provided shade from the sun (30 degrees Centigrade and humid most of the time), but we were spared the full fury of summer monsoon rains, enjoying fine weather and a couple of light showers.

Over the 16 days, valuable time was spent with the other teaching professionals, exchanging ideas and experiences. Our New Zealand system for supporting beginning teachers, with its point 2 release time and paid tutor teacher mentors was the envy of both Australians and Americans, who (although I stressed our system did not always live up to the ideal!), assured me that there was nothing comparable in their countries.

After the lectures on history and the Korean War (1950-1953), the field trip to the Demilitarised Zone and Joint Security Area brought the realities of the 'Cold War' all too close and one hoped that it didn't become 'hotter' on signing away the right to sue if death or injury occurred as a result of 'hostile enemy action'. Unlikely, but sobering all the same!



Many thousands of South Korean families had or have loved ones with whom they have had no contact since the Armistice Agreement in 1953 when North Korea, backed by Chinese communists and Russia, was separated along the 38th parallel from South Korea. This was supported by the United Nations (primarily the US and others, including New Zealand – historically South Koreans are extremely grateful for this). The poignancy of the message-draped 'Freedom Bridge' topped with curling razor wire, and photos of many missing relatives along its approaches, is something that will be with me for a long time to come. There seems significant goodwill on the part of South Koreans for the country to be re-united once more.

Education is the number one priority for South Koreans. It has helped transform the country into a successful modern society with the 12th largest economy, and the most sophisticated electronic innovations, in the world. Following the depressed levels of education during Japanese annexation from 1910-1945 and the Korean war between the North (communist) and the democratic South (1950-1953), social and economic progress has been aided by a huge emphasis on, and accompanying funding, to improve literacy levels (now at almost 100%). Along with the Korean language, ability in spoken and written English is highly prized, and children learn it from an early age as one of ten basic subjects when they enter school, together with moral education, maths, science, PE, music, fine arts, and social studies. More recently, concern has been raised about high student numbers in classes and the threat to the public education system of the ever-increasing private expenditure on education in the form of tutors and 'hakwons' or cram schools. These add many extra hours to the student workload as students compete for places at the most popular universities

Our history lecturer, Professor Young Ick Lew (ex Harvard), and author of *Korea Old and New – A History*, signed my copy of his book – "Hoping you develop deep interest in Korea and the Korean people" – typical of the pride and warmth with which we were received. I am very grateful that I have had the opportunity to gain an appreciation of these warm and friendly people with such a deeply interesting culture and heritage, and some insight as to the difficulties immigrant children may face when they come to New Zealand to live.

Robyn McBride



Pumpkin Day goes Global



Ever wondered how many ways there are to use the humble pumpkin?

Students in Room 3 Puahue school have been doing just that with their global blog partners in Russia, Lebanon, Missouri and Connecticut.

Classroom teacher Carolyn Knight has been blogging now for over 12 months with her students and when the traditional pumpkin day planning began she and her students took their questions seriously.

Puahue Principal Alison Crooks explained that it has been a biannually tradition at the school for over 12 years, originating back to when huge pumpkins were grown in paddocks around the school fields.

It is also closely linked to the districts identity as the name Puahue also means the *flower of the calabash*.

Recently this has been supported by enviro schools projects where students are given seeds to plant in October. Both Atlantic Giant and Minikins were grown. Students begin by planting the seeds at school and then they are transferred to a home garden where they are nurtured with passion. Good growing secrets are closely guarded. Unfortunately this year there were many casualties due to a shortage of water.

The heaviest pumpkin in 2008 was 50kgs nearly 40 kgs lighter than the 90kg pumpkin of 2007. Students were proud to show off what they were able to grow under drought conditions.





Competition categories include the heaviest pumpkin, smallest pumpkin, the misshapen pumpkin and of course the opportunity to create a pumpkin model. This year due to their principal moving on to a new position, a new category was added. "Alison Look-alike"

And of course the day's lunch included pumpkin fritters.

A sports afternoon followed where pumpkins replaced balls in rob the nest, under and over, even a pumpkin and spoon race. The biggest challenge was carrying a small pumpkin a nominated distance without using your hands.

I asked students what they thought the most important aspect of this tradition was and they answered that the opportunity to grow a bigger and better pumpkin based on what they had seen and heard the previous year was exciting.



The school community all turns out to support this day. It is an opportunity to support their children, share lunch and chat with neighbours.

So now what to do with 100's of Kgs of pumpkins?

Thanks to Room 3's blog partners we can now add pumpkin jam, roasted seeds, pulp mixed into pet food (Lebanon kibbe), Halloween Jack O Lanterns, pumpkin pie (with lots of cream on top), Russian pelemeny, and cooked with porridge to our cooking recipes

Carolyn and her students are experiencing the benefits of bogging, and the spin offs have been this exciting transfer of information on pumpkins

Pauline McLeod
WaiLITE ICT Cluster Facilitator



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