



Good Teacher Magazine

Term Three 2008

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Seven Minutes

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An old problem, some new solutions

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Good Teacher Magazine are not necessarily those of **ed-media publications** or the editorial team.

Winter is in our midst with yet another icy blast moving up from the bottom of the South Island as I sit writing this editorial. However it is still lovely to rug up and go for a brisk walk in the elements when weather allows - even if it is just so we can feel less guilt and really appreciate sitting with that pile of books we have been saving for a rainy day!

I couldn't resist finally using the picture on this page - taken mid-winter last year in part of the winterless North Island - well a part that doesn't see any snow! - The family played with their cardboard for ages on this grassy slope and you could hear their laughter from across the road ... see why I wanted to share it with you! One of life's magic moments.

I'd like to welcome Laurie Loper to our magazine - his opinion piece is on page 20. And I hope the Travelling Teacher does not run into too many dangers on his way to Florence with the delightful Lomlf.

A new feature which was requested and which the GTM Team thought was too good a chance to miss was 'Your Soapbox' an opportunity to have an anonymous say on something that is really bugging you. Perhaps you have already over done your gripe in your staffroom and would like to have a say to a larger forum... feel free to send your offering to soapbox@ed-media.co.nz ... we will email back so you know it has arrived safely, but you will remain anonymous to our readers... who will hopefully respond. So court a little controversy and get those keyboards going.

In the meantime we hope you all enjoy Term Three, and of course we also hope you enjoy the magazine...

the GTM Team



COVER: Many thanks to Kelly Hudson for the amazing cover photograph - a perfect winter sunrise

NB: for book reviews in previous magazines or to download a subscription form and so save the cover of your magazine: go to www.ed-media.co.nz

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Introducing: Your Soapbox!

**Finally, a chance to have your say
- anonymously!**

“It always amuses me when sports commentators, probably trying to fill in a boring bit, or trying to avoid dead air, attempt to give short biographies of a sports hero. The following example illustrates what I mean. The character depicted bears no resemblance to any real person.

“So there we have Zac O’Rooney coming on as a replacement second five eighth. You may be interested to know that his sister played cricket for the Ilford third eleven and his father watches replays of Brazilian beach volleyball. Zac was educated at Taureau College and is presently two years into a degree of comparative scatology.”

Spot the blunder?

Seems like none of these superheroes were subjected to any form of education before puberty reared its head. I once heard a hopeful politician at an election rally say the same sort of thing about himself and when he asked for questions, I asked him why he hadn’t gone to primary school? He seemed a bit perplexed.

Of course, we all know that parents, pre-school educators, along with many other agencies also help educate children. We all know that most students leave primary school with a huge amount of knowledge and skills necessary to assimilate the complexities of secondary and tertiary education. Is it just journalistic laziness that precludes people from finding out more about biographical details? Or perhaps it is a genuine belief that true education doesn’t begin until students are subjected to formal, examinable learning.”



If you want to have YOUR SAY
please email your offering to:

soapbox@ed-media.co.nz

Good horse sense on teaching thinking

by Gwen Gawith

The February, 'Teaching Students to Think' edition of Educational Leadership had some thought provoking articles.

It also had what is lacking in so many books and articles on thinking – some good horse sense, some good practical ideas!

Hallelujah!

One of my favourite sayings is that you don't get thin by talking about dieting. Nor do children learn to think (analytically, critically, creatively) when we talk about teaching thinking skills. Is there any curriculum which doesn't claim to cover 'critical thinking'? But often talking doesn't translate into action other than de Bono's ubiquitous '6 hats', etc?

Thinking can be taught. Thinking must be taught. Ned Noddings (2008) gets to the heart of it:

"Any subject—be it physics, art, or auto repair—can promote critical thinking as long as teachers teach in intellectually challenging ways."

He makes the point that you can't teach something unless you've worked out exactly what you mean by it:

One stated aim of almost all schools today is to promote critical thinking. But how do we teach critical thinking? What do we mean by thinking? ...Writers often distinguish among such thinking categories as critical thinking, reflective thinking, creative thinking, and higher-order thinking...

I consider thinking as the sort of mental activity that uses facts to plan, order, and work toward an end; seeks meaning or an explanation; is self-reflective; and uses reason to question claims and make judgments. This seems to be what most teachers have in mind when they talk about thinking.

This definition, in itself, provides a curriculum for teaching thinking, i.e. we need to teach the mental actions or tools children need to use facts to:

- Plan
- Order
- Work toward an end
- Seek meaning or an explanation
- Be self-reflective
- Use reason to question claims and make judgments.

The key point he makes is that thinkers need something (facts) to think



with. (grammar intended!) Plan what? Order what? Work toward what end? While de Bono's '6 Hats' are wonderful for examining points of view, they are not sufficient. Noddings' six menu components indicate that a much wider range of wider range of thinking skills must be taught.

Thinking out loud

Noddings focuses the rest of his article on the single most valuable strategy teachers can use to teach any kind of thinking – modelling by talking aloud as they think (so-called verbal protocols) so that children see that thinking is a messy, recursive, hesitant, hum, ha, I wonder, what if... process, not something with clear cut 'rights' or 'wrongs'.

Drawing thinking

It's even better if teachers can combine talking about what's in their heads by 'drawing their thinking' simultaneously, using what most teachers (but not thinking 'experts' like Hyerle and Jonassen) calls 'graphic organisers'. (Hyerle calls them Thinking Maps™ and Jonassen calls them Thinking Tools. I agree with them! These diagrams help children to draw their thinking, re-frame their ideas, so better to call them thinking maps, thinking tools or, as I do, thinking frames).

Simply, if you want to teach children to compare, list, match, relate, work out causes and effects, work out problems and solutions, work out steps, work out pro's and con's you show children how you frame your ideas visually using any of the visual thinking tools, talking aloud as you do so. By drawing and talking you will be teaching them how to reason with facts (reasoning), how to break larger ideas, concepts, issues down into component parts (analytical thinking), how to combine, synthesise, interpret facts (synthetic thinking), how to speculate, apply and judge (critical thinking). Sure, I know lots of teachers who hand out pre-printed Venn diagram forms and the like, and then wonder why children struggle. This isn't teaching. Talking aloud, questioning ("Could this be both a plus for the environment and a minus? OK, let's consider that...") while you show them how you work out which facts to put in which lobe and which are things distinctive and which are common is teaching. Then let them have a go with you as backup.

But we also need to go back to the fact that children need to know stuff to think with! You can't compare, list, match, relate, work out cause and effect, work out problem and solution, work out steps, work out pro's and con's if you don't have any facts to do it with! Saying that thinking is all about 'ideas' is fine but flabby. We all think and have ideas and opinions all the time. It's part of the human condition (and living with an intelligent and extraordinarily creatively mischievous cat I'm tempted to say the feline condition as well). However, we are talking, as Noddings said, about thinking in a learning/ academic context. We are talking about helping children to build deep knowledge and understanding, not just 'present' facts. This is where 'thinking for learning' needs to build on and extend everyday thinking.

Every child can compare two fizzy drinks or two lollies and work out which is the best value for money. But not every child can compare godwits and albatrosses and work out which has the best chances of survival in today's world, why and how. But if they're interested, have been given or have found out a lot of facts about albatrosses and godwits, and have a good reason for doing it (like a forthcoming visit to the albatross colony or tracking the godwits through the Web) and if they're shown how to do it, they never fail to surprise with their amazing mental agility.

This relates to another key point. If the normal 'end' to which children are working is 'presenting' (aka regurgitating?) information they have acquired, we are not giving them any reason to 'seek meaning or an explanation', as Noddings says. I presume what he means by 'teaching it in intellectually challenging ways is finding ways for children seek meaning or explanations, reasons to INTERPRET or APPLY their information so that they have to think with it, reason with it, process it through their minds, not just paste it up, manually or electronically, in the name of 'presenting' it.

Veronica Boix Mansilla and Howard Gardner (2008) say:

Although students have little trouble spewing forth information that they have committed to memory, they display great difficulty in applying knowledge and skills to new situations. Youngsters who have studied the solar system are unable to apply what they have learned to explain why it is warm in the summer in the northern hemisphere.

Exactly!

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Disciplining the mind

Mansilla and Gardner also consider that, "Students need more than a large information base to understand their ever-changing world. They need to master disciplinary thinking." This means, what Dewey used to bang on about, getting them to think mathematically, historically, geographically, i.e. feeling comfortable reasoning using the language and concepts of a particular subject discipline.

This is particularly true for secondary-age learners, but for primary age learners treating learning itself as a subject discipline, and giving children the tools and vocabulary to be self-reflective (as Noddings says) about their thinking, reasoning, to be metacognitive, is a prerequisite for disciplinary thinking.

Simply, if you don't have the words to describe what you're doing in your head, how are you going to self-reflect? Words such as compare, list, match, relate, sort, work out causes and effects, work out problems and solutions, work out steps, work out pro's and con's might not seem like anything new, but they are words that children don't normally associate with thinking. They have to be shown how, and shown within each subject discipline. To have a separate subject called 'thinking' and assume transference to different subject disciplines flies in the face of everything we know about learning and thinking.

Giving learners a basic thinking/ learning/ cognitive vocabulary and basic cognitive tools to help them master basic cognitive strategies like comparing, listing, sorting, matching, relating, categorizing and classifying, working out cause and effect, problems and solutions, pro's and con's, learning to ground claims in verifiable evidence, etc, is a necessary precursor to learning how to assess the accuracy and authority of evidence in any subject discipline, to assess it's relevance, it's balance or bias, and to make links and inferences and draw conclusions that go beyond the information given, to think critically and creatively.

Mansilla and Gardner (op cit) add:

Subject-matter learning may temporarily increase students' information base, but it leaves them unprepared to shed light on issues that are even slightly novel. A different kind of instruction is in order, one that seeks to discipline the mind.

Disciplining the mind might seem as quaint and old-fashioned to some teachers (and parents) as disciplining children's behaviour, but it is just as important to scaffold how children behave with their minds in the name of learning as it is to discipline their behaviour to encourage them to be nice, considerate people. Why we have schools and teachers is, surely, to grow children's minds?

Mansilla and Gardner (op cit) have the last word:

Today, the information revolution and the ubiquity of search engines have rendered having information much less valuable than knowing how to think with information in novel situations... (T)he disciplined mind resists oversimplification and prepares students to embrace the complexity of the modern world.

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staffroom in New Zealand**

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References

- Mansilla, V. B. & Gardner, H. (2008). Disciplining the mind. *Educational Leadership* 65(5), 14 - 19.
Noddings, N. (2008). All our students thinking. *Educational Leadership* 65(5), 8 - 13.

You may also find it useful to browse Project Zero's Visible Thinking (www.pz.harvard.edu/vt) and Artful Thinking (www.pz.harvard.edu/at) programs.



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1 - 2 - 3 - “Seven”

The first seven minutes in a lesson very often determines the lesson's success: if the teacher opens well, he or she has to do something wrong for the lesson to veer off track; if he or she opens poorly, they will need a super teacher effort to get it back on track.

The first few minutes creates a momentum, setting the tone and pace for the rest of the lesson. The students know if this teacher has the “right stuff” on the day. In those crucial opening minutes the teacher needs to: manage the entry to the room; read the “state” of the individual student and the class; gain attention; introduce the lesson; give instructions for a learning task; and, ensure students begin the task.

Entry

Students come to the classroom from the macro world of big sounds and running and playing and large movements. Teachers need to help them make the transition to the micro world of the classroom: writing, sitting quietly, listening, thinking, and small movements.

The whiteboard prepared, materials and resources organised, the teacher greets each student at the door with a smile as they enter single file into the room, with a smile, making eye contact - quiet, warm, expressive, supportive, caring, for each: “Morning” “How you goin’ today?” “Lookin’ good.” “Easy does it.” “What’s ‘macro’ mean?” Sometimes with a more global direction: “Heading on the whiteboard, books out, bags on the floor, settle down.” Anything signaling a welcome.

State

As the students enter, the teacher reads their faces, to judge their “state”, looking for how they feel - troubled, tired, worried, angry. Emotion shows on the faces of young people. They haven’t worked up all the defenses adults develop.

If the teacher reads potentially disruptive emotion, he or she asks the student about it at the door, or early in the lesson. Asking, confirms if a problem exists, but more importantly the act of simply recognizing and acknowledging the “state” tends to defuse it.

Teacher: “You OK? You look different. Maybe a bit frazzled looking?”

Student: “I’m OK. Just a bit late out of bed and rushing.”

Teacher: “Let me know if you need a bit of space today. OK?”

The student will be more likely to function during the lesson, if the teacher recognizes the emotions expressed on their face. Adults are the same, once we share it, the tension lessens. Less tension; less trouble. The exuberance levels drop to nearly zero. They’ve nearly made the transition.

Gaining attention

The teacher moves to the front and centre position in the room as most of the class arrives, looking eager to start, blatantly checking their watch, gesturing students to hurry to their seats, which serves as the preliminary notice that the teacher intends to gain attention soon.

At the right moment, the teacher calls the class to full and complete attention, which means no fidgeting, whispering, rummaging through bags, checking cell phones, exchanging play punches with a desk mate or building pen towers: “pens down, eyes here, listening.” Teachers develop short, set phrases, students will quickly recognise as a routine call to attention.

If students fail to come to attention... pause: make eye contact; use a name; ask a question; signal “shush”; move in the direction of any inattentive students; say “I’m ready”; do whatever proves necessary, but wait, wait, wait, for TOTAL silence before continuing.

1 - 2 - 3 -

4 - 5 - 6 - 7

Minutes”

by John Hellner

The teacher may need to convey the “look” and congruent body language during the pause – the deadpan poker faced, embrace of the dark side, single or double teapot (hands on hips). If the teacher falls short of full and total attention and begins before all eyes focus on them, the inattention invariably surges to epic proportions.

Introduction

Introductions can help motivate students, signpost learning progress and orientate students for the day’s learning. At the minimum, openings should review past learning, preview the next chunk of learning and inform students about the relevance of the learning – “what’s in it for me” (WIIFM).

The teacher can simply tell the students the information or use a question and answer sequence to solicit the ideas from students. Other strategies to add a bit of pizzazz to the opening few minutes might be: pose a challenging question; present a startling fact; show a short video clip; use a prop or a visual; tell a story or brainstorm. Review, preview, WIIFM.

For unruly classes, many teachers incorporate a short activity at the very beginning of every lesson, which serves as part of the opening and helps to settle the class: pop quiz; word finds; answer a question set or drawn out of a box; copying learning outcomes or notes off the whiteboard. The activity cleverly becomes part of the opening and simultaneously settles the students, but the end product remains the same: review, preview, WIIFM.

Instructions

“Right, let’s get going. Firstly, I want you to...”

Meticulous instructional clarity avoids confusion and allows students to successfully undertake the learning task. Hazy instructions leave students frustrated and presage off

task behaviours and management problems for the teacher. Impeccable instructions include most or all of the following: a big picture overview of the task and its value to achieving the outcomes; precise and detailed, step by step procedures to attain the end product; brief visual summary of the instructions for ongoing student reference; repetition of steps with allusion to the visual instructions; a demonstration of the steps and/or an example of the end product; asking for questions or asking questions to determine student comprehension; setting of time and noise limits.

“Begin”

After the teacher says “begin”, he or she should remain in the front and centre perch for another thirty seconds or more, scanning the room for any student slow to start work or off task. Low level corrections, such as a name, a gesture, a terse comment – “working now” – should focus the student to the task. Once the bulk of the students appear to be working, the teacher can move to circulate in the class room to maintain the activity, or manage any student still not focused.

Is it any wonder that teachers need the skill levels of a brain surgeon, the performance capability of an actor, the endurance of a marathon runner, the patience of a mother and the tenacity of an early Christian?



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 tindall@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/>

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

4 - 5 - 6 - 7

“There’s nothing to eat

“There is nothing to eat in your garden!!” I cried as I contemplated moving into my next home.

I have spent the last 5 years slowly converting the garden at my current home into a sustainable garden, with edibles and medicinal plants growing all over the place.

It was a beautiful garden when I moved in, lovely to look at and enjoy, well manicured with great plants and structure, and evident care taken with design.

But, there was very little to eat!

The vege garden itself was thriving, but there were very few plants with other useful qualities, such as for weaving or medicine, or even fruit!!

Ever since I started gardening I have preferred to grow things that had more purpose than simply providing structure and aesthetic appeal.

So something had to be done, because productive plants are the ones I really value in a garden.

So I developed a sustainable backyard. It isn’t quite as pretty, and certainly not as manicured, but it does have lots more useful things growing, and I think that is part of its slightly chaotic beauty. Now, with the fruit trees having had their first real crops, potatoes growing everywhere (it’s hard to get every last one of them, so they come away again!), and useful plants growing in most nooks and crannies, I am moving, to start all over again!

“So why worry? The garden you are moving to is beautiful!” Yes it is!

Many of us have been caught up in the modern world, disconnected or too busy, finding it impractical or uninteresting to create or tend a useful garden. Some of us don’t know how, now-a-days. The convenience of having produce provided for us has changed not only the way we live our lives, but has also had repercussions for the environment,

as we rely on increasingly inorganic methods to produce the volumes required for the large marketplace.

Lots of sustainable gardening is actually a return to, or continuation of, simple things many people already practice, and what many families have done for generations: like growing fruit and veges; composting; using plants for simple medicines; bottling and preserving the harvest; saving seeds; putting things away for later on; enriching the soil with crop rotations, manure, compost and mulch. These things are part of what many of us do as a matter of course, activities that are dictated by the needs of the plants, the soil and the seasons, and by the satisfaction or desire to provide healthy food for our families. Nourishing the plants and the earth, we receive in return.

In sustainable gardening there is deliberate, purposeful action, with an awareness of and connection with the health of the plants, the seasons, the wider environment and experiencing the interconnectedness of living things.



The garden I am leaving: the back corner with feijoas, lime, lemon, pepinos, mint, comfrey, horseradish, boysenberry, olive, cape gooseberry, potatoes in pots, rosemary and nasturtiums

in your garden!"

Lyn Rogers

Sustainable gardeners have a vision for the future, at least in terms of preparing for the seasons ahead. It never fails to amaze me because with suitable care, plants grow, produce and reproduce as if by magic. And the insects and birds come, almost as if in celebration.

Throughout the country people have been returning to organic, local production of foodstuffs, and there is a swing back towards the way many of our elders lived their lives. There is even an economic driver for this now, as food production costs and retail prices rise.

Although I have always had a productive garden, and enjoy both the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, as all my family has, I now have more reasons than ever to appreciate my heritage and get on with it. I'm not just gardening, I am contributing to a more simple and sustainable future. That's got to be good. It's not that hard, and it's fun!!

So, where to begin? Back to the new garden! A formerly bare section has already been converted lovingly to a beautiful, natural, and largely native landscape. But I do like growing useful things!

A garden has another dimension if it is useful too. So now I will have another beautiful garden growing nothing to eat, so again something has to be done. But this time I don't want to have a sustainable garden at the expense of the beauty and order. I have to plan it so the place has a coherence I didn't achieve in my current garden. As I said, this was well established when I moved in, so my plants got popped in wherever there was a gap. This resulted in a lovely, eclectic mixture of plants all over the place. Not everything had the best home, because planting tended

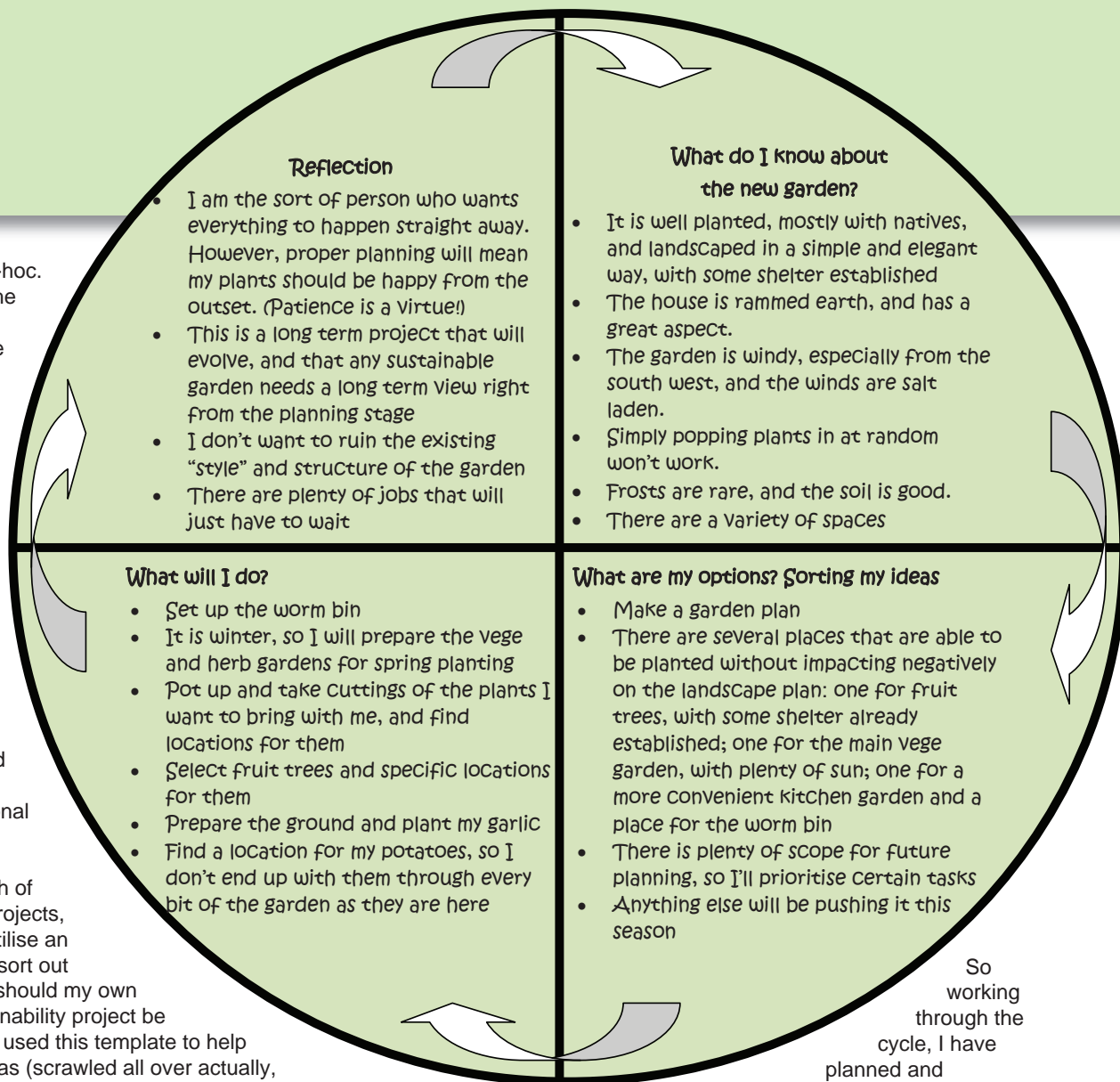


The garden I am leaving: the vege patch in autumn with potatoes, calendulas, nasturtiums, silverbeet and borage, all self sown.

to be rather ad-hoc. For example, the lemon tree had 4 homes before I found a spot where it was truly happy.

Now I have a chance to actually plan where things go, from the start!

So, like most action projects, my personal, sustainable mission needed some planning. In my professional life I advocate the thorough thinking-through of sustainability projects, and we often utilise an action cycle to sort out ideas. So why should my own personal sustainability project be any different? I used this template to help sort out the ideas (scrawled all over actually, rather than nicely typed, but you'll get the idea)



So working through the cycle, I have planned and prioritised the tasks that need to be done.

There are some jobs that will need to be done over time. Some things aren't urgent: the potatoes won't be planted for another couple of months; there is still plenty of time to get the fruit trees; the plants from my current house are in pots now so aren't in a hurry to be transplanted (which is lucky, because the garden many of them are moving to has been built up along permaculture no-dig lines, and it will take a little while for the layers to kill off the grass underneath and be decomposed enough not to kill the new roots); the compost bin isn't needed right away, as this takes care of garden waste and weeds, which won't build up until the garden is established anyway.

Now, I have got a plan to work to and a few jobs already done. The worms have a new home, and I

The new veg patch with compost, vermicast from the worm bin, straw and plenty of sun



ceremoniously gave the lemon tree the last of the diluted “worm wees” it will receive from me.

The new veg garden is already benefiting from the vermicast created when I dismantled the worm farm to bring it to the new place. Two new gardens have been created, and an area has been identified where most of the fruit trees should do well. The garlic goes in to one of the new gardens this week, and everything else will wait for a little while till it's a bit warmer. (At least there is plenty of rain!)

So my vision of a productive, sustainable garden is being realised as I take action to make it happen: the crux of any sustainable project is carrying out the actual action!! And that's the fun part too! Any gardener will know how it feels to leave the fruits of their work behind (literally), but this was a great opportunity for many reasons. It's pretty exciting looking forward to building a relationship with new plants, a new location, and anticipating the rewards of that. I hope that ultimately the whole place will be sustainable, not just the backyard!!

We'll see.



The no-dig garden with layers of newspaper, compost and manure under the straw, smothering the kikuyu underneath

The fruit trees new home, with shelter already growing



Creating your own Worm Farm in one easy lesson!

Empty worm bin



Cover the hole!



Layer 1:
Cardboard and newspaper

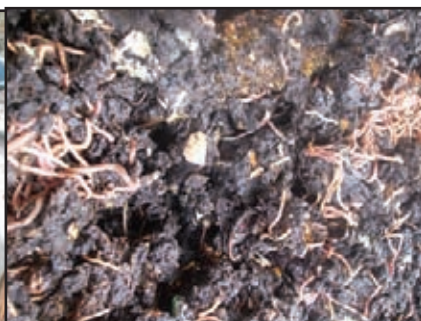


Layer 2:
Straw...
and add a bit of water





Layer 3:
Compost



Layer 4
The WORMS

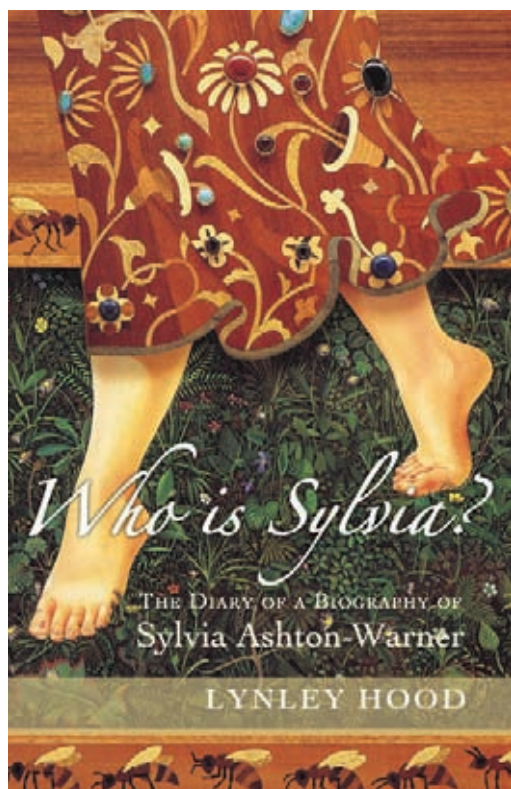


Layer 5
Some new food from the
kitchen

Cardboard cover

Cover with sheet or carpet
and a solid lid - e.g.plywood





Who is Sylvia?

The Diary of a Biography of Sylvia Ashton-Warner

By Lynley Hood

Published by Longacre Press

RRP: \$29.99

This year is the 100th Anniversary of the birth of Sylvia Ashton-Warner. An educationalist who seems, even now, to polarise opinion on both her lifestyle and her teaching methods.

I'm not sure what I expected from Lynley Hood's Diary of a Biography of Sylvia Ashton-Warner 'Who is Sylvia?' At the time she wrote Ashton-Warner's biography she was a scientist/academic not considered a 'writer' by the ubiquitous Aunt Maude who comments on her progress (disapprovingly) through the book.

This book is fascinating; we follow Hood's process of writing her book, the search for advice, for a publisher, for contacts for her research into this woman who is varying referred to by those contacts as brilliant, or mad.

The entire book makes compelling reading as Hood questions her contacts and crafts her story while also questioning herself, Ashton-Warner's influence on her and her realisation that she has such a passion for her craft that means she needs to write. Add to the mix the insights into disrupted family life consumed and overtaken by the ghost of the subject which is always hovering somewhere nearby.

Lynley Hood's writing is real, interesting and flows. How she managed to write an exhaustively researched biography and concurrently keep a comprehensive diary of her journey is impressive.

Hood wanted her biography of Sylvia Ashton-Warner to be "a rattling good yarn". Her diary "Who is Sylvia?" is just that. My enthusiasm in reading this book and relating snippets of it has been so contagious that I have a queue to read it once I am prepared to hand it on.

I found it hard to put this book down – though I did not have (and still have not) an overwhelming interest in Sylvia Ashton Warner. A great read!

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books and things

CD Review

Mokomoko

By Carol Storey

RRP: \$29.99

Reviewed by Mike Rogers

If you listen to only one new music CD this year, make it Mokomoko by Carol Storey. Carol is a teacher at Tauranga Intermediate School and this album is part of her M.A. thesis in music.

This is an exceptional work. Carol sings in Te Reo and her beautiful voice blends perfectly with acoustic guitar, electronic and traditional Maori instrumentation.

I found myself drawn into the waiata, even more so when I discovered the motivation behind Carol's compositions. The eponymous subject of the album, Carol's great, great grandfather, was wrongfully executed in the 1860s and his whanau were subjected to murder and rape and on-going incredible hardships. The story of Mokomoko and his eventual pardon can be found on the artist's website at:

<http://www.tirama.co.nz/content/view/12/26/>

Carol's voice has such control and clarity that the arrangements are perfectly realized. After a couple of playings, I, a non-speaker of Te Reo, was able to sing along to several of the waiata and for any phrase which eluded me, I was able to check the album's inlay, which has Maori lyrics and English sentiments.

Aimed for ages 10 to adult, Mokomoko's music has also been notated, for teachers who may wish to use it in classroom programmes.

Carol will be presenting Mokomoko at the International Society for Music Education World Conference in Bologna, Italy in July.

This is music of the highest calibre, highly recommended. To purchase, access: <http://maorimusic.com> or carol@tirama.co.nz



books and things

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Portrait of the Learner as an Old Man

I had been a teacher for over twenty years ... but I reckon I understood the most about learning ... when I became a student again.



It may have been a mini-mid-life crisis, or a desire to be above everyone else but one summer, a few years ago, I decided to learn to fly. I had started many years previously and had abandoned the idea due to a lack of funds. That's my rationale anyway. I probably was too chicken.

My first lesson was with a friendly, laid-back woman (a part time instructor), who explained everything clearly and had reasonable expectations of me. She certainly didn't intimate that I would be going solo after the twenty minute introductory flight. She praised me when I managed to identify the ashtray (smoking was prohibited) amongst all the instruments and showed no signs of worry when my attempts at flying straight and level would have had me resident on a booze bus, if I were on terra firma. She was most impressed when I could point out the airport from ten miles out. So, after the lesson, I felt pretty confident that my course to the skies was well and truly set.

Oh, the confidence of the late-middle-aged!

The next six lessons were taken by six different instructors. All had different personalities and none called me by my name. When I questioned the Chief Flying Instructor, I was told that it shouldn't make any difference who taught me, they all followed the syllabus.

OK. Carry on.

So my learning continued. Many days I left the airport with such low opinions of my abilities. All my lessons ended with "no worries" from the instructors but that feedback had little effect. Then I discovered other students and more experienced pilots. We talked, compared notes and boosted each other. Soon I was telling myself that if I showed a minor improvement, then that was progress.

So minor improvement after minor improvement occurred. If I remembered a check mnemonic, or applied carburetor heat when

powering off, then that counted as a minor improvement.

I discovered one permanent instructor who was laid back and friendly and I managed to obtain his services most of the time. He accompanied me on the tedious routine known as circuits, where the aircraft is coaxed around the airport, down to the ground, up and around again. Then, one magic day, he told me to stop, he got out and I carried on. That experience was unbelievable and is worthy of a story in itself.

However, after that, the instructor started to demonstrate behaviour that was boorish and in some instances, downright rude. He would give me a briefing (aptly named) and expect me to remember everything and have the skills to apply them. For those of you who are somewhat chronologically challenged, you may recall a scene in that movie, *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines*, where the German competitor, with sublime confidence, gets into the cockpit for the first time with a text book on how to fly. Unfortunately he soon learned that acquiring skills is much more than being able to read what to do. Or being told what to do.

I learned the meaning of information overload. One day I was told to look at the wheel to determine if the aircraft were drifting. Wheel? What's a wheel? My brain was well and truly locked up. This happened many times. When challenged on his teaching methods (which included swearing when mistakes were made), he replied that there was nothing personal, it was just his way.

I seemed to have come to a dead end with him. One particular manoeuvre is called 'power on' or 'wing stalls'. With these, the pilot pulls slowly back on the control column until the aircraft decides it doesn't want to fly any more. Then it may drop, quite dramatically, nose pointing to the ground and starts thinking about that most disconcerting of happenings, appropriately termed a 'spin'. Spins are no longer in the learner syllabus as they are deemed too horrifying. Anyway, before a spin occurs, the pilot must perform a series of actions which feel contrary to what would seem to be natural, involving adroit footwork and hands performing independent movements. I would find myself still pointing at the ground, time after time. Then the instructor would violently pull the aircraft to level flight. The G forces would make me feel like



Mike Rogers

becoming reacquainted with my breakfast, if I had foolishly forgotten to refrain from eating. Then we would land and it would be, 'no worries!' On one occasion he did admit that when he was learning and had to perform stalls solo, he was so scared that he just flew around without attempting them.

Theory lessons were also taken by the instructors. I recognized strategies and imperatives probably acquired from their own school days:

"OK, anyone not get ten out of ten?"

"This is how you do it."

"These are pretty easy. You will pick this up pretty quickly."

"Read this chapter."

"This is pretty basic, just look at the notes I have photocopied for you."

"Bollocks!"

After one navigation lesson I was so befuddled that I took the wrong road on the way home.

The exams were supervised by a man who measured the distance between desks with a ruler, to prevent cheating. Wallets were checked for hidden cheat sheets. This was a great distraction for a nervous candidate, being so funny it took a lot of the stress away. I can still remember finding two mistakes on one paper and the look on this gentleman's face when I pointed them out.

I finally decided to change instructors and found the ideal person. He was skilled, experienced, affable, encouraging. We went for stall practice. I felt so little pressure that I managed to compete a reasonable recovery and was cleared to do them solo. I did that, to my huge satisfaction. Later on the same instructor guided me through an aerobatics rating. That included spin recovery. This was done only at the end of the lesson and was usually introduced with, "Time to finish you off". By this time, I was so relaxed with this man that I had no trouble and enjoyed the experience.

His sense of humour and ability to impart knowledge and teach skills carried me through the rough patches to my private pilot's licence.

So, as a teacher, I learned first hand how important teacher-student relationships are. Being addressed by name was important. All my instructors were skilled at flying but not all knew how to encourage and recognise genuine learning, let alone use the appropriate pedagogy.

I learned that skills, which seem so

simple to experienced people, may be extremely frustrating to acquire for novices. Learning was best when taught in small steps and feedback included appropriate detail about my performance. 'No worries' was replaced by detailed breakdowns of how to achieve, especially in small steps.

I was able to change teachers. Not many of our students in school can do that. Seems to me in retrospect that I, the main stakeholder in this instruction, had the power to request change earlier than I did.

How many students have their learning enhanced by that 'great teacher'?

How many have the opposite?

I mentioned information overload. There was something else which impeded my learning, which was more than merely having too much content to respond to. There is sure to be a term for it but in my ignorance, I shall term it situationally induced amnesia. It's a bit like stage fright. I spent hours learning drills and could recite them perfectly in the shower, or on the way to the airport, only to forget them when doing the real thing. Being able to recite a list is not the same as being able to follow the requirements of the list, when circumstances demand. When I am in front of a class I reckon I encounter the same phenomenon. I will pose a question and several hands will go up. I will choose a student to answer and often will receive a perplexed expression and then, "I forgot." It could be that the child was merely trying to gain attention but I suspect that being the focus became too stressful and the answer suddenly disappeared. I guess the onus is on teachers to provide the environment where such stress is minimised. I can still recall the dreaded round-robin reading circle to which I was subjected as an eight-year-old. I usually managed to stumble my way through but it must have been hell for some of my classmates with even lower reading abilities.

I remember seeing a TV programme about human reflexes. It was investigating the assumption that high - achieving sportsmen and women would have super-fast reflexes in comparison with ordinary mortals. Surprisingly, this was not the case; there was no great difference. What they did have, however, was the ability to respond not only quickly but correctly. Consider receiving a serve in tennis by Roger Federer. A world-ranking tennis player would know what

to do and be able to do it, at least some of the time. While we might respond quickly, in some way, to a Federer serve, our results would most likely be woeful, with the racquet being lifted well after the ball had passed. A skilled opponent, however, would have wired in responses based on observations of Roger's stance, how high the ball was thrown, the sound of the racquet hitting, where he was looking and so on. Countless practice sessions would have instilled a database of appropriate responses where action becomes second nature, requiring little cognition.

Experienced people have countless such responses wired in. Whether driving a car, playing golf, drilling teeth, or conducting an orchestra, the appropriate actions are carried out without thinking. None of these skills were not learned in the first place, however, and it can be assumed that they were taught. Go back to your first driving lessons. How well did your teacher take into account your inexperience and nervousness? How many times did you stall the manual car? You have mastered that skill now but was your original performance impeded by your instructor?

I encountered many such instances in flying, where the instructors would rattle with ease through a procedure, whereas I would have to let cognition get in the way. Compass turns is an example. This is where the pilot has to turn to a prescribed direction using the compass. The instructor might say, "Turn to 150 degrees." Now all would be simple if we could just gently turn the aircraft and wait until the compass read 150 and then stop turning. Oh no, in the complicated world of flying this does not usually happen. For some long-forgotten reason, the compass does not settle quickly and the pilot has to perform mental arithmetic and either anticipate when to stop, or over extend the turn, by a variable number of degrees, depending on the direction required. Sometimes the margin was as much as 30 degrees. Each heading requires a different response. It's hard enough writing about it clearly, let alone perform it but experienced pilots have little trouble.

So what does this all mean? Rote learning? Lots of practice?

Perhaps. I would really have benefited by being aware that this was a skill that may take a while to master but it would eventually settle in; that there is nothing wrong with repetition and that it is better to learn in the appropriate environment with an understanding teacher.

Opinion Piece: **An old problem, some new solutions**

Laurie Loper
Reg. Psychologist

The vexed question of what to do about students who are not achieving and/or are actually failing is long overdue for a constructive rethink.

Teachers wondering how they can boost the learning outcomes of such students might well wish there were more effective alternatives. Well there are, but that doesn't mean any will be taken up. Because the information that could produce them has been available now for seven years but nobody's using it.

Partly that's because hardly anyone knows about it. Of the few who do, any number of considerations might put them off using it. For it'll challenge their understanding both of causation and of how learning works in classrooms. It's not information that comes packaged as ready made programmes. It signals, too, infrastructural and other changes capable of putting the whole education sector in a spin.

For the new information, coming from the work on classroom learning by the late Graham Nuthall, is definitely groundbreaking*. So much so, acceptance is likely to be its biggest hurdle. For what it offers may well seem so far outside the square, tradition and inclination might well rule it out. For a while longer yet anyway. Fortunately though, the New Zealand Curriculum's new learning-to-learn mantra is creating an environment that would support any teacher wanting to make use of it.

Let's back track a bit. Such is the pressure of expectation – piled on by parents and by the constant flow of advice about how to do it better – there's the risk of making teachers feel they're the problem here. Feeling defensive, working harder becomes their likely focus, thinking that there's a problem with the ordinary, everyday practices they're using does not. Especially when nobody has questioned those practices before. Sacrosanct, regarded as a given, they're rock-like in an uncertain world.

So what'll it take to get the notion out there that the real problem here isn't teachers, it's how learning as a process is being understood. The jury is still out on that one, and likely to be for some time. Because nobody's even tried as yet to noise such information abroad, not in any systematic or sufficiently funded way, that is. What such a notion faces is centuries of learning practice embedded in a world wide culture that's a byword for both conservatism and mythology. That culture, based on erroneous beliefs, has always bedevilled, subverted and blind sided educational progress and change.

So is that it? Do we just continue to muddle along, feeling immense empathy for the under-performing students, trying as hard as we individually can and wishing we could find something really wonderful for them. But inwardly knowing their fate's decided – life's about winners and losers, isn't it?

Well no, that's not it. We can do what the MOE hasn't done as yet, we can move out of our comfort zone and be professional about the research mentioned earlier. It may hold some unpalatable truths, but it also holds the promise of much better

outcomes. We certainly need some. We've an 18 year old achievement gap that isn't closing. And that's the good news. We've actually got twenty-nine out of every thirty new entrants turning up at school with a "remarkably similar" capacity of going all the way to PhD level or better, with far too few not even making it into Year 10, let alone into tertiary. We've got an attitude to assessment that's choking the uniqueness out of student understanding, and with it most of the diversity and innovation the nation's crying out for.

Should we get really professional about this, a vista of opportunities awaits. There's already a vastly more efficient learning model available. Called Self Directed Learning™, it's quite unlike any other currently available.* It's one that offers all students the promise of becoming, from an early age, the kind of self managing, owner-operated drivers of their own education who'll become the lifelong learners we're supposed to be producing. Better still, it offers teachers the certainty of becoming the learning facilitators they took up teaching to become. And much more.

More too for parents, because some associated, outside-the-square thinking offers them the chances of now playing a more informed support role than they could before.*

References:

Nuthall, G., 2001. "The cultural myths and the realities of teaching and learning". Paper to the NZARE Annual Conference, Christchurch, Dec 2001

* An electronic copy of the Rugby football shaped diagram and description of the SDL model is available free from l.oper@xtra.co.nz. The same applies to all other material asterisked.



The Sacred Balance:

Rediscovering our place in nature

David Suzuki with Amanda McConnell and Adrienne Mason

Allen & Unwin 2007

RRP: \$32.99

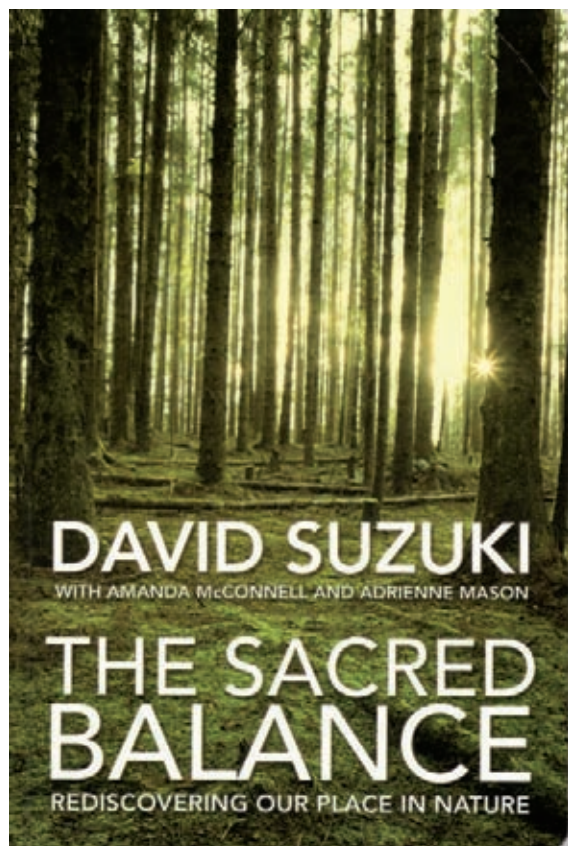
Reviewed by Lyn Rogers

David Suzuki is a well known environmentalist and scientist; widely acclaimed for his work. Although I have heard him speak very articulately about the environment on radio, I hadn't read any of his work before. And given this book is an update of an earlier text, not having read the original didn't matter. I found the book fascinating, fresh and relevant.

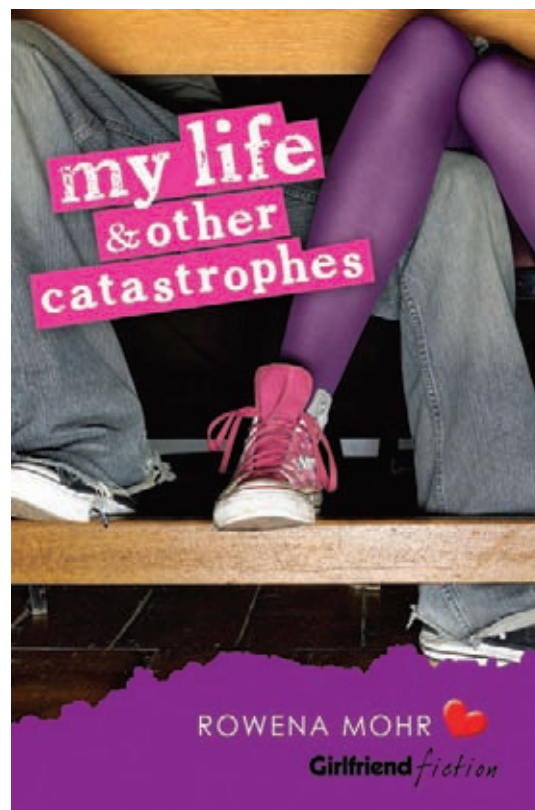
Suzuki pulls words together skillfully, creating a picture of where we fit into the world, and our impact on it. The book is set up so that it can be dipped into if desired, as each chapter offers an essay about an aspect of the big picture, which could be looked at in isolation, but makes much more sense when viewed as part of a whole. In fact one of the first discussions in the book challenges the way we tend to view the world as a series of discrete aspects, or through selective lenses, rather than as a whole.

He is liberal with his use of scientific information, making it accessible by putting it into new, relevant and interesting contexts. What really drew me in were the easy connections he made between scientific, spiritual, historical and cultural perspectives, demonstrated through case studies and discussions and it was made clear that we need these connections if we are to live in balance within our environment.. Unlike many authors of this genre, Suzuki offers a holistic view of the interconnectedness and interdependence of all things, and offers hope rather than despair.

I will now be looking for more of Suzuki's work, as I really enjoyed the style, content, and attitude of this author.



books and things



my life & other catastrophes

By Rowena Mohr

Girlfriend Fiction Allen & Unwin

RRP: \$17.99

Reviewed by Jessie Smith

The sky is falling in for Erin Costello. A divorce. A two-faced father. A certain Marisa Mandozer. A sleazy little brother who could be involved in something illegal. An ex-best best friend who maybe hates her. Brendan Russo who is almost certainly full of himself. Her mother's creepy new possibly-a-drug-dealer boyfriend. Not to mention the English teacher who is probably having an affair with her father. Oh, and the school play that will most likely just add to the list of disasters.....

'My Life and Other Catastrophes', is the easy going, humorous story of a teenager. Written in the form of a journal completed as English homework, this book is the story of Erin Costello a girl who is expert at jumping to conclusions. Without hesitation Erin makes her own judgments of every situation with often embarrassing, yet hilarious outcomes. Her bad habit however soon serves to drive away those closest and dearest to her.

Erin must learn to give others a chance and realize that her problems are not the only, or the biggest, in the world before it's too late to redeem her lost friends.

'My Life and Other Catastrophes' is a great read for any teenage girl looking for a light, easy read that's based in the real world.

Numeracy Symposiums

by Andi Adder

Numeracy teams throughout the country have been organizing symposium days to keep principals and lead teachers informed about developments in numeracy and to promote the sustainability of Numeracy in their schools.

Here is the resulting report from just one of those meetings

Recently the Waikato regional numeracy team hosted a full day numeracy symposium at Te Rapa Race Course. Principals and Numeracy Lead Teachers from throughout the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region were invited to attend. Participants attended from Tolaga Bay to Taumaranui, Rotorua to Raglan, Whitianga to Waipahihi and everywhere in between. Over two hundred delegates attended. Unfortunately, dozens of others were unable to participate as all workshops were full.

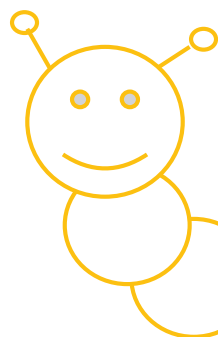
Vince Wright provided a stimulating start to the day with a presentation on 'Fractions: Let's Split' for all the delegates. He explored the schemes that students need to develop to understand fractional numbers

and how these schemes impact on understanding the key ideas of ratios, percentages and decimals.

The remainder of the day, delegates attended up to four workshops from the twenty-nine offered. All the Numeracy facilitators from the region presented workshops along with lecturers from the School of Education and six invited classroom teachers who shared innovative ideas they are incorporating in their classroom practice.

Very positive feedback was received on the content and delivery of the workshops. Planning is already under way for another symposium in 2009 in a larger venue and repeated over two days to enable as many teachers as possible to attend.

CALCULATING CATERPILLAR



Aim: To make the longest caterpillar

How to play: Write a 2 digit number in the first segment.

If your number is odd, add 1 and write your new number in the next segment.

If your number is even, halve the number and write your new number in the next segment.



Variations:

Use 2 dice or playing cards for starting number.

Start with a 3 digit number.

Teacher Comments from Symposium

*Lots of math minds in
one setting – great*

Purposeful stuff that can be used

*Fresh ideas on how to
lead maths in school.*

*Ideas to take back and share
with my team. Refreshed
enthusiasm for numeracy*

*I was presented with high quality
examples of math teaching and
professional learning approaches
from which I have gleaned
ideas to use in our school*

*Practical ideas for teaching
and leading. A refreshing,
motivating day.*

*Being able to share with other
teachers and getting other
perspectives and ideas in numeracy.*

Lots to use in the classroom.

Really practical.

Lots of professional discussion.

A good variety.

*Liked getting 'stuff' to
take back to school.*



Ideas from Symposium

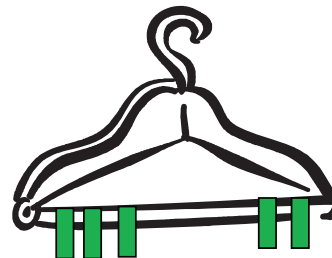
'What counts most is what teachers do, moment by moment, in their interactions with their students.'

(Effective Literacy Practice in years 5 to 8, Page 15)

Commutative Coat Hanger

Put pegs on hanger, some at each end, record equation (eg $3+2=5$).

Turn hanger around, record new equation (eg $2+3=5$)



Which of the following tasks would best assess whether a student can compare fractions?

Write these fractions in order of size, from smallest to largest: $\frac{5}{8}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{11}{16}$

Write these fractions in order of size, from smallest to largest: $\frac{5}{8}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{1}{16}$

Write these fractions in order of size, from smallest to largest: $\frac{5}{8}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{11}{16}$

Can you explain why the two tasks you did not select are not good assessments of students' understanding of fractions?

-Effective Pedagogy in Mathematics/Pangarau Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration, Page 199

Here goes Lucy again...

Pictures talk...



by Lucy Literacy



Using pictures to help students develop a rich vocabulary has been proving a real winner with some students I have been working with.

The conversations we have had about “what we can see” has led to some wonderful writing.

We also took time to talk through how to communicate clear ideas to the reader. Talk about good readers making images in their brain and asking each other -

- What do you do when you read a story?
- How does the author help you to create that picture?

Making the strong links with reading and writing is so important as it strengthens both the productive and receptive interactions with text. Knowing what a good reader does helps the good writer make appropriate choices.





Using pictures, the students try to capture with words exactly what it is that they see. Older students can record their responses for themselves while teachers' can scribe for their younger students. This builds a source of rich vocabulary as well challenges the students to look 'really hard' at the picture.

As a result of these conversations, parts of speech such as nouns, verbs and adjectives can be discussed. We often talked about using specific nouns eg. Dog or Labrador. We are always mindful of the picture we are creating for the reader. Interestingly one student commented one day – 'those aren't really hard words are they'. I guess what we are looking for is precise language.

The pictures here that we used for the following writing sessions were taken on one of my journeys into the King Country. It's amazing what see when you are travelling.

I always try to have my camera at the ready!



The Old Place by Hone Tuwhare

No one comes
by way of the doughy track
through straggly tea tree bush
and gorse, past the hidden spring
and bitter cress.

Under the chill moon's light
no one cares to look upon
the drunken fence-posts
and the gate white with moss.

No one except the wind
saw the old place make her
final curtsy
to the sky and earth:
and in no protesting sense
did iron and barbed wire
ease to the rust's invasion
nor twang more tautly
to the winds slap and scream

On the cream-lorry
or morning paper van
no one comes,
for no one will ever leave
the golden city on the fussy train;
and there will be no more waiting
on the hill beside the quiet tree
where the old place falters
because no one comes any more

No-one

Earlier we talked about making that link between reading and writing. For these writing sessions we used Hone Tuwhare's *Old Place* and William Carlos Williams' *Red Wheelbarrow*

Each student had copy of Hone Tuwhare's poem,



and as they read they:

- Underlined parts that 'wowed' them
- Put question marks by parts they didn't understand

We then came back as a group and talked about key aspects. This poem really got the students thinking about the things that Hone Tuwhare did to help the reader create that picture.

As you might guess the 'drunken fencepost' proved popular!

After creating a word list, students were encouraged to arrange their ideas into piece of writing.

Here's an example:

Time slowed for the rotting bridge

*Taut wires fraying from the strain of holding
up the drunken frame*

The side hidden by greying poplars.

Year 7 Student

William Carlos Williams also provided inspiration and a framework for crafting ideas.

Here's an example:

So much depends upon

the broken down cottage

blanketed in frost

hidden by the bare boxthorns

Year 7 student

Each student felt a huge sense of achievement and some just couldn't believe that they had managed to create such a powerful image.

Rusty old swing bridge

Light blue cloudless sky

Rotten timber



Encrusted with moss

Rickety

Dilapidated

Strong steel wires

The Red Wheelbarrow

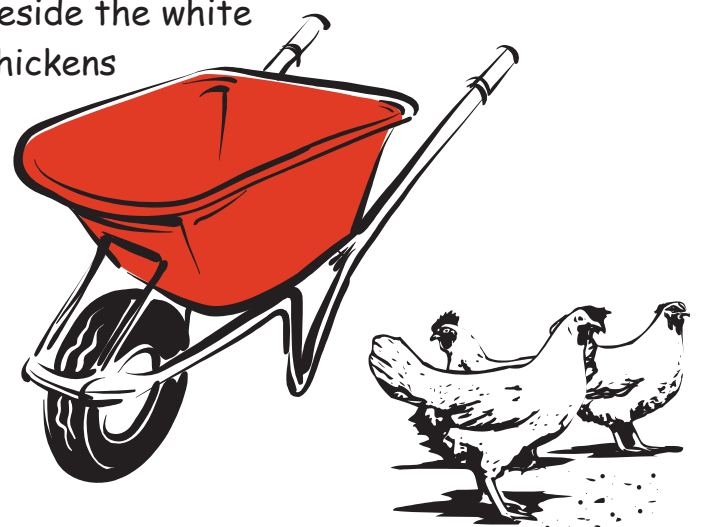
By William Carlos Williams

so much depends
upon

a red wheelbarrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens



Leaving Turkey in style!

Travelling Teacher

Well it took LOMLF and I some days to get over the fact that our visas had been revoked but all the while we had to work out a way to say goodbye to the kids.*

We discussed various options.

The normal way:- having a get together of the parents and the kids and the usual speeches where everyone wishes you all the best etc.

The New Zealand approach:- where we all get together over a few bottles of wine and everybody gets totally plastered. (At least here in Goreme when we send a person to the liquor store for more supplies they don't take along a "22" rifle.)



Then we hit the jackpot.

As it was almost time for the summer solstice we thought we could have a little play to send us off. We quickly convened an emergency meeting of the afore mentioned war committee, to discuss the different ideas that we were sure would be brought to the surface by our over-intelligent classes.

As it was a combined meeting of both our classes we had to have it in the playground as neither classroom was big enough. We trooped out our children in single file and organised them into a half circle around LOMLF and I.

After explaining the situation to them all and fielding the comments such as why we hadn't shot the gentleman concerned (seems that Turks and New Zealander's do have that in common) we started to get down to tintacks.

I had recently been sent a piece out of the Bay of Plenty Times about an aerial display that had been performed at the Tauranga Airport. It was of the battle between the Germans and the British in the Second World War. I suggested that we re-enact the battle between the Turks and the Anzacs during the 1st World War. Anything to do with fighting really interested all the boys (junior classes as well) and as we explained to the girls they could

be nurses. We already had a donkey (remember the donkey? ...refer to the Xmas story - Term 4 2007) to re-enact that famous painting of the wounded Anzac soldier being transported by donkey back to the beach. We had a balloon (refer to the trip by balloon across Cappadocia) so we could drop flour bombs on all and sundry. We even had the trowels to dig mini trenches with. All we really needed was some rifles and someone brave





and smart to be Atatürk and some idiot to be the Anzac commander.

Unfortunately the young lads hadn't yet started to grow to their finished height but there was one young lady who was not only the tallest in the class but also the brightest. Why not a woman Atatürk I thought. LOMLF of course seeing the chance to pierce the glass ceiling agreed whole heartedly.

When I described to the massed classes what was required for the British Commander (rather stupid, no idea of tactics, a rather cavalier attitude towards the safety of others), surprisingly, the vote was unanimous in my favour.

We decided that planning for the war would be out of character as there was little or none in the real thing so we decided that we would divide the classes in half and just let them have a go at each other. We were approaching close of school on Friday and our last day at the school was Monday.

So to recap, our thought was to have the play after lunch on Monday. Well we spent the rest of the day writing out invitations to all the parents and I sent a combined invitation to the teachers. I omitted to send one to the Headmaster as I knew that he would be delighted to be surprised at this wonderful re-

enactment of one of the few victories that the Turkish army ever had.

I sent all of our young soldiers and nurses home and asked them to get their parents to make them replica guns out of wood or whatever material was at hand. I also asked for bandages as I was sure that they would be required as I had a feeling there may be casualties of some sort during the fracas.

I asked the young Atatürk to stay behind and also the oldest of my soldiers who were going to be fighting for the allies.

With Atatürk we went through the basic order of battle where she/he falls back before the invading force and then with great courage rouses her troops to regain the lost territory and win the day.

The weekend was spent rounding up the balloonist, the donkey and copious quantities of tomato sauce.

Monday arrived and all looked great for a well executed war. The sky was clear, the temperature was in the 20's and the kids looked eager to go. They had succeeded in persuading their parents to make weapons for them which all looked fairly convincing. We had spent all morning using our trowels and digging fairly minor trenches in the playing fields. Ours

were slightly deeper than the Turkish ones at about 40cm deep. With the rampart in front it gave almost 80cm of cover. The Turkish trenches were a little shallower at about 60cm of cover.

Immediately after lunch we lined up the troops on opposite sides of the battle field (playground) and I gave my troops a rousing rendition of "we will fight them on the beaches" using my best Churchillian accent.

The young Atatürk could be seen striding amongst her troops rousing them and reminding them that this was not for real. This had a far greater significance than that original conflict. This was in front of their parents and they certainly didn't want to look like cowards... did they.

We had the donkey tied up beside my troops and the teachers and parents were sitting along the front of the school.

As soon as I saw the balloon appear over the cave houses I shouted to my troops "Forward". They leapt to their feet and waving their guns and swords ran straight for the Turkish ranks. Unfortunately for us LOMLF had decided that the Turks may require a little help and had become a turncoat and was now seen popping up amongst the other side (female solidarity with Atatürk I think).

Unbeknown to me she and Ataturk had spent all weekend making flour bombs. As we raced forward we were met with a wall of flour bombs which caused a hurried retreat back to our trenches.

At this stage the balloon appeared closer over head and started dropping flour bombs indiscriminately. Obviously they had not been trained in the art of aerial bombing as they seriously missed their targets. The bombs started dropping amongst the teachers and parents.

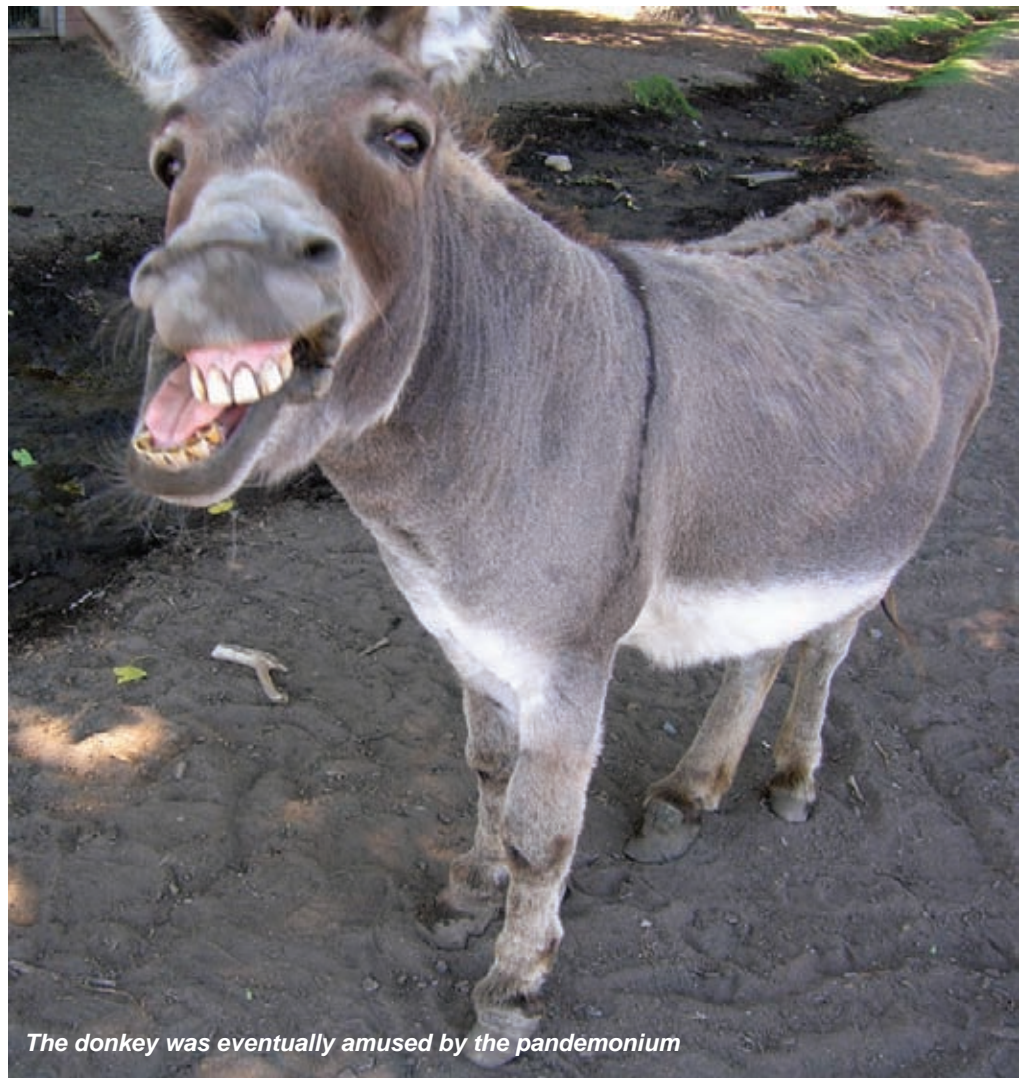
At this stage both Ataturk and I launched our counter attack against each other. The troops met in the middle of the ground as I tried to direct the war from my bunker (the gardeners shed) some way behind the trenches.

As the noise and confusion escalated the donkey became seriously worried and started jerking at its halter. With a final neigh of fear it pulled the halter off the post holding it, and made a beeline for the front door of the school. Terrified it lost control of its bowels just as it entered the school entrance and just outside the Headmaster's office door.

Hearing the shouting and screaming the Headmaster opened his door and stepped into Well you know the rest. He wasn't at all happy but the good thing was that there was nothing he could do about it.

All in all a great result. Only minor injuries resulted and we all felt that this was a fitting send off. The war had no real outcome very much like the original.

Tuesday bright and early LOMLF and I boarded the bus to Istanbul on the first leg of our trip to our new positions in Florence.



The donkey was eventually amused by the pandemonium

It was sad to say goodbye to all the neat kids but it was also good to be back on the road again. When you get the travel bug you can only spend so long in one place. I felt that it was time we moved on.

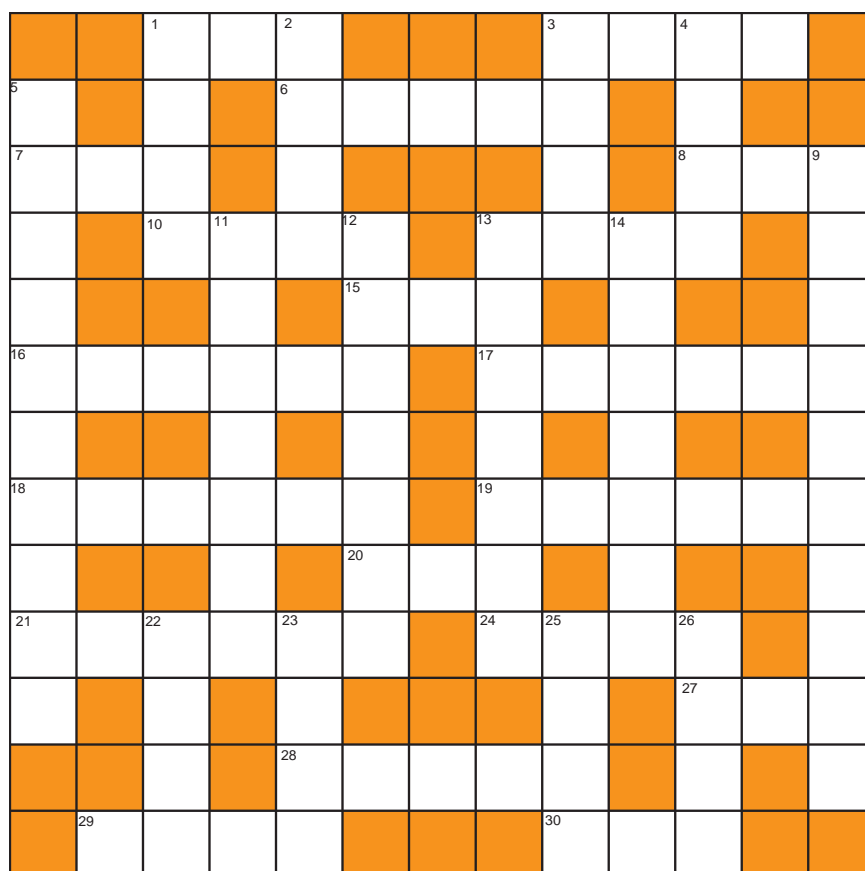
See you next time and travel safely.

* Lomlf = Love of my life fiona

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



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



Below the answers from
Good Teacher Magazine's term 2
crossword and sudoku

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

1	C	2	O	3	M	4	M	5	A	6	N	7	D	8	O	9	S	10	S	11	B
12	R	13		14	S	15	V	16	U	17	T	18	O	19	O						
20	B	21	E	22	A	23	C	24	H	25	C	26	O	27	M	28	B	29	E	30	R
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ACROSS

- 1 Whichever way, He's the same (3)
- 3 Bad Behaviour, to a point, produces trig function (4)
- 6 Headless, sneaky person and artist's equipment (5)
- 7 In late autumn we get a warm drink (3)
- 8 Tease from where the first woman came (3)
- 10 Dust can become a wall feature (4)
- 13 A hard drink and a plant (4)
- 15 He's known for resistance (3)
- 16 Quiet, within backed up train station, killed (6)
- 17 Mrs Peron, the German, leads to an escapee (6)
- 18 Slime around - very quiet against (6)
- 19 Short and long-footed amongst Liam, bichon frise and poetic (6)
- 20 Initially, Robert Oppenheimer's chemistry brings about this legendary bird (3)
- 21 Get older, New York envelops a hundred. Bureau (6)
- 24 Idea gone awry can be a helper (4)
- 27 She's perfect for litigation (3)
- 28 Sounds like solemn promise. Facetiously has each in order (5)
- 29 Plucky but a bit off (4)
- 30 So, your dinner contains a nutritious food? (3)

DOWN

- 1 These scarves could be constricting (4)
- 2 Note water from the Seine is dandy (4)
- 3 Slight but can be indistinct utterance (4)
- 4 He's an average guy? (4)
- 5 Cut her down to size? A daring substitute (10)
- 9 A Cab Rider's being upset produces obstacles (10)
- 11 Hot pony can be a tempest (7)
- 12 Strange point in arid surroundings is decidedly decrepit (7)
- 13 Morning, Heather. It's the U.S.A. (7)
- 14 Having no weapons, just like Venus de Milo (7)
- 22 Upset the ante for an explosive potential (4)
- 23 Remove it from hole to release a guinea pig (4)
- 25 Taking some pills could alleviate these (4)
- 26 Glimpse an eastern agent (4)

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

Charlotte and Percy



Teachers are finding new and meaningful ways to use story books in their classrooms. "I've always used books to foster a love of reading but adding a PMI, Venn diagram and De Bono's thinking hats to this has certainly given the children a deeper look inside the story." said Lynda Burt from Pukeatua School. Along with her colleague Sandra Meacheam both teachers have begun looking at incorporating the schools visions and the key competencies with their students through story books.



Trust

Wilbur showed that he **trusted** Charlotte in the story because she promised that she would look after him and not allow him to be killed. He **trusted** that Charlotte would always help him. In return Wilbur helped Charlotte by being her friend. She **trusted** him to take her egg sac back to the barn cellar so they could hatch and would be safe.

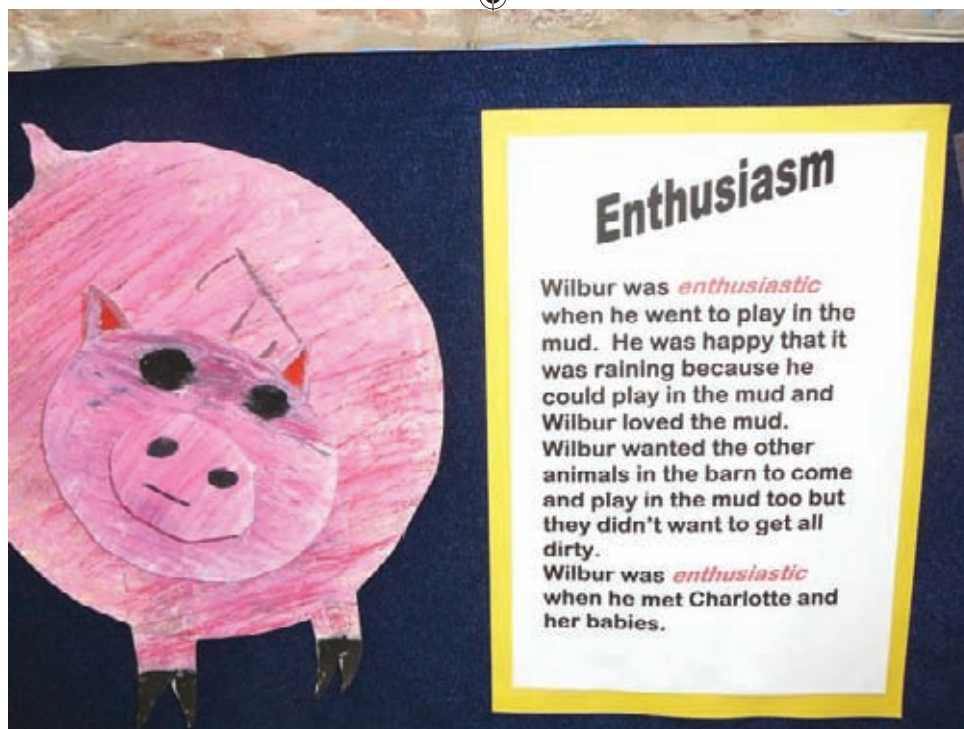
Caring

Fern was very **caring** in the story. In the beginning Fern grabbed the axe off her father because she didn't want her father to kill the piglet because he was a runt. She promised to look after the pig and feed it every day and take **care** of it. Fern took Wilbur for walks every day and when Wilbur went to the barn she visited him every day. Fern was a very **caring** girl.

Creativity

Charlotte was **creative** when she built her web to trap flies. She was also **creative** when she wrote words in her web to help save Wilbur's life. She wrote words such as terrific, some pig and radiant.



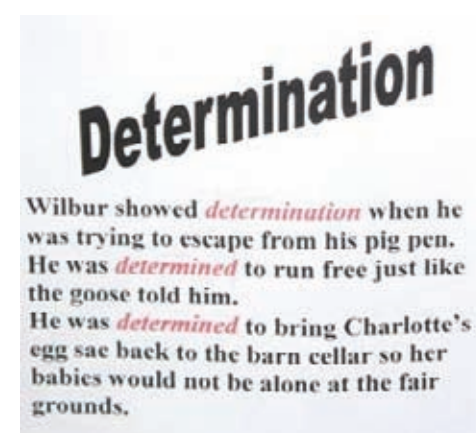
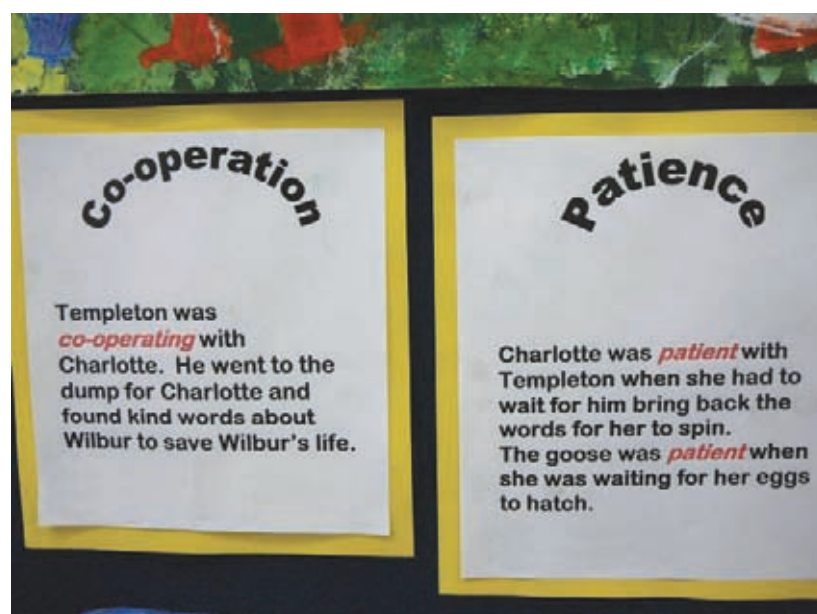
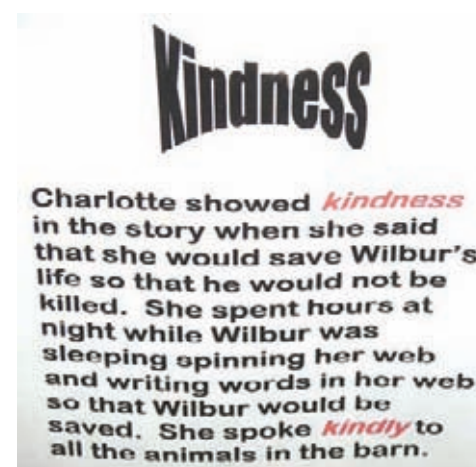
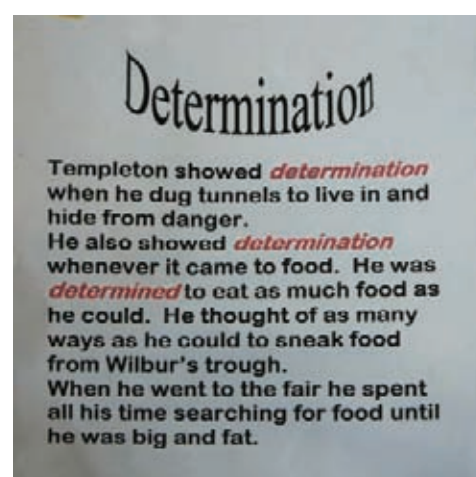


Sandra's Year 3/4 students recently looked at the characters in *Charlotte's Web* by EB White and with her students have looked at the values and beliefs their school has for its students and how the animals in the story demonstrated this. Knowledge of the personality of the animal as the story unfolded gave students a good look at their own goals and values before writing up their reports.

Students chose their character and identified its contribution to the story and aligned this with their school values. Students realised that none of the values stood alone that all were needed to interrelate to each other to motivate and sustain the life of Charlotte.

Students were proud of the work that was done which was placed among their art work on a big wall for all to see. Sandra is looking forward to introducing the new key competencies the same way.

Students were making links between behaviour of animal characters that they love with real situations. Students have been heard to say, "I wonder how Templeton would have dealt with that?" Teachers are noticing students are making more positive achievement goals in behaviour and curriculum areas.





... and Percy

Lynda's Year 1/2 students used the De Bono thinking hats after reading Percy Pukeko by Michelle Osment and were amazed how the retelling of the story was improved.

Students loved analysing the character of boisterous Percy using the hats.

"It improved their thinking and they began asking more meaningful questions as a result".

The students developed a deeper understanding of the interrelationship between animals and humans.

They looked at their own feelings and behaviour towards others in comparison with Percy's behaviour.

Students were challenged in their thinking when they had to shape understanding, actions and knowledge into a new retelling of the story.

As a result of the successful incorporation of the De Bono thinking hats to this Percy Pukeko story, the students are looking forward to more stories with Percy.

Pauline McLeod
WaiLITE ICT Cluster Facilitator



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