

PROFESSIONALLY & PERSONALLY

TeachersMatter

The Magazine of Spectrum Education



SEE, HEAR AND FEEL

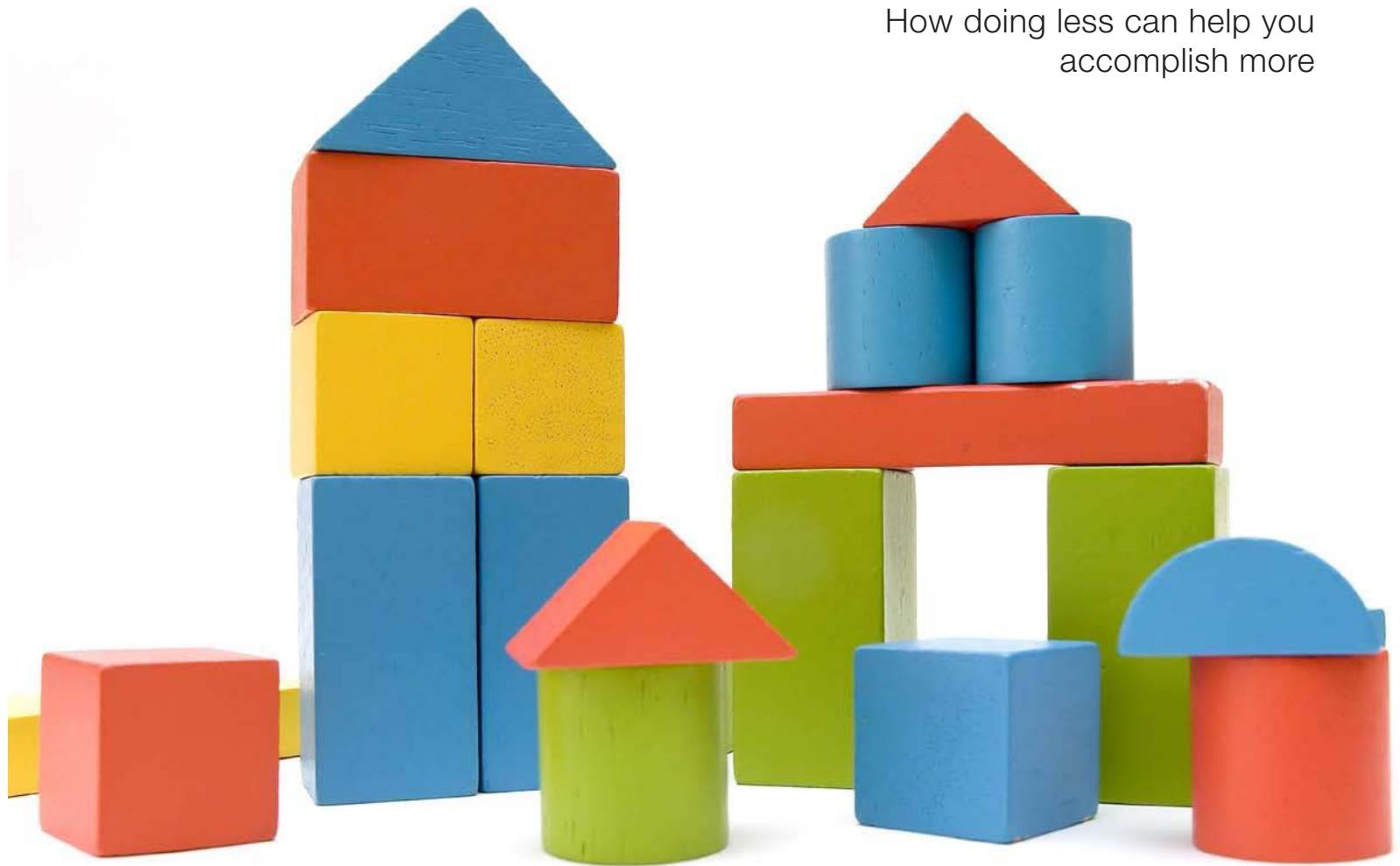
Help students truly understand the Habits of Mind

WHEN THEY CAN'T SIT STILL

Why some children might move too much
and what you can do about it

TAKE A BREAK

How doing less can help you
accomplish more



NZ\$15 / AU\$15

Habits of Mind Boot Camp



We have combined the 2 workshops into a super sensational four days of answers!

This is NOT a 4-day seminar where you simply sit and listen to presenters.

The Habits of Mind Boot Camp is a true hands-on experience of teaching in action.

(+ Leadership Challenge)

Over four action-packed days you will:

- Acquire the tools every teacher must have
- Learn the processes to create, plan and teach powerful lessons
- Be mentored by an incredible group of successful teachers and presenters
- Be involved in the actual transformation of schools with the Habits Of Mind Challenge 2009
- Witness the effect of the Habits of Mind in real-life situations
- Learn how to build your teaching capacity and students' abilities
- Benefit from the opportunity to make important decisions about your teaching, away from your day-to-day classroom
- Have more FUN than is allowed!
- Plus... you will learn more than you thought possible

The Thinking Toolbox

When you arrive at the Boot Camp, you will receive a comprehensive manual containing working templates (in both hard copy and digital format) that can be modified and used at the Habits Of Mind Boot Camp and in every lesson you teach afterwards.

These essential templates will ensure you cover all aspects, and anticipate the opportunities and pitfalls in such areas as:

- Discovering and exploring the Habits of Mind
- Engaging and activating the Habits of Mind
- Planning for deep understanding
- Evaluation and reporting
- Implementing the Habits of Mind
- Exploring meanings
- Expanding capacities
- Increasing alertness
- Extending values
- Building commitments
- Internalisation
- Habituation

In addition, you will have access to an invaluable resource base to accelerate your learning curve in the areas of:

- Thinking Maps
- Planning and teaching for deep understanding
- Metacognition
- Listening
- Assessments
- Rubrics
- Matrices
- Leadership

And heaps more!

The Habits of Mind Challenge 2009 is at the core of the Boot Camp schedule.

Over the four days you will enhance your understanding of:

- the Habits Of Mind
- the leadership in your school
- your communication abilities
- your personal effectiveness

This combination of personal and professional development will happen in team exercises throughout the event, with partners and independently.

The Boot Camp Team

Each member of the mentor panel is a leader in their area of expertise. Each will offer you invaluable mentoring to increase your success within the classroom. The format of the Habits Of Mind Boot Camp allows you to gain the most from their extensive Habits of Mind knowledge.

KAREN BOYES is a highly skilled, enthusiastic and dynamic presenter with over 18 years experience in the education profession. The leading authority on effective learning and teaching in New Zealand, she is CEO of Spectrum Education and their head facilitator, working with teachers, parents, students and corporate clients.

GEORGETTE JENSON brings her wealth of knowledge and wisdom from her classroom in Gisborne. Having personally trained with some of the best thinkers in the world; Rita and Kenneth Dunn, David Hyerle and Art Costa, she puts her expertise of learning styles, Thinking Maps and Habits of Mind into practice in her own classroom.

TRUDY FRANCIS is the co-director of C21 Learning, and ex senior management from College Street Normal School. She is passionate about assisting teachers to improve the quality of their classroom instruction.

ADRIAN RENNIE is a Deputy Principal with incredible passion and practical ideas to implement and reinforce both the Habits of Mind and resilience. He will share his success stories, resources and assessment tools.

GEORGE ROGERS is a physical education teacher with an interest in how closely the Key Competencies are connected to the Habits of Mind. He believes by infusing the Habits of Mind into his everyday teaching, he will be delivering the Key Competencies in physical education and beyond.

MATT ALLEN is the assistant Rector at Lindisfarne College. He is a passionate, innovative classroom teacher who continually strives for greater levels of student achievement through a range of creative teaching techniques. Matt has created many classroom strategies in association with fellow teaching colleague Barry Musson.

GRAHAM WATTS is currently studying for a PhD in gifted education and thinking skills in London, after being the Director of Advanced Learning at a Year 1-13 school in NZ. His role involved leading the Thinking Skills program, working closely with all Year-level teachers, helping them infuse the Habits into their classroom, curriculum planning and assessment.

Programme Schedule

SYDNEY

TUES 11th August, 9pm - 5pm

WEDS 12th August, 9am - 9pm

THURS 13th August, 9am - 7pm

FRI 14th August, 9am - 1pm

Investment: \$895 per person / \$795pp for groups of 3 or more.

Investment includes morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea each day.

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In this issue



- 10 Habits of Mind Bootcamp 2009
- 11 A Quiet Revolution
- 13 Some Lessons From My Learning
- 15 Three Steps to Significant and Sustainable Change
- 18 Counterproductive Approaches



- 20 Making The Most of Professional Learning Communities
- 22 The 21st Century Teacher/Educator
- 25 Kids Know They Must Study, But How?
- 27 Developing a Classroom Culture of Thinking



- 29 The First Five Steps to Happy Playtimes
- 31 What Am I Really Teaching?
- 32 Set It And Get It
- 33 Operationalising The Habits of Mind
- 36 The Real Truth About Homework
- 45 Take A Break
- 47 Making the Most of Your Parent-Teacher Interview
- 49 Be Kind To Yourself!
- 51 If It's Not Broken – Fix It!



BLACK-LINE MASTERS
Photocopiable activities:
 70...Brain Twisters
 71...Playground games

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To receive your own copy of the next issue, send an e-mail to magazine@spectrumeducation.com



- 52 Activating The Brain's Starter Motor
- 54 Why We Need This Recession
- 56 What Happened to Bugs, Beetles and Cicadas?
- 58 Build Your Personal Resilience
- 60 So What Club Did You Belong To?



- 64 Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders
- 65 Motivation: What Is It and How Do I Get It?
- 67 Smile: You're Learning
- 69 Transformational Leadership
- 72 Is Your School Ready For An Emergency?
- 74 What Did You Just Say?
- 76 The Last Word

*GIVE YOURSELF
SOME TIME TO
RELAX Page 45*

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The opinions expressed in Teachers Matter are those of the contributors and we love them!

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E editing Teachers Matter takes me forever. The writers aren't to blame. Or at least not in the way you might be thinking: The articles that they deliver aren't filled with mistakes or confusing information. In fact, the opposite is true. Their work is so engaging and helpful that I can't stop thinking about how I can apply their ideas to my life – and I'm not even a teacher. Two writers in particular – Jay McTighe and Janeve Green – got me thinking while preparing this issue.

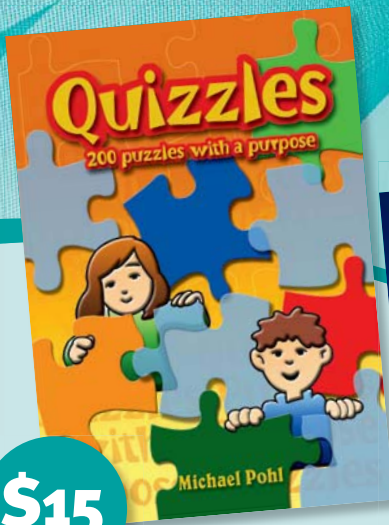
Jay McTighe sent me off to “contemplating land,” the place I visit when it looks like I’m just sitting and staring, but I’m really figuring out how to be a better person. He talks about how teachers often work in isolation as they prepare their lesson plans. Once they’ve moved on from the apprentice stage, principals trust them to create their own ideas for educating students, and understandably so: Teachers have trained for many years to be in charge of the class, and they know what they’re doing. Yet, as Jay points out, they can always learn something new, just like their students. He’d like for more teachers to take advantage of a “critical friend” and to become one themselves. A critical friend might be one trusted colleague who can review lessons plans or brainstorm ideas beforehand, or it might be a group of fellow teachers. Maybe those teachers are at the same grade level or maybe they’re a few grades above or below. Either way, every teacher sees things differently and might have the ideal way to take another teacher’s lesson from good to great. Jay explains the process of making “critical friends” work to your advantage and offers many more ideas for making your school the best possible.

Experienced educator Janeve Green also aims to keep classroom content new and fresh. I have a few friends who have been teaching for more than 20 years, and I always wonder how they don’t burn out. They and Janeve know that the key to being a strong teacher, whether it’s your first year or 25th, is to connect with students. While Janeve supports the idea that we need to teach values in our schools, she likes teachers to remember that they will ultimately be successful if they truly connect with their students. She mentions Courtney Cazden’s observation that the best teaching results come from “what happens in the classroom itself, in the interactions between teachers and students and among students during a regular day.” She encourages teachers to “establish whanau-type relationships within the class and school setting” and “to become involved in such a way with their students that any hierarchical barrier is removed.” Read about how she thinks teachers can take such an approach with students and cicadas. This will make sense when you read her article, I promise!

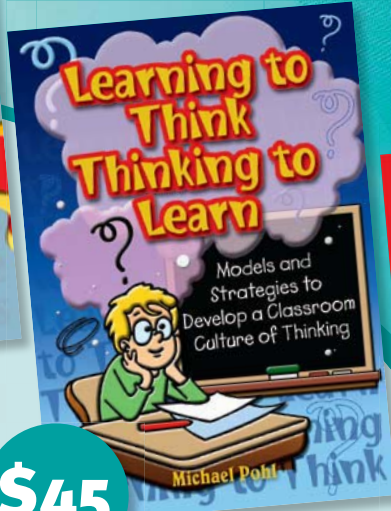
Cheers,

Kristen De Deyn Kirk

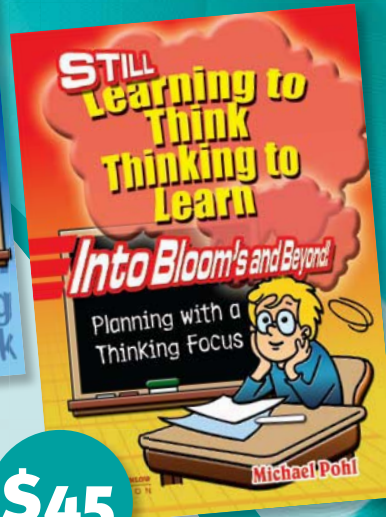
michael pohl



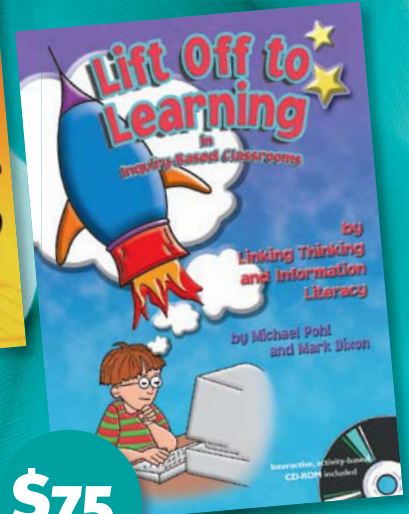
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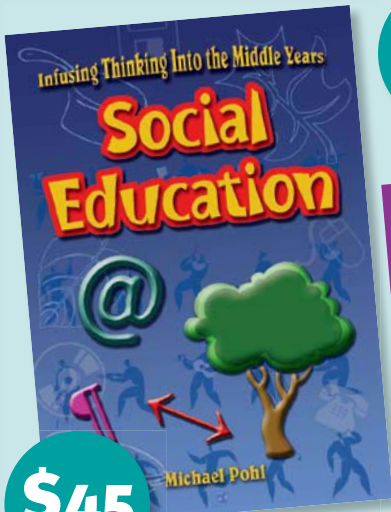
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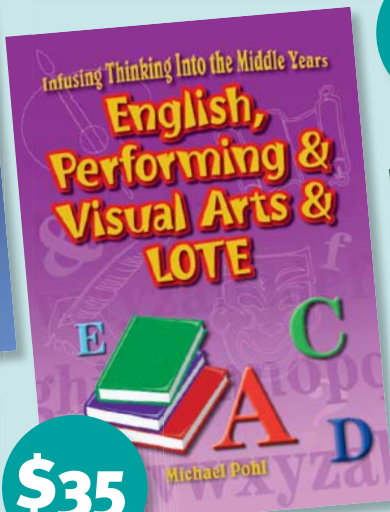
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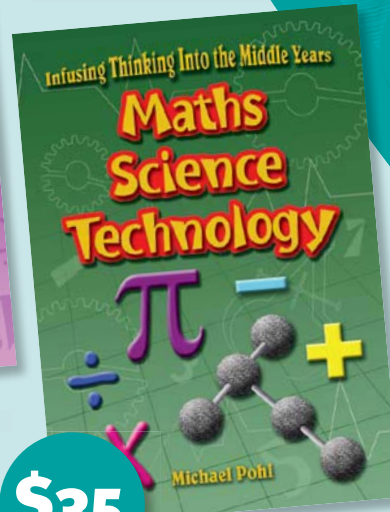
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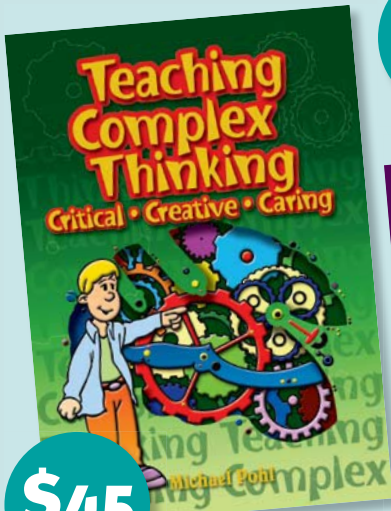
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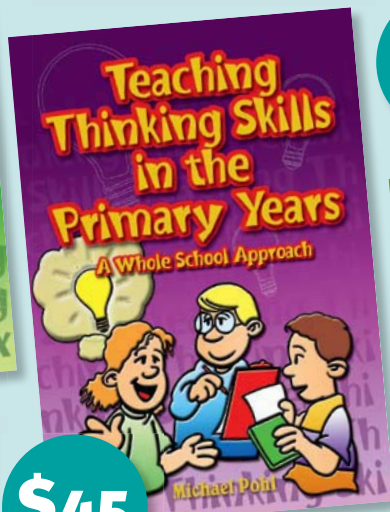
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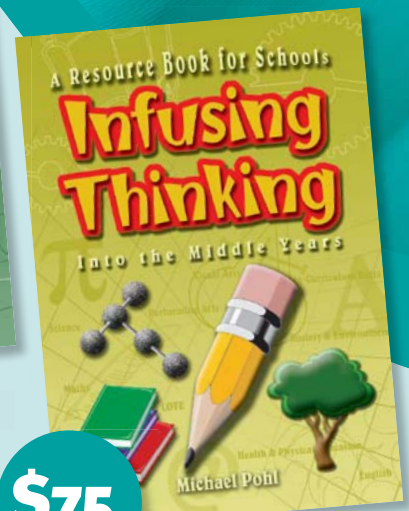
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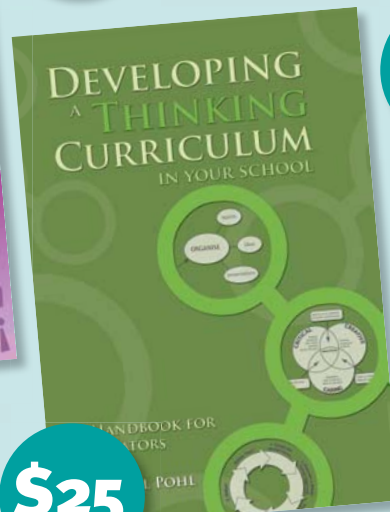
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Wendy Sweet

Wendy Sweet is a registered nurse with a degree in physical education from Otago and a post-grad diploma in sports and leisure studies from The University of Waikato, School of Education where she both lectures and is completing her master's thesis. Wendy runs professional development workshops for the fitness industry, companies and schools. Having set up the Les Mills Personal Training system in the '90s, she has trained hundreds of personal trainers throughout Australasia and is one of the country's leading health and wellness education experts. For information on professional development workshops for motivating staff to take responsibility for increasing their personal resilience, contact Wendy at wsweet@xtra.co.nz.

New Zealand Habits of Mind Bootcamp 2009

Teachers boosted their brain power and classroom abilities with an intense look at the Habits.

"Awesome! This has given me heaps of ideas for my own class and whole school implementation!"

This was a typical response from the participants on the NZ Habits Of Mind Bootcamp in Christchurch.

The central theme of the 2009 bootcamp was the value of the Habits of Mind, with teams of teachers working with six mentors over four days toward the Bootcamp Team Challenge. Team competition was intense as rival teams worked hard to score points for the title of Bootcamp champions.

I introduced and facilitated the bootcamp, not only showing participants the journey from beginning to internalising the 16 Habits of Mind, but also guiding teams to use these behaviours both personally and professionally. Gazza the bear was accompanied by his creator, Adrian Rennie, to share practical ideas from his classroom, as well as how to activate language and build a school-wide culture through the Habits of Mind.

Georgette Jenson led participants in using thinking maps and rubrics to complement the Habits of Mind. Trudy Francis expertly showed how to weave the 16 behaviours into lesson design and how to activate an individual Habit within students. Matt Allen and George Rogers, both from Lindesfarne College, shared the Secondary perspective with great humour and practicality.

A full-on four days meant both participants and mentors learned from each other, and the sharing, discussing, and resource making sometimes went on into the night.

The winning team, Blue Ice, received the 2009 Bootcamp Challenge 2009 trophies.

Participants left saying *"I'm going away with a pile of neat ideas and ways I can modify some of the things I am doing."* We've seen more proof of the bootcamp's success in the fabulous sharing of ideas and applications through the Spectrum Community site. Join me and the Bootcamp team at the next bootcamp and learn what you can accomplish with Habits of Mind.



Georgette Jenson facilitating learning



Adrian Rennie working with his teams



Mentors : Matt Allen, Adrian Rennie, Trudy Francis, George Rogers, Karen Boyes, Georgette Jenson



Random acts of kindness on the streets of Christchurch!



Leadership challenge



Winning Team with mentors George Rogers and Matt Allen



Bootcamp '09 NZ Participants

A Quiet Revolution

Place positive values at the heart of the curriculum.

During recent years, I have had the privilege to support the development of values education in Australia. This March and April I talked about how to develop values-based schools in New Zealand. In both countries there is an ever-increasing wave of enthusiasm for joining what can be called *The Quiet Revolution*.

Educators sensing that something is missing from school systems, despite a general focus on raising academic standards, fuel The Quiet Revolution. What appears to be missing from many schools and society at large is a shared ethical vocabulary, based on universal positive human values, which can provide a sense of direction and vision about how to nurture a positive sense of self, support the raising of academic standards and foster a stable moral society. The evidence from schools that describe themselves as values-based is that teaching about positive human values (e.g. respect, honesty, compassion, care, humility and responsibility) improves the quality of education in schools. It does this by promoting values education, which is an educational philosophy based on valuing self, others and the environment through the consideration of a values vocabulary (principles that guide behaviour) as the basis of good educational practice.

My experience, as a former Headteacher of West Kidlington School, Oxford, in the UK and doctoral student at Oxford University, is that when a school seriously develops the moral and spiritual aspects of the curriculum, the school community become more reflective and harmonious. The most effective teachers of values are those who work to be more self-aware and take time to reflect on the deeper meaning of the values being emphasised. Self-reflective work by teachers is seen to have a powerful impact on pupils, who appear to make a connection between what the teacher says and what she does. Such teachers are authentic, meaning that they seek to

achieve congruence between their thoughts, feelings and actions. They are aware that they have the potential (as we all do) to be consumed by afflictive emotion (e.g. anger) and for this to be inappropriately translated into action. Developing *reflection* as a tool to aid self-control enables both pupil and adult to behave in ways that reflect positive human values, such as compassion and respect. Such reflective work leads to teachers developing a deepening understanding of the values. They also have a clearer perception of their own attitudes and behaviour, and seem willing and able to model the values. Teachers believe that pupils will learn from their positive example. I believe that the process of values education must begin with adults before adopting the philosophy in the curriculum. Teachers cannot teach values education in isolation from their own thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

Teachers are not neutral with regards to values, as values are embedded within their attitudes and exhibited through their behaviour. This implies that, in order for there to be consensus and consistency of staff expectations and behaviour throughout the school, administrators need to introduce a whole school values education policy, based on West Kidlington School's *blueprint* for values education.

The blueprint has become an inspiration for schools world-wide and may be summarised as follows:

1. The whole school community (staff, pupils, parents and community representatives) is involved in shaping the values education policy.
2. A process of values identification takes place involving the school's community

asking the question, *which values do we want to nurture in our community?* A meeting/forum is set up to facilitate this process which takes account of any nationally or locally promoted values.

3. Core positive values (e.g. respect, honesty and co-operation) are identified. These are chosen through a careful process, which involves thinking about what qualities (values) the school should encourage the pupils to develop. The West Kidlington model has 22 values introduced over a two-year cycle – one value each school month. Schools may decide to have fewer values.

4. In the light of the values identified, the school decides the principles that will guide the way adults behave. Elements will be discussed to determine these such as:

- how adults will care for themselves and each other
- the emotional literacy of adults
- the needs of the pupils ▶

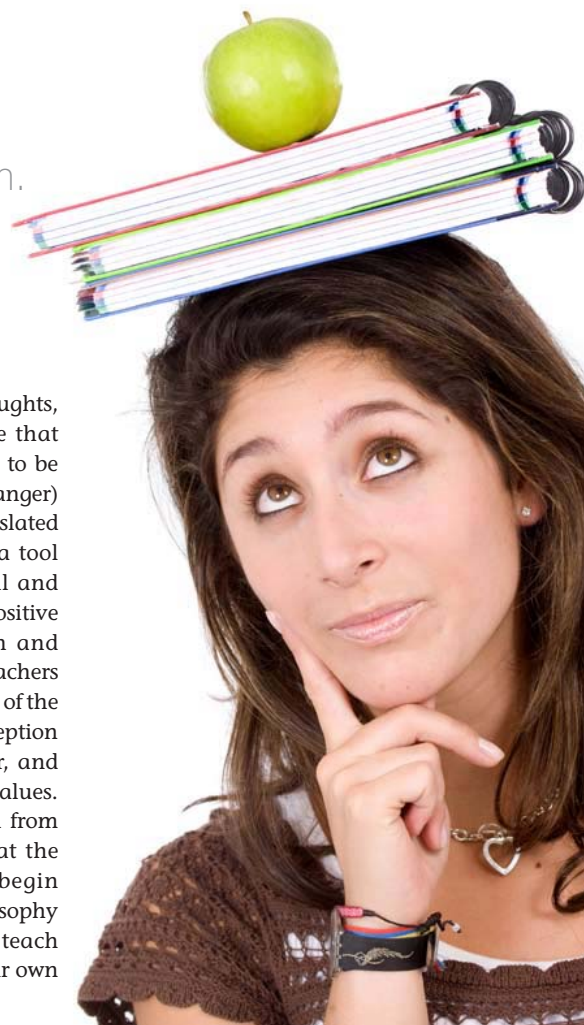


PHOTO: ANDRES RODRIGUEZ

- the way pupils are treated

5. Adults in the school commit themselves to work toward being role models for values education.

6. The school's institutional values (i.e. how the school is perceived by the community through aspects such as how parents are welcomed) are reviewed to ensure consistency with the values education policy.

7. The school considers how it will encourage reflective practices that will lead to values-based behaviour, such as silent sitting, active listening and the consideration of ethical dilemmas.

8. A programme is established for learning about values, which may include:

- introducing values in a programme of assemblies;
- one value being highlighted each month;
- each class or form teacher preparing one value lesson each month;
- the value of the month being the subject of a prominent display in the school hall and in each classroom;
- newsletters are sent to parents, explaining what the value of the month is and how they can be developed at home.
- aspects of the curriculum (everything the school does) are identified that could make a specific contribution to values education. The range of skills, knowledge, attitudes and understanding to develop in the pupils is established. Of crucial importance is to ensure that the process of developing values education is well planned, monitored, evaluated and celebrated in order to keep the process alive and constantly under review.

9. The school agrees on a statement of values that may be prominently displayed in school and included in the school's prospectus.

The blueprint enables a school to create a structure for values education that fosters good interpersonal relationships. Teachers say that consequently this helps to raise pupil self-esteem and confidence. The result is that the pupils display greater academic diligence, respect staff and each other and are generally well behaved.

My research demonstrates that the introduction and development of a vocabulary, based on values, acts as the platform on which pupils and staff develop, and deepen, their understanding of issues concerned with ethics and morality. It appears that the systematic introduction of a common ethical vocabulary encourages reflective thinking, which leads to more

Teachers consider that they are more careful about how they present ideas to children because of values education. They maintain positive attitudes that give affirmation and positive reinforcement to the pupils. The teachers believe that the pupils were more likely to reach their academic potential in a class with values-based discipline.


"My research demonstrates that the introduction and development of a vocabulary, based on values, acts as the platform on which pupils and staff develop, and deepen, their understanding of issues concerned with ethics and morality."

positive and ethically based behaviour. Also, frequent repetition and regular discussion about values reinforces their meaning, with the result that they are more likely to be internalised in the sub-conscious. This in turn reinforces the pupils' positive dispositions and acts as a check on behaviour. I believe that we cannot assume that such a vocabulary will generally be introduced to children, unless schools plan to do it through the curriculum.

Values-based schools aim to encourage pupils to be reflective by teaching a technique called *reflection* or *silent sitting*, which gives space and time for pupils to focus their minds, allowing their intrapersonal intelligence to be enhanced. Pupils are able to sit still in personal reflection for extended periods of time, a perceived outcome being that they became more aware of their capacity to determine their own behaviour in a positive way. The evidence indicates that the success of this is influenced by the staff modelling the behaviour. In school assemblies, for instance, staff model the behaviour expected of the pupils. The pupils therefore model their behaviour on that of the teachers. Teachers believe that if they are reflective it has a positive influence on their own behaviour, enabling them to be more effective.

A key aspect of values education appears to be a greater emphasis on the development of good quality relationships between staff and parents. The teachers recognise the vital importance of the role of families in educating children. They emphasise the importance of developing open, sensitive, active, positive teacher-parent relationships. The development of values education is shared with parents through newsletters and parents' evenings. This ensures a positive partnership between home and school.

I believe that values education is far more than a process of instilling values in pupils. It is concerned with the very meaning and purpose of education; a statement about the quality of education that can be achieved and the impact that this can have on society and the world. With this view of the role and purpose of education, schools that adopt values education and become values-based schools, can positively influence the development of positive values, which sustain a civil, caring and compassionate society.

I invite you to become a part of *The Quiet Revolution*. 

Some Lessons From My Learning

What you present is as important as how you present it.

In 1989 I was fortunate and blessed to receive a Sir Winston Churchill Study Fellowship and flew from Perth, Western Australia to Iowa State University in order to study learning methodology with one of the great founding figures of suggestive learning techniques, Dr Donald Schuster. As part of my Iowa State course, I presented a piece on Thinking Skills and then Don asked me if I would come to Chicago in 1990 to present such a piece at the annual Conference for Teaching Practitioners.

Sometimes simple questions change your life.

From 1990 onwards I was able to attend 10 of the next 12 International Alliance for Learning Conferences. Each created ripples of learning that continue to resonate today. Here are a few of the ripples that relate to my everyday experience now as a professional speaker and teacher delivering my dynamic Leadership Thinking, Creative Presentation Skills and other programs.

Design

The experience of training with Dr Georgi Lozanov and Evelyn Gateva in Seattle 1991 taught me the marvel of great design. Delivery is one thing, but having a great program design to deliver is the foundation.

As Dr Gateva presented, I took notes on her elaboration process and loved the seemingly effortless way we as learners would be introduced to new material and then re-visit the material in a variety of ways without it ever seeming like a drill. Each activity or game we played never seemed trivial – role-play, physical movement or conversation was a wonderful blend of fun and purpose.

The Lesson: Learners will do stuff if it is meaningful to them. How we frame activities, games and physical learning pieces is vital.

The Second Lesson: Design for the wonderful use of repetition with variety. Utilise a variety of styles of learning, re-loop to the main messages and constantly build and reinforce learning

Mix

A year or two after Seattle, I have great memories of Minneapolis, where Dr Robert Sternberg took stage several times to mix great humour with great content. Of the many things that stuck in my mind from Bob's wonderful "Stand-Up Intellectual Comedy" was his research on intelligence. "IQ matters but not that much" is one of his slogans, and his research shows that intelligence is beyond IQ and more a mix of three types of smarts:

- Creative Smarts
- Analytical Smarts
- Practical Smarts

In every design of a speech, classroom lesson or training program, I look for the blend of Creative, Analytical and Practical, plus I throw Emotional Smarts into the brew as well.

The Lesson: Teachers are Design Artists.

The Second Lesson: In each presentation piece, make sure there is some of what I refer to as the Nitty-Gritty (based on my love of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, if only for their name, let alone their music). The Nitty-Grittys are the simple, immediately applicable pieces of learning, the down-to-earth things that people immediately catch and incorporate into their vocabulary and behaviour.



Laura Nyro

I never saw singer and songwriter Laura Nyro perform live, but she travels with me whenever I present about designing great lessons. In the 49 years of her short and creative life, Laura gave us many great tunes, including *The Wedding Bell Blues* (anyone remember the 5th Dimension?) and *Stony End*, recorded by Barbra Streisand and others. More important, she also wrote the song that I call the most influential song in my life, *And When I Die*. (See Thinking Caps on iTunes). This 1969 hit for big band Blood, Sweat and Tears has got all the elements for designing great lessons and programs. It's got:

- A simple start
- A solo voice at first
- A single instrument that becomes many
- It goes fast and slow
- It pauses at times and has moments of silence
- There is repetition of the main messages ►



PHOTO: MICHELLE GALLI

- There is a crazy little country and western bit within
- There is a Yee Hah moment
- It tackles a Big theme
- It is a mix of grand and simple
- When you think it is done, there is more
- It builds
- It has a reflective piece before it
- Has a big finish

The Lesson: "And When I Die" is like an active concert that demonstrates to us how we should design great learning modules.

The Second Lesson: Never underestimate the power of a single mind and the seeds left behind. Lauro Nyro was 17 when she wrote "And When I Die,"... "And when I'm dead, dead and gone, there'll be one child born in this world to carry on, to carry on." When we teach, there are seeds planted that are going to be carrying on, carrying on. Great teachers plant life-long seeds; never underestimate what you can do.

Music and laughter

For me, humour and music are wonderful ways to allow minds to free up and then, when open, to soak in the learning. It does not mean that we have to be comedians when we are teaching, it just means that we honour the laughter in a room. There is great energy in a smile, and there can be great community in a shared chuckle.

Over the years, I have learned to lighten up as a person and a teacher, and I have realised that every moment does not have to be chocker block full. When you allow space, ironically it generates more volume and more depth.

The Overall Lesson: Each classroom lesson needs to honour and respect the hearts, minds and diversity of folk and their neurons.

The Second Lesson: The art and skill of being an educator is ongoing and never ending. Learn to

love the nuance of methodology and add more crayons to your backpack of knowledge.

The Main Lesson: Enjoy and never under value the work you do. 🎵

"Learners will do stuff if it is meaningful to them. How we frame activities, games and physical learning pieces is vital".

Three Steps to Significant and Sustainable Change

Start with a vision and end with students able to take on the world.

Often the most significant influences of change can be seemingly quite simple, some would say common sense. The first important milestone of change is the creation of a vision, a clear purpose encompassing the organisation's beliefs, desires and best crack at foreseeing the future. Such a vision needs to be created collectively and in wide consultation with all stakeholders. The consultation needs to be authentic, not tokenism, the child's voice that states "stop teaching us stuff we already know" needs to be heard and reflected on. Most visions and mission statements are created and then put on the odd bit of letterhead and shelved. A vision needs room to grow and live within the organisation. In an educational setting, a visual metaphor helps to ensure the principles within it are owned by the key stakeholders, and importantly our clients, our students.

Once a vision is established, a leader needs to conceptualise a synthesis of up-to-date theory and research, current practices and trends to prioritise a way forward. Strategic implementation of the vision principles and priorities is essential. To successfully implement, live by two important words: abandon and embed. Question current school practices and how they fit in with the vision. For example, if a vision belief is one of empowerment, then students not being allowed to use photocopiers or assessment measures that are done to students, rather than done with them, need to be questioned, and maybe abandoned.

When a vision is created and a strategic plan for its implementation established, collective decisions need to be made about how they transfer to the student. After six years in your primary school environment, what would you hope your students would leave being equipped with? What sort of dispositions, self worth and learning abilities do you believe are necessary for future success and satisfaction in life?

Are our expectations in a primary school setting achievable and realistic? Julia Atkin's question "what is powerful to learn?" is a fundamental question to ask when living in an exponential information age. At Red Beach School, we believe that students need to leave with four key concepts and understandings, which relate directly to our vision.





They are for the students to advance:

Life Long Learning

Community Member

Knowledge

Powerful Learning Process

	Knowing what to do when you don't know what to do.
	Knowing how to relate to others, ask and get support when they don't know what to do.
	Having the foundation knowledge to draw on and connect to when they don't know what to do.
	Knowing how to start (learning process) when you don't know what to do.

Does it need to be much more complicated than that? I don't believe so. As we are often reminded in this 21st century climate, there are no easy answers to future problems. We need to ensure students are OK at dealing with uncertainty and change.

Finally the third essential component to achieving sustainable change is to then ask what teachers and teaching practices will make this possible. What do we need to do as practitioners to ensure our vision principles live and our students leave our school living those beliefs? Teachers are the difference makers, they influence and have power beyond reckon to ensure the next generation will be our future leaders. I have not met a teacher who does not wake up each morning wanting to do the best possible job she can for each individual in her class. How do we ensure our teaching practice is strategic, future-focused and the best it can possibly be


to move all from good to great?

Visioning has such potential to gain clarity and provide a way forward when done well. It is a wonderful filter for informing decisions and ensuring alignment. From employing the right teacher to providing effective feedback to moving practice forward, it is the essential driver of change.

Remember the three steps

The three steps to significant and sustainable change are

- Creating a collective vision
- Deciding on what a student should leave your school equipped with as a result of the vision
- Creating clarity around the teaching practice that will enable the student to leave as decided.

This is all wrapped in an organisational culture that has underlying norms of continuous improvement, deprivatising practice and ensuring learning is the organisation's core business. In creating such a culture, mental models are shaken up a little, narratives are shared to highlight beliefs and differences are valued. 

Effective Teacher – Professional Responsibilities

Aspirational and
innovating

Coherent and
embedded

Moving in a number
or areas

Developing new
approaches

Little in place

Embeds the RBS norms to contribute to a highly effective functioning learning community and organisational culture

Walks the talk of norms. Supports others in their acquisition of them

Knows about RBS norms

Learning about the norms and their application

Professional Responsibilities

Applies shared norms
Builds learning community.

It

Co-constructed learning experiences designed that are personalised, connected, purposeful that progress both learning capacity and content knowledge

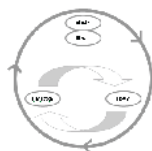
Learner input into designing learning encouraged. Teachers provide stretch through using and understanding learning progressions

Planning designed to meet learners needs based on some assessment information.

Teacher directed, isolated, activity based programme. Unrelated to learners needs

Designing Learning

Planning is a reflective process based on evidence
Can Justify 'how do I know my students need this learning
Reflects best practice



Continual willingness to collaborate, share and support in a professional learning community. Celebrates others successes. Contributes to the wider school community to make a difference

Openly shares resources with team and wider school learning community. Recognises others successes. Makes some contribution to wider community

Understands the benefits of collaboration and has a willingness to share

Works effectively in isolation. Little wider school participation

Active Contributor

Proactively supports the culture of the school (spirals up)
Participates
Collaborates
Celebrates to foster community - Fun

We



Heart RICH community and strong learning community operates. LLL deeply embedded. Minimal behaviour management

Reflects, stimulates and exemplifies learning. Learning process and learning progressions are

Majority of learners focused on learning. Teacher reinforces and models LLL. Limited behaviour management required

Environment stimulates learning and reflects current learning and some learning progressions

Use of RBS heart RICH language evident. Language shifts from managing behaviour to reinforcing learning. Engagement levels high

Teacher decides/controls the layout and displays within the environment. Some relevance to current learning

Focus is on behaviour not learning

Physical environment not conducive to learning (e.g. org. of resources) and has little evidence of learning

Creating Culture of learning

Environment
Behaviour management
Encouraging student ownership and motivation

Empowered to actively manage and take responsibility for personal health, well being and work/life balance. Experiences fulfilment and purpose.

Manages personal health and wellbeing through active goal setting and seeking support

Aware of imbalance often unable to action solutions

Personal health and well being is imbalanced. Reactive as opposed to proactive.

Personal balance and wellbeing

Fulfilment
Sense of purpose
Empowered to make a difference



I apply knowledge and understandings flexibly and richly to promote future learning in all students. Justifies and reflects on what, why and how future learning could and should occur in partnership with student learners

Intuitively aware of self (e.g. strengths and weaknesses) Continually reflects to self improve

My knowledge of a learning area moves from knowledge to understanding. I understand the big ideas, concepts and principles behind the body of knowledge

Constantly seeks to further understand self, openly accepts, reflects and acts on feedback. Continuous improvement evident

I build my knowledge in an area of need. I am at the 'get it' stage of the PL process

Awareness is built through external feedback. Ongoing support motivates and encourages self improvement.

I have little knowledge in a content area

Little awareness and understanding of self. Resistant to change. (e.g. sets goals with little challenge)

My own professional learning

Performance management
Attestation -Goals
Openness continuous improvement
Self Awareness

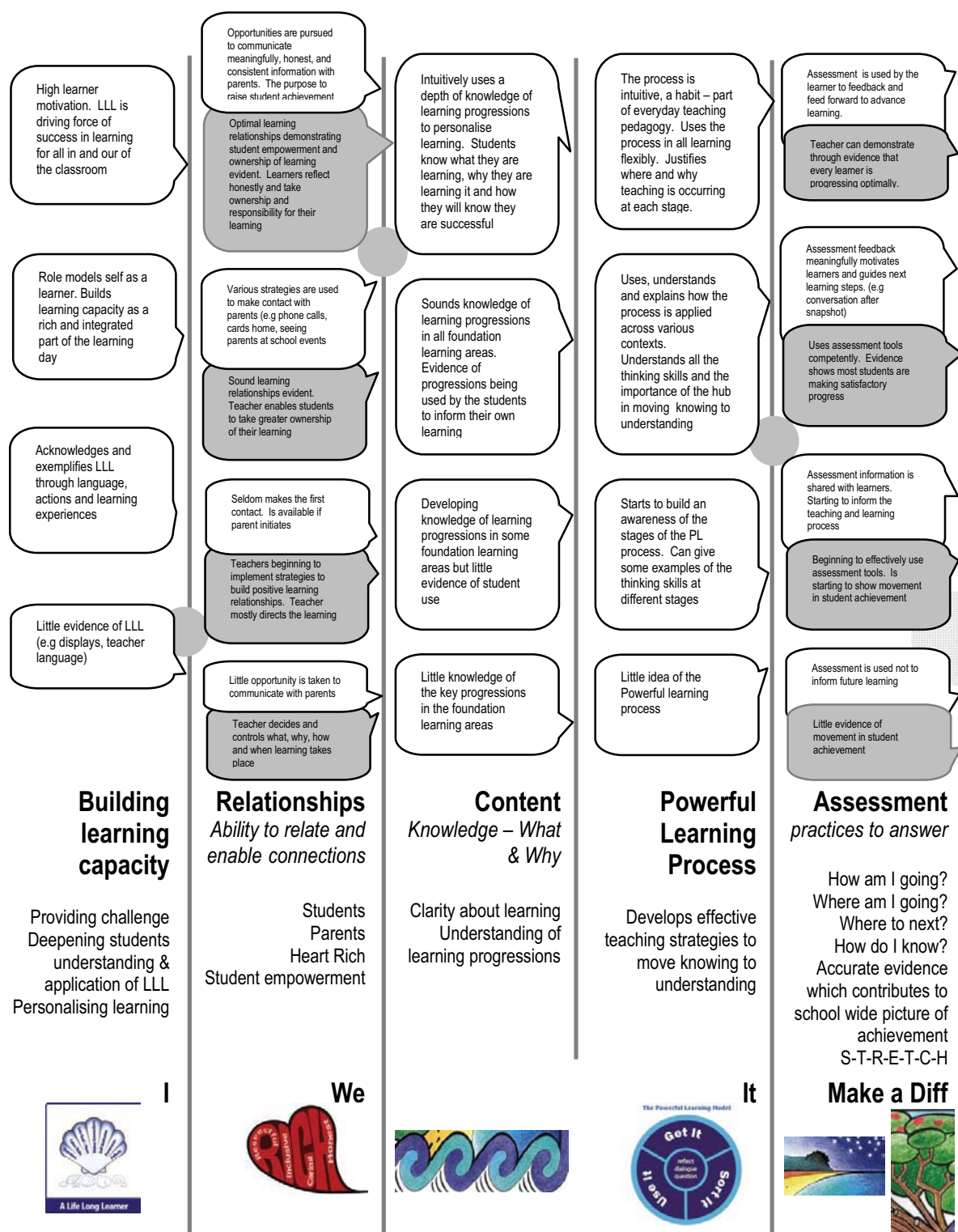


4 Central Beliefs

1. Vision principles (life long learning, achievement, empowerment, Community, Make a difference) Vision underpins all we do,

2. Learning is our core business (everyone is capable of learning),

Effective Teacher - Practice



3. Students with leave our school knowing – what to do when they don't know what to do, know how to relate and connect as a community member, knowing how to learn powerfully and have the necessary knowledge to learn on their own.

4. Developing self to be able to function in a digital world utilizing ICT tools to enhance learning.

Counterproductive Approaches

Choose the right words and actions and your students will surprise you.

Teachers are using counterproductive approaches and don't even realise it.

Learning requires motivation, but motivation to learn cannot be forced. Highly effective teachers realise this, so they prompt students to want to put forth effort by creating curiosity, challenge, and interest in meaningful lessons. In addition, these successful teachers create positive relationships with their students by practicing positivity, choice, and reflection. These practices are part of the teaching model which avoids approaches that inhibit motivation. Here are nine examples commonly used in schools today that are so counterproductive that they exacerbate schools' dropout rates:

1. Being reactive

Teachers too often become stressed by reacting to inappropriate behaviour. It is far more effective to employ a proactive approach at the outset to inspire students to want to behave responsibly and then use a non-adversarial response whenever they do not.

2. Reliance on rules

Rules are meant to control, not inspire. Rules are necessary in games, but when used between people, enforcement of rules automatically creates adversarial relationships. A more effective approach is to teach procedures and inspire responsible behaviour through expectations and reflection.

3. Aiming at obedience

Obedience does not create desire. A more effective approach is to promote responsibility; obedience then follows as a natural by-product.

4. Creating negatives

The brain thinks in pictures, not in words. When people tell others what not to do, the "don't" is what the brain sees. Example: "Don't look at your neighbour's paper!" Always communicate in positive terms of what you do want. Example: "Keep your eyes on your own paper."

5. Alienating students

Even the poorest salesperson knows not to alienate a customer, but teachers too often talk to students in ways that prompt negative feelings. Negative feelings stop students' desire to do what the teacher wants. People do "good" when they feel "good," not when they feel bad.

6. Confusing classroom management with discipline

Classroom management is the teacher's responsibility and has to do with teaching, practicing, and reinforcing procedures. Discipline, in contrast, is the student's responsibility and has to do with self-control. Having clarity between these two is necessary for both preventing and solving problems.

Too often, teachers assume students know how to do what is expected of them. A more effective approach is to teach expectations and procedures; have the students practice; have students visualise the process; and later reinforce the procedure by having them practice again. This process is necessary in order to have students successfully perform the activity.

7. Employing coercion

This approach is least effective in changing behaviour. Although teachers can control students temporarily, teachers cannot change students. People change themselves, and the most effective approach for change

is to eliminate coercion. NOTE: Noncoercion is not to be confused with permissiveness or not using authority.


8. Imposing consequences

Although consistency is important, imposing the same consequence on all students is the least fair approach. When a consequence is imposed, be it called "logical" or "natural," students are deprived of ownership in the decision. A more effective and fairer approach is to elicit a consequence or a procedure to redirect impulses so each student becomes more responsible. A teacher does this by asking students if they would rather be treated as a group or as individuals. They will readily have a preference to be treated as individuals and have ownership in the decision that will help them, rather than hurt them.

9. Relying on external approaches

We want to assist young people to be self-disciplined and responsible. Both traits require internal motivation, but rewarding behaviour and imposing punishments are external approaches. They also place the responsibility on someone else to instigate a change and, thereby, fail the critical test: How effective are they when no one is around? The greatest reward comes from the self-satisfaction of one's efforts. In addition, by rewarding kids with something they value (candy, stickers, prizes), we simply reinforce their childish values when what we really hope to do is to teach them about values that will last a lifetime.

In contrast to these counterproductive approaches, the Discipline Without Stress Teaching Model uses approaches that eliminate counterwill, the natural response to coercion.

Additional information is available at www.MarvinMarshall.com 

“Obedience does not create desire. A more effective approach is to promote responsibility; obedience then follows as a natural by-product.”

Making the Most of Professional Learning Communities

Ask for help and see just how strong you are.

A growing number of educators are involved in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). In my recent book, *Schooling by Design*, written with Grant Wiggins, I propose various professional roles for teachers when they are *not* instructing students. In this article, I will discuss three of these roles as defining the essential work of members of a Professional Learning Community:

PLC Member Role #1 – Serving as a “Critical Friend”

Once a month, members of a cross-grade level PLC team meet to exchange unit plans for “critical friend” feedback. Allison and her fourth grade partner, Tom, give copies of their upcoming interdisciplinary unit on the “rain forest” to 5th grade teachers, Everett and Elizabeth, in exchange for their E/LA “poetry” unit. Following reading and paired discussions of the units they received, each grade level team presents feedback and suggestions to the other.

During the meeting, Elizabeth and Everett suggest several essential questions for the rain forest unit (“How does where you live influence how you live?” and “How do living and non-living things of an eco-system interact?”) that can be productively revisited in fifth grade. As a group, the four teachers brainstorm ideas for a performance task that assesses several of the unit’s interdisciplinary learning targets. Allison and Tom commend the engaging learning activities of the poetry unit, but point out that the proposed assessment evidence does not align completely with the unit goals. Elizabeth and Everett discuss ways to sharpen the assessments. Tom suggests a wonderful Internet site on which elementary students can read poems written by students across the globe and publish their own poems. Everett and Elizabeth are thrilled to learn about this resource.

Teachers typically develop plans in isolation and (with the exception of untenured beginners) which are rarely reviewed by others. Teachers can sometimes get too close

to their work and have a difficult time seeing weaknesses. *All* teachers should play the role of a “critical friend” for their colleagues. Structured opportunities for peer reviews should be included as an explicit expectation of Professional Learning Communities.

Leaders can begin slowly to help staff become comfortable with peer review. For example, model the process with a lesson developed elsewhere. Discuss the roles of reviewers and designers. Ask for volunteers interested in having their own work submitted for peer review, and invite them to share the benefits of the feedback. Involve more staff in peer review as people become more familiar and comfortable with the process. A group size of three to seven teachers works well. When beginning, a school might schedule peer reviews once during the first semester and again during the second half of the year. Once the staff realizes the benefits, they may seek more frequent opportunities for feedback.

Any peer review process should be guided by an agreed-upon set of criteria so that the feedback is “standards based” and personalized.

Professional Role #2 – Looking at Student Work in Teams

Three times a year, the secondary English teachers meet in grade-level groups to evaluate student work from their district’s writing assessments. They mix student papers from the various classes and divide them among pairs of teachers. Using a rubric, the pairs score the papers and discuss their judgments (for inter-rater reliability). As part of the process, the entire grade-level team identifies “anchor” papers that illustrate the various performance levels of the rubric. They annotate the selected anchors with comments in the margin, describing the paper’s strengths and weaknesses. The scoring session concludes with the team identifying areas of needed instructional emphasis and share “best practice” strategies and resources for addressing the noted weaknesses.

“Continuous learning is a hallmark of professionalism in any field and especially relevant to a profession devoted to learning.”

Teachers should be *actively involved* in the analysis of achievement data and the formulation of improvement plans, so they will come to better understand and “own” student performance data. Ideally, the staff will engage in an on-going analysis of student performance data from *multiple sources*. What is needed, metaphorically speaking, is a “photo album” of evidence, including results from traditional tests along with a collection of student work generated from local assessment tasks.

When teachers meet in role-alike PLC teams (e.g., by grade-level and subject areas) to evaluate the results from agreed-upon assessments, they begin to identify general *patterns* of strengths as well as areas needing improvement.

Questions To Ask When Examining Student Work

Describe

- What knowledge and skills are assessed?
- What kinds of thinking are required (e.g., recall, interpretation, evaluation)?
- Are these the results I (we) expected? Why or why not?
- In what areas did the student(s) perform best?
- What weaknesses are evident?
- What misconceptions are revealed?
- Are there any surprises?
- What anomalies exist?
- Is there evidence of improvement or decline? If so, what caused the changes?

Evaluate

- By what criteria am I (are we) evaluating student work?

- Are these the most important criteria?
- How good is “good enough” (i.e., the performance standard)?

Interpret

- What does this work reveal about student learning and performance?
- What patterns are evident?
- What questions does this work raise?
- Is this work consistent with other achievement data?
- Are there different possible explanations for these results?

Identify Improvement Actions

- What teacher action(s) are needed to improve learning and performance?
- What student action(s) are needed to improve learning and performance?
- What systemic action(s) at the school/district level are needed to improve learning and performance (e.g., changes in curriculum, schedule, grouping)?

Professional Role #3 – Continuous Learner

A middle school principal told his staff that for the next two years he would evaluate half of their performance on their ability to learn about and experiment with innovative “best practices.” He asked the faculty to come up with a list of the most promising-sounding innovations in the field appropriate for their school. They whittled down the final list to six (e.g. differentiated instruction, authentic assessment, etc.). He then asked each staff member to join with three to five other teachers to form a working research and development PLC on one of the six identified topics. Their job over the course of the next two years was to investigate, try, and report to the faculty on their learning about the “best practice” and its effects on student learning. Many of the staff reported that this single action dramatically changed the culture of the school and led to demonstrable improvements in student attitude and achievement.

Continuous learning is a hallmark of professionalism in any field and especially relevant to a profession devoted to learning. Additionally, faculty members should learn how to evaluate the results of their teaching (described in Role #2 above) and how to use feedback to become more effective (e.g., as described in Role #1).

Educators can keep abreast of current research by taking university classes, participating in professional organizations, and attending regional or national conferences. Unfortunately, the majority of practicing teachers are not regularly engaged in these professional learning options. What is needed is *on-the-job* learning for *all* teachers. Here’s

a straightforward tactic for instigating this idea: A school principal selects a set five of articles describing research-based instructional practices. He distributes one of the articles to each staff member, and requests that they read and be prepared to discuss it at a forthcoming faculty meeting. They summarize the five articles and discuss them via a “jigsaw” process during the meeting. Teachers have the opportunity to explore new ideas and discuss their practical implications as part of a *regularly scheduled* staff meeting.

In addition to traditional PD activities, such as participating in school/district staff development experiences, teachers have an array of possibilities for enhancing their learning, including professional reading, peer-to-peer coaching and mentoring arrangements, and personalized growth plans. One particularly robust form of professional learning experience is action research.

Action research involves on-going, collaborative inquiry into matters of teaching and learning. It operates under the assumption that local educators, not outside experts, know best about where and how to improve their schools. It fosters a culture of collaborative problem solving and a team-oriented approach to school improvement. It puts a capital “P” in professionalism because it offers the potential to add to the knowledge base of our field. Here are a few examples of generic action research:

Shadow a student for a day

Pick a student at random and follow that student for a day. As you “walk in his shoes.” Consider questions such as, Is his schoolwork engaging? ...boring? Does the learner see purpose in what he is learning? Is he exploring big ideas? What are your impressions of his school experience? Take notes and report on your experiences at the next faculty meeting.

Questioning Strategies

Monitor your use of classroom questioning. What percentage of my questions require factual recall?, ...application?, ...synthesis or evaluation? What are the results of asking different types of questions? What happens when I use various follow-up strategies; e.g., “wait time”?, probes?, play devil’s advocate? Visit other teachers’ classrooms and take note of their questioning strategies. Then, share your findings.

Survey Graduates

Contact recent high school graduates who are now at institutions of higher education and employed. Ask them to describe the extent to which their K-12 schooling prepared them for future study and the world of work. In what ways were they well prepared? In what ways might their schools have prepared them

better? Present and discuss survey results with teachers and administrators.

Making time

Academic leaders can carefully examine *existing* blocks of non-instructional time (e.g., faculty meetings, before/after school periods, professional development days, team/department meetings) to see the extent to which they are used for continuous improvement. (Think of how often such scheduled meeting times are frittered away on matters that do not contribute to improved learning.)

In addition to the judicious use of available time, imaginative leaders have developed practical ways of *making time* for teachers to engage in peer reviews, collaboratively examine student work, and plan needed instructional interventions. The following list presents a set of such practical options for making time for results.

1. Half the faculty covers for the whole faculty once per month on pre-assigned days; classes double up and/or teachers of “specials” plan large-group activities
2. Teachers spend one hour per month on “results-oriented” actions, taken as needed from current faculty/department/team meetings and in-service days
3. Schools introduce late start/early release one day per month
4. Each grade-level/department team is allocated two hours per week, with coverage provided by other teams, administrators, student teachers, or substitutes
5. Extended year contract; e.g., three days of summer curriculum design work is built into the contract
6. Two hours of non-contact, staff time are added to each Monday, then traded for three days added to vacation
7. One permanent sub per grade level is hired for the needed period of time
8. The school year is reorganized — half-day twice per month should be scheduled with no students; add five minutes to other instructional days for the minutes lost
9. Teachers meet for an extended lunch and resource period or assembly schedule.
10. Providers of special group learning (Project Adventure, etc.) give assemblies to release teachers for three half-days per year.
11. Roving subs, hired for a day, release grade level/department teams

The 21st Century Teacher/Educator

Today's world requires so much more from teachers:
Fortunately, you're up for the challenge.

Many of our students are 21st-century learners. We know they are:

- Collaborators, networkers and communicators
- Adaptive and creative
- Information, media and technology savvy
- In need of instant gratification

But what are the characteristics we expect to see in a 21st-century educator? We know they are student centric and holistic. They are teaching about how to learn as much as teaching about the subject. We know they must be 21st-century learners as well. But teachers are more than this; there are eight characteristics of a 21st-century teacher:

The Adaptor

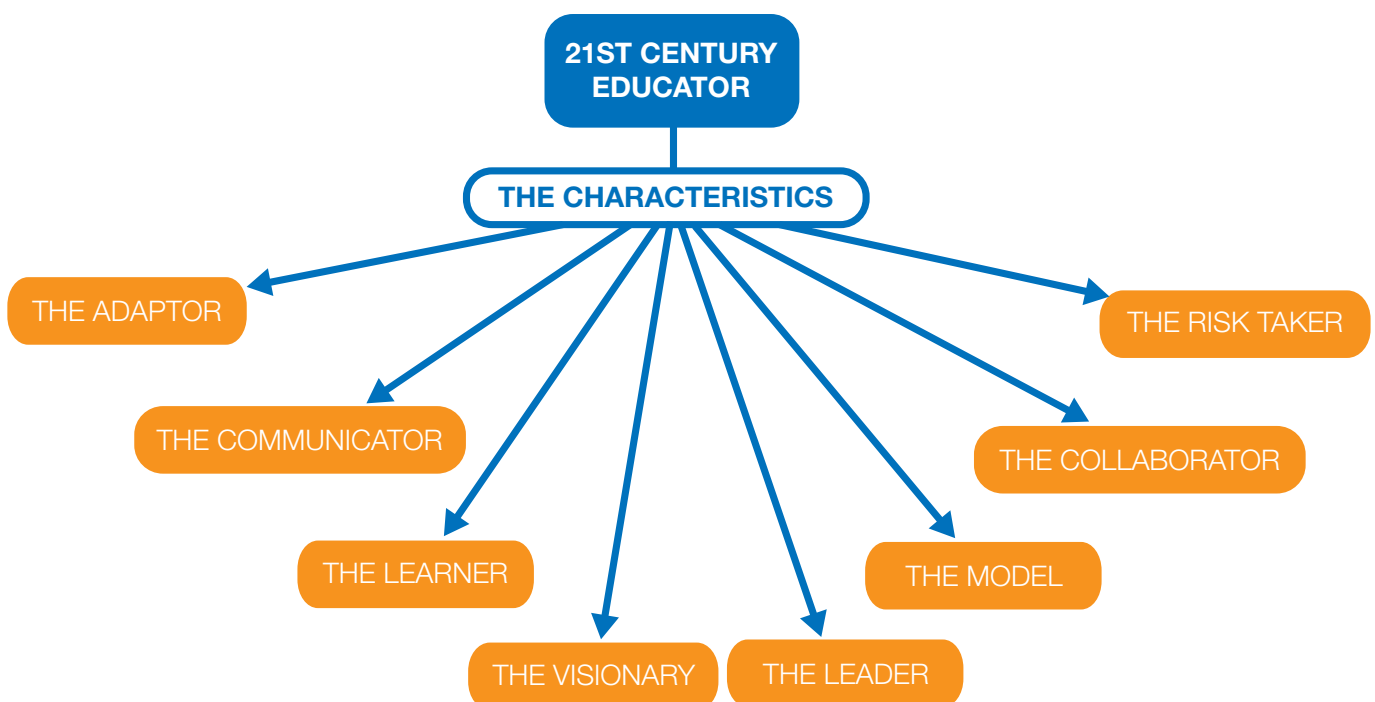
The 21st-century educator is an adaptor. With an assessment-focused education model, the 21st-century educator must be able to adapt the curriculum and its requirements to teach in digital modes. They are able to adapt software and hardware designed for a business model (such as Microsoft Office and Adobe) into tools suitable for educating a variety of age groups and abilities. They must also be able to adapt to a dynamic teaching experience. When it all goes wrong in the middle of a class, when the technologies fail, the show must go on.

As 21st-century educators, they must understand and apply different learning styles. They must be able to adapt their

teaching style to be inclusive of different modes of learning. The 21st-century teacher matches students' preferred learning style to a variety of tools. Gone is the chalk-and-talk approach most of us experienced as children. We've replaced it with learning that touches all of the senses: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic, as well as those who prefer the read/write learning style.

The Visionary

The 21st-century educator is a visionary. The visionary teacher can look at other people's ideas and approaches and envision how she would use these in the classroom. The visionary also looks across the disciplines and through the curricula. She can make links that reinforce and value



"The teacher's role is often that of moderator, facilitator and referee: shaping conversation, refocusing discussion and leading by example. The teacher learns how to structure and develop conversation."

learning in other areas, and leverage other fields to reinforce her own teaching and the students' learning.

Imagination is a key component of adaptability. It is a crucial component of the educator of today and tomorrow. The 21st-century teacher sees the potential in the emerging tools and web technologies and grasps and manipulates them to serve her needs.

The Collaborator

Ning, Blogger, Twitter, Wikispaces, Bebo, MSN, MySpace, Second life, the 21st-century educator is able to leverage these collaborative tools to enhance and captivate learners. She, too, must be a collaborator: sharing, contributing, adapting, and inventing.

The teacher's role is often that of moderator, facilitator and referee: shaping conversation, refocusing discussion and leading by example. The teacher learns how to structure and develop conversation. The electronic medium enables students who would normally be quiet, shy or retiring to participate, discuss, debate and argue.

Teachers can collaborate and contribute by becoming involved in the many online communities. They can provide their work under the Creative Commons licence. This allows educators access to an array of materials at no cost. The OER (open educational resources) project is a good example of resources produced under the Creative commons banner.

The Risk Taker

How can you as an educator know all these technologies? How can you teach the students to use them? There are so many, so much to learn. The 21st-century educator takes risks and is prepared to surrender to the students' greater knowledge. Have a vision of what you want and what the technology can achieve. Identify the goals and facilitate the learning.

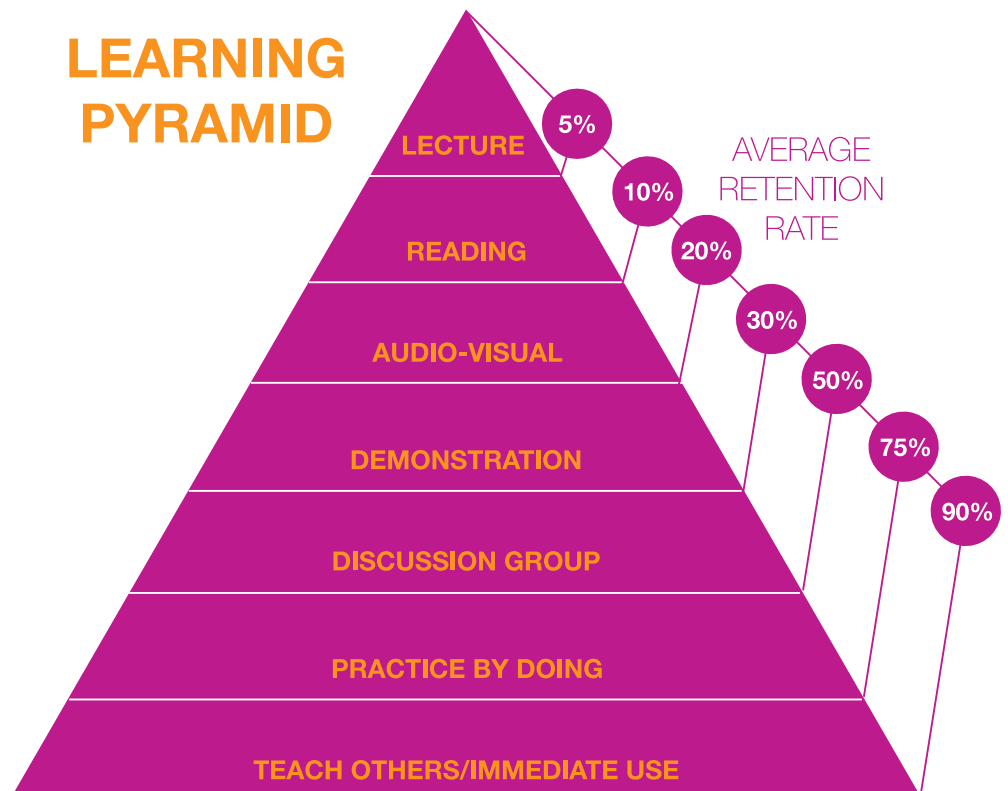
Use the Digital Children's strengths to understand and navigate new products; have the students teach each other. The learning pyramid shows that the highest retention of knowledge comes from teaching others. Trust your students.

The Learner

We expect our students to be life-long learners. How many schools have the phrase "life-long learners" in their mission statements and objectives? We, too, must continue to absorb experiences and knowledge. We must endeavour to stay current. I wonder how many people are still using their lesson and unit plans from five years ago?

In subject areas like information technology and the sciences, especially the life sciences, knowledge, understanding and technology are fluid and dynamic. To be a teacher here you must change and learn as the landscape changes. ►

LEARNING PYRAMID



"The visionary teacher can look at other people's ideas and approaches and envision how she would use these in the classroom."

Visionary

Risk-taker

Leader
Communicator

Model
Adaptor

21st-Century-Educator

Collaborator

Learner

The Communicator

"24/7 anywhere, anytime learning" is a catchphrase we often see. It is paired with "the life learner." To have anywhere, anytime learning, the teacher must be "anywhere and anytime;" not necessarily the same teacher, but the 21st-century teacher is a communicator, fluent in tools and technologies that enable communication and collaboration. They go beyond learning just how to do it. They also know how to facilitate communication, stimulate and control it, moderate and manage it.

The Model

As teachers, we model the behaviours we expect from our students. There is an expectation that teachers will teach values. In fact, we must model values. For some, we are the most consistent part of our students' lives. Students may see their teachers more often and for longer periods than their parents.

The 21st-century educator also models reflective practice; whether it's the quiet, personal inspection of her teaching and learning, or through reflective practice via blogs, twitter and other mediums, an educator must look both inwards and outwards.


Teachers model a number of other characteristics:

- Tolerance and respect
- Acceptance
- A wider view than just their curricula areas
- Global awareness
- Reflection
- Other human values

The Leader

Whether a champion of ICT integration or the quiet technology coach, a teacher

leads by example. They could be a maverick or early adopter. But, above all, the 21st-century educator is a leader. Leadership, like clear goals and objectives, is crucial to the success or failure of any project. Thousand and Villa's paper, *Managing Complex Change*, summarises this brilliantly, showing the elements required to achieve successful change.

The 21st-century teacher must have vision, skills, incentives, resources and an action plan to educate successfully. They are subject experts, a counsellor and frequently an administrator. The role is a complex one. 

Thousand and Villa's Summary of Managing Complex Change

VISION	+	SKILLS	+	INCENTIVES	+	RESOURCES	+	ACTION PLAY	=	
✓	+	✓	+	✓	+	✓	+	✓	=	CHANGE
		✓	+	✓	+	✓	+	✓	=	CONFUSION
✓	+			✓	+	✓	+	✓	=	ANXIETY
✓	+	✓	+			✓	+	✓	=	RESISTANCE
✓	+	✓	+	✓	+			✓	=	FRUSTRATION
✓	+	✓	+	✓	+	✓	+		=	TREADMILL

Kids Know They Must Study: They Just Don't Know How

Show your students how to study and your parents how to support their children, and everyone will be happier.

Mention the word exam to high school students, and you'll probably see them breakout in a cold sweat. Preparing for exams, for some students, means a 48-hour cramming session prior to an exam, but there's always the risk on exam day that the facts will disappear into thin air, faster than you can say NCEA.

Don't worry: Help is at hand in the form of study-skills guru Karen Boyes, who has worked with hundreds of students throughout New Zealand.

Writing important facts in red is just one piece of advice Karen gives students in her study-skills workshops. Successful study takes planning and, with time ticking away, Karen cuts to the chase and offers students top tips to study smarter and survive exam time.

"Karen worked with Year 11 and Year 13 students at the beginning of Term 4 prior to exams and ran a two-hour session with each group," shares Graeme McFadyen, principal of Spotswood College. "She is a dynamic person and engages students with colour and vibrant presentations. We also

used her to work with a group of Year 9 students to focus on how to learn."

Learn the right stuff

Learning what to revise is as important as how to revise. According to Karen, it's a case of working smarter, not harder. The most important revision tip she gives students is to learn what they don't know.

"Karen teaches students how to learn and demonstrates how to revise," says Graeme. "The workshop focuses on skills; for example, different ways to show and remember information to pass exams."

It's a family affair

"After the students' session, Karen ran a parent evening to teach parents how to learn, what they can do to support their child's learning and what kind of questions they should be asking," says Graeme.

He attributes the workshops' success to Karen's empathy with others: "Karen is a clever communicator and has a good rapport with people. This is the third time we've invited her to run workshops in our school."

Karen's tips to thrive at exam time

- 1. Goodbye cramming, hello planning.** Make a revision plan and stick to it.
- 2. Dive in.** Learn the most important facts first.
- 3. Back up.** Review the most important information last.
- 4. Red is the new black.** Using colour makes it easier for the brain to process. Red, for example, goes into the long-term memory so highlight important facts in red.
- 5. Talk is good.** Tell someone about what you have learnt. Using a conversational tone helps information to sink in.

Spread the word

Jane Hamilton, assistant principal of Mount Aspiring College, says that one of the strengths of Karen's workshops is that an outsider is reinforcing the message that teachers are already communicating. Year 11 students and teachers attend the workshops and, to sustain the professional development, new teachers are encouraged to take part. The school has used Karen for several years so there's a cumulative effect and a shared understanding between teachers, students and parents about how to study. Plus, each time Karen comes with new ideas, everyone upskills. ►



"There's evidence that the skills learnt in the workshops transfer to the classroom. Jane sees Year 12 and 13 students talking about revising and using colours, visual displays and graphic organisers to do so."

Stuck on you

There's evidence that the skills learnt in the workshops transfer to the classroom. Jane sees Year 12 and 13 students talking about revising and using colours, visual displays and graphic organisers to do so. Year 13 student Lauren Wootton, who attended two of Karen's sessions, still uses scrapbooking to help her study and recognises the importance of colour and pictures as memory triggers. Lauren finds using pictures in sequence shows how ideas are linked, which she finds is "good for learning science."

Know thyself

"One of the strengths of the workshops is the way Karen offers very individual feedback to students and encourages them to think about 'how do I best learn myself?' and to put the skills into practice during an exam," says Graeme.

While it's difficult to measure success in terms of exam results, Jane has a "gut feeling it is working" and sees "students tap into the skills." It's an indication that it works when a student says, "I've just had the best day. Before the workshop, everyone told us to study, but no one told us how."

A study skills workshop is an investment for schools, but it's guaranteed to offer lessons your students won't forget. 📖

Developing a Classroom Culture of Thinking: A Whole School Approach

A dedicated effort to create a thinking culture is needed to produce lifelong learners.

Few people would argue that one of schooling's primary objectives should involve teaching tools for life-long learning. As a result, many educators place a high priority on empowering students with thinking skills, such as the ability to reason, make informed judgements, critically evaluate information, and think both creatively and caringly. Immersion in high-order thinking, therefore, should be an integral aspect of students' learning in every lesson, every day.

Schools benefit from having a framework for a whole school approach to the explicit teaching of thinking skills and adhering to a prescribed scope and sequence for teaching thinking that encompasses a wide range of strategies, many aimed at developing higher-order thinking skills.

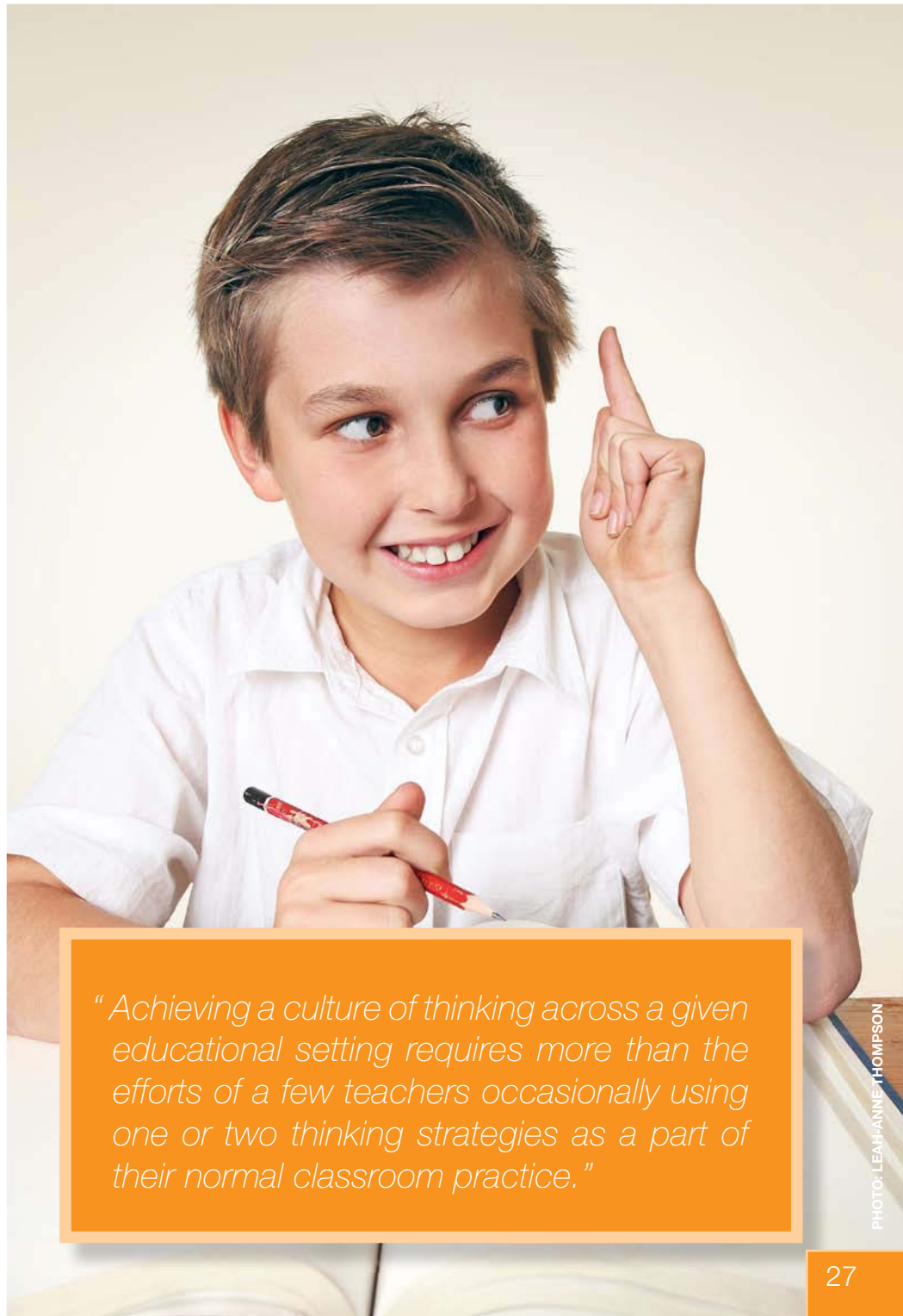
WHAT IS A THINKING CULTURE ?

A classroom culture is as a supportive environment in which specific factors work together in a synergetic fashion to initiate and reinforce productive thinking in a critical, creative and caring sense. In developing a thinking culture, teachers must provide activities that will:

- empower students with the language, tools and strategies to engage in a wide range of analytical, critical, creative and caring thinking tasks
- provide on-going opportunities for developing, practicing and refining the skills of thinking
- provide instruction and practice in ways of managing, organising and recording thinking
- assist in the transfer of skills to everyday life and everyday situations as tools for life-long learning.

WHY A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH?

Achieving a culture of thinking across a given educational setting requires more than the efforts of a few teachers occasionally ►



"Achieving a culture of thinking across a given educational setting requires more than the efforts of a few teachers occasionally using one or two thinking strategies as a part of their normal classroom practice."

using one or two thinking strategies as a part of their normal classroom practice.

A whole-school approach that provides a scope and sequence for the introduction of thinking skills at specific year levels or across faculties will have a much greater chance of success. Developing a thinking culture within a school will require that all teachers:

- establish and use an appropriate language of thinking in their classroom
- are familiar with a diverse range of thinking strategies to use in their own planning and programming
- make extensive use of graphic organisers to assist students to better manage, organise, record and recall their thinking.

Furthermore, teachers will progressively expose all students to a range of thinking strategies that will develop their skills in:

- many different types of thinking, including analytical thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking, caring thinking
- responding to a wide range of different question types

- framing their own questions using question-generating tools
- using graphic organisers to record thinking and to present the products of their thinking
- making decisions and solving problems.

Students will engage in activities that involve planning for good thinking, activating thinking and transferring thinking processes into different contexts within curriculum areas, across subject boundaries and into tools for life-long learning.

The scope of the modules in my "Teaching thinking skills in the primary years" provides the opportunity for students to receive explicit instruction in several models and strategies in thinking.

Framing these models and strategies into a sequence for explicit teaching at specific year levels and by different faculty groups ensures that all students become familiar with all approaches to thinking in a systematic fashion, not just those most favoured by particular teachers. This will mean, of course, that senior secondary students enter this phase of their education with an extensive range of tools, skills and strategies that enhance their ability to work more effectively and efficiently.


DEVELOPING A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH

In developing a whole school approach, teaching staff will decide when it is most appropriate to introduce specific strategies. Modules that introduce tools we wish students to revisit many times throughout their schooling should appear early within an agreed sequence. Teachers should delay the explicit teaching of the more complex thinking frameworks and strategies until the later years. They, however, should not hesitate to use tools or strategies in their own planning and programming.

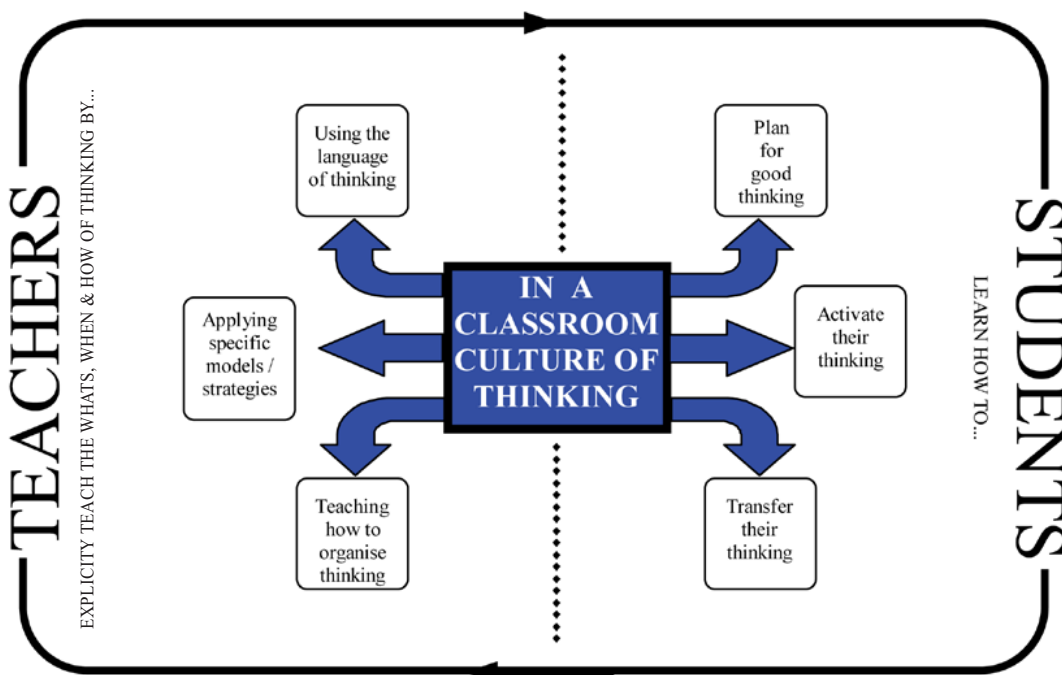
Teacher and administrators must address many issues in developing a whole school approach to the teaching of thinking, including staff training and development, tracking students understanding of thinking strategies, and implementing indicators of successful intervention. My publication, *Developing a thinking curriculum at your school*, outlines how schools in Australia and New Zealand have tackled these issues.

A TWO-SIDED COIN

A culture of thinking is a two-sided coin. One side of the coin is all about what teachers do to develop the culture and the other, what students do within a culture of thinking. Most important, both occur within an environment which:

- does not see the teaching of thinking as an add-on to an already overcrowded curriculum
- is aimed at enabling students to reason, think, and solve problems so that they engage in complex thinking and tackle new situations and unfamiliar problems
- is designed to relate thinking and learning strategies to discipline-based knowledge
- encourages students to learn how to learn, to become motivated, self-regulated, life-long learners
- infuses thinking into every teaching and learning activity – every lesson, every day. 

A CLASSROOM CULTURE OF THINKING



The First Five Steps To Creating Happy And Powerfully Positive Playtimes

Your first step is to talk with the kids.

Students can spend up to 25 percent of their school day in the playground, and if the playground is an angry, hostile place, or if there are pockets of problems, we face challenges after play wasting good learning time resolving conflict. Teachers frequently find that playground problems wind up some children so much that their brain is no longer wired for learning. Investing time and energy in creating positive structures that encourage positive play is worth its weight in gold.

You can take five steps to create happy and powerfully positive playtimes.

Step 1: Playtime audit

The process involves evaluating, developing and improving playtimes (including development of the outdoor play environment).

The audit needs to look at:

- Children's involvement
- Level of enjoyment for all concerned
- Behaviour
- Rules and responsibilities
- Rewards and consequences
- Time
- Space
- Staffing
- Resources: fixed, hand-held and non-equipment
- Storage of resources
- Links between class-time and playtime

And most important:

- The organization of all of the above.

Once you've identified the school's strengths and weaknesses, you can create action plans.

Step 2: Design and create your dream school playground

Schools have always found it invaluable to ask the children to design their dream playground. You can glean lots of fresh ideas this way. With the design and technology challenge, we like to get the whole school involved. Firstly children put their designs onto paper; secondly they work together to create a 3D model of their playground.

Get children to think about:

- Activity areas
- Equipment small and large
- Use of space
- Use of jungle gyms, sand pits, etc
- Storage
- Playground clubs: eco club, dance club, netball, football, chicken club (looking after the school chickens), etc.

Most of my schools are amazed by the imagination, creativity and skill that can develop from such a project.

Step 3: Playground games activity areas

As I mentioned in issue five of *Teachers Matter*, some of our children have lost the art of knowing how to play. I encourage schools to set up an activity area where teachers, support staff, playground buddies or anyone else interested in helping out at playtime can encourage and teach games. *101 Playground Games* is a great resource with lots of old and new games.

Games have the capacity to be hugely inclusive of all children, no matter what age, culture, race, creed or ability; they offer opportunities for everyone in the school playground to get involved. ►



Choosing a playground games activity area

Get the adults and children to work together on deciding where the best place would be to have a games area. It helps if the area has boundaries and is a good size. This will always be the game area, so children and adults know where to congregate at playtimes when they want to play games.

You may also want to create additional zoned activity areas.

Explaining a game

- Read out the game to the group and explain the rules as clearly and simply as possible. Do it in a fun way, encouraging participation and playfulness.
- Make sure everyone can see and hear you. Stand on the edge of the circle rather than in the middle.
- Ask if there are any questions.
- Extend an invitation to play. Say "let's play.... Rather than, "you are going to play...."
- Always ask for a volunteer to be "it."
- Play each game a couple of times.
- Always look for opportunities to make a game more fun -- add fantasy, chanting, singing, change the name to the latest craze, etc.
- Encourage participation, effort and satisfaction rather than winning.
- Ask for feedback on how it went.
- Once there is agreement that the game is



working, the responsibility for playing the game with the agreed rules and guidelines can be left with the children.

"Game of the week" or "Games menu"

Choose a new game to learn each week. You can introduce this in an assembly and display it in the playground so that children can learn and practice it at break time. Additionally, children may like to select a "games menu," which has a selection of games to be played each week of the term.

Step 4: Games training for the adults

I would suggest that teacher aides, teachers and any other adults involved in play have at least two hours of games training. This would be to introduce new games and reinforce and remind them of old ones.

As Confucius' saying "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand" indicates, the best way of learning anything new is to do it.

What to do:


- Select 10-20 games. You can download a free copy of the traditional games chapter from my website, www.successpartnership.co.nz or use a selection of other games. Copy and laminate them onto a coloured card. Give one set to each member of staff. Select a leader to organise the games.
- Go play.
- Evaluate the games.

This is also a great team-building exercise and lots of fun.

Step 5: Organising games in the playground; adults and children playing together

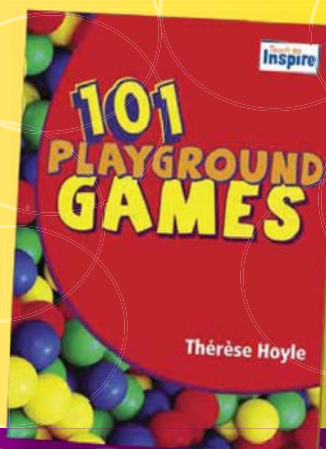
The best playtimes are those that are well organised with a balance of free play and structured activities children can choose to join.

It is important to remember that if we are to expect children to play games in the playground, then it helps if we adults get involved, too. It is also great fun. I have often found that if I have children who are well trained in the games, they can take over once I have left.

Next time, Part II of this article will include five more steps to powerfully positive playtimes. 

A collection of active and engaging games for children

by Therese Hoyle



available from www.spectrumeducation.com


 A woman with dark hair and glasses is shown in profile, looking towards the right. She is holding a blue marker and has just drawn a horizontal line connecting two points labeled 'A' and 'B'. The points are marked with blue dots. She is wearing a ring with a large purple gemstone on her finger.

A ————— B

What Am I Really Teaching?

You might know exactly what you want to teach your students:
Be sure to spell it out clearly for others.

Somewhere in your education, you would have studied the history of the foundation of your country. You would have committed dates, names and documents to memory. You might also have learned something of the periodic table in science, how to conjugate the verb 'to be' in French and how to solve a quadratic equation. Where has all that learning gone?

As teachers, we all recognise that much of the factual knowledge we impart to our students will be forgotten. During the 1970s, a comedian based a routine called the "Five-Minute University" around this idea. His premise was that in five minutes he could impart all the knowledge that most university students remember five years after they leave school. Your Spanish language classes would be reduced to

"The notion of intention is important. If these are the most important, lasting outcomes of education, surely we need to do more than assume they will be caught indirectly by exposure to a positive school culture."

"Cómo es usted?" (How are you?) and "Muy bien." (Very well.) Sometimes we can find deep truths in humour.

In our workshops with teachers, administrators, parents and senior citizens, we often ask, "What would you like students to remember five years after they have left school?" It is, perhaps, not surprising that the results are similar wherever we ask: ►



PHOTO: HELDER ALMEIDA

- Recognise his or her abilities
- Be creative
- Be able to solve problems
- Know what and how to study
- Be self-motivated and confident
- Be able to operate in a variety of environments
- Recognise injustice
- Be productive citizens
- Be lifelong learners
- Be able to work in teams
- Be compassionate
- Appreciate the value of education
- Have a sense of humour
- Have the ability to communicate clearly
- Finish things

What was conspicuously absent was any reference to specific factual information.

Next, we ask: “Where are these things taught with intention in the curriculum?”

The notion of intention is important. If these are the most important, lasting outcomes of education, surely we need to do more than assume they will be caught indirectly by exposure to a positive school culture and by participating in the things that happen in our classrooms. Our curriculum statements, our planning documents and our day-to-day lesson plans need to incorporate these behaviours and attitudes as specific learning outcomes. We need to have a wide repertoire of strategies that enables us to infuse these outcomes into discipline-based learning tasks. These long-range learning goals must be planned for and specifically taught, and should inform the way we teach the subject content in every discipline.

As we analysed these responses, it became clear that they reflected the dispositions of intelligent, successful people, as described by the Habits of Mind. These 16 dispositions provide teachers with the focus, structure, language and strategies they need to teach with intentionality those things that

ensure life-long learning and productive participation in society after school.

One of the characteristics of thought-filled schools is that all participants share a common sense of purpose. In these schools, parents, teachers and administrators have agreed upon a clear set of objectives. Has your school initiated this discussion? Are you sure that your sense of purpose is compatible with your principal’s? Do the parents of the students you teach have the same view as you of the purposes behind the activities in your classroom? Do you just want your students to pass the tests at the end of the year? Or would you like to think there are some long-term benefits from your efforts, some things that will still be present and growing five years after they leave your care and influence?

Start the discussion! 

Operationalising The Habits Of Mind: A First Step To Self-Assessment

Lead students to success by starting with a clear picture of their goals.

While talking with students about the value of persisting, one young man raised his hand and said, "I'd love to persist, but no one has ever taught me how." We assume that students understand classroom instructional terms, goals, behaviours and vocabulary. However, some terms remain vague until we help students clarify and hold visions in their minds of what the Habits of Mind look like, sound like, or feel like.

Defining Operationally

"Operationally" means that a vague name for an action is translated into observable, tangible terms that can be experienced through one or more senses. Invite students to define operationally by thinking back to a time when they had to use clear and precise language, when they really listened or were listened to, when they solved problems successfully or when they found humour in a situation. Ask students what they would see a person doing or hear them saying if they were thinking flexibly, listening with understanding and empathy, and striving for accuracy. Students can easily "operationalise" these Habits of Mind by supplying rich examples from their experiences.

Students and teachers of Thomasville Primary School in Thomasville, North Carolina in the United States developed these operational definitions:

Persisting

- Staying on task a reasonable length of time
- Looking for multiple ways to accomplish a task
- Analysing and evaluating tasks by seeking new knowledge while verifying results
- Demonstrating diligence despite obstacles

Creating, Imagining, Innovating

- Exploring educational resources
- Trying to complete tasks in imaginative ways
- Analysing ideas in new ways using fluency and flexibility
- Reflecting on products and ideas by analysing and evaluating

Finding Humour

- Creating things that are funny
- Using humour to entertain, delight, and surprise others
- Recognising, creating, and evaluating whimsical ideas/situations

Criteria

When collecting examples of operational definitions, adhere to certain criteria. If the statements do not meet these criteria, continue to probe and clarify.

Statements must be observable.

Sometimes students will say such words as, "empathy means be nice to each other." But what does it look like to "be nice"? How would we know that someone is being "nice?" You might have to probe more deeply to achieve a statement that is in observable terms. Students might say, "Being nice means saying things like 'thank you' and 'please'."

Statements must be positive.

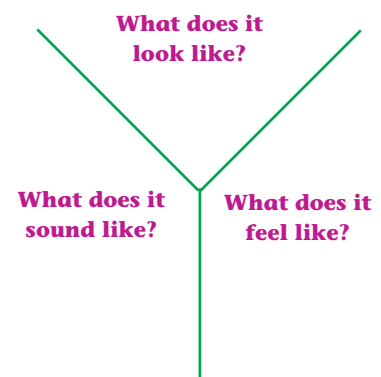
Students might contribute negative examples. They might say that an attribute of good listening is "NOT" interrupting. However, it is impossible to see or collect evidence of the absence of performance. Probe more deeply. Say, "If a person were NOT interrupting, what would they be doing?" One student told us, "You'd see only one pair of lips moving at a time."

Statements must be feasible.

Operational definitions must be feasible for a student or group. We often expect students to demonstrate that they are listening by establishing eye contact with the speaker. In some cultures, however, this would be an affront and students would be admonished for being disrespectful. Age makes a difference. To expect very young children to paraphrase another's idea is beyond their capability at such an egocentric stage of development.

Y Charts

Y charts are powerful in helping students develop operational definitions. The process for building Y charts is to ask students to consider what a Habit looks like, sounds like and feels like in real situations. The teacher may talk about a student sitting in class persisting to finish a piece of writing before the end of the lesson. Ask students to describe the facial expressions on the student's face, his or her body language or how the student is behaving in relation to others. Again, encourage the students to be as specific as possible and to explain their choices. Saying the student looks like he is concentrating doesn't go far enough. Instead, ask them to state what tells us he is concentrating: a wrinkled brow, the ►



chewing of a pencil, the head down whilst others are off-task. What might a person say if he/she were persisting? "Don't bother me, I want to complete this assignment" or "I think I see another way to approach this problem. I'm going to keep trying different ways until I get it!" And what might it feel like? Frustration when their strategy doesn't work; jubilation when it does!

Self-evaluating

Evaluation, the highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy, means generating, holding in your head and applying a set of internal and external criteria. The intent of assessment, therefore, should be to support learners in becoming self-directing -- increasingly more able to self-assess. The Habits of Mind provide a perfect opportunity to foster the capacity for self-evaluation. Following are some examples of operational definitions translated into "I" statements:

Listening with Understanding and Empathy

1. I wait until someone is finished before I take my turn to speak
2. I show respect to the speaker by facing them.

"Ask students what they would see a person doing or hear them saying if they were thinking flexibly, listening with understanding and empathy, and striving for accuracy."

3. I show that I am listening by making eye contact with the individual who is speaking.
4. I show that I am listening by nodding and shaking my head.

Checklists

Checklists develop indicators that can guide self-assessment. Ask students, "What would it look like if a person were a good listener? What would it sound like if a person were a good listener?" Guide students as they generate a list of positively stated, observable behaviours. For example, in the "looks like" category, students might say, "maintains eye contact" or "nods head when agreeing." In the "sounds like" category, they might say, "builds on the other person's ideas" or "clarifies when does not understand." Students may self-assess using a format like the one below.

As students become more familiar with observing these behaviours, they often shift

to a checklist for their group. The teacher might ask them to rate themselves and others. Students could then compare ratings and see how accurately they perceive themselves. The teacher might also give feedback with specific, positive examples.

Keeping an inventory such as a checklist during class interactions, when solving problems, and after interacting with others can help individuals and groups gather valuable data upon which to self-reflect and plan for learning as they self monitor more effectively. A class meeting might start with a facilitator drawing criteria from the class as a reminder of how to work successfully as a group. During a class discussion, students monitor their own behaviours and are aware of each other's performances. Before the end of the work, the teacher asks the students to reflect on the group's interaction and to describe how they did or didn't meet the criteria. They explore feelings and note indicators of how the team is working together more synergistically. Teachers may pose such metacognitive questions as:

- What decisions did you make about when and how to participate?
- What metacognitive strategies did

When I am Persisting I...	Often	Sometimes	Not yet
Know what I need to do to finish a task			
Know what to say to my friends so they won't distract me			
Know who to ask for help			
Move somewhere so I can concentrate			
Know when I need the help of someone else			
Say encouraging things to myself to stay on task			
Look forward to feeling pleased with myself when I'm done			



PHOTO: BEARDEAN

you employ to monitor your own listening skills?

- What were some of the effects of your decisions for you and others in your group?
- What signals will you look for in the future to alert you to the need for these good listening skills?
- As you anticipate future team meetings, what commitments might you make to strengthen the groups' productivity?


Building Rubrics

Involving students in the development of rubrics is another way for students to self-assess their performance. Rubrics differ from checklists in that they require a quality determination. Checklists ask about frequency or simply whether there is evidence of the behaviour or particular criterion in the work. Rubrics require a judgment about the quality of the work. Providing rubrics serves several purposes:

1. They remind students of the agreed-upon criteria for excellence.
2. They provide a systematic way to chart growth and improvement.
3. They define the explicit criteria for excellence so that students can rate themselves and then set goals and strategies for personal mastery.

Rubrics can show stages of development. Each category should be sufficiently clear so that students can learn from the feedback about their behaviour and see ways to improve. For example, in the rubric here, we have used the language that signifies the development from novice to expert. We have found that students respond to this language favourably. Rather than thinking of themselves as failures, they think of themselves as learners. Everyone is a novice at something.

Why is self-evaluation so valuable?

The ultimate purpose of evaluation is to have students self-evaluate. The student who writes a paragraph and then asks the teacher "Is this OK?" is a student who is not self-evaluating. How will this student cope when presented with an extended piece of writing or complex problem to solve? He or she is still in the habit of relying on others to approve, to judge to value. Self-evaluation moves some of this responsibility to the student. We want students to be committed to a lifetime of self-managing, self-monitoring and self-modifying. If students graduate from our schools dependent on others to tell them what is good, adequate, or excellent work, then we have failed them. They must judge for themselves. 

CREATING, IMAGING INNOVATING RUBRIC FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS

Expert	I always think of my own ideas and can explain how I got them
Skilled	I usually think of my own ideas and can sometimes say how I got them
Apprentice	I can sometimes think of my own ideas and don't need much help
Beginner	I am beginning to come up with new ideas; sometimes with help

"...there isn't a shred of evidence to support the widely accepted assumption that homework yields academic or non academic benefits for students of any age. The idea that homework teaches good work habits or develops positive character traits (such as self-discipline and independence) could be described as an urban myth, except for the fact that it's taken seriously in suburban and rural areas, too."

— Alfie Kohn, *The Homework Myth: Why Our Kids Get Too Much of a Bad Thing*

The Real Truth About Homework

You mean well when you assign homework, but you might be doing more harm than good.

One of the sacred cows of children's education is homework. It has been around for as long as schools and quietly creates stress and havoc for teachers, parents and students – and it's time it was exposed for the fraud that it is.

This argument is focused on primary school to keep things simple. Also, reading is not homework and needs to be a family activity.

Let's start where most good arguments start: Research. No research shows that doing homework improves educational outcomes. No matter how much teachers and educators want it, it doesn't exist. The only thing researchers found in the United States was that the number of students with homework has increased from 34 percent in 1981 to 64 percent in 2002. This after-school activity doesn't increase academic performance, and yet it has continued to erode children's lives, and educators and parents need to discuss this.

Ironically, homework is often given to children because parents believe it's what "good schools" do. Parents think they are "learning more." Indeed homework policy is a big part of many independent schools' glossy prospectus brochures, in the hope that well-meaning parents will part with their hard-earned money to go "private." This is because more homework will "ensure" your son or daughter will become smarter and cleverer and do better at exams.

in class and don't need to steal their time outside of school. Teachers who start each day checking homework create stress in the students who haven't completed it. Today's children are already living at high stress levels. They need to have down time doing fun things that correct the cortisol flooding that happens in their brains when they feel stressed. Stress can create a primitive response in the immature brain, and upper cognitive functioning is impossible when stress is present.

Primary students definitely shouldn't be spending time on mindless work sheets, long lists of words, colouring or memory activities that make them look like performing monkeys. After school, children are tired and the last thing they need is boring activities. Any brain-compatible educator knows that this is ineffective learning, if any learning takes place at all.

A teacher emailed me after I argued against homework for primary kids on an Australian TV breakfast program. She wrote:

"I run workshops for teachers and watch them in their classrooms, and I agree wholeheartedly with everything you have said about homework. It is great to have someone back this up with reference to research. When I was teaching I gave homework - worksheets, dull mindless revision in a booklet for the term because it is what parents asked for and the admin required. As a parent I hated the arguments trying to get my kids to do their homework when I would have much rather had them off playing sport etc."

Some of the new principles that have come from brain-compatible learning experts suggest:

1. Tiredness and stress negatively impact learning
2. Learning outcomes are improved when students are interested and enthusiastic

3. Boredom and coercion are toxic to the brain
4. Calm, happy children learn best
5. Students need quiet "down" time after school to allow the brain to process new learning
6. Over-scheduled children can be easily overwhelmed by "more school work" at night
7. Frequent homework can create negative attitudes toward all learning

Carole Ames of Michigan State University points out that "quantitative changes in behaviour" — such as requiring students to spend more hours in front of books or worksheets — don't help children learn better. Rather, it's "qualitative changes in the ways students view themselves in relation to the task, how they engage in the process of learning, and then respond to the learning activities and situation." Assigning homework is unlikely to have a positive effect on any of these variables and often does the opposite.

Children, especially up to 10 years of age, are always learning. The emotional and social skills that they learn ►

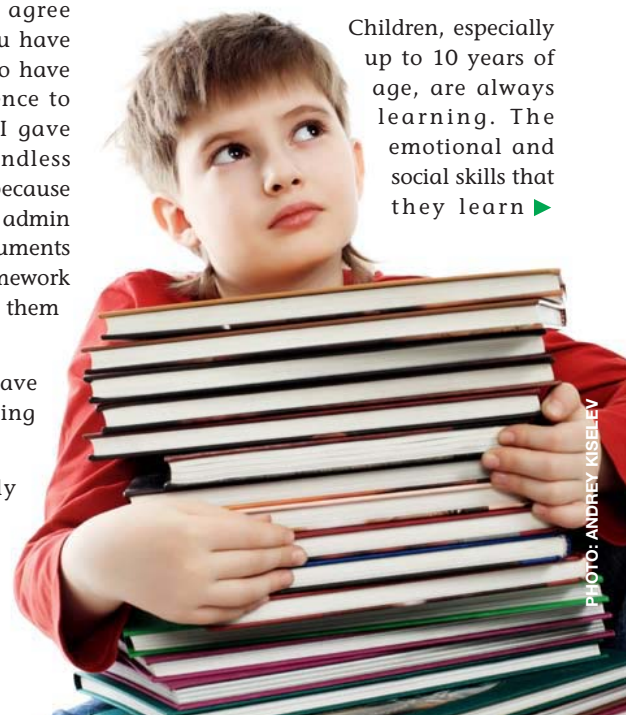


PHOTO: ANDREY KISELEV

Just not true.

What is true is that quality teaching and positive parental involvement improve student performance. The better teachers are able to connect with students, and teach their content in interesting and effective ways, the better students will learn.

Competent primary teachers are able to consolidate learning while students are

from playing with other children, siblings, parents and pets is vital to their healthy development. Parents need to realise that just because they cannot measure or assess a child's emotional and social growth, it is still important. We all want our children to learn healthy social interaction skills, patience, how to share, to lose and how to win graciously. These things cannot be developed when children are doing homework that stops them from playing and being kids.

Health Concerns

The lack of outside play is impacting negatively on many areas of today's children's health and well being. Homework can be a variable in obesity, aggressive behaviour, poor sleep, anxiety disorders and depression. The lack of play may well be stunting the emotional and social growth of children, putting them at risk of poor relationships, lack of motivation and no patience or persistence.

Attitudes toward homework can easily flow over to attitudes toward school and learning in general. Overachievers can take homework too seriously and spend much longer than the recommended time doing it; they attempt their homework as

though their life depends on it. This can lead to serious "perfectionism" issues that can lead to serious psychological issues later in life. Students with delayed readiness, or brain integration challenges, will simply learn to hate it and will do anything they can to avoid doing it. Then the dreaded "homework wars" happen and parents begin the potentially destructive cycle of nagging, pleading or demanding that their child do their homework. This creates horrible tension in our already-stressed homes. Homes need to be the safe place in children's lives where they are able to re-fill their cups for another day at school. Long-term stress will affect the health of children's bodies and their relationships with those they yearn to love them the most.

As a high school teacher, the only at-home activity I assigned was reading; all guided discussion, review of texts, corrections of written assessments and all written work was completed in class. This meant they learned to work during class time and had home time for the million other things adolescents needed to do. This also meant that any written tasks were done under class conditions within limited time frames. This meant that I knew who was actually doing their assignments, and they become competent at writing under exam conditions – and they seldom felt resentment toward me for stealing large amounts of their outside school.

Many parents hate not only being "homework aggro masters," but also feel challenged when asked to help with homework that is too hard. Primary maths can be tricky. Some parents are sensitive when they "fail" their kids. Indeed some children get confused when Mum or Dad teach them a different way to do a newly acquired skill in maths. Home time would be much better spent teaching them to play scrabble, chess, Uno or other board games that require social interaction without a screen. This would help reduce the amazing disconnection many children feel.

Teachers have to take classroom time to organise homework tasks and check it. Why not use these vital minutes of class time to create a clear window to consolidate learning rather than trying to have it

Five tips for Homework Harmony:

- 1. Be realistic with your child.** Avoid putting too much pressure on them to do it completely all the time, without fail.
- 2. Never do it for them.** By all means suggest ways of helping; maybe do a maths example with them, but never finish their homework or you will be doing that for at least 12 years of their life.
- 3. Let teachers deal with homework that is not done –** and remember that you and the teacher are on the same side of the fence. Never let a child believe that home and school are opposing sides of the school equation.
- 4. Allow for transition time after school –** and help your child work out what time best suits him. Primary students are often best before dinner; adolescents are often better later – sometimes much later.
- 5. Put family first.** On special days like birthdays or when grandparents visit, allow them to have homework free nights. Simply let the teacher know.


Honour this message:

"Many children played and learned in the streets, woods and fields without the looming presence of adults and albeit well-meaning coaches. Their experiences were real, varied and enormously engaging. These hands-on or concrete experiences with the real world prepared the brain for learning. What may have seemed to be unstructured play had a very serious purpose. It allowed children to discover the underlying rules and patterns that organise and make sense of the world. It may have set up a filing system for the storage and retrieval of information. Many of today's children are starved of real life experiences"

— Terrence Parry & Gayle Gregory
"Designing Brain Compatible Learning" p 30-31

consolidated at home? Keep school work for school – who likes taking work home from their real jobs to do at night?

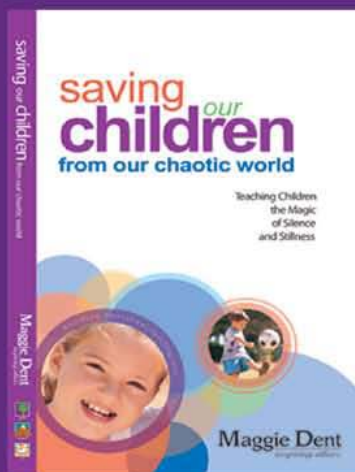
Keeping school work at school would also create an even playing field for those children whose home environments are not conducive to doing homework, such as a home with toxic family dynamics.

Please question the sacred cow of homework in the lives of your children and students – and have a conversation with your child's teacher to check its true value in the precious years of your child's life. 

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Aspirations

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Set It and Get It - Six Keys to Successful Money Goals

You don't need all the answers to get started; you only need to commit pen to paper.

How many times have you kicked yourself for not following through on a New Year's Resolution?

Do friends and family roll their eyes when you announce (yet again!) that you're going to get fit, give up desserts or even (gasp!) earn more money?

We all logically understand that setting goals is beneficial; they help us make use of our potential and create a life we enjoy. But time and time again, we stumble when trying to reach our goals. Did we make them too hard? Are we being unrealistic? Were we truly passionate about the end result?

Wouldn't it be awesome to know exactly what steps are required to achieve any goal? If you're ready to get different results by doing things slightly differently, then here is:

Set It and Get It – the six keys to successful money goals (you can modify these to fit other goals)

1. Your goal must be written down

When your thoughts are in your head, they are nothing but wishes and daydreams. As soon as you commit them to paper, you're telling your subconscious mind "This is the result I want you produce."

When you write your goals down, you activate a mental filter system that makes you aware of the opportunities, resources and people available to turn your goal into reality. Even if you struggle with words, you can cement your goal with pictures and

drawings. A goal on paper is a goal almost half-finished.

2. You will be rewarded for being specific

Your goals absolutely must be specific. If you write your goal as "I want more money," how does your subconscious create that? Finding a coin behind the couch cushion achieves that goal. So does receiving a small pay rise or receiving a huge inheritance. "I want a new car" could see you squeezed into a hatchback when you were dreaming of a chunky off-road truck. Describe in precise language what you want to achieve, and give it a time-frame. A goal without a deadline is still just a dream. A time limit lets you monitor your progress and can give that sense of urgency to keep you moving. ►

How will it feel to achieve the goal? Will you be proud, excited, happy, relieved...? Write that down, too. Describe the entire goal as specifically as possible.

3. Goal setting is a skill and a discipline

"I tried goal setting once but it didn't work!" Huh? That's like playing your first-ever round of golf and deciding that you're no good at it. Like any skill, developing mastery at goal setting takes practice, practice and more practice. But it is learnable. We should teach the process of goal setting in great depth at school. Where would your parents be today if as a teenager they understood the secrets of goals? How many of their dreams would have been saved from the dusty "maybe one day but probably not" shelf?

4. Beware of overestimating and underestimating

You read a financial literacy book or go to a seminar; you get fired up; you're convinced that you can actually bring your money dreams to life, so you enthusiastically set some inspiring goals. A couple of weeks pass; nothing seems to be happening; your action list doesn't look to be getting any smaller; the first little flicker of doubt appears; before a month passes you're kicking yourself for actually thinking you

could reach your goal; and so another dream dies a lethargic death.

This is a common scenario, because people regularly fall into the trap of overestimating what they will achieve in the short term. Yet they also underestimate what can happen in the long term. Just like your money growing in the bank thanks to compounding interest, your little baby-steps and mini-successes in the next 12 weeks will have an enormous pay-off over the next five years.

5. Your WHY is more important than the HOW

Will there be days when you would rather stay in bed or watch TV, instead of working towards your money goal? Oh yes! Will there be people who stomp all over your dream with their words or actions, hoping you will join them in the crowd of mediocrity? Absolutely! The one thing that will get you through these trying times is a compelling, vivid, super-strong reason WHY you want to achieve your goal. "Because I *should*" and "He/She thinks it's a good idea" are completely useless reasons. Get personal: Why is it important to YOU? Uncover the emotion behind the dream and list the benefits of achieving it.


The stronger your Why and the more compelling reasons you have, the greater

your chance of reaching your goal. It's your Why that will keep you going when that little voice says "It's not worth it - just give up!" It's your Why that gives you courage when you don't know what step to take next.

6. You don't need the HOW to begin

The biggest brake to reaching your money goal is the belief you can't begin until you know exactly how you're going to achieve it. Life isn't like that. How do you get good at a sport? You play it! Do you always win? No, but you'll always lose if you never step onto the field.

When working toward your goal, *something* is always better than *nothing*. Even by taking a tiny, seemingly insignificant step, the often-daunting journey to achievement has begun. Yes, change can be stressful and stepping into your courage zone makes your heart race, but confidence comes from action. Even if the action doesn't produce the results you expected, at least you're off the mental couch and have taken the first step. Build on that energy.

Without action, your dreams will never become real. You will never have a 100 percent failsafe plan for how to reach your money goal, so just start where you can - today! 

Take a Break!

Give yourself some time to relax and you'll end up giving even more to your students.



PHOTO: EDYTA PAWLOWSKA

Stop doing such a good job.

As a teacher, there is no upper limit to what you could do: There is always something else to prepare or a parent to talk to or a student to invest more one-on-one time with.

Most teachers work way too hard. They work so hard that their performance suffers.

When you mix the profession's ever-increasing demands with most teachers' natural propensity to give, you have a dangerous combination.

The economic rationalists have us held under the thumb that is connected to what is supposed to be the long arm of progress. You know the economic rationalists: They cut the schools' resources and expect those remaining to absorb all the additional responsibilities without additional reward. It's the classic "one-two": For every resource you eliminate, you work someone else twice as hard.

It's a powerful and seductive force to be made to feel irreplaceable, but when you try to achieve mission impossible, everyone suffers. Of course, you want to do your outmost for your students, but what about a bit of balance? What about creating time for yourself, and living a healthy lifestyle so that you maximise your positive impact?

When you do this, you become a better teacher. That's why you need to stop doing such a good job. When you give yourself a break, you'll do an even better job.

I spend my life trying to get people to lighten up and have time for themselves. They become more efficient, more energetic, more influential and less prone to mistakes, inconsistency, overreaction, anger and anxiety.

Don't you tell your students that the best way to do their homework is to take a break every now and then to freshen up? How about taking some of your own advice?

Reality Check

Are you staying back, attending meetings or working late most nights?

Do you resent spending so much time working, but then keep thinking about school even when you aren't there?

Have you let your social network, eating or exercise habits slip because you're so busy?

If you have answered yes, you're at best misguided and potentially hypocritical. All effective leadership starts with self leadership. You will never maximize your positive impact on the students unless you have your own house in order. People who never take a break become fatigued and resentful. People who do take breaks are energetic and creative. I know which I'd rather my kids have as a key influence in their lives. ►

"When you mix the profession's ever-increasing demands with most teachers' natural propensity to give, you have a dangerous combination."


Don't look to the Time Management Gurus for help; the only time they find balance is when the dribble comes out of both sides of their mouth at once. Time management just fits one more thing into a day that's already overcrowded. Forget time management. What you need is time creation. This is when you say "no" to a few things, and then use that time for yourself.

In the past week I've spent what some would consider an irresponsible amount of time on a tennis court and falling off a surf board, and I've chased my sons around so much that they say they can see me growing up before their eyes. I'm not looking for a medal; I just believe that apart from being fun, this helps me perform much better when at work. You can do these things, too, when you reestablish control, rather than enduring the load and trying to limp through to the end of term.

The answer is not to sell up the farm, swap the Commodore for a Kombi and become a share market day trader. It's also not to become a born-again fitness zealot. Don't

force yourself to eat alfalfa and run around the block at dawn every morning if you know it's not going to last.

You'll find the answer in a combination of philosophy and pragmatism. The philosophy is to define your fundamental expectations of life. Sounds heavy, I know, but you don't have to sit cross-legged, light a stick of incense and start making "ohmming" sounds; you just have to think about what really matters to you. For me, it's that family comes first; I come second; and my career comes third. That's it. It's narrow and selfish, but easy to remember and put into practice.

It has nothing to do with short, medium and long term goals; it's more a personal mission statement without the verbiage. It's what you weigh things up against when you have a decision to make. Here's another example from Dilbert: "I can only please one person each day. Today is not your day. Tomorrow isn't looking too good either." 

Here are a couple of simple action steps to get your life back in balance:

- 1. Phone a friend at least once a week.** Don't email or text and don't count work colleagues, just pick up the phone and call. Not just the close friends you see all the time anyway; keep in contact with your wider group.
- 2. Have the next possible weekend totally school free.** Turn your mobile and your work brain off, don't visit the school, open your laptop or do any lesson plans or report writing; just have a real and full weekend.
- 3. Have one day a week when you always knock off by a set and early time.** If at all humanly possible, make it as soon as the kids leave. It may shock a few people, but the sun will still come up tomorrow if you leave school just a little early. Go and do something that's just for you.
- 4. Under no circumstances allow yourself to feel guilty about number three.**
- 5. Schedule your next holiday.** Plan it, book it and pay for it. Please make it at least a week long (preferably two), and do your absolute best not to feel guilty about this either.
- 6. Finally, have some fun this week.** Laugh a little more. You and your students will benefit.

Making the Most of Your Parent-Teacher Interview

Look for a few personality clues, and you and every parent can work as a team.

Ask a group of teachers about a challenging situation, and you'll hear "parent-teacher interviews" every time. Fortunately, a simple tool can transform these interviews. It's not something we need to spend valuable time studying; teachers just need to look for a few simple clues when communicating with someone to identify that person's "type." Each personality type has different needs.

Your intention is not just to categorise, but to figure out how you can best communicate with someone who thinks differently from you. Ask yourself, "how can I speak his or her language?" These clues can be used with parents, in the playground, in staff meetings, and even in your own home.

Getting started

There are four dominant personalities. It's simply a process of elimination. Ask yourself: Who's loud, who's quiet? Who moves quickly, speaks quickly; who's methodical and who is listening? These are real giveaways. Two types are the noisiest, and the easiest to identify.

Let's qualify the "out there" noisy, moves quickly, speaks with authority types:

We call these the Playful and the Powerful.

The Powerful

They have a restless presence about them. They are confident, quick thinkers, sharp, direct and have a preference to lead and drive the meeting. They don't suffer fools, and will tolerate people who waft only if

they provide a mini summary. The best thing to do when talking with Powerfults is to acknowledge that their time is important so you will get to the point. They will respect you if you do.

The Playful

They mix easily, laugh the loudest, always smile, and are very demonstrative in their approach to you. They love to talk, so you will have to keep an eye on the time, or it will run away from you. They long to be accepted, so they will do whatever it takes to be approved of. They avoid conflict, so they won't want to cause any trouble. They will be most interested in their child having friends and feeling part of the group. ►

GO INTO YOUR MEETINGS WITH THIS INFORMATION IN MIND:

The Playful Desire to have fun	The Playful wants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention • Affection • Approval • Acceptance
The Powerful Desire to be in charge	The Powerful wants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit for all their accomplishments • Appreciation for all that they do • Loyalty in the ranks
The Precise Desire to get things done right	The Precise wants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity • Space • Silence • Support
The Peaceful Desire to have harmony & peace	The Peaceful wants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect • Harmony • To be valued



PHOTO: CATHY YEULET

"Each personality type has different needs. Your intention is not just to categorise, but to figure out how you can best communicate with someone who thinks differently from you."

The Peaceful

Powerfuls are usually married to a Peaceful who allow them to take control.


Peacefuls are quiet, and just like their name, they want harmony. They avoid conflict and are obliging. However, they do have a hidden will of iron. Powerfuls are outwardly strong, Peacefuls inwardly strong.

The difference between these two types is one is outgoing and the other is not impacted by externals, so whatever type of tension is going on doesn't phase them.

Give eye contact to the quieter of the two during the interview, as he or she has been listening (a great trait of the peaceful) and wants acknowledgement. Peacefuls like to let things settle before they make any decisions, so before you finish the interview, suggest they come back to you if they think of any pressing issues. This gesture shows you value them.

The Precise

They are quiet, and serious, and want to know ALL, I say ALL, the details. They probably will come with a list and want to proceed through their issues. These are the ones that usually insist that there be homework, and they will challenge you on work you haven't checked. They manage their emotions well and make decisions with their head, not their hearts. They are very sensitive people. Your strong belief in their child will have these ones accepting you as the teacher.

Next time, we'll look at how these same types can help you with the actual student and how to best motivate them. 

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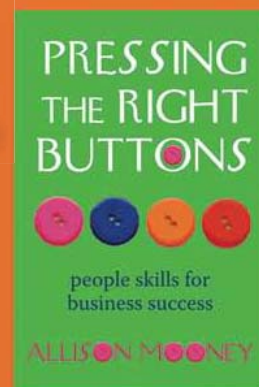
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Be Kind To Yourself!

Developing student self esteem and resiliency

“Who wants to live a happy life?” I ask, as a sea of hands stretch toward the sky.

“Who wants to be successful?,” I continue.

“Yeah, yeah!,” yell a group of kids from the back of the room.

“So, who’d like to know *how* to become happy and successful?”

“Me!,” replies the crowd with enthusiasm.

“All right then, let me share with you the secret to becoming happy and successful. Put your hands up in the air like this... with six fingers pointing upwards. These fingers represent the six things you need to do in order to be happy and successful in life. These six things give you a ‘recipe for life’ and act as guidelines to help you make good decisions.

The “Law of Attraction” says that “whatever you are thinking and feeling plus your actions is creating your future.” The “Six Kinds of Best” will help you think, feel and act in a positive way, and in turn will help create a positive future for you.”

This is how I start my motivational presentation for kids titled “Make the Six Kinds of Best Your Personal Quest!”

In my work in schools over a period of 20 years, both as a teacher and education consultant, one glaring observation has been that students who do well have a strong internal constitution. In other words, they know what’s important to them and they stick by these internal rules (for the most part). On the other hand, kids who struggle with school and life lack this “internal compass” and consequently their behaviour is “all over the place.” This internal compass is, of course, our values.

A great number of our students get a great values base at home, but with the busyness of life these days, many children don’t get the values inculcation that they need. The “Six Kinds of Best” provides a simple framework to help teachers and parents articulate what good values are, and gives students sign posts to point them in the right direction when they get to “crossroads” - times when they need to make important decisions. By teaching the “Six Kinds of Best,” we are giving our children a simple, consistent and meaningful message that will help them remember what they need to do in order to become happy and successful individuals.

The “Six Kinds of Best” are:

1. Be kind to yourself
2. Be kind to others
3. Be kind to the environment
4. Be the learning kind
5. Be the achieving kind
6. Be the community kind

In this article, we focus on the first kind of best, “Be Kind to Yourself.”

Being kind to yourself is about developing self-esteem and resiliency. It is no coincidence that this is the first kind of best. Without self-esteem and resiliency, it is very difficult to get children thinking about being kind to others or the environment, or to be concerned about achieving, learning or being a positive member of the community.

Research shows that self-esteem in children is a predictor of success in later life. A study by the London School of Economics Centre for Economic Performance found clear evidence that students with a high self-esteem at the age of 10 would earn more money in later life than those with

higher academic abilities. (Not that money is everything!) Basically, it found that high self-esteem children do much better in later life than those with a low self esteem.

So, how do we teach self-esteem and resiliency? With a lot of patience and persistence! And with some useful tools. Here are a few ideas to help you teach your children how to be “kind to themselves.”

Seven ways to teach children to “be kind to themselves”

1. Teach children the “Six Kinds of Best” affirmation so they internalize the core values.
2. Articulate what being “kind to yourself” means. See the key pointers on the opposite page. Put up a poster to remind them.
3. Teach lessons on the key pointers from the Values Education Toolkit books. Free downloads also available at www.sixkindsofbest.com
4. Use “Six Kinds of Best” language. e.g. if someone is putting themselves down say, “Come on Mary, be kind to yourself.” Or if they get “out” in a game and don’t get upset, say “Well done John, that’s being kind to yourself!”
5. Catch them being kind to themselves. Give them an “I am kind to myself” sticker or certificate. Free downloads available. Better still, get children to praise each other when they see good examples.
6. Use an individual or class progress chart to reinforce positive examples of good self-esteem and resiliency.
7. Make up a “Be Kind to Yourself” class display. See examples at www.sixkindsofbest.com ►

Ten indicators of good self-esteem and resiliency

Children with good self-esteem and resiliency will generally:


1. Behave well.
2. Have a positive outlook and use positive language.
3. Compliment others and don't use put downs.
4. Downplay and accept mistakes or losses in games.
5. Will "have a go" at new things.
6. Show initiative.
7. Tend not to have outbursts of anger.

8. Recognise and acknowledge their strengths without bragging.

9. Believe that their limitations can be worked on.

10. Are confident, but humble.

Give your children "Six of the Best"

The Six Kinds of Best Values Education Toolkit resources have all the tools you need to teach values in your school. Why not help your children become the best that they can be by giving them "Six of the Best." Many of the resources are also suitable for parents. 

Be kind to yourself Key Pointers

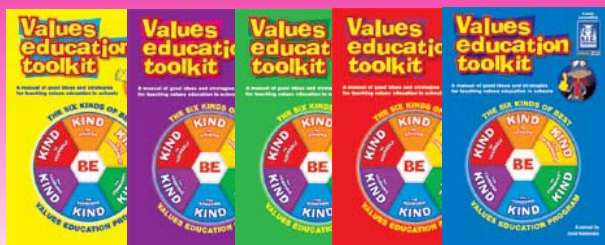
How to encourage self-esteem and resiliency

Encourage your students to:

1. Be proud of their uniqueness
2. Develop a sense of identity
3. Know their strengths and work on their weaknesses
4. Exercise regularly
5. Eat well
6. Sleep well
7. Take time to relax
8. Minimise physical risks
9. Keep learning and growing
10. Strive for success
11. Love, and value the love of others
12. Develop a circle of quality friends
13. Stand up for themselves
14. Make good choices
15. Forgive themselves if they make mistakes
16. Be positive
17. Be useful
18. Have some fun
19. Be proud of the things they say and do

Values education toolkit resources

By David Koutsoukis



Book 1: ages 4 -6yrs -
Book 2: ages 6 -8yrs -
Book 3: ages 8 -10yrs -
Book 4: ages 10-12yrs -
Book 5: ages 13-15yrs -

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PHOTO: ANATOLY VARTANOV

If it's not broken – fix it!

Maybe you're not doing anything "wrong," but you should always be looking for ways to be better.

I was talking with one of my friends who had just completed his degree when he told me that my business degree, which I had complete a while ago, was now out of date. I asked him to explain and he proceeded to give me an example.

"Ok, Nga finish this statement. If it's not broken..."

To which I replied "don't touch it."

He explained that the ending of that statement had changed, and the new correct answer was now "fix it!"

"Fix what?" I asked. "There is nothing to fix."

Our discussion went into more depth, and it took him a while to convince me that a paradigm shift had occurred regarding that proverb. It is difficult to change proverbs at anytime – unless it is necessary – and to quote another well-known proverb "necessity is the mother of invention."

If it's not broken, fix it, because there are many other products and services out there which are also not broken, but are


continually being "fixed." Take the humble mobile phone, for instance. Once upon a time it was just a phone, until it was "fixed" into a camera, an MP3 player and a video camera, not to mention developments that are occurring now.

So what are you fixing? Like the mobile phone, there are always developments for us to make, too. Learning to type faster, improving our time management, studying for higher qualifications and being a better reader or leader are common examples of how we can fix ourselves. I can hear some of you saying, "I am working very well, thank you," and congratulations to you. However, so is the person next to you, who may be improving his performance in some manner and may one day be promoted ahead of you, or even worse, take your position in a restructure.

My work with leaders has shown me that leaders are always looking for ways to improve themselves. Good leaders also look for ways to improve the people they lead.

"If it's not broken, fix it, because there are many other products and services out there which are also not broken, but are continually being "fixed." Take the humble mobile phone, for instance."

One of our Maori proverbs says "Ka pu te ruha ka hao te rangatahi." One translation says "when the old net is worn out and cast aside, the new net is put into use."

One of the things that make a net old and worn out is a lack of maintenance or improvement. Don't be like that net. 

Activating the Brain's Starter Motor

A child who can't stop moving might be trying to get his brain going.

Do you have students who never sit still? Are they constantly turning their heads, moving or wriggling? Do they delight in rocking on the back legs of their chairs? But then, when they're working, they suddenly droop over their desks? These children quite often have no appreciation of the space their bodies take up and will invade others' without realising it. Think of the child who jostles other children when sitting on the mat or joining a line, because he just didn't realise that he wouldn't fit into that small space. They might even have been labelled as ADD or ADHD children.

The issue may be that their brain's vestibular system (the brain's "starter motor") is not yet fully activated.

A lack of movement and practicing balancing during pre-school years can exacerbate this issue. So can too much sitting in front of the TV, repeated ear infections and childhood allergies.

The vestibular system (think of building's entrance way) is the pathway by which all sensory information enters the brain. Movement creates and enhances these pathways. This system is the first to be fully developed in utero and is functioning by about five months after conception. At this stage, the foetus moves its head frequently; these early movements later turn to crawling, walking and running. Every movement the child makes helps stimulate the vestibular system, which in turn stimulates the brain for new learning. You can feel the effect of the stimulation on your brain: Think of the buzz that an amusement park ride or a flight simulator gives you.

Several small organs tell us about our movement and position (illustration 1). In the inner ear, situated behind the mastoid bone (the lump behind your ear), are the utricle and the saccule, which monitor us when we are still, keeping us stable. The three semicircular canals keep us balanced when moving, with each canal responsible for a different plane. Nerves carry impulses from there, via the

"Every movement the child makes helps stimulate the vestibular system, which in turn stimulates the brain for new learning."

medulla oblongata, pons and cerebellum, to the neocortex. This nerve network is part of the reticular activating system (RAS) (illustration 2).

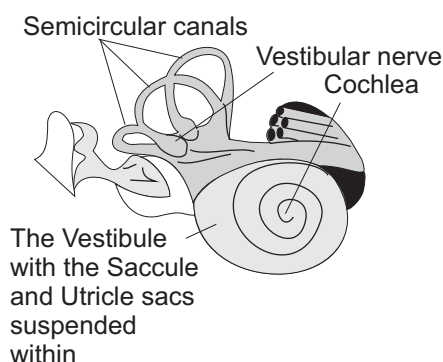


Illustration 1 Inner Ear

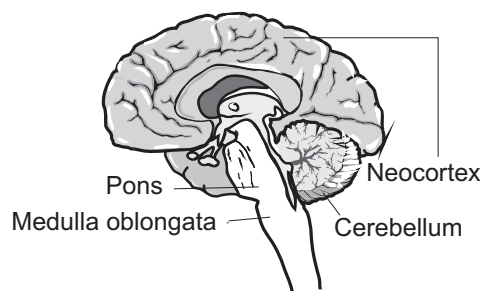


Illustration 2 The Brain

Children who are constantly on the move may not have a sufficiently developed RAS. They need to keep moving to wake up the neocortex area where all our higher-level learning and processing occurs. Just watch these children when they keep still: Do they soon go off in a

daydream as their brain shuts down?

Sound enters our brain via our ears, through the vestibular system. It appears that the upper ranges of sounds are particularly effective in maintaining alertness and energy within our body. We seem to know this on an instinctive level when we use a higher pitch voice to "talk" to babies. A study showed that when monks in monasteries in France stopped their Gregorian chanting (upper register vibration and harmonics), they needed more sleep, achieved less and were ill more often. Factory workers who lost the upper range of hearing through constant noise pollution also showed signs of being more listless and non-productive. The lesson: Let's watch the noise pollution that we subject our children to if we want to maximise their alertness and energy.

The vestibular system's job to send feedback to the brain, which then readjusts our balance to keep our eyes level so we can read or write as we sit in a chair. We have over 40,000 bits of information going to our brain every second. The vestibular system filters the unimportant information and transfers the important information for storage. Think about when you enter a room full of people. You're aware of the noise and then as you start to talk to someone really interesting, it is as if the background noise fades away. Children who are sensitive to the noise in the classroom may not have their RAS system working properly.

As we make our playgrounds more "safe" and remove equipment we perceive as dangerous, we are also stopping our children from clambering and climbing and being able to

practice balancing. We will find more and more children who are clumsy and accident prone, because they haven't fully developed their vestibular system.

We can help activate this system by engaging in a movement-based program such as Neuro-Linguistic Kinesiology's Mental Fitness exercises. This program has a number of beneficial "switch on" exercises, including one which involves holding the navel and the mastoid bone behind the ear. The action of placing the hand over the navel ([Illustration 3](#)) works by bringing attention to the body's centre of gravity to help balance. Holding the mastoid bone brings the body's awareness and energy to this area. The cross-crawl ([Illustration 4](#)) requires balance while working both sides of

the neocortex, again activating the vestibular system. The more slowly these exercises are done, the more effective they are. Think of some children who walk early, or in fact, run. If they slowed down, they would fall over as they may have bypassed the stage that gives them control of balancing their head on their shoulders, which is part of learning to crawl.

So next time you have a "wiggler" in your class, remember that he might be using this movement subconsciously to start his brain up and allow the information in. We need to encourage children to practice their balance from an early age and when children display the signs of an undeveloped vestibular system, consider a movement-based program to help them to develop it fully. 🧠

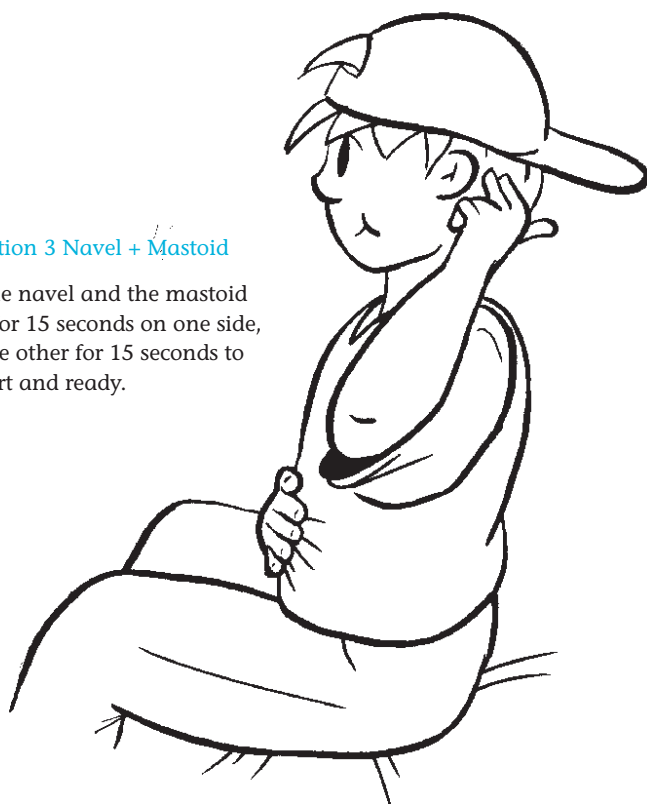


Illustration 4 Cross Crawl

Activating both sides of the brain and the body.

Illustration 3 Navel + Mastoid

Hold the navel and the mastoid bump for 15 seconds on one side, then the other for 15 seconds to feel alert and ready.



"Children who are constantly on the move may not have a sufficiently developed RAS. They need to keep moving to wake up the neocortex area where all our higher-level learning and processing occurs."



PHOTO: ANDY DEAN

Why We Need This Recession

Hard times often lead to strong, successful people.

I was enjoying a meal recently with a small group when (not surprisingly) the conversation turned to the current economic climate. The party included my oldest son, a Lt Colonel recently back from a two-year stint at Puckapunyal, Victoria and currently working on some very high-level New Zealand Defence projects, and my good mate Allie Mooney, one of New Zealand's top women speakers. The conversation then flowed on to how the experiences of our early years had influenced our resilience levels. As it happened, almost everyone around the table, my son included, had experienced hardship, feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem and times of "doing without" in our early years (and for some of us, me included, well into our adult lives.)

Our conclusion? Hardships and hard times are a precious gift. They teach us. They toughen us. They give us strength – if we approach them with the determination to overcome. Every one of us noted that if we'd not experienced those earlier tough times, we'd not now be capable of doing the work we do, nor in a position to contribute to society in our various ways.

Instead of talking about the young people you're dealing with right now, let's take a few minutes to consider the end product. Reflect for a moment on the adults you know. Have you noticed that those who've had an easy life as youngsters have it tough when the pressure comes on? Often the brightest ones, who've not had to work hard in school or even university, struggle the most when complex tasks require solid application. Further to that, when times get tough and jobs get scarce, those same

people are not well equipped to cope with the situation. Many of them find it scary, depressing and mighty uncomfortable.

On the other hand, if you've already been at the bottom of the pile, if you've already survived on the smell of an oily rag, if you've been unemployed or part of a group that the "popular" crowd didn't want to be bothered with, you know you can deal with blips, because you've done it before.

Many readers are parents as well as educators, so let's consider our child-raising techniques. I speak from the perspective of having raised six children, five of them boys, and now as a grandmother of 12.

I profoundly believe that if we make our children's lives soft and easy, if we take away risk and challenge, if we always seek to protect our children from adversity, we weaken, damage and distort the precious

young lives we're entrusted with. Of course, we protect them from danger when they're little, but danger and adversity are *not* the same thing. Real danger is life-threatening; adversity is just a situation that we have choices on – choices of attitude, choices of action.

Although many people know this intellectually, how often do you hear successful people – who *have* experienced tough beginnings – say “I don't want my kids to have to go through the hardships I did.” And so they bend over backwards, spend vast amounts of money, do everything they can, to smooth the path for their children, to make life easy for them.

And in the school environment, look at the trend towards not making any kid feel like a failure. This is *not* preparing them for the real world. No boss is going to say “Never mind the stuff-up you made, or the major customer your mistake just cost us.”

I might be a slow learner in some things, but I've had enough years to finally notice that there is a direct relationship between kids who have life too easy or have been over-protected and adults who lack resilience, are often selfish, self-centred and dysfunctional and who seldom rise to their potential. Many people with wonderful easy childhoods, with every advantage and everything they want lavished on them, end up living adult lives of boredom, emptiness and quiet desperation. Softness makes us weak and ineffective.

If you're a gardener, think of the process of turning tender plants into ones that can cope with a tough environment. My husband and I live on the shores of a tidal estuary. It's a harsh environment for a garden, salt-laden wild west winds are the norm and the soil isn't brilliant. Our landscaper, when discussing our planting options, said: “Make sure any plants you purchase have been hardened off. Most nurseries don't do it. They raise their plants in protected

“Every one of us noted that if we'd not experienced those earlier tough times, we'd not now be capable of doing the work we do, nor in a position to contribute to society in our various ways.”

enclosures. If your plants haven't had a bit of exposure to wind, sun, cold and rain before you transplant them, they won't survive in your rough conditions.”

So how do we develop resilient young people? It's too big a topic for this forum, but here are three of my basic rules and a really useful book if you're interested in more.

- From an early age, let them feel the consequences of their actions. Let the punishment fit the crime.
- Don't give them everything they want. Make them earn and save for their rewards and treats.
- Link pocket money to tasks. It's not a right.
- Read Maggie Mamen's book *“The Pampered Child Syndrome – how to recognize it, how to manage it, and how to avoid it. A guide for parents and professionals”* 2004 (Rev. ed. 2006).

I'm glad about the economic mess the world is in right now. We need it. To become an effective nation and effective people, we must become resilient again. Resourceful and resilient people and companies thrive. They're prepared, with the right attitude. They know how to rise above immediate circumstances, they have the long view and they have determination.

This is a great time to be alive. 



PHOTO: LISA YOUNG

What Happened to Bugs and Beetles and Cicadas?

As we talk about what to teach, remember to connect with the children.

After sitting at an initial planning meeting of the school year and reflecting upon what transpired, I began to consider whether the education path that the children of today are being taken down is going to produce great minds like the one quoted here. The new curriculum was designed to take our learners into the future, a world which is currently in turmoil as a result of greed and competition, but could we be interpreting this document in a too literal and fragmented manner?

The question was asked “what should we be teaching this term?”. I immediately turned to the young, enthusiastic teacher next to me and said, “Cicadas! It’s the best hatch for years, and they are such great little insects.”

The teacher looked at me like I had been beamed down from another planet. At this point you need to know that I can remember teaching maths from the little orange syllabus, being a teacher that had come through the last full training at Ardmore Teacher’s College in 1974. Apparently, I had missed the whole point of the sessions I had attended on the new curriculum. An appropriate answer should have been one of the core values or key competencies.

We then proceeded, as I am in no doubt that many other schools would be doing, to divide our terms into learning areas based upon these values, competencies, vision statements and future focus areas. Has the world and humanity changed that much that we need to teach these basic human skills for the survival of the human race as a separate learning theme? When we look at Einstein’s quote, I think not.

Cazden found that educational outcomes were dependent on “what happens in the classroom itself, in the interactions between teachers and students and among students during a regular day” and central to this is the need to establish whanau-type relationships within the class and school

“The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery every day. Never lose a holy curiosity.”

- Albert Einstein



setting. This can be expressed through whakawhanaungatanga (the process of establishing relationships) and requires the teacher to become involved in such a way with their students that any hierarchical barrier is removed. As part of the redistribution of power, we look toward the presence of ako. The concept of ako is well known to Maori and literally means to learn and to teach. A modern day slant could be Inquiry Learning and “co-construction of the curriculum,” and through this reciprocal approach we can see manaakitanga (showing respect or kindness) growing within the classroom setting leading to an increase in involvement, confidence and in fact all the key words in the values, competencies, and vision of our new curriculum and Ka Hikitia.

Bevan-Brown states that for outcomes for Maori, and I believe for all students, to be truly effective, a holistic view must be taken. Knowledge, skills, attitudes and value must be present in the five domains of human development -- cognitive, physical, cultural, interpersonal and intrapersonal. The skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values from the five different domains need to be interwoven into the education that is provided, not as a stand alone study. We should be providing exciting educational opportunities that come from the student’s world in a classroom that is buzzing with anticipation.

The way in which we run our classrooms can also help the acquisition of these skills in an integrated way. Circle Time as a regular classroom activity can provide support with classroom cohesion and the development of social and emotional skills within meaningful contexts. It has been developed both in the United States of America and the United Kingdom, where it is a well-known intervention to support these skills. Cooperative learning is one of the most widely researched methodologies and actively addresses both academic and social

"We should be providing exciting educational opportunities that come from the student's world in a classroom that is buzzing with anticipation."

skills. Peer tutoring is another inclusive strategy. According to Stainback and Stainback, this highlights mutual care and respect for others by providing opportunities for students to work collaboratively. It helps promote a balance of power, positive peer attitudes and increased confidence for both tutees and tutor and as a result academic skills are more easily developed, according to Medcalf.


So what did happen to bugs, beetles and cicadas? Did you know that cicadas know about prime numbers? You also find prime numbers in the life cycles of cicadas. There are about 1,500 species of cicadas known. There are those that appear yearly in midsummer, and there are also the so-called "periodic" cicadas. They appear at prime number intervals - 7 years, 13 years and 17 years (<http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/>). I believe as educators, it is our job to enthuse and nurture the enquiring minds that walk through our doors each day so that the hunger for knowledge remains forever. To do this, we need to weave our skills, values and competencies into topics that encompass the "mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvellous structure of reality." 

PHOTO: NOEL POWELL



Build your personal resilience

To bounce back again and again, think like an athlete.



Few people would deny that leaders in schools face challenges that could send personal stress levels into orbit. Lack of time and the demands of bureaucracy are two of the greatest sources of stress for education leaders, let alone the extra demands arising from managing and juggling daily issues from staff, students and caregivers. Understanding how to build daily personal resilience to stress and learning to thrive on the positive effects of stress are essential tools. Draw on any of the strategies outlined below, and enhance your health, well-being and most important, daily energy:

1. Think and act like an athlete. Building daily resilience starts by thinking differently. Our top athletes today know when to eat, train and sleep to keep their immune systems and cortisol production relatively healthy. Two critical functions of cortisol are to regulate energy and mobilize fat from fat stores. Because it is produced in the adrenal glands, it can impact negatively on your immune system when fatigue and stress levels go up. If athletes over-train, they can have increased levels of cortisol, which causes fatigue, burn-out and injury. The same can also be said for non-athletes working long hours and burning the candle at both ends. Cortisol levels creep up when nutrition is poor, sleep is inadequate and mental pressures increase. To prevent cortisol levels building up too much, adequate sleep is the key. Top it up when you can and start each week in “sleep balance,” not deficit.

2. Use nourishing food and water as your daily fuel. We all know the connection between the amount, type and calibre of the food that we eat and our body's health, energy and well-being. So make eating immune-boosting foods every three to four hours a goal. Skipping meals leads to irritability and fatigue. Increasing antioxidant rich foods (berry


fruit, veggies, green tea to name a few) is cardio-protective. Eating too many energy dense foods if you are increasingly desk-bound leads to weight gain and a tired, sluggish metabolism. Dehydration also leads to increasing fatigue. Although research on the correct amount of water intake is mixed, most physiologists agree that a minimum of a litre of water daily is necessary to enhance energy. That's water, by the way, not tea and coffee.

3. Exercise harder and smarter when stress levels go up. Stress management experts the world over know that handling stress requires a number of interventions, but some of the most important “stress-coping” hormones we have in our body are called “endorphins.” Commonly known as the “feel-good” hormones, production of these is increased during vigorous exercise of at least 20-30 minutes duration. Vigorous walking, cycling, swimming or jogging helps to negate the negative health effects of stress. Think also about listening to some of your favourite music as you exercise which helps to switch you off from thoughts about work. As Shakespeare once said: “A turn or two I'll walk, to still my beating mind!”

4. Plan your year. Teachers are in a unique position in that they can plan their exercise commitments around the

academic year. Just like athletes who plan in-season and off-season periodisation programmes, teachers can do this, too. By going into maintenance mode during the busier terms and then using the school holidays to increase exercise commitments and work a little harder with aerobic fitness, you will achieve good carry-over of your fitness, especially as, inevitably, you back-off a little as work commitments increase during the school term.

5. Practice what you preach. Think about how many times you ask your students or teaching staff to set small, achievable and realistic goals, and then fail to put this into practice for your own fitness and health. If you set fitness and nutrition goals for each week of the term, then at the time when you are at your busiest, this should remind you to stick with it. Place exercise prompts on your desk or fridge and pack your workout bag the night before or set the alarm a little earlier for before-school workouts. Train in the morning if possible. This will increase your metabolism for the day, help you maintain your weight and you will commence each day feeling invigorated and energised. Be realistic about what you can achieve from week-to-week and remember that something is better than nothing. If you are a beginner, then stick with the healthy-dose of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity either in one dose or by striding out around the school grounds and accumulating your 30 minutes in “snac-tivity” bites throughout the day.

6. Prioritise your resilience-building values. Create a personal mission statement and place this somewhere where you will read it daily. Use this to stay motivated as well as to stay connected with your true purpose for adding resilience-building strategies to your daily routine. 

“Increasing antioxidant rich foods (berry fruit, veggies, green tea to name a few) is cardio-protective.”

" Train in the morning if possible. This will increase your metabolism for the day, help you maintain your weight and you will commence each day feeling invigorated and energised. "

So what club did you belong to?

"The clubs epidemic breaks out in March like a giant nit plague. It spreads through our class 'til practically everyone's infected. Not me. I must be inoculated."

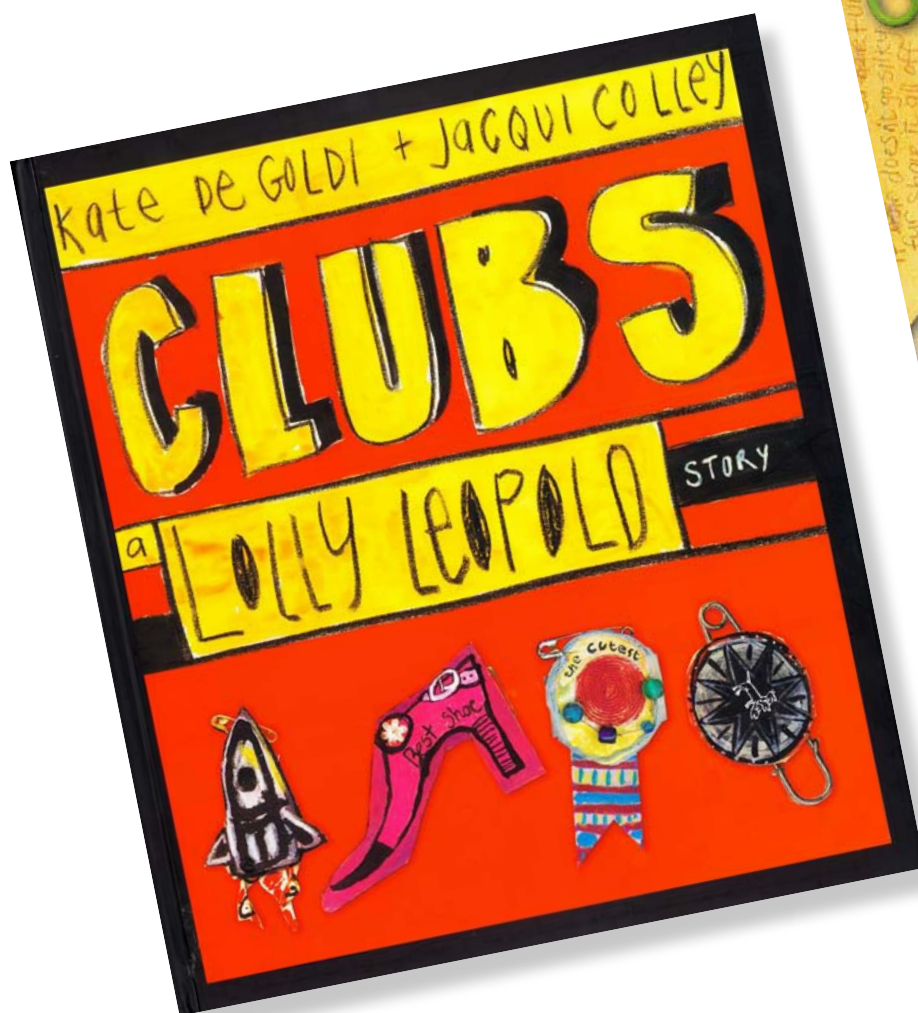
Title: *Clubs*

Author: Kate de Goldi

Illustrator: Jacqui Colley

ISBN 0-476-00912-X

Trapeze Books 2004



Clubs is a thought-provoking journey through the intricate world of "belonging" in the playground and the "are-you-in" or "are-you-out" rules of clubs.

Lolly Leopold cannot be a member of the Barbie Club (her Totally Hair Barbie is now Practically Bald Barbie with a pierced belly button), the Harry Potter Club (which excludes girls), the Kitten Club (Laughing Stock, her cat is too old) or the Lego Club (she considers them too violent). So, she co-founds the Grass Growing Spectators' Club, the chief activity of which is to hang upside down from the school fort and ...watch the grass grow.

This book is a bright, busy, chalk-and-crayon classroom jumble, complete with blackboard notices, attendance registers, spelling lists and classroom paraphernalia.

The sophisticated but childlike illustrations and rich text of *Clubs* tell of the difficulties,

for a child, in belonging to peer groups, and of fitting in at school.

The text and illustration placements encourage the reader to explore stories within the story. It requires reading, and then reading again and again to appreciate the interaction of text and illustrations. It can be read in a lineal fashion, but it needs to be viewed from all angles to be fully appreciated.

This story uses many literary devices such as similes, metaphors and imagery. In this story, Lolly's voice comes through strong, so it could be a fantastic resource to use as part of a writing programme focus on voice. It includes many words that may not be in student's everyday vocabulary, such as garrisons, diplomatic envoy and pacifist.

Activities

1. Describe each club.

Stated and inferred rules, when and where they meet and activities.

Club	Rules	Time & Place	Activities
Barbie			



BARBARA GRIFFITH AND TRICIA KENYON



2. Using the class list, identify and infer who the members of each club are, ensuring all children are included.

Barbie	Kitten	HP	Lego	Grass
Bethany				Lolly

3. Choose one of these characters; Lolly, Ms Love, Dad, Bethany, Jake or Byron.

Create character web for this character. You may have to infer some information.



4. Give the reasons as to why Lolly didn't join these clubs

<div>Lolly</div>	X	Barbie Club	
	X	Kitten Club	
	X	Lego Club	
	X	Harry Potter Club	Boys only club

5. What issues/problems arose within each club and how did Ms Love react to them?

What national or international issue did she compare it to?

Bethany's Barbies were always causing vicious cat fights among members.

Ms Love declared herself a 'One Woman Barbie Beauty Contest Protest Movement' and picketed them.

Beauty contests being picketed and frowned upon as 'meat markets'.

6. Dad's sayings show his quirky sense of humour.

Identify three of his sayings and explain what he means.

Eg. "My dad says, Quite frankly Lolly, there are worse places than a dungeon. (The living room apparently when I'm practising the piano.)"

7.Exploring sign language.

Locate the one-hand sign alphabet and use it to communicate with another class member.

8. Backwards spelling.

Write a message to someone using backwards spelling.

Yojne eht koob!


9.Homonyns.

For/four none/nun

- Search the whole book for homonyms.
- Ms Love says that "club" is a homonym, but she can't figure out which meaning fits the Grass Growing Spectator's Club. (See appropriate double layout page in book.)

Which one do you think fits in this story and why?

10.Invent your own club, maybe an unusual one.

Decide on membership, create rules, meeting places, activities, badges, etc. 

"Both in terms of its text and illustration, this book is a breakthrough in New Zealand publishing. Original, funny, demanding to a high degree, and achieving a true marriage of text and image.... There are lots of wonderful stories with pictures, but this is a picture book in the truest sense of the word."

- Margaret Mahy



Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders

No matter who you are, you have something to offer the next generation.

Can you remember your most inspirational teacher? What made her so special? My guess is that it wasn't that she was the most academically proficient teacher, but she still managed to do or say things that inspired you and brought out the best in your unique personality.

Imagine having teachers like Sir Edmund Hillary, Kate Sheppard, Katherine Mansfield, Rob Waddell, Peter Jackson or Sir Peter Blake. Fantastic people surrounded and influenced each of these individuals, and, in turn, others followed them; people wanted to be led by them because they each had something special.

None of them managed to achieve their absolute greatness alone – each was in some way part of a team; they all had influencers who helped create their legacy.

What they have each ultimately shared with us, however, is their vision of possibilities. Their truest legacies: pushing for new experiences that required them to strive forward. They each conveyed an unbeatable can-do attitude, toward not only their major goals, but also their lives in general.

If you want your kids to learn more, to be better equipped as people when they


venture out into the world, then your role as a teacher, (whether you are a coach, parent, teacher, or mentor) is to draw out your students' dreams, to foster them and then provide some of the blocks to create their path.

You may wonder how you can do this if you haven't done it yourself. You may think you're not important enough to influence someone who may one day be great. But you're an important part of the development of a young person's mind regardless of your personal "greatness." Each one of us has something to share, something to learn, and an opportunity to shape the imagination, skills and ability of some other person or maybe lots of people.

Your experience doesn't have to include sailing up the Amazon to pass along the importance of social conscience, nor do you need to have inspired a political change or written a great manuscript to affect people's thinking about living better. You only have to plant and nurture seeds.

As you do this, and start to think about your own life, consider who influenced you. Who has affected your thinking and inspired your actions? Do you want more or less of something? You can create the life you want if you listen to others' teachings, be they your community leaders, experienced friends or family members, or authors who can convey their message in inspirational books. Then as your own life grows, your ability to teach and influence others increases, too.

This is all part of dreaming of a better world. You don't have to be a parent to positively affect a child. You don't have to be a teacher to teach. You also don't have to be a mentor to influence, but at some stages of your life you do, and therefore become all these things. Your community might need your particular skills to nurture children, whatever your skills and abilities.

Don't doubt your personal ability to help create tomorrow's great leaders. 

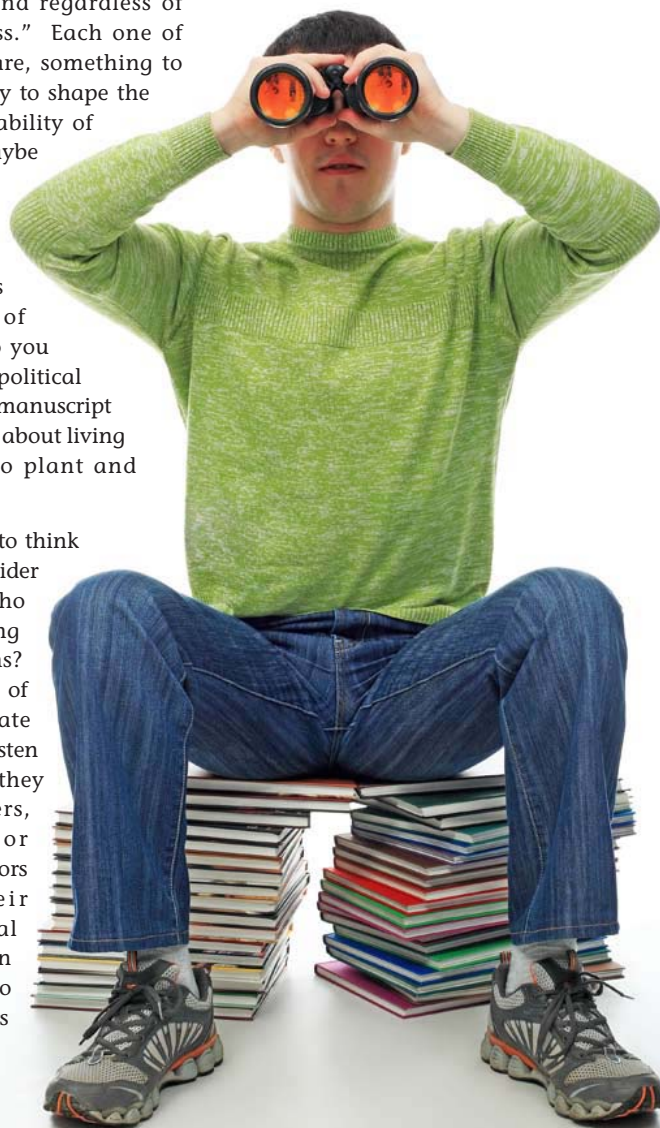


PHOTO: ANDREY KISELEV

" They each conveyed an unbeatable can-do attitude, toward not only their major goals, but also their lives in general."

Motivation: What is that stuff and how do I get some?

Everyone gets tired, feels lazy or occasionally can't be bothered.

What sets a champion apart from the average?

A champion bothers, even if she doesn't feel like it.

Winter's chilly mornings and cold, rainy days will cause some of us to go into hibernation mode, inadvertently affecting our metabolism, our fitness levels, our self-esteem and our attitudes. Many of us tend to become lazy and inactive during the colder months, preferring to snuggle up with a warm blanket and a hot chocolate and gaze mindlessly at the television set. No matter how much better we know, we seem to fall into the same trap every year. Some people simply exist from day to day. They lack energy and are not committed. They are too tired, too bored, too lazy and can't be bothered. It's always too hot, too cold or too hard.

What sets apart the people who exercise come rain or shine from those who don't? Why do some people set and achieve goals when others barely have the energy to get up out of bed in the morning, after hitting the snooze button at least three times? What is the difference between those who do and those who don't?

Some say it is motivation, but there's another word, SELF Motivation. Self-motivated people set goals and do whatever it takes to achieve them. A little rain or cold would never stop them. Self motivated people get up, get going and keep going until they have achieved their health and fitness goals. They don't make excuses, they don't procrastinate and they keep going until they achieve results. Results are the best motivation to keep going, but sadly most people give up before they achieve the result. This means they miss out on the self motivation they would feel injected into their self esteem and subconscious brain from the result.

Then there are those who wait for someone else to motivate them. What happens if that person never shows up? Motivation is not about having someone else to motivate you. It is not found in a book or a CD or a seminar. Who motivates the people who write the books, create the CDs and speak at the seminars? True champions are SELF



PHOTO: DIEGO CERVO

motivated. They do not need anyone to get them out of bed; they do not need someone to hold them accountable or to help them to stay on track. Your greatest motivator has to be you. Getting up, getting going and staying that way begins and ends with you.

According to expert opinion, self-motivation comes from one or both of two places... Wanting to gain pleasure or avoid pain.

Imagine the pure agony of not being able to fit into something you really want, or feeling lethargic and exhausted all the time or worse, being fatter or less fit than you are now. Imagine going up clothes sizes every year. Alternatively, imagine the sheer pleasure of slipping into something that has not fit you for years. Imagine the feeling of running your hands over your naked body in the shower, feeling your tight muscles under the soap. How much more could you do, be, give and become if you had endless energy; you were happy and you could jump out of bed every morning feeling like you could attack the day and win?

Whatever works for you, focus on it and


get going. Whether you concentrate on the pleasure, your results you will achieve, or the pain you will feel if you don't, create, visualise and write down your goals and see yourself achieving them or imagine how you will feel if you don't.

Now comes the ultimate achievement word: DISCIPLINE. The word that we all know is the key to success. A lack of it means a guaranteed mediocre life. Discipline means doing the right thing, at the right time, even if you don't feel like it.

Keep these two sentences in mind:

"The pain of discipline is much less than the pain of regret."

"Nothing tastes as good as being fit, strong and healthy feels!"

Make this winter the time you give up procrastination and excuses and implement discipline. 



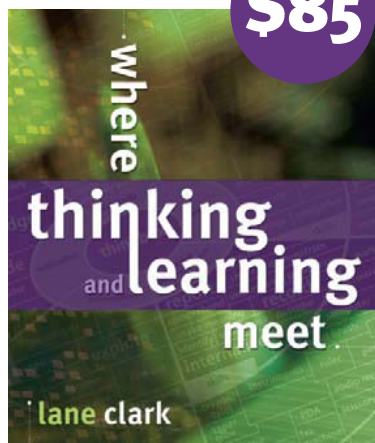
Quiz Questions

For answers turn to Page 78

1. What is the Maori word for jade, often used to make necklaces?
2. On which continent do jaguars live?
3. What name is given to a baseball player who can bat right or left handed?
4. What is identified by its I.S.B.N?
5. Which two countries names have four letters and begin with the letter "C"?
6. The original Madame Tussauds wax museum is in which city?
7. In poetry, how many lines are in a quatrain?
8. Which "S word" is used to make glass?
9. Dumbledore is - in fact - a what?
10. What does the musical term "adagio" mean?
11. How many weeks are there in a year?
12. What is the world's smallest bird?
13. In the "Lord of the Rings," who is the queen of the elves?
13. Braille is a system of writing created by Louis Braille for people who are what?

lane clark

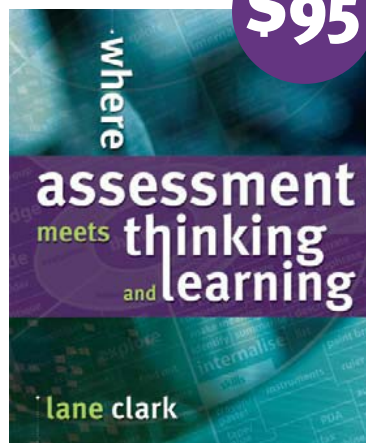
\$85



If it is our goal to see an increase in student levels of engagement and levels of high school retention, an improvement in student performance standards and learners skilled and ready to contribute to their world, then we have got to rethink what we are doing, and how we are doing it, in our schools. We've got to teach our kids how to think and how to learn. In *Where Thinking and Learning*

Meet, Lane Clark challenges our individual and systemic educational beliefs and practices. She offers an approach to re-thinking and re-engineering how teachers teach and how learners learn.

\$95



A symbiotic relationship exists between thinking, learning and assessment. Criteria, void of thinking, result in little more than 'quantity' statements or statements of subjective 'quality' language. Neither stretches the learner in their performance, and the latter results in confusion and often a need for moderation. When a learner is provided with criteria, but is not given the opportunity to

develop knowledge and understanding of their elements, its use is compromised and the end result disappointing. This book is about the thinking and learning process. It's about the relationship between assessment, thinking and learning. It's where assessment meets thinking and learning!

available from www.spectrumeducation.com

Smile: You're Learning

Get your digital camera out of the cupboard and help your students master the key competencies.

You were probably excited about your digital camera when you first got it, and you can be again. Make the most of it as you work on the key competencies:

Thinking

"Students who are competent thinkers and problem-solvers actively seek, use, and create knowledge. They reflect on their own learning, draw on personal knowledge and intuitions, ask questions, and challenge the basis of assumptions and perceptions."

To achieve the key competencies requires use of the rich learning contexts that surround us. The digital camera allows us to take what we are studying in the classroom and apply it to the world around us. A simple activity related to literacy is to find examples of rhyming words or of objects beginning with "sh" and "ch." Move on to more abstract concepts by asking the children to find or stage photos of adjectives or adverbs. In numeracy, encourage the children to find shapes, angles and patterns in the environment or symmetry. In science, have them find mini-beasts, parts of plants and parts of the body. For social sciences, they can seek out examples of humans' impact on the environment, and for art, they can look for photos of line, shape, texture and colour.

The digital camera can also allow us to capture what is happening in these rich learning contexts and bring it into the classroom. For example, if we are studying the weather and the children have pointed through the window to cloud formations, send them outside with a digital camera to take photos of the sky

on different days, recording the weather for that day. What do we notice? Are there any particular shaped clouds that we see on certain days? Do we know what these clouds might be called? Then they can research the names and features of these different cloud formations and label the photos. This process of collating the evidence around us before we go too far into a topic will create many opportunities for "thinking" as described in the key competency.

Languages, symbols and text

"Students who are competent users of language, symbols, and texts can interpret and use words, number, images, movement, metaphor, and technologies in a range of contexts."

This is how the digital camera is traditionally used. We capture field trips and use the photographs to stimulate recounts or descriptive writing. We create flash cards for literacy activities or learning languages. We use photos to brainstorm adjectives to use for poetry. The important thing here is to move from the "we" to the "students" taking control of the camera and being able to take photos that interest them. Teachers might not have

enough cameras for every student, but these days many students have cameras at home or mobile phones with built-in cameras. If a teacher provides a USB pen drive, students can easily bring those photos to school. Students can illuminate their stories with their own digital pictures. Poetry can be about the sunset that they can see from their house. Descriptive writing can be about a close-up photo of their grandmother. Using these student-created resources also gets around the often-problematic issue of pictures in books and on the Internet being copyrighted.

Relating to others

"Students who relate well to others are open to new learning and able to take different roles in different situations. They are aware of how their words and actions affect others. They know when it is appropriate to compete and when it is appropriate to cooperate. By working effectively together, they can come up with new approaches, ideas, and ways of thinking."

It may sound obvious, but learning each other's names is vital to building relationships. On the first day of the year, take their photos and laminate them. Use them for simple matching games to familiarise students with each other. Use them for graphs and





collating facts about each other: how we get to school, what pets we have, and where we went on holiday. You can use them as a classroom management tool for voting, pairing and grouping. Also remind the students to get them out again when a reliever takes the class, as the reliever needs to be able to relate, too!

Participating and contributing

"Students who participate and contribute in communities have a sense of belonging and the confidence to participate within new contexts."

Many of the values that schools focus on relate to this key competency and "relating to others" above. The digital camera is a powerful way to illustrate the value of the week or term. Encourage the children to capture examples of students and staff who are being "helpful" or "sharing." Not just photos of their smiling heads after the event, but photos of the event actually happening (or being re-staged!). Hopefully by the time you're done focussing on the value, every child's picture will be on the wall and everyone will have a good understanding of what that value really means.

Managing self

"Students who manage themselves are enterprising, resourceful, reliable, and resilient. They establish personal goals, make plans, manage projects, and set high standards. They have strategies for meeting challenges."

Most of the above activities have encouraged the students to use the camera as much as possible. However, collating evidence of students managing themselves is a good one for the teacher to lead. As the children set about a task, snap photos of those students who are demonstrating the

above qualities. At the end of the day run a slideshow of all those pictures and if there is time, initiate a discussion on what qualities these children were demonstrating.

Higher up the school, hand the reins back to the students and let them create step-by-step photo guides on how to complete a project, be it as simple as working the VCR or as complex as organising a fund-raising event.

Understanding the key competencies

The digital camera can also help children grasp what a key competency represents. We may talk about Richard Branson as a good example of "Managing Self" or Tana Umaga as someone who illustrates "Participating and contributing," but what does that mean to the children on a day-to-day basis? Allow the children to take photos of people they know who they think represent the key competencies such as local heroes or their mum! They can explain their choices and prepare a classroom display. These people from their own experiences then become the far more "touchable" role models and illustrations.

Assessing the key competencies

New methods of assessment are required to record achievement of the key competencies,

and schools are looking at learning logs (blogs), learning stories (digital stories), portfolios (eportfolios) and rich tasks. To support these new methods of assessment, digital cameras need to be just-in-time accessible to capture learning moments. We have all been there when a student has put his heart and soul into a creation and it is time for him to go home and he has to disassemble his pride and joy (and you find it 10 days later hidden somewhere). These days, he can take a photo of it, put it on the class blog so his parents can see it and add it to his eportfolio with his reflections on what he achieved.

Don't keep your digital camera in a cupboard! All of the above activities revolve around one premise – that the camera is freely available. Make sure that every day the camera comes out of the cupboard, having been charged over night, and is left in its designated place for the children to use when appropriate. This will entail some classroom management: how to use the camera, discussion of when and when not to use the camera, a monitor to be responsible for putting away and charging the camera and maybe even a new role when doing group or class work: The official class or group photographer. 📷

"The digital camera can also allow us to capture what is happening in these rich learning contexts and bring it into the classroom. For example, if we are studying the weather and the children have pointed through the window to cloud formations, send them outside with a digital camera to take photos of the sky on different days."

Transformational Leadership

You can change others by changing yourself first.

Leadership is not only the most significant measure of success in an organisation, it is the most significant measure of success for a human being. Leadership of one thing, that is: Self Incorporated.

Gone are the days when our leaders are politicians, success gurus, masters such as Branson, or icons such as Mandela. Now their names are Smith, Jones, and Wong. In other words, everyday Joes are the new transformational leaders. A saying I believe in: We are the one's we have been waiting for.

Leadership itself is not much more than managing and directing traffic. But what is true transformational leadership and how can you become a transformational leader? Strangely, the first thing a transformational leader must be is self-focussed. That doesn't mean operating in ego, or putting one's self at the head of the line all the time, but it does mean having a strong connection and acceptance of self. Think about it: When was the last time you actually had a conversation with yourself?

When was the last time you actually looked in the mirror for more than a fleeting glance?

In India, my company sponsored a teachers' training program. We realised the number-one thing we needed to work on was self-esteem, not students' but the teachers'. Many teachers had little self-esteem,

and the impact on the class was huge. They were literally passing on poor self-esteem. By focussing on the concepts of empowerment, trusting yourself, making decisions, reinforcing positivity and rewarding yourself for reaching small goals, we saw a massive shift. We later saw that the children were getting great results, and administrators credited it to a massive increase in their self-esteem. You can be poor, but a great self-esteem can overcome many difficulties. If you have seen the wonderful movie *Slumdog Millionaire*, you will know what I mean.

Transformational leadership is leadership with purpose and leadership with passion. When you combine strong purpose with strong passion, you start operating in the area of unique ability and this makes you stand out from the crowd. You simply create more attraction because something is just different around you. You are so focussed and so sure that problems disintegrate and roadblocks clear.


Where To Start

Transformational leadership is leadership not from the top down, but from the bottom up. Years ago when I was in the senior management team of a medium-sized corporation, we had a major integration to complete. In the past we had always talked to the line managers and sold them on the ideas, hoping they would "sell" the ideas to those below them. This never worked well. So we reversed it. We met with the people at the lower end of the company. We figured that if the cleaner knew what their role was in our company's vision, and how they fit in, then they would feel part of the team.

"By focussing on the concepts of empowerment, trusting yourself, making decisions, reinforcing positivity and rewarding yourself for reaching small goals, we saw a massive shift."

We explained how there was sensitive information regarding clients and changes in the rubbish and how the cleanliness gave us a great look to any customer coming in. They really got it, and, from then on, they did an incredible job and felt part of the team. We did the same with the new staff and the lower responsibility roles. By the time we got to management, they were already ecstatic about the shift in people's emotion and the obvious increase in productivity. That year, we had a 35 percent increase in revenue and profit.

Transformational leadership is about purpose. It's the big "why" behind what we do. Just ask yourself: Why am I a principal? Why did I choose this career? Chances are it wasn't to make a lot of money or have great holidays. There will be a "big" reason that maybe you even lost sight of. Focussing on that reason could bring everything into alignment for you. It will create impact for you and that impact will resonate with everyone around you. Have you ever seen anyone this has happened to? They just start to do brilliantly, create attraction, get ahead, maybe promoted, even seemed to get wiser.

It's a shame that 99.9 percent of the world's population dies without ever reaching their full human potential, and equally as shameful is the fact that many people never even ponder what their potential might be. We don't all have to be Einstein or Tiger Woods, but every single person has so much to contribute. 





Brain Twisters

For answers turn to Page 78

D
A
N

ORGANiiii

R
KCLOCKO
C

Jointed
Jointed

SECRET

Mula
Mula
Mula
Mula

BpOuOsTsS

cycle

MILLI1ON

⇩ Want More? Here's how you can get additional thinking puzzles ⇩

Thinking Puzzles

Posters for your classroom

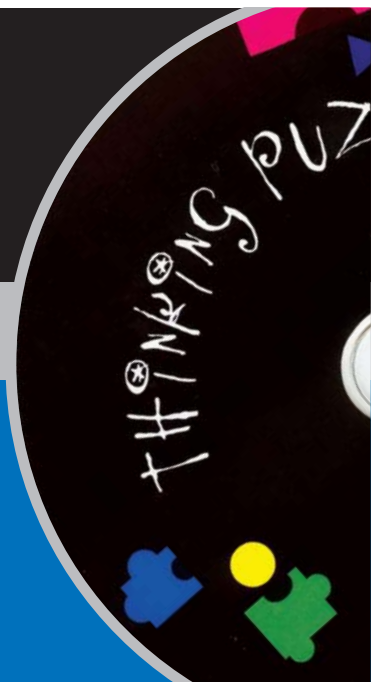
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Playground Games

Name of Game: Captain's Coming

How Long: 10 - 15 Minutes

Age range: 5 to 11

Ideal Number of Players: 6+

Equipment Needed: None

How To Play: The players assemble in the centre of the playground or in a hall.

A leader is chosen who calls out various commands.

(The commands need explanation to each participant before the game can begin.)

The group competes with each other to complete the commands. If there is an obvious person or if applicable group of people who are last to start a command, then they are out. The game continues until there is only one person left - the winner.

The commands

A game of Captain's Coming can have any number of various commands; the more there is, the more that needs to be memorized, and the harder it is to play.

Some favourites are :

Bow - everyone races to the front of the room.

Stern - everyone races to the back of the room

Starboard - everyone races to the right of the room.

Port - everyone races to the left of the room.

Captain's coming - everyone stands tall, salutes and shouts "AYE AYE CAPTAIN".

Captain's wife - everyone curtseys.

Scrub the decks - mime scrubbing on hands and knees

Climb the rigging - everyone pretends to climb a rope ladder.

Man the lifeboat - find a partner and hold both hands. Anyone without a partner is out.

Sharks - Lie on stomach with feet up.

Freeze - stop all actions when this is called. If a further command is given without saying "unfreeze" anyone obeying it is out.

Variations: There are lots of variations of this game. You can find many alternatives by doing a Google search of "captain's coming" on the internet or you may want to make up your own.

Hot Tips for Schools: Is Your School Really Prepared for an Emergency?

During the last few weeks the winter chill has suddenly arrived to many parts of New Zealand. People, businesses, schools and communities in affected areas have had to cope with a wide range of issues relating to weather. This added to recent earthquake tremors around the country plus recent events in Napier and the Swine Flu in New Zealand which has affected schools in Australia has got many people talking about emergencies, others quickly dusting off the plans and procedures and many quietly wishing they had worked on it all earlier. Preparations done in advance by schools, known within Emergency Management circles as the 4R's, greatly assist schools to forward plan, train people before they need them, manage their response through the event, allow them to recover in less time and get back to business as usual. Let's face it a lot of work can suddenly appear on the principal's desk when things go askew so take a moment to reflect. How prepared are you at home and in your school if an emergency event suddenly occurs?

Has your school developed procedures, trained people, purchased and stored additional resources for emergency situations? If your answer is yes, then people in your school will be more empowered to take action, work effectively together and show greater resiliency in the response and recovery stages. If people in your school have not taken the time to pre-plan or have adopted the "it won't happen to us" view then the chances are that they will be greatly affected by circumstances which are beyond their control. In these economic times indefinite periods without power and staff unable to teach are likely to put an added strain on you, your school and the wider community.

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Civil Defence (MCDEM) advertising campaign 'Get Ready, Get Through' is encouraging New Zealanders to be better

prepared in their homes, businesses and communities. The message is "*be prepared*" for a range of events or emergencies. The emergency services can't help everyone at once, so resiliency must come from being in a state of readiness when the time arrives. The Swine flu could escalate further and the Ministry of Health has sent a letter to schools indicating that closures up to a week could occur. So you have a window of opportunity to critique your level of preparedness in your home and school environment. Do you have written pandemic/ emergency procedures, equipment and have you completed training. Are you self reliant at home and work for at least five days. Focus on the depth of your response plans and see how well the backup plans are developed. The Ministry of Education has Pandemic Guidelines and Work Safe at Schools to guide you further. Will the layers of support stay in place if the incident affects your school for several weeks or more.

There are aspects to all emergencies that can be managed. Natural hazards and man-made technological disasters such as floods, earthquakes, storms, fires, volcanoes, chemical spillages, medical emergencies, bomb threats, terrorism, tsunamis and utility failures often strike with little warning. There are steps you can proactively take to make life easier for you in your business.

The 4 R's of Emergency Management Checklist

The 4R's within the Emergency Management sector that schools need to consider are:

Reduction:

Mitigate against the effects of an event. Examples include: civil defence cabinets/ book shelves secured to the wall to reduce injury and heavy objects placed on lower shelves.

Readiness:

The writing of plans and procedures. Written procedures need to be regularly revised and this involves consultation within the school and community.

Training people — This can include general rescue, floor wardens, first aiders and the Coordinated Incident Management (CIMS) team that manage the emergency. Usually made up of senior management people these people need to have their own families prepared. Team building and training together build trust, identifies equipment and identifies people's skills.

Trialling the plans/ procedures in tabletop and practical simulations — These rehearsals involving the whole school and caregivers/community further develop trust as well as identify what is going well and what needs to be developed further. Remember to have photos of people signed off to collect the students. That way you don't create further challenges. Many schools have students bring supplies of food plus further consideration needs to be given to students requiring medication. Schools regularly update contact details and where possible email addresses so lessons could be emailed to students especially the seniors.

Involve the students in fun ways to raise awareness — A quiz, video clip or posters is a fun way to give information.

Schools often rely on other businesses to supply certain services and these supplies need to continue during a range of emergencies and the businesses they work with have contingency plans in place. These plans are signed off at the senior management level within the businesses concerned. People's job descriptions include certain deliverables. The more work that occurs here, the more effective people are to respond to a range of emergencies.


Response:

All the pre-planning and practice comes to the fore. The management of an event is important. The Coordinated Incident Management (CIMS) team manages the emergency and provides direction during the response phase. This team has worked together in the readiness stage and it identifies people in leadership roles that respond calmly in situations that require quick decision-making, forward thinking and planning. General rescue teams, floor wardens and first aiders are available resources during the response.

Recovery:

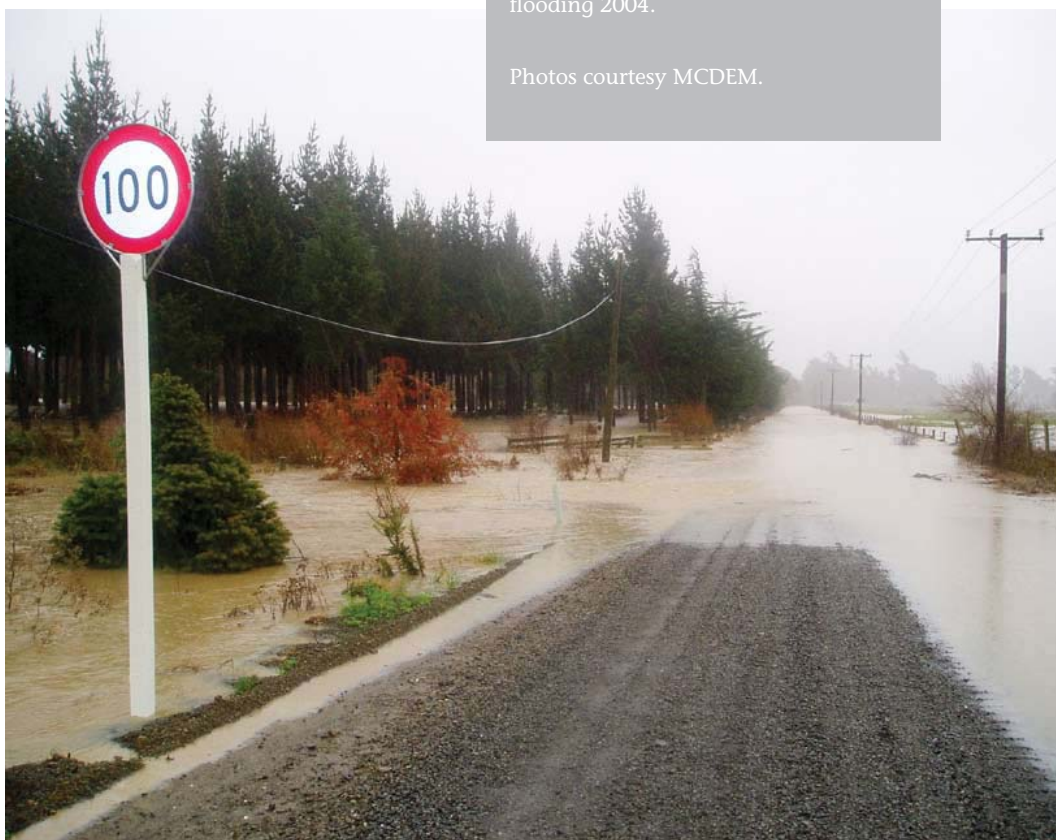
The ability for a school to get back to business as usual. This is where the CIMS team that has managed the emergency response hands over the management to the business continuity team. The Business Continuity/ Business Recovery teams would be activated early so groups of people are working together and it is a smooth transition from one stage to the other.

We work nationally and each year we work with the Hutt Valley Emergency Management Office who is very proactive in their community. We deliver rescue training to approximately 120 students aged between 15-17 years old from ten colleges in the Hutt Valley. We teach them rescue skills and the students also have the opportunity to be assessed to a NZQA unit standard. These students could be at their school/ college, playing sports, be at home or in the workplace in years to come when an emergency occurs. The skills we teach them are transferrable. Some older students have now also joined the local Rural Fire Brigade and the Victoria University Rescue team. It is rewarding and a privilege to work with these students

Make life easier for yourself. You have problems that need solving. Be proactive; seek information, training and resources so in the event of an incident or emergency you can respond effectively. It takes one person to initiate the process and end result belongs to everyone. Disaster Awareness week is 12-17th October which is the start of term 4. So not only will your school get attention for all the right reasons it will save you hours of time and money. All the pre-planning and practice comes to the fore when it's really needed most. 

Below: Garty's Road, south of Amberley, 2008 flood. Bottom: Otorohanga school flooding 2004.

Photos courtesy MCDEM.



What Did You Just Say?

You're saying one thing, but your audience might hear something totally different.

After completing a talk for a large New Zealand company, I received feedback that has cemented some of my ideas about the impact we can have as educators. I was quite pleased with the feedback, although, like most of us, I spent more time focusing on the one negative comment than I did on the 20 positive ones.

As a speaker I get enough feedback from the audience during and immediately after the presentation to know if I've touched their hearts or not. When people make the effort to come up and wait in line to ask you a question, thank you or just shake your hand, you know that you've delivered a message that will have an impact on their lives. Just because one person didn't like me doesn't mean that I didn't deliver great value to the rest of the audience.

As a businessman I'm always looking for ways that I can improve what I do because if I deliver 'a better service' I can charge 'a better fee'! I realise that we all need a way of measuring the service we deliver so that we can improve but I'll always get more feedback and development ideas from talking to one member of the audience, than I would from reading 100 "happy sheets."

I really appreciate that a client needs to be able to measure how good a speaker was so that they

c a n

justify spending the money. They have to prove that they have provided a quality presentation for their staff. Unfortunately, "quality" in my business is totally subjective.

Before I left that event, an audience member took me aside and, with a tear in her eye, told me that I had changed her life, particularly the way she will communicate with her teenagers. The next person I spoke to told me that he enjoyed my presentation, but hadn't bothered to set the goal that I had requested because his life was close to perfect and he didn't really want any more money. Finally three guys grabbed me and quizzed me for 20 minutes about what I would recommend with regards to their triathlon training.

Did they all listen to the same presentation? During my two hours on stage, I don't think I spoke for more than two minutes about children and yet one of them told me she was going to completely change the way she treats her kids. The second person had decided that my goal-setting session was only about money and therefore refused to get involved, despite the fact that 60 percent of the rest of the audience chose to set a health and fitness goal. Finally, the three triathletes focused on the three-minute story I'd told about the time I coached the British triathlon team and helped them achieve some great results.

If you compare my own intentions and objectives regarding my presentation with what the audience heard or received on the day, you can see a huge difference. I said ABC and yet they heard XYZ. Who's right and who's wrong? I think I'll take most of the responsibility here as I agree with Anthony Robbins



PHOTO: ANDRES RODRIGUEZ

"If you compare my own intentions and objectives regarding my presentation with what the audience heard or received on the day, you can see a huge difference. I said ABC and yet they heard XYZ."


when he says: "The meaning of your communications is the response you get."

To me the only true measurement I can use to judge my effectiveness has to be about the changes in behaviour that occur as a result of what I've said. We, as educators, are trying to help people perform better, learn and apply a new skill or do a better job and if we can see positive changes, then we know we've achieved success. If half of my audiences achieve the goal they set for themselves at the end of my presentation, then I'd be over the moon.

The problem is that we will never know if the behaviour change that we are seeing is a result of something we or someone else said. Perhaps it's even a result of something they think we said. All we can do, as educators, is look at the long-term results from our presentations and answer the following questions:

- Making a difference to the quality of other's lives is my intention, but am I actually achieving this?

- Are some of the people that I'm working with improving or getting better performance?
- I'll never please everybody, but are more people using my message than rejecting it?
- Will the world be a better place because of what I've said or done?

Whether you work with school children or like me, adults in the corporate world, if we can put a hand on our heart and answer yes to all of those questions, then I think we are doing a good job. 

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Inside your toolbox

Take stock of the tools you use to become the best teacher possible.



Every teacher has at his or her disposal a toolbox of strategies for classroom management. Every one of us can use eye contact, proximity, praise, a lowering of the voice, a smile, redirect a student or send a student to the office to manage our learners. However, not everyone uses these tools, and many teachers use strategies that are detrimental to learning.

In his book, *What Great Teachers Do Differently*, Todd Whitaker discusses three strategies that do not work in the classroom:

Number 1: Arguing

Todd claims when teachers argue with a student, no-one ever wins. For the student, with his or her peers looking on, he or

she cannot afford to lose or back down. Peer pressure is strong and alive in most classrooms. They will keep arguing even when they know they are wrong. Arguing creates a win-lose situation; someone has to win while the other will lose. Todd also suggests that when people argue, one person is acting like an adult, the other a child. He maintains that in a teacher student argument, it is hard to work out which one is the adult.

Number 2: Shouting

Often the teachers are yelling at the students who have been yelled at so much that it has no effect. Furthermore if students are shouted at by their mums or dads, and a teacher responds in the same way, it just becomes "white noise" to them.

Raising your voice automatically sends the listener's brain into a stress/threat situation. Adrenaline starts to pump, and the brain shuts down the higher-order thinking (Neo Cortex) and downshifts to the survival or Reptilian, lower brain. Even if the teacher is yelling at someone else, all the other students' brains will be affected, some more than others. I have heard teachers say, "Yell? They have not heard me yell yet!" Whatever you as the teacher perceives as shouting, your students' understanding may be very different.

Number 3: Sarcasm

There is absolutely no place for sarcasm in any learning environment. All brain experts agree. Even if the student you're being sarcastic to knows it is a joke, there will be someone in the room who does not know. The subconscious brain believes all that it is told. It does not have a filter for true or false. Using sarcasm causes stress in the brain and again diverts brain function away from the 'thinking brain.'

Teachers who use these strategies do have other tools available that can enhance learning rather than inhibit it.

One major tool is to develop strong relationships with the students in your classroom. Get to know them at a personal level; be genuinely interested in their life outside school as well as within. Share your stories, failures and successes so students see the human face of you, the teacher. I came across this wonderful quote recently by John Maxwell: "If you want to impress people, tell them about your successes. If you want to impact people, tell them about your failures." Opening up about your life will draw your students closer to you and help you build positive relationships with them, which should be a top priority for your toolbox.



PHOTO: LISA YOUNG

"Humour is highly effective as an attention grabber and creates a positive climate within your classroom."

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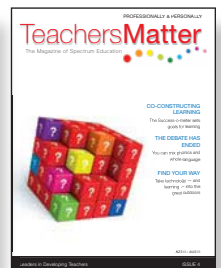
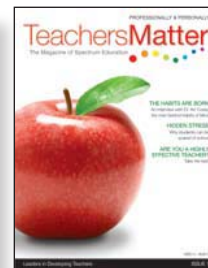
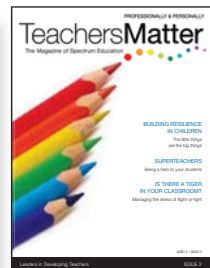
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Another tool to enhance learning is discussed by Dr David Sousa, an international expert on how the brain learns. He states, "Students who laugh more learn more." There is a physiological response in the brain when laughing that opens up the long-term memory and embeds learning. **The benefits of the use of humour in your classroom are extensive.** Laughter increases oxygen to the brain and gives an endorphin surge, which makes us feel good. Humour is highly effective as an attention grabber and creates a positive climate within your classroom. Mark Shatz, a professor of psychology, made a great distinction about humour when he stated: "Our job is not to make students laugh. Our job is to help them learn, and if humour can make the learning process more enjoyable, then I think everybody benefits as the result of it."

Great teachers also use praise in specific ways to facilitate their behaviour management plan. Dr Ben Bissell suggests praise must be authentic, specific, immediate, clean (without expectation of wanting more from the person) and private. **Effective teachers, according to Todd Whittaker, have not only high expectations of their students, they have higher expectations of themselves.** They are constantly monitoring the results they are producing in the classroom and changing and adapting their teaching style to cater for the learners in their charge. They are frequently reflecting on their own practice, adding, reinforcing and deducting tools from their effective toolkit.

Which tools do you have in your toolkit that are effective in enhancing learning and which ones might be useful to replace?



Answers

Brain Twisters (from page 70)

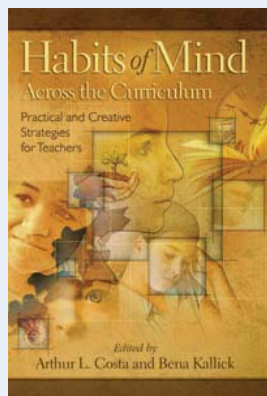
1. Indian
2. Organise
3. Rock around the Clock
4. Double Jointed
5. Top Secret
6. Formula
7. Puss in Boots
8. Unicycle
9. One in a Million

Quiz Questions (from page 66)

1. Pounamu
2. South America
3. "Switch hitter"
4. A book (International Standard Book Number)
5. Chad and Cuba
6. London
7. Four
8. Sand
9. Type of bee
10. Slowly and leisurely
11. 52
12. Hummingbird
13. Galadriel
14. Blind

Habits of Mind

available from www.spectrumeducation.com



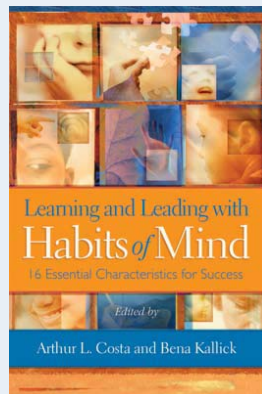
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Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick

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Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick

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and in life. Drawing on their research and experience in applying the Habits of Mind in all kinds of schools, the authors guide you through making intelligent behaviour a practical outcome. Costa and Kallick present a compelling rationale for using the Habits as a foundation for learning and leading.

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The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.

Alvin Toffler

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