



Good Teacher Magazine

Term One 2009

'Online 2009'
ed-media.co.nz

New Zealand's teachers magazine

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COVER: Summer at McLaren's Falls, off the Tauranga Kaimai Road

Good Teacher Magazine

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Message from the GTM Team

Welcome to 2009 and welcome to the huge step being taken by Good Teacher Magazine.

Since Good Teacher Magazine was created in the 1990's it has been delivered to schools and tertiary institutions as a hard copy magazine ... progressing from a newspaper format through black and white (with some colour) magazine and more recently as a glossy full colour magazine.

Presenting at a conference on change management at Cambridge University in the United Kingdom gave that thing we have too little of today... the distance and time to think clearly and plan for the future of the magazine.

The result is what you are reading now.

There is a multitude of benefits to moving the magazine into the 21st century.

- 1 Good Teacher Magazine is now available to a far greater audience in the schools and institutes of New Zealand. (no more wondering where the copy has vanished to)
- 2 Those international requests for the magazine can now be met... the magazine is available to teachers in other countries – we are meant to be world leaders in education after all!
- 3 Regular readers can access and download the magazine from anywhere – home, work, overseas... no limits.
- 4 The advertisers are happy... their ads can now have a link direct to their website, much more gratifying than not knowing if anyone has seen it.
- 5 Continually rising printing and postage costs will be a

thing of the past – along with the compliance required by the Post Office – both of these can be crippling and in this economic climate will become more difficult.

- 6 By having the magazine online there is no limit to the number of pages. (This is usually a constraint which goes with print layout planning and the cost of printing/binding/mailling.
- 7 If you add to that the air-miles and trees being saved, the whole experience is looking decidedly green!

So while you will not have that lovely glossy copy on your staffroom table (unless you want to print it out yourselves on super glossy paper) the team at Good Teacher Magazine hope you will embrace this new venture and appreciate it.

As Good Teacher Magazine is now free to look at online - or to download (the pictures are not print quality but that is the price paid for smaller file size) there will be no more subscriptions – it is free to everyone.

However should you see the benefits of what is being offered now, we would appreciate your telling potential advertisers about us – while one lot of costs have gone the magazine still has to be designed and typeset – the need to make an income is still there - and computers and their programmes have a limited lifespan.

In the meantime enjoy your new magazine the same writers are there – with a new one in this issue and more writing for Term Two (look for ESOL and PRT). We are now also able to merchandise (sell) Putumayo cd's (look for the kids ones being reviewed in Term Two) SO if you'd like to let us know what you think you can email us on

info@ed-media.co.nz

Enjoy

The Team at Good Teacher Magazine

NZ Glass Environmental Fund

Attention Teachers

Expressions of interest to make application for a grant from the NZ Glass Environmental Fund are invited. Up to \$25,000 will be available in total for suitable environmental projects. For application forms and guidelines see our website www.recycleglass.co.nz or contact:

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Deadline for expression of interest is 31 March 2009.

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Your Soapbox!

Finally, a chance to have your say

“

Reflections from a Maori Adviser 2008.

The role of an Adviser is vast and varied. Driving is the time when many ISTE's (In-service, Teacher Educators) reflect on their work. Many a problem has been solved whilst overtaking a car on the Waikato roads.

Waikato region has the largest number of children involved in Maori medium education. Kura a iwi, Kura Kaupapa Maori, kura reo rua, immersion classes, bilingual classes and schools are examples of the vast environments Maori adviser work in. One could mistakenly think that Maori medium education settings are all the same, Isn't it about the education of children in Te reo Maori?

After a meeting in school and a week of being in four different schools, it dawned on me; these setting are not the same. They are their own unique contexts. They are driven by Iwi/Whanau and hapu and the professionals in their settings. As suggested in the Marautanga o Aotearoa these schools are exploring notions of a graduate profile relevant and specific to their contexts. Whilst exciting it may command that ISTE's respond in a range of ways to meet the specific contexts' needs. One size does not fit all.

The other great discovery I made that day when driving was; teachers want to be affirmed in their practice as teachers. They need to know they are doing a great job and to be cajoled to do a better job. This reminded me of the demanding and fragile nature of our profession.

Those two reflections (earth shattering to me at the time) made me think, how incredibly privileged I am to see and contribute to such a range of dynamic and diverse settings within Maori medium education. The second revelation/reminder was that teachers are our greatest resource and he aha te mea nui i te ao he tangata.

Quite simple reflections really, and in hindsight does everything need to be complex though?

”



If you want to have YOUR SAY
please email your offering to:
soapbox@ed-media.co.nz

Google, the 'white bread of the mind'?

by Gwen Gawith

In the last (hard copy) issue I ended with this quote from Mansilla and Gardner (2008):

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

The question is what are we doing to help students to discipline their minds, resist oversimplification and cope with complexity?

Consider this question in the light of a recent accusation by Professor Tara Brabazon, reported by The Times (Frean, 2008).

Google is "white bread for the mind", and the Internet is producing a generation of students who survive on a diet of unreliable information, a professor of media studies will claim this week.

In her inaugural lecture at the University of Brighton, Tara Brabazon will urge teachers at all levels of the education system to equip students with the skills they need to interpret and sift through information gleaned from the Internet.

She believes that easy access to information has dulled students' sense of curiosity and is stifling debate. She claims that many undergraduates arrive at university unable to discriminate between anecdotal and unsubstantiated material posted on the Internet.

"I call this type of education 'the University of Google'. Google offers easy answers to difficult questions. But students do not know how to tell if they come from serious, refereed work or are merely composed of shallow ideas, superficial surfing and fleeting commitments..."

Is easy access to information dulling students' sense of curiosity and stifling debate?

Personally, being gluten intolerant, I dribble at the thought of a nice slice of wheat-based bread, brown or white, but I think Brabazon has a point about Google as the white bread of the mind, especially since Wikipedia has become the encyclopaedia of choice of the digitally literate but, dare we say it, all too often information illiterate. Some say that kids now 'wiki' things instead of 'googling' them! Who knows! In the article Brabazon is quoted as having said that the founder



of Wikipedia, Larry Sanger, himself described it as 'broken beyond repair' before abandoning it in 2007 and I guess you can't go to a more authoritative source than the originator?

Having established that Professor Brabazon has taught in universities for 18 years, and having Googled her to look at where her work has been published and her academic street creds, I am now convinced that she is an authoritative source, and while the article comprises mainly Brabazon's unsubstantiated opinions, I can see that she has based those opinions on two decades of relevant experience. As 'evidence' this is clearly not good enough to constitute PhD data, but is certainly sufficiently credible for me to consider her views.

Given what I see of children's indiscriminate extraction of 'stuff' from the first few Google hits listed, what Brabazon has to say is both relevant to my own experience and accurately represents my experience both with schools and trying to teach essay-writing to struggling university-level students. I'm intrigued by the phenomenon she calls the 'flattening of expertise', each piece of web-based information being given the same credibility by users. This mirrors my frequent cry, "But where does that come from, and how do you know it's any good?" Brabazon quotes from Andrew Keen's book, *The cult of the amateur*, in which he says, "To-day's media is shattering the world into a

billion personalised truths, each seemingly equally valid and worthwhile."

If you add what Mansilla and Gardner say to what Brabazon says, it looks like a double-barelled problem:

- Students need to avoid oversimplification in dealing with information-age complexity, and need to be taught how to 'think with information in novel situations'
- Students need to learn how to use Internet information with discrimination, distinguishing gold from grot, learning to establish relevance, accuracy and authenticity.

Brabazon combines both themes when she says:

We need to teach our students the interpretative skills first before we teach them the technological skills. Students must be trained to be dynamic and critical thinkers rather than drifting to the first site returned through Google (Frean, op cit).

A plague of plagiarists or breaching a universal digital 'right'?

Frean reports that Brabazon's own students are banned from using Wikipedia or Google as research tools in their first year of (university) study. She talks about rampant plagiarism and burgeoning use of Internet-based essay supply services.

While, at primary level I see no evidence that plagiarism is attributable to anything other than the failure of teachers to show children how to credit their sources and the 'official' sanction given for pasting up facts retrieved from a number of sources in the name of 'presenting' your 'inquiry', there is some evidence that plagiarism is alive and well in NZ secondary schools.

When I wrote two thoroughly researched, commissioned articles on copyright, intellectual property, plagiarism, etc, in *Good Teacher* in 2002 I found that some secondary schools were considering using services like Turnitin.com and several tertiary institutions were already using such services to detect plagiarism. I've no idea what has happened in the six intervening years, but I don't think that intellectual property abuse will have diminished. In fact, there's every reason to think that because it's so easy to manipulate verbal and pictorial data, stick it into programs like Photoshop to change anything and everything, many students see anything based on the Internet as raw material for adaptation into any shape, form and format they choose. Downloading, adapting and using is their 'right', and the idea of someone thinking that they can 'own' intellectual property because they happened to spend years working on it is manifestly absurd, a violation of their rights to freedom of speech and creative technological expression! Yeah, right!

What is discrimination and where do we start?

In this climate, teaching children to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information, between accurate and inaccurate information, between authoritative, reliable, well-researched authoritative information and anecdotal, unproven, 'amateur' information, between balanced information and biased information, is not only hard, it's like making water flow uphill.

Because of this, like so many things (including learning to read, learning to plan one's learning, learning to self-regulate, self-monitor and self-evaluate) I think that the challenge of teaching children how to evaluate information, how to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information, between accurate and inaccurate information,



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between authoritative, reliable information and anecdotal, unproven, 'amateur' information, balance and bias, and the like, lies with primary schools. It's not easy at any age, but at least, at this age, much of the information they retrieve will be from print sources and, one hopes, much of the digital information they use will be filtered by teachers.

Primary and intermediate age is, surely, the time to show students that any written or verbal claims they make are better, academically speaking, if grounded in evidence, and how to distinguish good evidence from shallow, anecdotal ungrounded opinions taken from say, a social networking site. At primary there's opportunity to show children how to find out whether their info is relevant, true, current, authoritative or reliable, and so on. So, you can say, is this fair, when teachers themselves haven't really been taught how to do it? I agree; this is where that endangered species, trained full-time Teacher Librarians come in handy. But few schools have such a luxury, and this gets me back to the fact that everyone, children and teachers alike, needs to use some simple filtering tools. The three 3Doors® questions are a good start, but although I religiously introduce these to teachers few seem to integrate them into their ongoing teaching practice. The starter tool itself (three simple questions) cannot be easier, so I can only assume that few primary and even fewer intermediate level teachers actually recognize the need for children to learn to distinguish authoritative, reliable information and anecdotal, unproven, 'amateur' information, balance and bias, and the like. A quick look at student performance (both Yr 4 and 8) on the tasks relating to using information with discrimination in the 2005 NEMP information skills results confirms this assumption, but I don't have any reputable research evidence, so it remains an assumption. I've also read (unsubstantiated) assertions that IT use may be increasing children's mental flexibility and establishing different thought patterns. So it may be swings and roundabouts. Less depth of thinking traded for more mental agility and gullibility?

Surely these skills and tools belong at secondary? Secondary students need these information discrimination skills and tools even more, but they're proportionately harder for secondary teachers to integrate unless all of them agree to teach the same skills and tools in each separate subject. Pigs might fly?

A bonus for geriatric teachers? Whooppeee!

So is it all gloom and doom? According to a recently UCLA study habitual Googling may help prevent mental atrophy in 'aging test subjects'! Hotchkiss reports:

The objective of the study was to see if regular Internet usage was more effective than other intellectually stimulating tasks in keep the brain limber in aging test subjects. Gary Small, a professor the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA, along with Teena D. Moody and Susan Y. Bookheimer, will be publishing the study in an upcoming issue of the American Journal of Geriatric Psychology...

In a nutshell, the findings were that "emerging computerized technologies may have physiological effects and potential benefits for middle aged and older adults," and that "Internet

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searching engages complicated brain activity, which may help exercise and improve brain function." This is a long way of saying that being on-line helps keep those little gray cells busy. The level of brain activity was compared to that of reading a book. With Internet usage, a significantly bigger piece of neural real estate lit up on the fMRI indicating that more parts of the brain were engaged (Hotchkiss, 2008).

So, if there are schools out there actively teaching students to use information with discrimination, please contact me. Other than my simple tools, the whole issue of how to teach discrimination has got me stumped. While I can agree with what Brabazon says, I don't have many answers, but it's going to be one of my major focuses with 3Doors in 2009.

Having said that, I'm inching closer to retirement, so if you want 3Doors® in 2009, get in early! I'm taking bookings now (gwen@metacog.co.nz). When I retire I'll have a lot more time to ensure that my 'neural real estate' is lit up daily as I try to research some of these intriguing questions! Meanwhile, I'll plug on with the ten tools in 3Doors in the confidence that they are firmly grounded in reputable research – an authoritative 'evidence-based' (to use an expression I detest) set of pedagogical tools to give students the skills and tools they need to manage their learning, find the information they need, apply it mindfully, with critical discrimination and intellectual discipline and creativity.

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**At the party,
the 'know it all'
explained the
fundamental
problems in the
school.
The 'know it all'
knew the cures too.**

At the party, the 'know it all' explained the fundamental problems in the school. The 'know it all' knew the cures too. The 'know it all' spoke with conviction and certainty and never asked questions or listened to anyone else. Why should you when you know it all. The 'know it all' told everyone what they ought to do about the school's problems, but no one wanted to hear it: 'their loss,' said the 'know it all', 'that's part of the problem, no one wants to know the truth.' Must be nice to be so sure.

'Know it all' dialogue

On Monday, the 'know it all' discussed homework with a student as follows:

Teacher: That was an important assignment and you point blank didn't do it.

Pupil: I forgot.

Teacher: You forgot? You shouldn't forget. It's obvious, that it's your job as a pupil to remember.

Pupil: I was busy.

Teacher: Starting tonight, I want you to write it down in a notebook and I'll check it every day.

Pupil: What if I forget?

Believing your personal views and experiences are universal or definitive, and expressing personal attitudes, values, beliefs and opinions as facts, characterises the 'know it all' person. Teaching and working with people involves a great deal of wobbling and banging about. People are a messy business – they're just so complex and diverse.

Tentative teachers

In teaching, tentativeness requires the teacher to move beyond their own perspective, to express an open minded attitude and a willingness to hear opposing points of view. With all the messiness involved in dealing with young people, tentative teachers often prove more successful in working with them than the 'know it all' teachers.

Tentativeness, rather than unwavering certainty, helps create a supportive and inclusive atmosphere in the classrooms between the teacher and the students. On the other hand, teachers who seem to 'know it all' and appear set in their views are rarely appreciated and eventually the students become defensive rather than open in dealing with the teacher, creating barriers to effective interpersonal relations.

Tentative dialogue

Compare the conversation below between a tentative teacher and the 'know it all' approach above:

Teacher: It looks like you didn't do your homework. It seems to me the assignment is fairly important.

Pupil: I forgot.

Teacher: I know I don't live at your house, but isn't there someone or some way to help you remember to do your homework?

Pupil: Well, I suppose I could ask my mother to remind me.

Teacher: I know you might think 'typical adult', but can you hear me out? Sooner or later you have to take care of your own business. I think that is part of what school is about.

Pupil: What about if I write it in a notebook.

Teacher: That might be worth a try. When will you start?

Pupil: How about tonight?

Both dialogues arrive at the same outcome, but 'tentative' dialogue invites comment, involvement and further discussion. In 'know it all' dialogue the teacher makes it clear that they have said everything that needs saying and responding is difficult.

'know it all'

by John Hellner

Tentative Approaches

The following examples of tentative language can prove effective in leaving the pathway open for students to supported rather than confronted:

Disclaimers

- "I probably shouldn't say this, but..."
- "I'm not really sure, but..."
- "If it were me..."
- "Don't get me wrong, but..."
- "I realise this may not be the best time, but..."
- "I know you will think this is crazy, but..."
- "I may be wrong here, but..."

Qualifiers

- "Sometimes..."
- "Maybe..."
- "Kinda"
- "Rarely"
- "Likely"

Hedges

- "Perhaps"
- "You could" (instead of "should")
- "It seems to me"
- "I think", "I believe" or "I feel"
- "You might"

Tag Questions

- "[Let's get to work.] Okay?"
- "[Time to work.] What do you think?"
- "What about [going to work?]"

Descriptions

Description, instead of evaluation, provides a successful approach to being tentative: describe what happened, describe feelings, or describe what can be seen; separate description from emotion; avoid accusations, avoid blame, and avoid evaluative adjectives.

For example, saying "the people are barbaric" passes judgment: saying "the people make human sacrifices and live in caves", describes behaviour.

Saying "I hated the place" gives an evaluative opinion: saying "I felt bewildered and confused when I was there", describes feelings. Description not only indicates tentativeness, but also credits the listener with the ability to draw their own conclusions.

Tentativeness and Power

Using too many tentative approaches may appear as an indication of weakness, lack of conviction, or as someone who wants to avoid responsibility. But expressing tentativeness judiciously to establish your belief that no one can know all about a subject, or your ability to accept opposing views, should blunt such criticism, especially in belief laden conversations or when the discussion turns to opinion.

Nor does tentativeness apply to the rare student who methodically seeks to undermine a teacher's ability to teach other students, or to take advantage of the teacher's best intentions. Those student's deserve the consequences the teacher doles out.

Tentativeness appearing as weakness occurs more often in a power sharing environment, such as a corporate boardroom, or one in which certainty pays a dividend, such as a courtroom or sales pitch. In a classroom, power lies strongly with the teacher and certainty conveys no bonus, which makes tentativeness appears warm, polite and social – not weak.



In April 2006, John presented to the "Making a Difference" symposium in Wellington. A 45 minute audio-video CD disc of John's presentation, entitled "Classroom Fun", is now available. For information contact john@ed-media.co.nz

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

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

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

“End of Year Message

Dear Teacher,
You may not always understand me.

Actually I'm not sure that I understand myself !

I just know that I'm not like many other kids.

We don't even laugh at the same things because they don't really get it. They often make jokes about things that they think are funny but insult me. I don't think that it is kind to make fun of other people, especially when it upsets them. Grown ups do this too. I wonder why they do it? I thought it was really funny the other day when you said it seemed strange that abbreviation is such a long word when you helped me to spell it for my story.

I really like words but sometimes when I talk I use too many complicated words for the other kids to understand and so I seem to always get the job of writing stuff down when you give us group work. My classmates don't understand that I know a lot of stuff about the things that I'm interested in, and I've read lots about all sorts of things. I'd like to share too but I'm usually too busy writing down what they say. I like it when I get the chance to work with my friends because we take turns at being the recorder. I know that the other kids in the class are bored when I need to talk about an idea that I'm trying to come to grips with because they don't follow what I'm on about. It's really great when you help me with where I can go to find the information or who to talk to that can help me because I learn more when I do this myself.

I want to learn new stuff too. I love it when you give me things to do that challenge me to use my brain as well as being fun to do. That's why I like talking to you. Sometimes I just have to talk to you because there isn't anyone else in the classroom who understands what I am trying to do. Most of my friends are older than me. They will be leaving this school before I do and it can be lonely in our classroom. It's hard when you are really busy with other kids, because sometimes I need to talk about where I'm going with my learning. It helps me to think about what I am doing, even when I'm supposed to be working by myself.

I hope that doesn't annoy you too much. Sometimes I can get on the right track by talking with others in my group. We try to do it quietly but sometimes we argue about things and interrupt others. We are not trying to be a disturbance though.

I get embarrassed really easily. My mum says I'm over sensitive because I worry about things when I can't change anything to

to My Teacher''

From a Gifted Student

make them better! There are so many injustices in this world. I don't try to make trouble. It's just that at school I get really bothered and I need you to intervene when the classroom is very noisy because I can't think when there is a lot of noise going on around me. Or when someone causes a fuss that you have to deal with because their behaviour is disrupting everyone else. I hate it when we all get into trouble because of one or two kids. Thank you for understanding that I need peace and quiet to do my best work.

When I am doing something that I am really interested in then I find it really hard to break off and do something else. You see, the trouble is that I don't even notice that time is passing because I am concentrating. It isn't that I am ignoring you. I just haven't heard you. I have noticed that this happens especially when I am doing something creative. Mum said that Professor Csikszentmihalyi calls this 'flow.' (She had to help me with the spelling of his name.)

It's really hard for me to get motivated to do stuff that I already know in class because there isn't any challenge for me. I need to see the big picture for what we are doing because I like to look for patterns. It helps when I know who would use the information in their lives and how they connect it all up. Dad gave me a really fun idea. He said to ask you if I would be allowed to find a way of connecting the topics that we study to something that I am currently interested in, and then he said this is a kind of brainstorming called synectics. I am looking forward to trying it out.

I hope that you don't think I'm a problem because I am curious. I like to be able to think for myself about things. My passion for astrophysics might seem unusual for my age but it really fascinates me. (I've been interested since I heard a radio interview about the team of scientists working with data from the Antarctic ice cap.) I know that you are not really interested in this area but it was really exciting for me when you helped me to find out how I could contact them to find out more because it is their job and they are experts.

I can't help needing to trust that grown ups know what they are talking about, and so when they are wrong then I simply have to speak up. I wish you would help me to discover how to do it without causing offence because I don't mean to.

Thank you for helping me to be myself.

Thank you for understanding me and expecting me to do my best.

Thank you for believing that my best is worthwhile.

Thank you for advocating for me with the other teachers.

You are my favourite teacher. When I go into a new class next year I would still like to be able to come to you for help sometimes

I hope my new teacher next year is just like you.

You have made a difference. I will remember you.

Love from

A. Giftedstudent



Growing Food

Lyn Rogers

In the last issue
I described the setting up
of an edible garden at my
new home.

Since then, I have seen
articles about edible
gardens in so many places
that I decided it might be
best to finish the story. . .

I had worked through an action learning cycle to show some of the process I used for planning. The last part of this process is reflection (which of course has also been going on throughout).

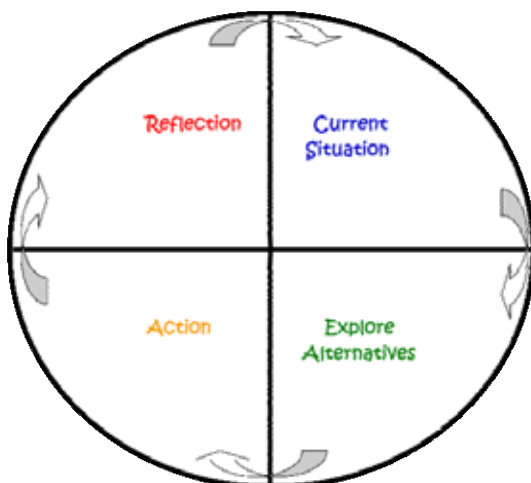
I chose to follow through the reflection process in photo to essay style, pondering these questions:

What went well?

What needs improvement/reassessment?

What next?

What have I learned?



The worms are thriving, and really need to be emptied and started up again.

The citrus trees especially have appreciated the "worm wees" which come out the bottom. I dilute it about 1 in 10 before pouring it around their roots. I've covered it with carpet with to keep the moisture in and the flies out.

The compost (vermicast) from the worm farm and applied on the garden when I first arrived is where the garlic grew and the pumpkins and strawberries are now thriving



Reflections . . . on an edible garden

The kitchen garden has gone from this



to this.

Garden first harvest



The location works perfectly, just outside the kitchen door, making and daily checking very easy and so the weeding never got out of control. The straw mulch also made that a lot easier.

Growing Food



Garden first planting



and transformed

The garden got a bit bigger too!

I managed to resurrect the heritage and Maori potatoes I thought I had almost lost, by planting in old washing machine bowls. These ones did better than those planted outside, because we had alternately very dry and very wet, and I hadn't enough spent time considering the location or quality of the soil.

The harvest was fine!

One dilemma was the quantity coming on all at once. So the preserving skills and the freezer came in very handy.

From now I will stagger the plantings by growing seedlings rather than putting punnets of several plants in at once. I have collected seeds of many of the plants, letting one of each variety I enjoyed go to seed. I am hoping that not too many were hybrids, because the seed doesn't always breed true, and most of my plants came from various supermarkets and garden centres.

I will see next season I suppose!



Potatoes and Harvest



Possibilities at school



As mentioned before, edible gardens are popping up everywhere, especially in schools.

There is an abundance of books and magazines available, focusing on gardening and children, with plenty of ideas for actions, activities and building gardens.

In secondary schools the horticulture blocks (in many cases having fallen into disuse and even disrepair) are being revamped, and edible gardens are seen in many primary schools too.

What is exciting is that many of these initiatives are student driven, or responding to student demand.



School gardens

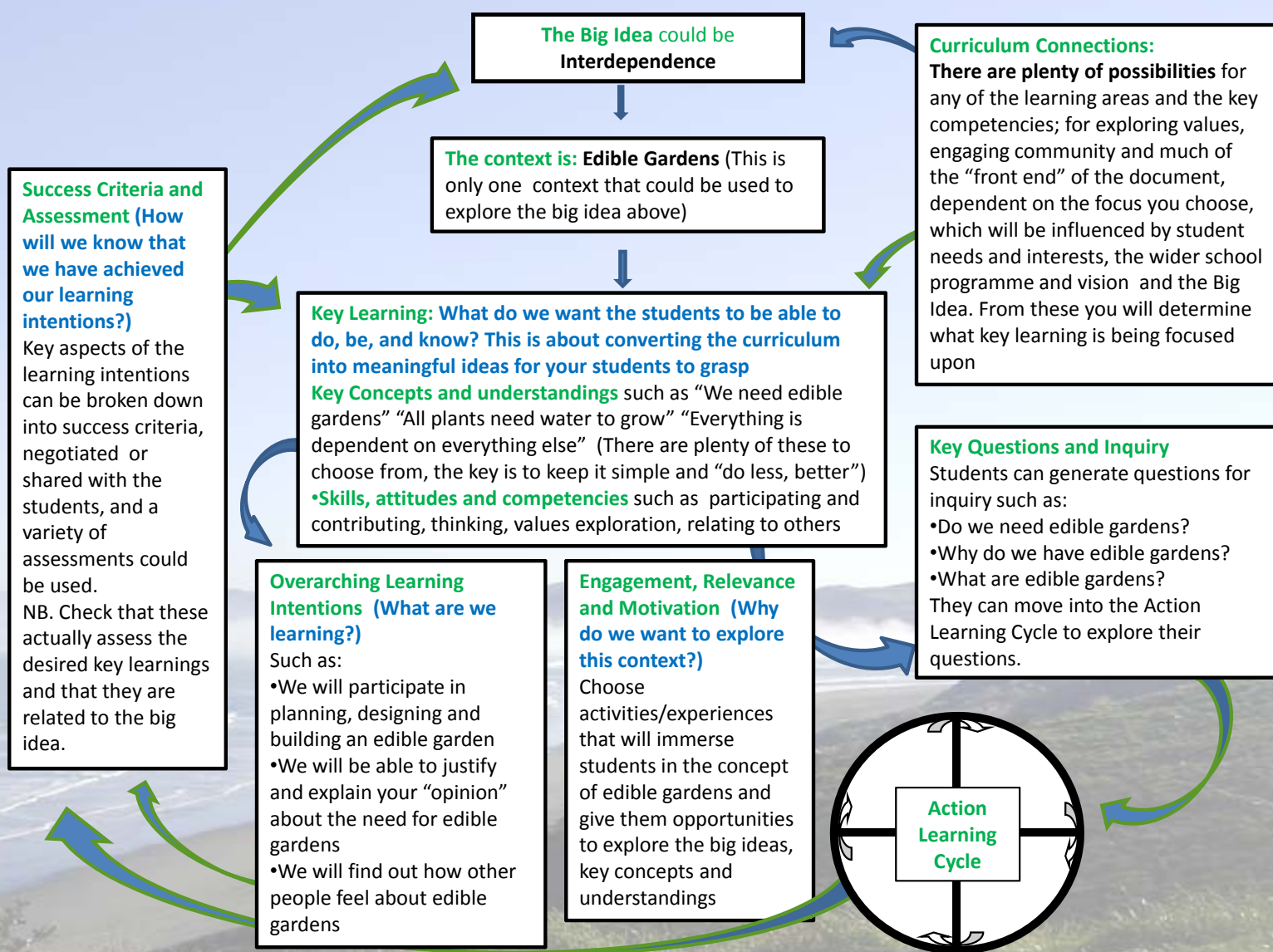


Growing Food

Teachers are incorporating gardening related contexts into their programmes, and are planning for the type of learning that involves cross curricular student inquiry. Many of the parts of Fig 1 can be co-constructed with students,

and as we move into empowering our students more, and building our own confidence in doing inquiry, we can do more of this. The best inquiries are those the students come up with themselves, as the interest is there already!

Fig 1 Teacher planning for inquiry into edible gardens



There are various schooling initiatives that foster the idea of edible gardening and many schools have become involved in these initiatives.

Finding curriculum connections is very easy.
(See Curriculum Connections - right)

Possibilities at school

ACTION LEARNING CYCLE: An Inquiry into Edible Gardening

Involving students in their own inquiry, including putting their plans and learning into action, can be fostered using the action learning cycle mentioned before.

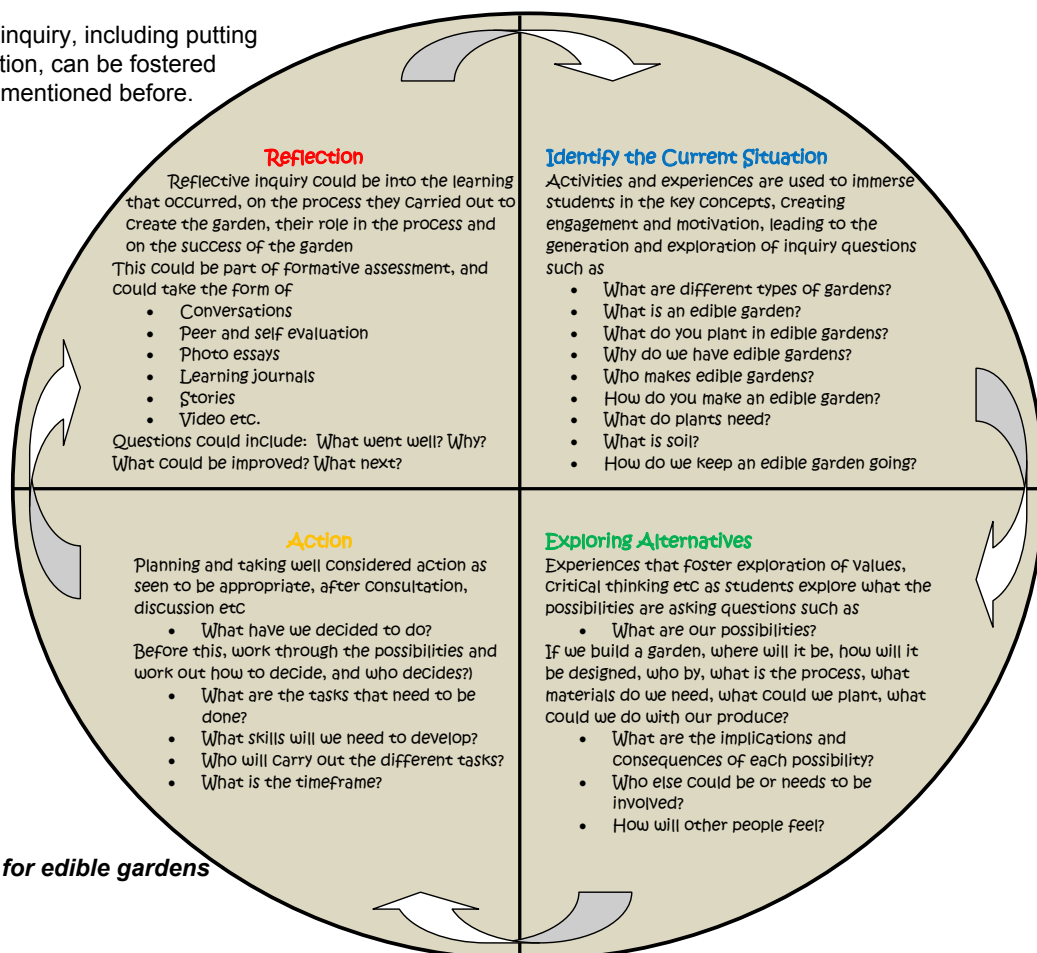


Fig 3: Action Learning Cycle for edible gardens

There are potential opportunities to focus on any of the Key Competencies and Values, foregrounding those that are most appropriate for your students.

There is also the potential for all aspects of the Vision and Principles of the NZC to be considered, and again, which ones are foregrounded will depend on the chosen focus for this context, within the wider framework of student, school and community needs, vision, interests and strengths.

Curriculum Connections: Some informal ideas for implementing the curriculum through an edible gardens context. I have deliberately chosen not to make specific links to the curriculum, as these depend so much on the focus of the learning desired, school vision, student needs and interests, etc.

Some ideas could include:

Health: communication; community and environmental resources; healthy eating and nutrition; taking action; working with whanau and communities

Social Studies: exploring history, values, culture, economics, social action, community

Science: exploring relationships between organisms and their environment; interdependence; socio-scientific issues and action; fair testing and investigation

Technology: the design process and putting it into action

The Arts: design; communication; presentation; expressing ideas

Languages: expressing ideas in any language; cultural exploration

Maths: measurement (length, volume); estimation; scale drawing; graphing

English: exposition; transactional writing; visual texts; keeping a journal; communication

Growing Food ... As a Community

As well as school and home gardens, the number of community gardens is growing.

If practical, these might offer and alternative or additional opportunities for students to become involved in gardening.

One of the most famous in NZ is that set up next to the Home of Compassion in Island Bay Wellington. Sister Loyola Galvin won the NZ Gardener magazine Gardener of the Year Award last year for her initiative and enthusiasm.

We even found a model garden built to feed the needy in the middle of the civic centre in San Francisco when we were lucky enough to go there last year. This garden was modeled on the "Victory Garden" concept which saw most schools and many public spaces in the USA growing food in times of need after the Second World War.

So, give it a go!!! Everyone's doing it because it's not so hard.



Home of Compassion



books and things

Wholly Irresponsible Exploits:

65 ways to Muck About with Science

By Sean Connolly

Published by Allen & Unwin

Reviewed by Catherine George and Luke Allis

RRP \$35.00

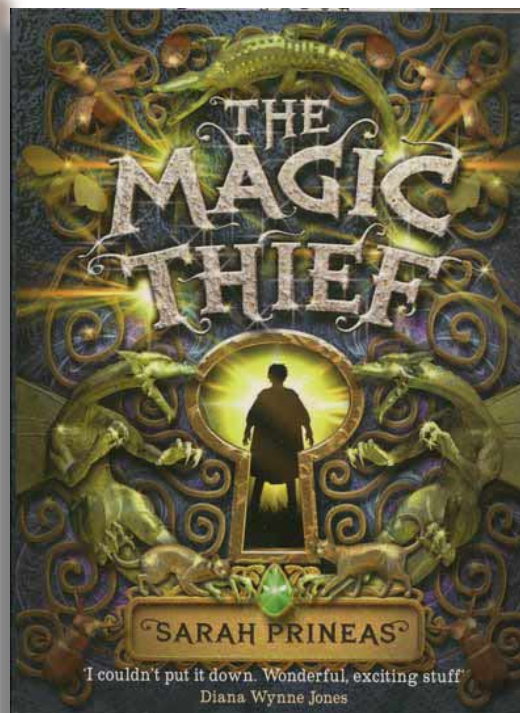
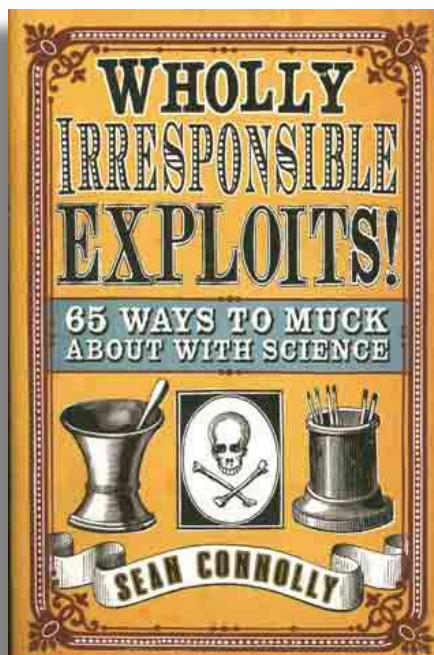
"Wholly Irresponsible Exploits: 65 Ways to Muck About with Science" is Sean Connolly's follow up to the excellent "Wholly Irresponsible Experiments". While some naysayers may point out that the experiments are at the very well behaved end of the irresponsibility spectrum, I thought the range of experiments was great and different from other "lets have fun with science" books I've seen recently. The text is entertaining and informative, with the cover and illustrations reminiscent of "The Dangerous Book for Boys".

The experiments can be done pretty much with things you will find around the house, in the kitchen or garden shed.

That said, I don't have personal experience of any of them. I tried to encourage my children to read and review this book for me, however the appeal of the beach was too great for them. Fortunately I bumped into an interested reviewer at the swimming pool....

Luke Allis, aged 11, happily took the book home and by the time I saw him a few days later he'd already done two of the experiments. "What is really good about it is that it has step by step instructions that make the experiment simple to do. And then at the end it tells you how it works and tells you the science part of it. There are short stories at the beginning of each chapter, and lots of it is really funny."

This book would be a great gift for older children or families interested in doing experiments together. Luke thinks it would appeal to children aged 10 and up. "Definitely people who like watching science shows like "Brainiac" and "Lets Get Inventing" would like this so they could try out some of their own experiments at home." Highly recommended.



The Magic Thief

By Sarah Prineas

Published by Quercus

Reviewed by Gabriel Ford, aged 10.

RRP \$18.99

At the very beginning of "The Magic Thief" Conn, a pickpocket and petty thief, tries to steal a wizards "Locus Magicalicus", a stone used to focus magic. And so begins a tale of magic and mystery.

The story is set in a world where magic is used by the Wizards, but some of the magic is disappearing. The city of Wellmet is divided into two sections, the Twilight and the Sunrise. The Sunrise is the wealthy side of the city while the Twilight is inhabited by the poor like Conn. The two sections are separated by a river. When Conn tries to steal from the wizard Nevery it is a surprise to Nevery that Conn doesn't just drop dead as he should when he touches a wizard's locus magicalicus. He senses something special about Conn and takes him on as his apprentice. (Well he becomes an apprentice when Nevery works out that Conn isn't interested in being a servant!) Conn and Nevery work together to try and find out why the magic is leaving the city of Wellmet.

This book is a fascinating story that made me want to read on at the end of each chapter. The characters were really easy to imagine and you got a good image of the city of Wellmet. My favourite character was Nevery's servant Benet. He started off grumpy and rough with Conn, but that changes as they develop a friendship.

"The Magic Thief" is the first in a compelling trilogy and I'm really looking forward to the next books in this fantasy series. I can't wait to see what Conn does next! Recommended for readers aged 9 and up who enjoy books about magic and fantasy.

What You Need To Know Before Your Child Starts Secondary School.

Debbie Knowles and Julie Mulcahy

Published by Penguin

Reviewed by Catherine George

RRP \$30.00

What You Need To Know Before Your Child Starts Secondary School is a handbook to help parents understand secondary schools in New Zealand. The authors are experienced teachers and parents who now run an educational consultancy business, Springboard New Zealand.

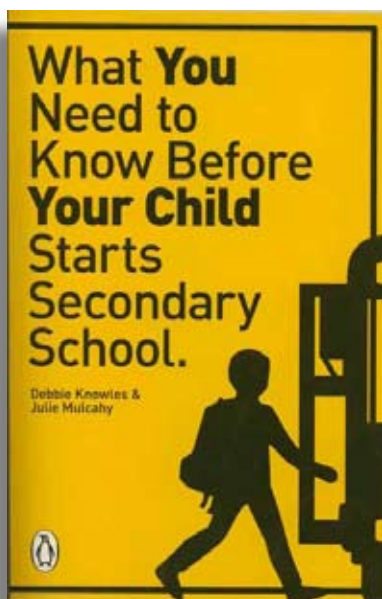
The book aims to help provide answers to questions about secondary school life including:

- How does NCEA work in simple terms?
- Why do some schools use other forms of assessment?
- How do I choose a secondary school for my child: Single sex versus co-educational?
- Teachers: who are they and what do they do?
- What legal rights do schools have to discipline my child?
- What learning support is available and how do we find it?

The book is easy to read and written in a very friendly voice. The chapters are clearly divided into broad topics and the book is easy to navigate to find the specific information you need. It includes anecdotal case study examples to illustrate the chapter themes, and is packed full of tips and resources to access further information if your questions haven't been answered fully.

What You Need To Know Before Your Child Starts Secondary School would be invaluable for parents of Year 7 and 8 students. As the parent of a student in Year 10 in 2009 I wish this had been published a year ago! However I still found a wealth of useful information, with the chapters on systems of assessment and subject choices being particularly interesting.

Highly recommended for parents and as a resource for school and community libraries.



Under Pressure: How the epidemic of hyper-parenting is endangering childhood

Carl Honoré

Published by Allen & Unwin

Reviewed by Catherine George

RRP \$35.00

Carl Honoré, bestselling author of *In Praise of Slow*, discusses and investigates how the natural instinct to want our children to have the best of everything and be the best at everything is backfiring on kids, parents and society as a whole. He was inspired to write the book after an event with his own child:

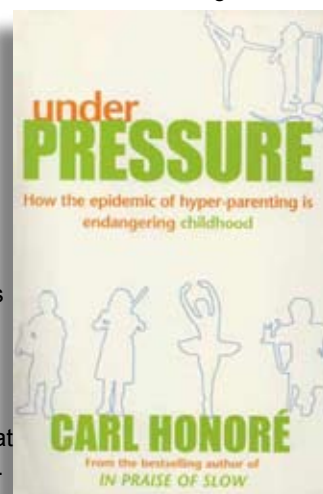
"It all started at a parent-teacher evening. The feedback on my seven-year-old son was good but the art teacher really hit the sweet spot. 'He stands out in the class,' she gushed. 'Your son is a gifted young artist.' And there it was, that six-letter word that gets the heart of every parent racing. Gifted. That night, I trawled Google, hunting down art courses and tutors to nurture my son's gift. Visions of raising the next Picasso swam through my mind – until the next morning. 'Daddy, I don't want a tutor, I just want to draw,' my son announced on the way to school. 'Why do grown-ups always have to take over everything?'"

In the early stages of reading the book, I wondered if it would just be embraced by parents who agreed with the "less is more" theory, and ignored by parents who see offering as many classes and extracurricular activities as possible is the responsibility of a good parent. Honoré stresses that the book is not an attack on parents, but to make us all feel less guilty and insecure about our children, and to show how parenting less hard can actually help them to thrive even more. He stresses that there is no single formula for child rearing, and that every family must find the formula that works best for them.

The book is written for not just parents, but also teachers, coaches, counsellors and anyone with an interest in children. It includes a wide range of anecdotes including stories of obsessive parents (many at the extreme end, such as the father who drugged his child's tennis opponents!) to everyday situations that all parents will recognise. The international flavour of the book and stories of parents from around the world gives a good picture of how parenting is difficult no matter what your situation and resources. Its "chatty" style makes it easy to read, without feeling you are attending a lecture on parenting.

I found *Under Pressure* really interesting, though Honoré may have been preaching to the converted as I agree with his ideas on giving children time to find their own passions, and the value of free time to dream, play and make choices without adult intervention.

But whatever your personal opinions, I would recommend *Under Pressure* as a valuable resource for parents and teachers. It would also be suitable for teenagers to help start family discussions about pressures of school and outside activities. A great addition to any school library.



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For more information email poundn@waikato.ac.nz

Beliefs ... are the curse

Beliefs are something we all acquire as we journey through life.

Common sense can often elevate them to the status of fact.

However, under science's more exacting scrutiny, we frequently find they're not.

If they've no factual basis, using them as if they do is obviously a fraught practice. In that respect, consciously held beliefs are bad enough, it's when they lurk deep beyond our awareness that's when the real fun begins.

Which pretty much sums up the way things are with the beliefs that surround learning.

Our learning beliefs have been with us since pre-history. Markedly similar throughout the world, once acquired, they're virtually permanent fixtures, albeit we're not aware of them most of the time.

Beliefs form to be deposited, akin to carbon sequestered in ocean sinks, deep in the the mind's unconscious. Someone like Professor James Flynn, Otago University, might even say that sets the stage for genetic change. Whether that's so or not, the truth is that those beliefs are seriously bonded to the psyche of every individual in society and even more tidily tucked away out of mind. So we end up with this community wide, super-tightly bonded, mutually supported body of almost identical beliefs that, to all intents and purposes, nobody realises exists.

Young students coming up through the education system acquire their beliefs doing an around 12 year apprenticeship in learning. Well before they enter secondary school though, their beliefs, too, have disappeared into the less accessed regions of mind. Nonetheless, enough seeps back to ensure young people can dance in sync with the learning rituals schools use.

Now none of this would likely matter too much if those pesky beliefs were just to lie doggo. But they don't. Like nocturnal creatures, they emerge unnoticed, influencing what we think and do, unconsciously, all the time. Operating, too, as if on auto pilot. Like it means we're not in control, like we're being steered by a collective will without our individual say so.

Kind of a scary thought that. But even that mightn't be so bad either, except that we now know, and with great certainty, that there's no factual basis for any of those beliefs at all. Scary doesn't do it anymore for me, sheer terror's more like it.

Terror is well warranted because those mistaken, tucked-away beliefs are what makes learning so "inherently inefficient" (Nuthall, 2001). In turn:

That's why outcomes are so uneven;

Why the achievement gap isn't closing;

Why about half of the entire student learning power ends up lying undeveloped on the classroom floor (Loper, 2007);

It's why making changes to that traditional, "inherently inefficient" teaching model is nigh impossible;

It's why lives get blighted even before they reach full bloom;



of the thinking classes

Laurie Loper
Reg. Psychologist

And it's why New Zealand as a nation isn't punching anywhere near the weight it otherwise could and should.

If that scenario is telling us anything, it's saying forcibly: change those beliefs. Change, too, the teaching practices that have been built on them. Otherwise, forget about improved educational outcomes happening any time soon.

Change, too, our intervention culture, for not only is it riddled with the same beliefs, it's shot clean through with incrementalism. Under that mindset, any gain is seen as good – no matter its basis and often, no matter its cost or scalability. This tinkering strategy, history tells us, leads in the main to minimal, localised, and mostly unsustained gains. Being so ad hoc leaves intervention practice rudderless, no real gains are achieved, scarce resources are wasted. The roll out of each new intervention brings the threat of its own false-hope aftertaste. Inefficient learning systems allow no let up in collateral damage and downstream societal carnage.

Change that'll see learning outcomes accord with the "remarkably similar" learning capacity possessed by most all students (Nuthall, 2001), will never happen either unless we recognise how change-averse is our belief-based learning culture. It's perhaps mankind's most deeply held and likely the longest held belief system ever. It erects firewalls at threat of change to rival any used against computer viruses and they trigger just as automatically. That's why it's said teaching always reforms educational reforms. That's why that very inefficient teacher-as-manager-of-classroom-learning model has never changed. It's also why nobody's even thought the act of learning itself warranted scrutiny. Held in good faith, those basic beliefs are nonetheless the proven villains here. Sweeping them aside will take more than just a tsunami or two.

Against such a background it's unrealistic to think, for example, that the new information technologies (IT), will break this "inherently inefficient" teaching model impasse. While for instance, IT might be a favouring influence in making learning more student driven, it's a technology born within the traditional learning culture so is already shot through with its beliefs, as are its users. Up against a force as obdurate, history bets it'll take more than IT developments to break the mould.

Establishing a more effective teaching model will involve overcoming the collective unconsciousness of the community, remember, it's chock full of those erroneous beliefs. Bringing around the public's mind is the task.

Another is nullifying the erroneous beliefs of the education sector, those of the Minister downwards – though not forgetting those held by the students and their parents.

Not likely to be easy, quick or cheap. Selling NCEA changes, by comparison, would be a cinch.

Saying what needs to be done is the easy bit. Imagine what it's going to take to de-programme the entire education sector of its erroneous beliefs. Imagine what it'll take to develop and implement a more effective learning model for use everywhere. The key here, though, could be the learners themselves. Experience to date suggests they'll revel in the opportunity to truly become the owner-operator managers of their learning. What keeps learners happy is usually what keeps teachers happy.

Parents, too, are likely to be drawn to the increased satisfaction they witness in their children and young people. So that's where I'd imagine acceptance of the change will spring from initially, spreading eventually as the benefit becomes apparent.

Another approach with potential – one which will be dealt with in other articles on how the changes spoken of might be effected – would be to look afresh at the part learning support could play. This would involve increasing the amount and types of the learning support that teachers, students and parents might supply. The different way it is envisaged this might be accomplished is viewed as something that could appreciably increase the speed, scope and scale of change acceptance and implementation. There are so many more ways of supplying such support than are currently being used.

Make no mistake about it, what's being advocated for here is the most fundamental change education will ever witness. Remember too, that what's being mooted here is change in a context where the old beliefs, as they have done now for centuries, still hold sway and where the holders of them wield all the power. A power base that dominant could be expected to eat such change proposals for breakfast. Even securing a toehold will be a victory (any offers?). There's no prize for picking the underdog.

(* Quote by Professor David Kenny, Massey University, in a Kim Hill interview, 25 October, 2008)

References

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



Putumayo World Music

Putumayo World Music was established to introduce people to the music of the world's cultures.

The label grew out of Putumayo clothing company, founded by Dan Storper in 1975 and sold in 1997. Co-founder Michael Kraus joined Storper to help launch Putumayo World Music in 1993. In the past fifteen years, the label has become known primarily for its upbeat and melodic compilations of great international music characterized by the company's motto: "guaranteed to make you feel good!"

Putumayo's CD covers feature the distinctive art of Nicola Heindl, whose colorful, folkloric style represents one of Putumayo's goals: to connect the traditional to the contemporary.

By combining appealing music and visuals with creative retail marketing, Putumayo has developed a unique brand identity, a rarity in today's artist-based music industry.

Putumayo is considered a pioneer and leader in developing the non-traditional market. A large portion of its target audience consists of "Cultural Creatives," a sociological and lifestyle term for 50 million North Americans and millions more around the world with an interest in culture, travel and the arts.

In an effort to reach beyond the United States, Putumayo is working with other international organizations to support multi-cultural education around the world. Putumayo supports specific organizations working in the countries where the music originates. This year Putumayo are supporting charitable organizations by contributing a percentage of the proceeds from their releases.



Christmas is the time of year we all associate with overplayed Christmas tunes The ones we look forward to hearing all year and then find them done to death and tedious by the third rendition heard each festive season.

I have a friend who could be accurately described as Christmas Music fiend... given the chance they'd be playing the yuletide tunes all year round... perhaps it does something to his psyche?

This aficionado of Christmas music has begged for a copy of A Jazz and Blues Christmas (he has no chance and can buy one from me instead! – see end of review) At last he has found a Christmas cd he could lay all year without risking the threat of divorce.

The cd is a wonderful collection of Jazz and Blues which offers the chance to chill out and enjoy in the busy run out to Christmas – actually at any time of the year with a feeling of nostalgia you would find this cd and a red wine ... bliss

So why am I reviewing it in the aftermath of the festive season? I wanted to see if the appeal remained once the tinsel had long gone ... and it does. I have it playing on my iPod while writing this and it has the same toe-tapping effect that it had on a long road trip before Christmas.

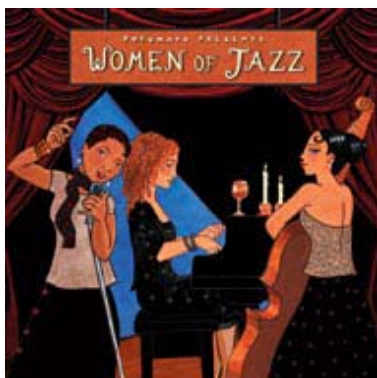
Featuring:

- 1 B.B. King • Christmas Celebration
- 2 Charles Brown • Santa's Blues
- 3 Randy Greer and Ignasi Terraza Trio • Wrap Yourself in a Christmas Package
- 4 Emilie-Claire Barlow • Santa Baby
- 5 Ray Charles • Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
- 6 The Ramsey Lewis Trio • Here Comes Santa Claus
- 7 The Dukes of Dixieland feat. Luther Kent • Merry Christmas Baby
- 8 Topsy Chapman and Lars Edegran • The Christmas Blues
- 9 Riff Ruffin • Xmas Baby
- 10 Mighty Blue Kings • All I Ask for Christmas

I can't pick any of these over others .. So if it's brassy traditional jazz or soulful blues you'll find it here.

Not a record just for the festive season.... some of the proceeds from the sale of this cd go to the India Foundation for the Arts in support of its efforts to enrich the practise, knowledge, public access to and experience of the arts in India.

"guaranteed to make you feel good!"



I love jazz having been to countless Jazz Festivals since I started tagging along with relatives as a ten year old.

I also love hearing women singing jazz well. This cd featuring women from the United States and Canada has a diverse range of performers from the first track by Melody Godet to the last one by the sublime Etta James.

Featuring:

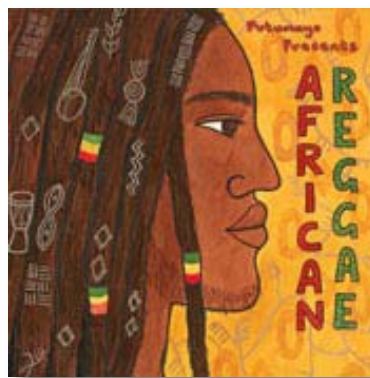
- 1 Melody Gardot • Goodnite
- 2 Madeleine Peyroux • Dance Me to the End of Love
- 3 Cassandra Wilson • Lover Come Back To Me
- 4 Sophie Milman • Lonely in New York
- 5 Hope Waits • I'll Be Satisfied
- 6 Kate Paradise • Mean to Me
- 7 Jennifer Hartswick • Lover Man
- 8 Stacey Kent • Shall We Dance?
- 9 Della Griffin • It Could Happen to You
- 10 Etta James • Since I Fell for You

The range of songs dating from the 20's, through Broadway to a Cohen folksong, ensures a complex and interesting blend of jazz genres. It is difficult to pick any out for special comment as they are all so good.

However that said, I did particularly like Madeleine Peyroux's rendition of Leonard Cohen's 'Dance Me to the End of Love', Sophie Milman's big band, sultry rendition of 'Lonely in New York' while 'Shall We Dance' by Stacy Kent also stood out.

By the time the cd reaches Etta James 'Since I Fell For You' I was wishing it was a twenty track cd instead of ten.

I've played this in my car, my office and on my iPod, and as a background to a dinner party. Without fail people have commented on the sounds and asked about the singers. Surely a sign of it being the superb cd I think it is!



Reggae is not a musical genre I would readily attach my listening to as I have never felt a pull to the Marley influenced sounds. Consequently, I was a little hesitant when I

realised that I'd have to write a review for the new Putumayo record African Reggae.

This has now been playing in my car cd player for the last two weeks and I have to admit I think it's rather catchy.

I've never been convinced that the pure 'traditional and expected' reggae is something I would listen to regularly, however I found a lot of the tracks on this cd had rhythms which reminded me of those which were introduced to an international audience and became popular with the introduction by Paul Simon of Ladysmith Black Mambazo.

Pure African beats which easily overcome not knowing or understanding the language being used. These influences, added to the reggae sound of Marley, are appealing.

Featuring:

- 1 Ismael Isaac • Magno Mako • (Côte d'Ivoire)
- 2 Mo'Kalamity & The Wizards • Vision • (Cape Verde/ France)
- 3 Bingui Jaa Jammy • Congo Natty • (Burkina Faso)
- 4 Zoro • Jabulani • (South Africa)
- 5 Nino Galissa • Krebo Cheo • (Guinea-Bissau)
- 6 One Love Family • Bô Ten Qu'Luta' • (Cape Verde/ Portugal)
- 7 Kwame Bediako • Steppin' Into Zion • (Ghana)
- 8 Ba Cissoko with Tiken Jah Fakoly • On Veut Se Marier • (Guinea/Côte d'Ivoire)
- 9 Serges Kassy • Jah Libile • (Côte d'Ivoire)
- 10 Majek Fashek • Man of Sorrow • (Nigeria)

However I must admit I was listening to the cd while at work and found, when my colleagues stopped at the door to ask about the sounds and rhythms emanating from the room, that they all liked different songs!

Music really is a subjective thing. This is a really cool cd and I'm not convinced that I won't become a Marley reggae fan after a few more trips in the car with it playing!

Order Putumayo cd's through Good Teacher Magazine

If you cannot find the Putumayo cd you are looking for then contact us at Good Teacher Magazine.

You can purchase Putumayo cd's for \$29.95 each + \$5 Postage and Packaging. Just tell us which cd's you want and send with your cheque to: Good Teacher Magazine, PO Box 5531, Mt Maunganui 3150

Don't forget to give us your correct mailing address and that all important street number and postcode!

Or to pay direct (bank to bank) please email barisa-holdings@xtra.co.nz with your order and we will return your email with banking details.



Numeracy News

by Andi Adder

New Zealand maths website. - www.nzmaths.co.nz

Recently new items and news have been added to the website. On the front page of the site you will find the usual jigsaw puzzle but to the right of this can be found the new items

Home School Partnership: Numeracy Handbook.

The book has been designed as a guide for schools and communities to plan ways to work together to support children's numeracy achievement. The suggestions in the book are intended as a guide for principals and schools with a collection of ideas to select from. Ideas can be found on what community sessions could involve and how to get the community along.

There are some fabulous new games and activities in Chapter 5. These are games that can be kept separated from school so the students do not tire of them. A great idea is to set up a family mathematics kit that student's can take home.

The HSP Numeracy facilitators have contributed a great deal of practical easy to read ideas.

Funding available to improve teachers teaching and learning in Mathematics.

Are you planning to study in 2009? Tertiary fee funding is available for primary and intermediate teachers. The Ministry of Education is offering funding support for Mathematics papers at the graduate and post graduate level. Six hundred teachers will be funded with half your tuition fees paid by the Ministry. The other half can be paid by your school. Click on the link on the front page to find out more.

Online Numeracy Professional Development Material

These modules have been developed to replace the old online numeracy workshops. There is no need for a CD or a password. Everyone has access to the modules. They are a great way to help out new teachers to Numeracy and as a refresher for individual teachers. Try a viewing of one at your next staff meeting before you start a new number unit



Nzmaths Scavenger Hunt – ensure that teachers have internet access or set this as a homework task to share back at your next staff meeting

1. Which jigsaw piece is red?
2. Click on Numeracy Project section. How many sections are on this page?
3. Click on the Project Material heading. How many Numeracy books are there on the site?
4. Click on Equipment animations. Look at the bead frame animations. Can you think of any other ways to use this equipment?
5. Have a look at how to use a piece of equipment you have not used before, or a NEW animation.
6. Click on the BACK arrow. What is Material Master 4.6? How do/could you use this in your class?
7. When was the most recent Material Master added to the website? What is it called?
8. Click on the BACK arrow. What animal is mentioned in GloSS Assessment C, Task (4)a?
9. Return to the Numeracy Project section. In the "Frequently Asked Questions", what is the answer to : "How much time should I spend on Number?"
10. Return to the Numeray Projects section. Name two activities from Level 2 Number in the Digital Learning Objects. Try one of the activities.

Deborah Gibbs Massey University

Some other websites to explore:

http://www.tki.org.nz/r/wick_ed

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/maven/>

<http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/maths/contents2.htm>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/megamaths/tables.html>

<http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/maths/maths.htm>

<http://www.rainforestmaths.com>

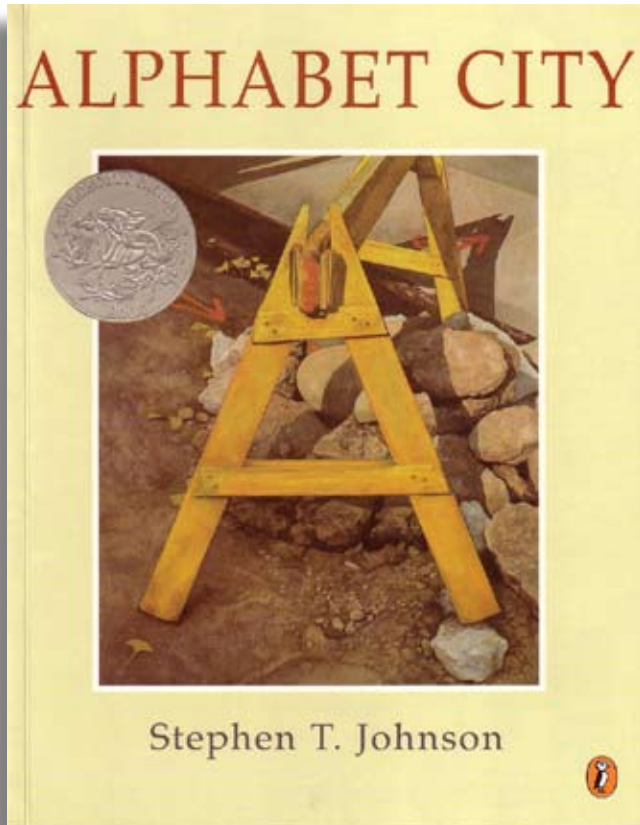
<http://www.daisymaths.com.au>



Here goes Lucy again...

Pictures talk some more...

by Lucy Literacy



I seem to be using pictures a lot lately.

They are such a valuable resource.

I do know some of you were able to springboard off my last contribution and give it a go.

I am always on the lookout for new and interesting texts to share with students. Recently I came across a couple of books by Stephen Johnson – 'Alphabet City' and 'City by Numbers'.

I got to thinking about our emergent readers and how we support them with language acquisition. In order to become good readers and writers, children need to develop knowledge about how sounds and words work together to give a message.

This process of language acquisition is complex. Students need to engage with text at various levels to make sense of text.

The framework of language acquisition on page 24 of Effective Literacy practice handbook clearly describes three critical aspects:

- **Learning the Code**
- **Making meaning**
- **Thinking critically.**

Learning the code requires the reader to “focus on the conventions written language and the skills required to read and write letters, words and text.” Pg 24 ELP.

Using the two books by Stephen Johnson, students can create their own alphabet and number books from the environment.

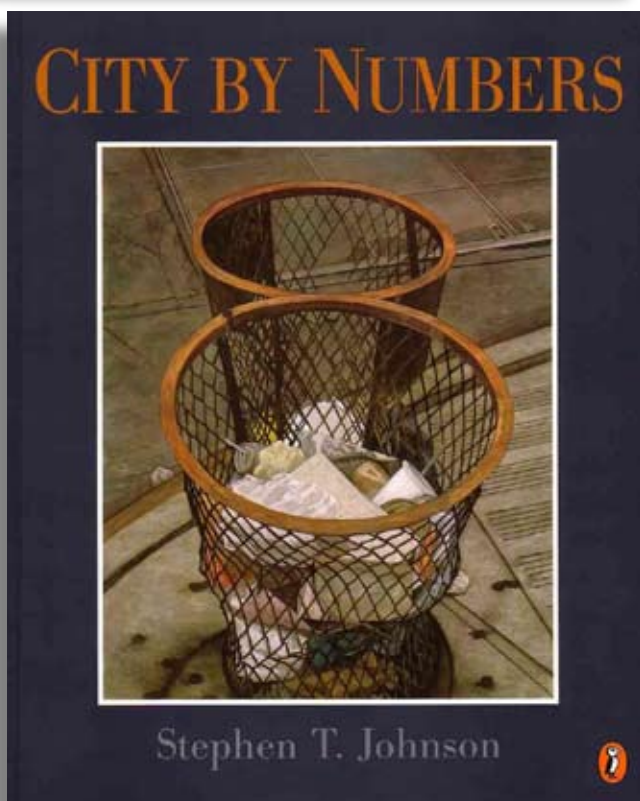
This could be within the school grounds, maybe a walk down to the local park or as one teacher did – a walk through native bush looking for letters of the alphabet.

It is amazing what you can find around you if you look hard enough.

You may even be able to use your photographs to create a digital storybook with music and voice.

Give it a go. Kids have an uncanny knack of seeing things that we as adults miss.

Some of the following pictures were taken in and around schools I have visited.





Feel free to use Lucy's pictures ,
and other pictures through Good
Teacher Magazine to spark your
Literacy programme. We would
ask that you acknowledge the
source of your pictures and
information though.
If you would like to email Lucy,
use the following address:
lucy@ed-media.co.nz





Why Do We Travel?

Part one

Travelling Teacher

After setting off from, Cappadocia as per my last musings, LOMLF and I arrived in Istanbul 18 hours later.

The bus trip was uneventful apart from the dog that was run over by the bus and the driver's complete disregard for the rules of the road.

In Turkey they are meant to drive on the right side of the road but it seemed that our driver and all the others that we passed, and who passed us, had forgotten this.

The rule apparent was that you drive in the middle of the road and only pull over to the right when someone is coming the other way, or if a faster vehicle comes behind you and gives a polite tap of the horn, normally of 30 seconds duration. If you are coming to the brow of a hill then "ensha Allah" applies ("if God wills"). So it was only by the "Will of God" that Lomlf and I arrived at all. At the third or fourth near miss you tend to relax in a dazed adrenalin depleted stupor and allow life to wash over you.

So it was in a spirit of absolute mental exhaustion that on arriving in Istanbul. I heard that my father was very ill and that we were required to go home to New Zealand. Catching a flight home was the easy part as the family, knowing of our perilous financial plight had placed enough money in my account to pay for the tickets. Wanting to stay true to New Zealand, Lomlf and I winged our way to London and travelled cattle-class with Air New Zealand all the way home.

To cut a long story short we had to cancel our posting to Florence (much to the delight of the school I'm sure) and spend some time in New Zealand dealing with the family and other matters. Lomlf hadn't met my family at this stage and I was really pleased that Dad was still alive to meet her. He was an interesting man with some very different ways of assessing a woman's character.

When she walked into his room (he was at home – the cancer being very advanced) and I introduced the love of my life his first words were "she's pretty tall for a woman isn't she", this was followed by the question he always asked, "Have you got your own teeth?". He used to own racehorses and knew that good teeth meant good health.

He certainly was a character. After exchanging a few more pleasantries I asked him what his plans were for the rest of the day. Looking at his nurse he replied. "We're going prick hunting".



Apparently he and his nurse had taken his wife to the dentist the previous day. They had parked the car outside the dentist and two men in suits told him he had to park 100 metres down the road. He was going back today to 'hunt the pricks down'. Who knows what his intentions were if he found them, but at least it keeps him happy.

Unfortunately a week later he died, much to everyone's relief. It had been a long battle and I was lucky enough to be with him when he passed away.

Lomlf and I had left our details with an agency in London on the way home and we were very surprised to be offered a 2 week posting in Marrakech over the Christmas period. They were trying to replace two teachers who were going on holiday, and they couldn't find anyone else.

One way tickets were supplied as was accommodation in the hotel opposite (the Myrium Hotel), breakfast included. The school was a private school and my class was of children between 14 and 16. Both Lomlf and I jumped at the chance to visit such an exciting place. We had heard on the grapevine that it was pretty wild but nothing we couldn't cope with we were sure.

Our flight took us through London and then by Easyjet to Marrakech.

All the stories and TV programmes about Easyjet gave the impression that it was a disorganised airline staffed by rude incompetent people. Not so! We found that it was well organised and although you had to buy everything, the service was excellent. On a three hour flight they came through the aircraft three times with food and beverage trolleys.

We arrived in Marrakech in late afternoon as the sun was descending.

After going through immigration (one hour) we eventually staggered through customs (non-existent) tried to find a bank to get local currency (not open) tried a number of cash machines (none worked) and were eventually directed to the one cash machine in the airport that did work from where, armed with the required local currency we braved the taxi queue.

Lomlf and I had absorbed every word from Lonely Planet about Marrakech. We were indeed experts in the field. We knew the taxi fare to our hotel was 60 Durham. Yeah right!.

When our turn came in said taxis we were told the cost was 100 Durham. (5Durham = \$1 NZ) I tried to argue that Lonely Planet said 60 Durham. All the drivers laughed at my ignorance



and said yes that was for daytime. It's now nighttime and the cost goes up.

After a bit of toing and froing we agreed on 90 Durham. A massive saving of \$2 NZ. We hopped in the old diesel Mercedes painted light brown (probably to blend in with the colour of the desert), and were driven to our hotel. Obviously the people who named it were unsure as to the spelling. This ranged from Myriam, Maryan or Merriam Hotel. However it was 4 stars and far as Lomlf and I were concerned was no less than we deserved.

We checked into our room after assuring staff that we were married and after passing the sign saying no food or alcohol was allowed into the rooms we proceeded to our room.

Time was ticking as they say and so we came downstairs for dinner. We were on a pretty tight budget and so the cost of \$34NZ for a mediocre buffet was a bit steep. However it was all that was available so we persevered and had a moderately good meal.



The next morning, bright and early, we ventured across the road to meet our students. As Morocco is Muslim, Christmas means nothing to them. As our New Year hasn't the significance it has in the West as they work with a different calendar. They have a holiday on New Years Day but apart from that the school year goes straight through.

It took me about fifteen minutes to reorganise the class into the traditional method I have always used. Me as the nucleus and the students as electrons floating around the outside.

The first morning was spent getting to know the kids and I discovered to my delight that we had an equal number of new kids (just arrived at this school) to ones who had been there for a while. As Lomlf and I were only there for two weeks and school was open six days a week, it meant I could use this as an excuse to go on numerous school trips.

As I am sure you all know relieving is fairly difficult, especially when you try to carry on with the curriculum as approached by the previous teacher. If you don't know the curriculum it is impossible to teach, Lomlf and I therefore decided we could go on trips. A trip one day, revise what we had seen the the morning of the next day and then plan for the next trip in the afternoon.

Our first trip was to the Souq. This is a large market area about as large as a rugby field, divided into hundreds of small alleys. Once you're in there it's almost impossible to find your way without help. No problems we thought. We're descendents of Kupe and Maui by osmosis at least, two great navigators, and Captain Cook.

As dawn broke, we realised that the skies has opened and it was pissing down. Luckily most of the market is

under cover so we rounded the kids up, loaded them into the school vans and we were off. You enter the Souq from the Medina (square) so we got the vans to park at the first alleyway and promised to be back at about four in the afternoon.

The Souq is an area that has been frozen in time. It could easily be the same as it was 500-1000 years ago. It's cobbled but the shops are like eaves in the side of blank buildings. The alleys are about three metres wide and they are full of people. I had spoken to my treasures and told them, "Don't bargain unless you intend to buy." The stall owners get really septic when after hard bargaining they discover you have no money. It's AK47's at five paces. Although as Prince Harry famously said "These rag heads don't use AK47's, the weapon of choice is the Kalashnikov!"

After working our way past carpet stalls, spice stalls, lantern stalls, curio stalls we chanced upon a stall selling scarves. The charming gentleman accosted Lomlf by throwing a silk scarf around her neck and efficiently garrotting her. Not quite but almost. He was an excellent salesman and talked to the kids as though he was a teacher (He probably was). He showed us the difference between a badly dyed scarf (wet a little of the scarf and squeeze and the dye comes out). Whereas with a properly dyed scarf no dye comes out. He then proceeded to dress Lomlf and myself as Berber tribesmen.

After the kids had died laughing he took us all around the corner and showed us a small alley where all the wool and silk is dyed to make the scarves. Once dyed it is hung up in the rafters to dry. All of the dyes are natural and are made from local minerals, vegetables or flowers.



We then proceeded back to the stall for the piece de resistance. Sell these tourists a scarf. Both Lomlf and I have a Celtic streak so spending money is an anathema. When he told us Lomlf's scarf was only 570 Dh, about \$135 NZ we almost died laughing. So without a flicker of emotion he came back with the typical response... "What do you think it's worth?" After some serious whispering I said 130 Dh. A look of shock appeared on his face. "Do you want my children to starve" he replied. I realised a diversion was in order. Leaving Lomlf to continue the struggle I took the kids aside and talked about how it's really good to try before you buy and that trying on the scarves could be good fun. So with the kids grabbing the scarves and the shopkeepers attention suitably diverted we hit him with our final offer, 170 Dh. With a gulp and a last gasp 250 Dh he eventually accepted our offer. Really good buying we thought as he pocketed the money. The challenge was it was possibly his only sale of the day and he had to look after his wife and kids on that income. Hey why let poverty interfere with the money saved.

While this saga was unfolding the rain had started to soak through the roof and was mixing with the dust which was on and between the cobbles. Within half an hour there was about 1.5 cm of liquid mud flowing over the cobbles. Very unpleasant.

Time to move inside I thought so I looked around for the nearest carpet shop. Luckily just down the alley, around the corner, down another alley was an older man dressed in a fine Jedi outfit. Luckily the hood was down so he was obviously one of the Goodies. "Like to buy some carpets for your wife (Lomlf) and children (students)?" He oozed.

"We also have women weaving the carpets for you to watch" he offered generously. So in we trooped. Wet and bedraggled, with Lomlf and her new scarf.

I have always fancied myself as playing a character out of the Bible. Not JC himself

but maybe David against Goliath or Moses parting the Red Sea. However as we came up the stairs into the lair where the carpets were I felt very much like Daniel in the Lions den. My head appeared over the balcony and I could hear and sense the expectation of the 7 men lounging on the settees along the walls. They slowly got to their feet and as they mentally licked their lips they padded over to us. "What a lovely family." one smarmy carpet seller purred as we dripped all over his beautifully varnished wooden floor. Bugger I thought, we're going to get eaten alive by these predators.

Thinking quickly I asked if they had any silk prayer rugs. "Of course your honourableness" he growled, prowling to the back of the room. He reappeared with 5 beautiful silk rugs. He placed them reverently onto the floor and stepped back expecting to see my look of wonder. "Boys" I said to the male students. "I'll give 5 Durham to whichever of you can jump on one of these carpets and slide the furthest. With that the



boys raced to the other end of the room, turned as one and sped towards the carpets. As if they were linked by an invisible steel rod they jumped onto the carpets and slid 10 – 15 metres across the very large room.

There was a shriek of anguish from the salesman as he saw the desecration of these sacred items. The salesmen roared and bared their teeth in anger as Lomlf, the kids and I beat a hasty retreat down the stairs and out to the rain and mud that had enveloped the market.

Looking at my watch I realised it was getting close to 3pm and about time to mosey back to the buses. One thing the stall owners are is polite. We asked how to get back to the Medina and they pointed us in the right direction. There had been a kid hanging around and following us for some time, One stall owner realised we were a group and told this kid to bugger off in no uncertain terms. He told me that there are two types of guides. The official kind who are always in front of you and the unofficial one who trail behind. If you don't get rid of the unofficial ones they will demand money when you reach your destination. Anyway we got back to the buses without any further trouble and sped home.

**Why Do We Travel? will continue in Term Two.*



The Travelling Teacher provided the images to accompany this story.

As usual, the Editor takes no responsibility for the Travelling Teacher's meandering mind!



EDUCATIONAL WORD PUZZLE #7

by FRED

This is an internally assessed achievement standard in Puzzle Solving Level 1

Print your answer in the box provided.
Each puzzle is worth 1 credit.
These credits can be used to gain the literacy requirement for Level 1

Group work is permitted.
Time: all afternoon

<p>ACHIEVED</p> <div>12:00 t</div> <div></div>	<p>MERIT</p> <div>LeARNING</div> <div></div>
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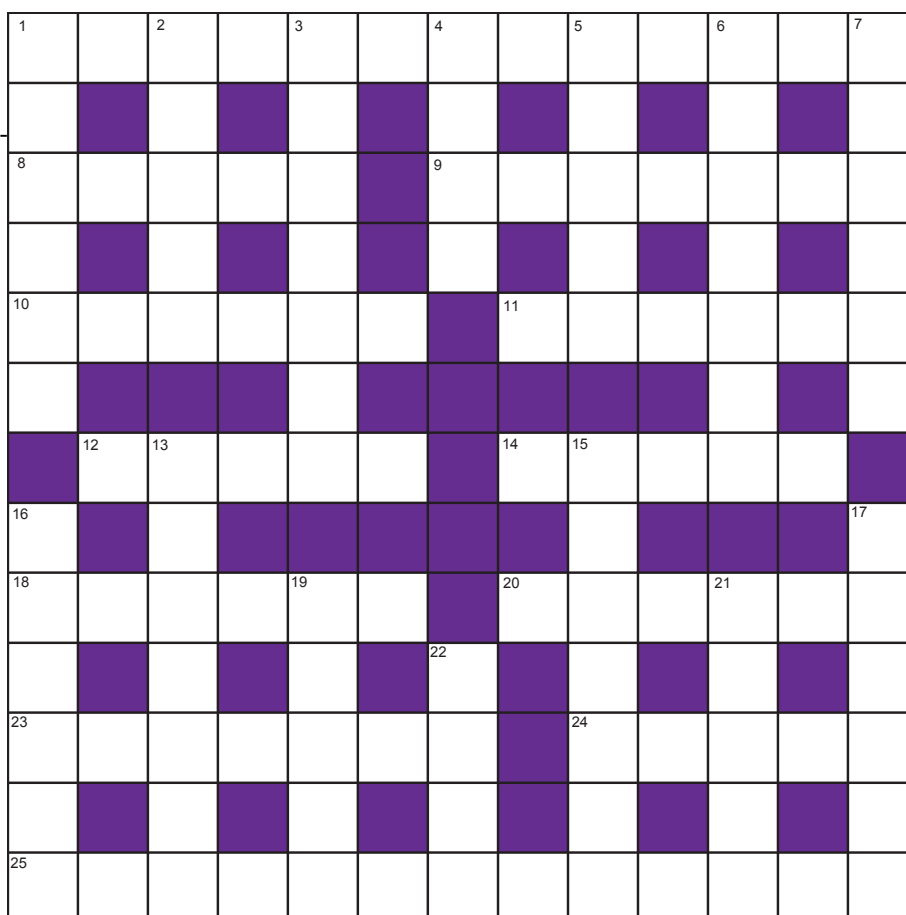
Richard Crypt's challenging crossword and Mike's number puzzles

Across

- 1 After 2001, Stanley's epic. (1,5,7)
 8 Sounds like Mr Key's insects? (5)
 9 Belligerent inmate, note, surrounded by electromagnetic radiation to give strength. (7)
 10 Quiet, she is pretty untidy. (6)
 11 Ma uses untidily to suppose. (6)
 12 Get someone else to snoop around beast.(5)
 14 Sulphur and Hydrogen surround old testament character. He just hangs around. (5)
 18 Suspicion around a hip. (6)
 20 Richie, Buck and Jonah by hospital department. Not here!. (6)
 23 Use ones eyes and die upset. To be completely prepared. (7)
 24 Space agency left nose-like. (5)
 26 Esau, Joseph, Ruth and Solomon are all good examples. (8,5)

Down

- 1 A very dignified time of the year. (6)
 2 Half pizza under mountain climbing a square. (5)
 3 The professional fighter could so this for this. (7) or (4,3)
 4 Ouch, Edward was in debt. (4)
 5 At first yellow, indigo, purple, eastern sunsets engender an expression of surprise. (5)
 6 He did this on the dirt road and what remained perhaps after the carpenter had finished? (7)



- 7 A difficult delivery (in overtime). (6)
 13 Sounds like a regretful thorn for a vegetable. (7)
 15 Where backward Pierre says no to the first murder victim on the Mediterranean. (7)

- 16 Revolutionary polish is a little angel. (6)
 17 Note taxes are Pacific features. (6)
 19 Doesn't sound hot but it is. (5)
 21 Salts from here are cathartic. (5)
 22 Concept almost perfect, but left out. (4)

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

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

books and things

Mastering Bipolar Disorder: An insider's guide to managing mood swings and finding balance

Edited by Kerrie Evers and Gordon Parker

Allen & Unwin

RRP \$29.99

Bipolar disorder can be tremendously disturbing for both sufferers and their families, even in its milder form. *Mastering Bipolar Disorder* is a collection of personal stories from sufferers of this difficult condition. Their inspiring accounts and wise advice are accompanied by tips from psychiatrists for managing this difficulty successfully.

There are two main types of Bipolar disorder, Bipolar 1 and Bipolar 11 – once known as manic depressive illness – affects one percent of the population. It can include full manic or mixed episodes, sometimes with psychotic symptoms. Bipolar 11 is less severe than Bipolar 1 and is more commonly characterised by alternating episodes of hypomania and depression. It affects up to 5 percent of the population and is being increasingly widely diagnosed.

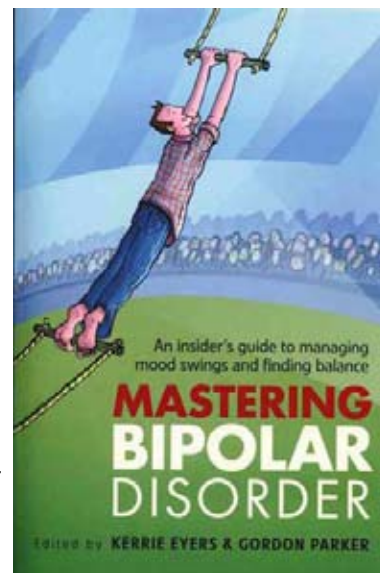
This excellent book has insights into what sufferers of this, at some times devastating disorder, are feeling both while on a high where the world is theirs and mania takes over, through to only being able to write when in a depression as life is too busy and full when on a high. Alternatively, depressive situations can be totally debilitating necessitating the cooperation of friends and relatives in identifying where the sufferer is at and assisting in putting into place agreed strategies to help the sufferer cope with what is to come.

What is clear is that the disorder affects every sufferer in a different way. Once your thinking moves from the incidence

of 'highs' and 'lows' the manner in which they can be affected and how their behaviour can differ from their 'normal' day to day persona makes this an eye-opening book.

However this book is not only for the outsider looking to understand what is happening to friends or relatives. It is also a useful work for those who live with the disorder or who may still be coming to terms with being diagnosed with bipolar disorder. They will find within the pages many diverse first person accounts of what sufferers feel and perceive while in the throes of an 'episode' and how mood swings can affect them and how they put coping strategies into place to retain a semblance of normal life.

This book is very informative and helpful with 'in the spotlight' segments at the end of each chapter, which repeat the focus of the chapter, and first person accounts of experiences. I feel it would be of interest to not only those immediately involved with a person who has bipolar disorder, but also for teachers and anyone in general who has an interest in how the brain works and are interested in gaining insight into this increasingly recognised disorder which can be so disruptive to people's lives if not understood.



		1	B	O	2	B				3	S	I	4	N	E	
5	S		O		6	E	A	S	E	L		O				
7	T	E	A		A					8	U		9	R	I	B
	U		10	S	11	T	U	12		13	A	14	R	U	M	A
	N				Y		15	O	H	M		N				R
16	T	O	P	P	E	D			17	E	V	A	D	E	R	
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18	O	P	P	O	S	E			19	I	A	M	B	I	C	
	M				O		20	R	O	C		E				A
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	N			T			A						27	S	U	E
				N		28	V	O	W	E	L			P		S
		29	G	A	M	Y					30	S	O	Y		

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

Answers from term 3 2008 crossword and sudoku

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

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

Roger's Rant

We are being held to ransom by small groups (possibly the same people) whose attitudes and behaviour vary enormously from the majority's. I can conjure up a host of un-PC epithets for these individuals but will let you decide on your own. I'm not talking about psychopathic terrorists who delight in mass murder but those people amongst us, whose antisocial actions affect our everyday lives.

The other day I was driving sedately along a suburban street. My attention was momentarily grabbed by some god-awful abomination daubed on some poor resident's fence. We see it everywhere. Graffiti. vandalism. It's euphemistically labelled tagging by its creators but we all know it for what it is.

It was only a momentary distraction but it was enough to make me nearly miss slowing down for a speed bump. Speed bump? I was only doing 45kph but that induced a few protests from both my car and passenger. My neurons fired up. Random thoughts gave way to contemplating how much our existences are affected by the selfish and criminal actions of others.

How does tagging cause us grief, apart from offending our sense of fair-play and aesthetic values? Check with your local council for the amount you pay in rates to address this problem. How many millions of our rates and tax dollars are diverted from health or education to clean up after a few sociopaths?

Speed bumps (and traffic islands on intersections) are the direct result of another group with a euphemistic label-boy racers. There is no need define who these people are but this very small percentage of drivers have effected huge modifications to our suburban streets and still endanger us.

My father has paid thousands for a security system; a safeguard

against some denizen of the dark side deciding to take what is not rightly his. The place is locked up and alarmed tighter than Seamus down the road on St Patrick's day. Try to go to the loo at night and you have to negotiate the laser beams and drone guns. Well, almost.

Pay insurance? I wonder what the premium would be, if dishonesty and crime weren't factored in. Considerably smaller, I imagine.

Paid a steep price for something at the supermarket? What would it have been if shoplifting were non-existent? What do they call it when a container is robbed by light-fingered transport workers? Ah, yes, 'shrinkage'. An apt term. It applies to the ready stuff in our wallets too. A friend of mine works in a supermarket. He works long hours and usually qualifies for a performance budget. That often disappears when members of a certain affiliation openly steal food and swagger out the door.

My pet peeve at present is arriving at a "service" station which has the pumps on "prepaid" to stop petrol theft. The other day-it was raining-I pulled up at the pumps and realised I would have to walk the walk. The queue was long, considerably longer than my patience. When it was my turn, I informed the young man behind the counter that I wanted to fill up the car. I had to leave my credit card behind, go back to the car, fill it up and then queue again to complete the transaction. Just as well I wasn't asked how my day was going. Today's special for \$2 would have become an improvised enema.

Oh yes. Here's another. You head off to the one day cricket match with your great aunt, who, as a result of a misspent youth, can only drink fermented yak milk diluted with rain water. Just try to get a bottle of that into the ground! Great aunt might just try to throw it at a match official. Come to

think of it, I reckon some match officials/security personnel must have a secret yak milk habit. Why the draconian restrictions? Oh, a couple of yobs out of thousands of spectators may throw a bottle. Still, it makes for a tidy profit for the soft drink and bottled water monopoly holders in the cricket ground.

And what about fireworks? Back in the Good Old Days, didn't we all use to have fun with the rockets, double happyies and mighty cannons? I'm sure there were a few people out there who were a few Tom Thumbs short of an arsenal, but nothing like those neighbours of mine who blow up letter boxes with their sparkler bombs. Probable fireworks bans loom.

A great vote of thanks to those large retail chains who sold cheap, miniature motorcycles over Christmas. Now we have a bevy of budding Crusty Demons disturbing the peace in our parks, not to mention the older malcontents who delight in damaging the park surface with their wheelies. Come on parents. If you can read, you will see the signs saying no vehicles and golf allowed. Don't get me started on golf. Then again, remind me to tell you about broken windows and risks to life and limb from the Mensa candidates who used a one wood in a park one hundred metres long.

Oh well, this is making me tired. I need my beauty sleep. I don't want to think any more about how the actions of a minority negatively affect my life. Some other time, though, I'd be really interested to know what our school students think about this. Would they share my sense of outrage, or would they view these groups as possessing heroic qualities, rebellious icons worthy of praise and emulation?

Til Term Two...

Roger

Now online!

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