



# *Good* Teacher Magazine

Term Four 2009

***'Online 2009'***

***[www.goodteacher.co.nz](http://www.goodteacher.co.nz)***

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

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# Good Teacher Magazine

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## Message from the GTM Team

The Good Teacher Magazine editorial often starts with comment about the weather...this one is no exception. The weather has been crazy and we are currently in yet another cold snap when we should be appreciating spring and all its beauty! Roads are closed, people have needed rescuing from their snowbound cars and travel is generally being considered seriously to see if it is really necessary. However as usually happens, summer will eventually arrive, and the weird spring we have been experiencing will vanish from our memories. It does seem a little strange though, to be into daylight saving and still rugged up against the really cold bitter wind and rain.

### THE EDUCATION PROJECT

Good Teacher Magazine will be at the Education Project in Bahrain from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> of October... an overview of this groundbreaking conference can be found on pages eight and nine. If possible we plan to be putting updates on the Good Teacher website [www.goodteacher.co.nz](http://www.goodteacher.co.nz) as the conference progresses. If for some reason this doesn't eventuate (it is

after all time and technology dependant), the reports will be uploaded as soon after the event as possible.

As we head into the final term of the year we thought a few seasonal activities might be of use. This led to the colouring in activity, Christmas dough ornament recipe, and a lovely cut out wreath, ideal for group work. Of course there are also the usual fantastic... challenging cryptic crossword from Richard and the Sudoku in case you want to utilise your numeracy skills rather than literacy.

From the Soapbox through to Lucy Literacy, our regular contributors' articles continue to test our thinking. Add on all the other articles and a couple of press releases and it adds up to 42 pages which we hope you enjoy reading. We have always avoided press releases but in this magazine the one on cyber bullying is one which we couldn't let go.

Hopefully we are heading into a glorious summer, where we can wander in sculpture parks and admire works in situ like the ones shown.

Good Teacher website is available if you get withdrawal pangs and the forum is always looking for new participants... don't just read the entries, add your opinion... you can do it anonymously! Remember to also visit the shop as this ensures we do not need to hunt for advertising, though we would welcome any advertisers who want their product known internationally. We have also added a flea market for interested website users. We can also be followed on Twitter and have a fan page on Facebook... links are on the website.

**Enjoy**





# Your Soapbox!

## Finally, a chance to have your say



Just how endangered is the New Zealand education environment for our able students?

In all fairness, no teacher or parent could say with certainty that any potential gifts or talents of able students have been rendered extinct by educational interventions that have been tried in the past. However, current policy reducing access to quality professional development for all teachers runs the risk of creating a new species of at risk students by pushing them into the realm of an endangered status when top talent is in short supply.

Conservation measures must be put into place now, before it is too late. Over the past decade New Zealand has become a presence of international standing. We know a lot more about the ways in which students learn.

Teachers are an important catalyst in the development of talent and should not be relegated to a position of negative influence through ignorance.

'Ignorance is bliss.' Yeah right. More than ten years ago researchers from Cornell University found that the skills required for competence are often the same skills necessary to recognise competence. Teachers would be the first to admit the truth of this. We don't always know what we don't know. What a huge waste it is if we have learned nothing over the intervening ten years since this research was done. We have local data now to support best practice for both ends of the educational continuum. Issues of definition, identification and differentiation for our 'kids who can' have been brought into the open. We shouldn't ignore them.

It is time to stop deficit theorizing and admit that we run the risk of becoming complacent in our incompetencies if we don't support those with the ability to create future change. Standards are great but without targeted professional development to increase teacher understanding of cultural values, there is an increased risk that minimum standards will become maximum expectancies.

We can't afford to let that happen !



**Ann Advocate**



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

# Still w(h)ining!

by Gwen Gawith

*I read the lead article in The Herald on Thursday (Sept. 17) wondering what it was intended to say.*

*On the one hand the first sentence says, "Only 2 per cent of high schools are ready for an extensive overhaul of the national curriculum in five months, a Government monitoring project has found".*

*On the other hand in the text box we read that while 2 per cent of secondary schools are 'not yet preparing', 61 per cent are 'well under way' and 35% have done 'some preparation'.*

*The same text box also claims that 42 percent of primary schools have done 'some preparation', while 49 per cent are 'well under way'.*

*How can the fact that 91% of primary schools and 77% of secondary schools are reasonably well prepared six months out from the implementation of the new curriculum warrant a 48 pt headline claiming 'Schools fall behind on new lesson plan'?*

This probably says more about the parlous state of journalism in the age of technological geewhizzery and illiterate hyperbole than it does about the implementation of the curriculum, but to me it also suggests how easy it is to whip people into a lather with a few misrepresented or misinterpreted words and statistics.

In a recent issue of Educational Leadership, David (2009) says:

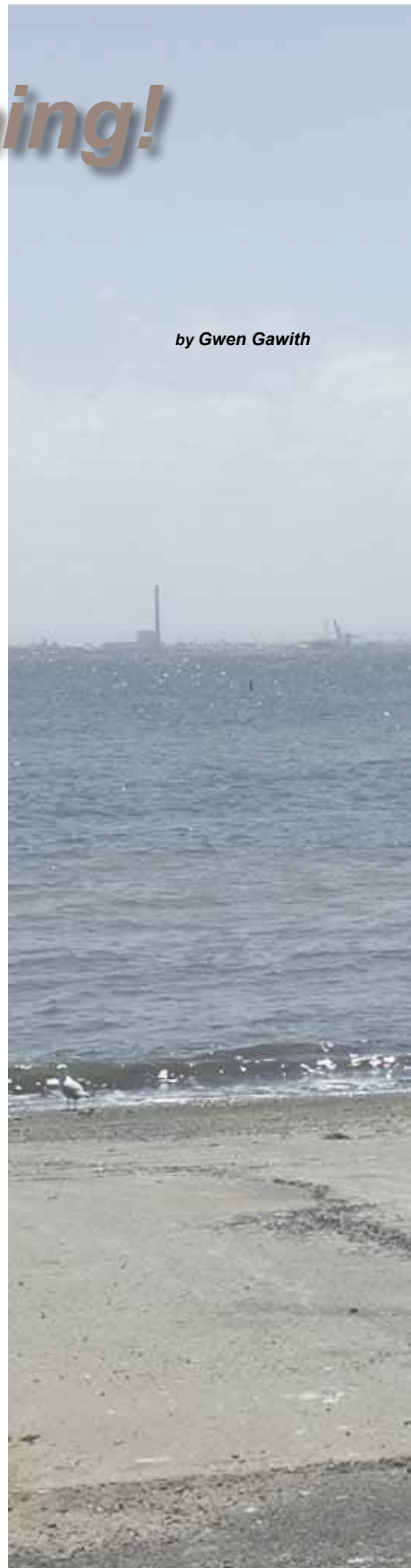
The Internet has kindled a resurgence of interest in media literacy. With vast amounts of information at students' fingertips, educators and parents worry about students' ability to make sense of what they encounter. Can students learn to recognize bias, track down sources, and cross-check information?

Media literacy in the past tended to focus on alerting students to stereotypes, advertising, and propaganda and on protecting them from undesirable influences. Today's digital media literacy encompasses many additional topics, from using search engines, to creating Web sites and online profiles, to participating in social networking. One of the most basic strands of media literacy emphasizes the skills and knowledge students need to locate and critically assess online content.

Advocates of digital media education agree that reading online demands different skills than reading print-only texts does. They differ, however, on the extent to which training in the new literacies should go beyond procedural learning—how to use search engines, read URLs, identify Web site publishers, and so on—to include more cognitively demanding tasks that teach sound critical judgment and sense making.

David then quotes a 2006 research project suggesting that:

Unlike reading assigned textbooks, reading online challenges students to make judgments about the reputability and validity of the information they see. Researchers who directed several hundred college students to



three bogus Web sites about fictitious nutritional supplements found that half of the students lacked the skills to identify the trustworthiness of the information, yet most thought they had strong research skills.

Recent American research (Warschauer, 2007) suggests that these critical and analytical information skills are also skated over or ignored completely in many school laptop programmes:

*The study found that students in all the laptop schools learned to access information, manage it, and incorporate it into their written and multimedia products. However, the focus on evaluating information, understanding the social issues surrounding it, and analyzing it for the purpose of knowledge production varied widely across schools. Some schools succeeded in promoting scholarly approaches to working with information, whereas other schools mostly limited themselves to teaching procedural functions of computer and Internet use.*

While I totally agree with Barack Obama that kids need to understand that what they put on their social networking sites is highly likely to come back and bite them on their behinds, the critical and analytical skills involved in developing information literacy are relatively sophisticated. We are dealing with students who are *technologically*

sophisticated. They can create websites, social networking pages and twitter with the best of them, but at the same time most are *cognitively* unsophisticated. They don't understand the consequences of the online behaviour and they tend to believe what they read on a screen. Teaching them to use information critically and analytically requires *cognitive*, not technological, tools and is actually a much tougher call than most people recognise given that most young people don't know that they don't know what it is they should be able to do.

I'm interested in the final three sentences in each of the paragraphs, i.e.

*Can students learn to recognize bias, track down sources, and cross-check information?*

*One of the most basic strands of media literacy emphasizes the skills and knowledge students need to locate and critically assess online content.*

*Researchers who directed several hundred college students to three bogus Web sites about fictitious nutritional supplements found that half of the students lacked the skills to identify the trustworthiness of the information, yet most thought they had strong research skills.*

Of course students *can* learn to recognise bias, track down sources and cross-check information – *if* they are *taught* to do so. Are they?

'Critically assess', in my opinion, relates just as much to hard print info as it does to online info, if the Herald lead article is anything to go by.

Anyone who thinks NZ students have strong critical and analytical skills is referred to the four cycles of NEMP results which tell us more about where our learners are than national standards ever will.

Am I suggesting that media literacy is yet another 'thing' teachers have to 'do' on top of the curriculum and national standards?

Not on your nelly!

I simply think it's a lot easier if you can see what is wood and what is trees. I'm not saying it's not time consuming, but I am saying it's a whole lot more interesting if you turn the whole curriculum thing round and focus on *learning* instead of *teaching* – if you see the curriculum as WHAT and HOW children will LEARN instead of what and how we will *teach* stuff that they may or may not learn.

I *know* (because after ten years of research I have proof of the pudding) that if the focus is on teaching children the tools *they* need for *learning*, and teaching (and monitoring) these *learning* tools incrementally in a variety of contexts, not only will the key competencies be achieved, but teachers can pick and mix a rich and interesting route through the Learning Areas with the full confidence that they will be able demonstrate children's growth as learners to parents, ERO and anyone else who thinks we need standards to demonstrate learning.

The comparative (to the monstrous bloated old Curriculum Statements) brevity and flexibility of the new curriculum means that *focusing on rich, deep, relevant, rewarding learning* is a realistic goal for all teachers and all schools for the first time in many years.

If, as a teacher, you focus on rich, rewarding learning, of *course* this will include *teaching* children to think analytically and critically about the information they retrieve from books or websites. *Of course* it will include helping them to



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recognise bias, weigh up the trustworthiness of the information, track down their sources and cross-check their information. I don't call this media literacy; I call it information literacy, and I've been teaching it for the last thirty years. It's as integral to reading and writing and listening as it is to 'research', and it simply isn't possible to overlook it if one is focused on rich, rewarding learning and topics that lend themselves to a 'finding out from information' type of learning.

It might seem like splitting hairs to insist that changing one's lenses from teaching lenses to learning lenses makes such a difference, but why not? Schools are places for learning, surely, and if we concentrate on the learning we want learners to do in a place of learning, it focuses the mind most wonderfully? It's like saying libraries are places of books. It changes everything you do to see them, instead, as places for *readers and reading*.

The cart goes better if the horse goes before the cart - I prefer to focus my pedagogy by seeing schools as *places for learners and learning*, rather than places for teachers and teaching. Above all else it helps to avoid the stupid and simplistic depiction of 'pedagogy' as some sort of contest between 'chorkntork' and so-called child-centred learning.

Almost any of the ignorant idiots who feel they can get stuck into education (by virtue of the fact that they went to school) seem to think that the whole 'problem' is because some trendy lefty liberals have hijacked the good old meat-an-veg 'direct instruction' curriculum with all this child-centred do-as-you-please stuff. When asked for experienced examples, the closest they've come to a school in yonks is a child of someone they know who can't spell and bla bla bla...

If, as a teacher, one simply asks 'How best can I help these children to learn this particular topic?' the answer may well be that some things are best learnt by rote (like times tables), some things are best learnt by repetition, some things by doing, hands on, drawing, chanting, whatever, some things are best learnt when the teacher explains it, draws it, demonstrates it, and some things are best learnt by researching, by experimenting, by discovering. There's room for the widest range of learning styles and techniques determining, in turn, the widest range of pedagogies.

Some methods will suit some learners more than others, and some teachers will feel more comfortable using some pedagogical styles than others, but that's life, and if the focus always remain on the question, 'How best can I help these learners to learn this stuff?' teachers find themselves encouraging learners to use techniques and tools that they themselves may not have encountered in their schooling.

I know that if I ask teachers the question, 'How best can learners learn this stuff?' they immediately tell me how they'd *teach* it. When I say, "No, that's not what I asked. I asked how best students might *learn* it." they look at me as if I've gone gaga. But learning is not teaching. If you can get into the shoes of the learner and visualise the type of cognitive processes involved in learning something, there are numerous ways people can learn, and having identified optimum ways, you teach accordingly.

If I were to ask *any* teacher in week 1 or week 2 of my 3Doors® course whether they felt comfortable using 3Doors® tools with their class, I'd bet that 100% would say they didn't probably because the tool-focus *forces* them to take a learning perspective. But it doesn't take long before they (and their children) are using the tools with competence and confidence. I'm sure not all the schools I work with will top the Tolley Tables, but I'm also sure that the vast majority are in the 91% of primary schools who *are* wrapping their minds around the new curriculum without too much drama simply because whatever themes or topics need to be covered, once teachers focus on how best children can be helped to *learn* the themes or topics they select, it suddenly becomes more manageable, more do-able, and infinitely more rewarding for both children and teachers because the *learning tools* provide the cohesion, the glue, that makes the curriculum hang together.

#### References

David, J.L. (2009). *Teaching media literacy*. Educational Leadership 66 (6 March), 84 – 86.

Warschauer, M. (2007) *Teachers College Record* Volume 109 Number 11, 2007, p. 2511-2540 <http://www.tcrecord.org>

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## Speakers

Nancy L. Ames  
Consultant to the College Board and former Vice President of Education Development Center (EDC)

François Barrault  
Former CEO, BT Global Services and BT Group board member

Bahram Bekhradnia  
Director, Higher Education Policy Institute, UK

Alan M Blankstein  
Founder and President of the HOPE Foundation

Dr Taddy Blecher  
CEO of the Community and Individual Development Association (CIDA) and CEO of the Maharishi Institute

Aaron Brenner  
Founder of KIPP SHINE Prep, Head of Primary Schools for KIPP Houston

Dr Shirley Gatenio Gabel  
Associate Professor, Graduate School of Social Service, Fordham University

Dr Shafeeq Ghabra  
Founding president of American University of Kuwait,  
Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University

Professor S Gopinathan  
Associate Dean, Office of Education Research, National Institute of Education, Singapore

André W Haardt  
Founder and CEO, FutureWhiz Media

Dr Angela Ho  
Director of Educational Development, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Janice Jackson  
Lecturer on Education and Senior Associate for the Executive Education Leadership Program, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Adriana Jaramillo & Nalin Jena  
Senior Education Specialists, World Bank

James Knight  
President and CEO, Association of Canadian Community Colleges

Dr Law Song Seng  
Senior Advisor, ITE Education Services

Brian McKay Epp  
Higher Education Assessment Consultant, Pearson eCollege

Dr Mona Mourshed  
Partner, Middle East, McKinsey & Company

Helen Pinnock  
Education Advisor, Save the Children UK

Kari Pitkanen  
Deputy Director General and Director of Administration, Finnish National Board of Education

Natasha Ridge  
Research Fellow, Dubai School of Government

Marina Rosenfeld  
Pedagogical Director, Aprendiz

James P Rubin  
Broadcaster and Adjunct Professor, Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs

Andreas Schleicher  
Head, Indicators and Analysis Division, OECD Directorate for Education

Dan Shine  
President, 50x15 Foundation and Senior Advisor, Corporate Global Citizenship, World Economic Forum

Dennis Shirley  
Professor of Education, Lynch School of Education, Boston College

Professor Ralph Tabberer  
Chief Operating Officer and Chief Schools Officer, GEMS

Dr Tony Wagner  
Co-director: Change Leadership Group, Harvard Graduate School of Education



## What makes The Education Project unique?

The Education Project will bring together experts from all facets of education from pre-school to higher education. It will also focus on vocational training, an important area where improvement and increased reach can offer significant near-term economic and social benefit. The event will provide the platform for an open, solutions-seeking discussion involving all key stakeholders in education.

The event will run across two days of highly interactive workshops and plenary sessions, and will provide open debate among education experts from diverse cultures and backgrounds. It has been designed for education professionals who want to – and can – make a difference, for every society.

The event will particularly focus on identifying a series of deliverables for action during the year ahead – the results of the “roll up your sleeves” breakout sessions. These deliverables will be taken forward into the subsequent year’s Project, and will serve to propel education outcomes, globally. Delegates will leave the event with a ‘rolodex’ of the most dynamic people in the world of education.

The speakers at the conference are education experts – most of them have spent a lifetime in education and are passionate about it. They know intimately the shortcomings of the sector, and therefore understand what is needed to create solutions that will work. The event will outline clear deliverables, tasks and an action plan for the sector globally: it will enable all delegates to leave, equipped with the information they need to enable them to make real change.

**Good Teacher Magazine will be attending the Education Project event and will bring you updates through the**

**<http://www.goodteacher.co.nz> website forum.**

**If not then reports and information will be uploaded as soon after the event as can be managed.**



## BAHRAIN HOSTS GLOBAL EDUCATION EVENT

### - INAUGURAL EDUCATION PROJECT TO TURN RHETORIC INTO REALITY -

Plans for a global education event to be held in Bahrain this month are gathering pace as governments worldwide are being urged to invest in education to meet growing population demands and alleviate social deprivation, as a driver of improved standards of living and economic development.

The inaugural Education Project, set up by the Kingdom's Economic Development Board (EDB), will take place in Manama from October 15–17 2009 to address the gap in the global education system. Seventy five million children across the world are without an education; a situation at risk of being exacerbated by the global economic downturn as education budgets and aid commitments feel the pinch. At the same time the world's population is expected to hit seven billion by 2012. Education for all is widely acknowledged as one of the greatest challenges facing the world today.

Professor Ralph Tabberer, Chief Schools Officer at GEMS – the world's largest private provider of schools – and among the education experts speaking at the event, said: "It is barely 10 years since small groups of highly motivated academics and scientists got together – alone and initially unheard – to call for greater interest in global warming and green solutions; now there is no world leader who dare ignore these issues. We need to make the same transformation in our thinking about education; a debate on how we put it top of the agenda for every government worldwide."

Countless commentators have recently called for governments to meet their commitments toward education. Warm words from the G8 in Italy this summer were not backed by immediate commitments or resources, and campaigners such as Nobel Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu maintain that a global fund for education is the only answer.

The Education Project seeks to address the issue by identifying practical solutions and gaining commitment from educational professionals to put them in place. A key focus will be on encouraging commitment from both the private and public sector to adapt successful, proven and transferable models of innovation and success for wider roll-out by matching potential donors with projects seeking funding to enable real outcomes. And on identifying a series of deliverables for action during the year ahead, to be taken into next year's project and serve to propel education outcomes globally.

Shaikh Mohammed bin Essa Al Khalifa, Chief Executive of the Bahrain EDB which is supporting the event explained: "Education is the single most important factor in bringing stability, productivity and prosperity to all societies. But it is globally recognised that outcomes are poor compared to the investment made and that solutions need to be found and scaled for the widest possible implementation at a global level. The Education Project aims to help address this issue. We want delegates to leave equipped with the information and insights, commitments, partnerships and backing they need to enable them to make real changes."

Professor Tabberer added: "The new global shortage is not in energy, nor in bankers willing to risk or invest, nor in green and sustainable options. It is in education. The problem is not falling standards, but rather escalating demand; of keeping up with the fundamental ambition of every family for their children. In a recession, wise people invest. And as we take in the lessons of the financial crisis it is crucial that we invest in education so that it is fit for a global age."

Other confirmed speakers are shown to the left.

The Education Project is for educational professionals from all sectors as well as from public and private sector institutions with an interest in developing new models and standards in education.

For further information visit:

[www.educationprojectbahrain.org](http://www.educationprojectbahrain.org)



# Sharing and Collaborating

**Good teachers have always engaged in professional learning communities...**

**long before researchers coined the phrase and dissected the concept to the point of near inaccessibility.**

In education, the words 'share' and 'collaborate' best capture the essence of a professional learning community (PLC).

When professionals share ideas, share strategies, share resources and share themselves in order to improve their students' outcomes, they create a professional learning community.

When professionals collaborate to overcome barriers, solve organisation problems or jointly plan to improve learning opportunities for their students, they participate in a professional learning community.

Researchers tend to explore the attributes of a PLC, the benefits of a PLC, the PLC as a fulcrum of change, leadership style suited to a PLC, measuring the development of a PLC or a case study of a specific PLC in a specific school.

Few seem to address the most fundamental question: what exactly do teachers do to begin and sustain a PLC?

Some specific indicative strategies appear below.

## **Professional educators share when they:**

- Invite other teacher into their classroom and share impressions afterwards.
- Establish, contribute to and maintain a shared file of plans and resources.
- Exchange interesting and useful professional articles or literature to others in the faculty.
- Ask another faculty member to explain a successful learning episode they have taught.
- Undertake a small 'action research' project based on one of your teaching and learning goals and share your progress with the faculty.
- Give a teaching resource to another teacher and

explain how it was used.

- Explain a teaching problem to another teacher and ask what they might do to resolve it.
- Take turns putting a new classroom strategy into practice. Report back success and problems in the faculty meeting.
- Tell another teacher about a mistake you made— it's how people learn.
- Offer to be a resource person for your faculty, to find and share readings and research articles with other faculty members.
- Find a useful educational website or subscribe to an online educational forum or news letter and share the address with others.
- Attend a course or conference and briefly report back the teaching and learning value of your experience to the faculty.
- Pursue further education or qualifications and report back the value of the experience to the faculty.
- Visit another school and observe teaching practice in that school and report back to the faculty what you thought could be useful to teaching in your faculty.
- Prepare an 800-1000 word paper on the ways in which your faculty shares and collaborates and submit it to 'Good Teacher' for publication.

## **Professional educators collaborate when they:**

- Plan a lesson with a 'buddy', observe it being taught or teach it together, analyse the occasion, and revise it so it might be better next time.
- Collate and share faculty assessment results and work out a plan for using assessment results to improve teaching practice. Document the impact



# y to be Better than Before

by John Hellner

on assessment results.

- Discuss and organise a programme to assist students who are falling behind.
- Jointly compose a questionnaire for students in the faculty asking students what they believe works and doesn't work in helping them to learn. Survey their opinions and collate the data. Analyse the data in the faculty and decide what, if anything, could be done to improve teaching practice to better help students learn. Set some goals and undertake the improvements.
- Discuss the topic 'how can we help each other to be BTB' (better than before) in your faculty meeting.
- Conduct workshop sessions as a faculty to develop resources, or learning activities, or to plan teaching episodes.
- Set up a study group across ages, experience levels and across faculties. Identify and research a teaching and learning issue or an idea relevant to your organisation. Present the information at a staff meeting. Publish it in a professional publication.
- Jointly design a common assessment task, assignment or class exercise and set criteria for the task. Mark student work as a group and cross check each other or use the results to identify student strengths and student weaknesses design. Bring three pieces of marked student work to a faculty meeting and ask others 'what do you notice?' and 'what do you think?'
- Discuss the question at a faculty meeting, 'how do you know students are actively engaged in the lesson?' Work out some ideas to try to engage students more actively in faculty classrooms.
- Discuss the question at a faculty meeting, 'how does

your classroom environment support and stimulate student learning?' Compose a checklist of ideas for faculty classrooms.

## Teachers have class

Most trainee teachers and virtually all experienced teachers acknowledge the debt they owe to senior members of staff when they began teaching, to mentors, to role models in the profession.

The senior staff, the mentors and the role models unfailingly provided advice, encouragement and support to their younger colleagues. They shared and collaborated – just as they do with their students – because 'someone did it for me and so I'll do it for someone else.'

It's what teachers do.

Good teachers have always engaged in professional learning communities, long before researchers coined the phrase and dissected and marinated the concept to the point of near inaccessibility.

Good teachers share and collaborate because they are teachers: they are hardwired to share and collaborate.

Teachers have class.



*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](mailto: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](http://www.johnhellner.co.nz)*

# The 18th World Council for



***The 18<sup>th</sup> World Council for Gifted Education Conference was held in September of 2009 in Vancouver, Canada.***

***It was a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with an international network of educators committed to promoting the wellbeing of gifted and talented students and their teachers through the exchange of ideas and experiences based on research and best practice.***

The conference venue was The Sheraton Wall Center. This is a large venue ideally situated in downtown Vancouver, with three floors of conference rooms available for the more than 600 delegates who attended from more than 40 countries, including a number from New Zealand.

Five pre-conference workshops featured a selection of 'names' in the field, including our very own Dr Lynn Beresford of the Assessment and Counseling Centre for Gifted and talented in Auckland, and Rose Blackett, President of the NZAGC.

On a personal basis I attended the session offered by Dr Don Treffinger, Director of the Center for Creative Learning in Florida. This was a very practical and enjoyable session. The focus was on creativity. In fact, all of these sessions were well attended and well received.

In keeping with World Council tradition, the opening ceremony and reception showcased a range of gifted musicians including a truly awe-inspiring classical piano and violin duo known as Diva Musica. If you ever have an opportunity to hear Rosemary Siemens and Victoria Gomon any time in the future then you will find yourself really in for a treat. (either as soloists or together). Other performers of note included a young 12 year old flautist, and eight year old vocalist, a pianist who made her debut with the Vancouver symphony orchestra at the age of eight, and a First Nations dance troupe.

The keynote speakers presented food for thought on a range of challenges being faced by educational systems all over the world as they deal with rapidly advancing technology and changes to traditional views of learning theory and service delivery, with an emphasis on the curriculum needs of gifted.

A number of presenters offered examples of differentiated learning experiences, while others offered organizational models and strategies supporting underserved populations.

A considerable amount of interest was generated by the presentation by Professor Jack Naglieri from George Mason University in Fairfax, USA. He shared research findings from his alternative test to the Ravens Matrices, known as the NNAT2 (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, aimed at evaluating general ability without requiring the child to know a specific language or have prerequisite academic skills. A sample test is available to view by typing NNAT2 Online into your search engine.

A wide range of conference themes were on offer, allowing delegates to make choices from a large selection of areas ranging from characteristics, assessment and identification, creativity and the talent dimension, social and emotional aspects of giftedness to teacher training and parent and community interest.





# Gifted Education Conference

New Zealand practitioners were well represented with presentations from Lynn Beresford, Brenda Bicknell, Rose Blackett, Deb Clark, Ann Easter, Lynda Garrett, Mary Irvine, Elaine Le Sueur, Sara Meadows, Louise Tapper, Janna Wardman and Sonia White.

From a presenter's point of view the conference technological support organization was superb, particularly in relation to managing up to three presenters within a single one and a half hour session slot!

Thursday evening was rounded off by a conference dinner presenting further opportunities for international networking and discussion followed by speaker, Dean McFlicker who is a young, talented award winning primetime television producer and director based in Los Angeles. Our table included a group of chatty educators from Great Britain, two of whom were being married (to each other) the next day and continuing with their intercontinental trip as a honeymoon! A great opportunity for celebratory drinks all round. Another topic of interest was a mutual fascination with the television programme 'Time Team.' It was exciting to meet a group of people who had first hand experience with organizing a group of students to participate in one of the 'Time Team' digs.

The conference closed with a introduction to the incoming Executive Committee of the World Council, and an address by the new president, Professor Taisir Subhi Yamin. This was followed by a presentation by the winning bid for the next World Council Conference which will be held in 2011 in Korea.

As with any successful conference, it was with a sense of renewed purpose but some sadness that we all left to go our separate ways on the final day.

I am sure I speak for all my New Zealand colleagues when I say that I am truly grateful for the opportunity to meet and collaborate with those who share a similar vision and resolve.

Now it's time to put ideas into practice and start saving for the next one.



**Elaine Le Sueur**  
**University of Auckland.**  
**[e.lesueur@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:e.lesueur@auckland.ac.nz)**

# books and things



## *The Art of Conversation*

Louise Howland & Keith Lamb

RRP \$19.99 Box

Published by Louise Howland & Keith Lamb

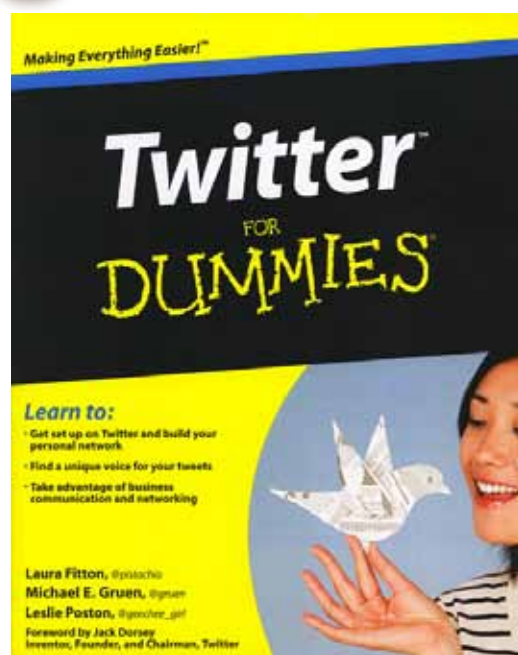
TAOC (The Art Of Conversation) was first produced in a successful version for adults. It is an innovative game (in the broadest sense of the word) which has been developed to stimulate conversation. This 'game' has no winners or losers but has the potential to build self esteem and to enable children to engage in conversation with each other and to learn about themselves and others in their social or class group.

Children who 'play the game' have to abide by the TAOC Manners. They cover 'talking manners', 'listening manners' and 'trust'. These are the tenets of good (and courteous) listening, group interaction and engaging in reflective thinking – skills which each child needs to understand and use, to communicate effectively as they travel life's path.

The rather sturdy boxed set contains 100 cards, with two conversation provoking questions on each card. Examples are:

- #17 What do you like to do outdoors,
- #18 When you were little what frightened you?
- #99 Tell us about your pet. Or, tell us about a pet you would like to have?
- #100 Do you believe that children should have pocket money, and if so, should it be earned?

These cards have a myriad of uses and would be very effective in encouraging group interaction, especially at the beginning of the year when children may be unsure of themselves and their surroundings. I think 'The Art of Conversation' is an extremely useful and valuable resource.



## *Twitter for Dummies*

Laura Fitton, Michael E. Gruen, Leslie Poston

Foreword by Jack Dorsey, Inventor, Founder and Chairman of Twitter.

ISBN 9780470479919

RRP: \$34.50

As a confirmed Twitter user, both personally and for business, I thought that I had probably covered all the options available. So rather than just review this in isolation I asked my techno savvy son (and Twitter user) to also read the book and give his opinion.

Funnily enough our opinions coincided... not only is this book aimed at those who can barely use a computer or phone (you can access Twitter from your phone, anywhere), but it also has some tips which users who think they have looked at all options and basically know it all, will find of interest. My son admitted there were some new things he couldn't wait to try and I am going back to the book after writing this review to try some of the interesting extras which I had not even considered would be available.

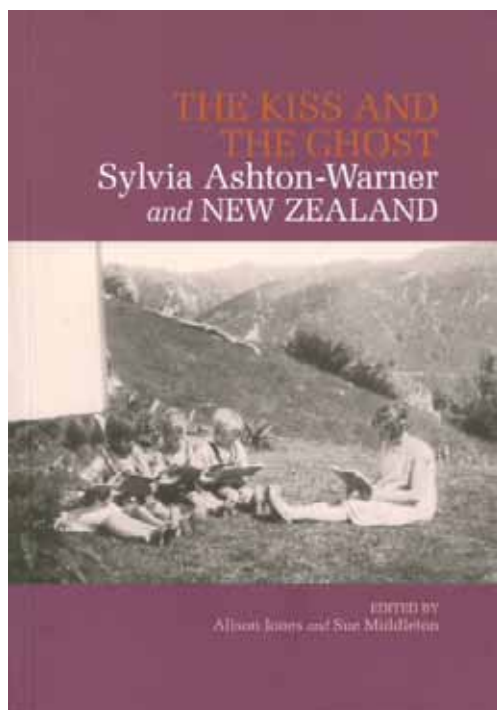
For those who enter the eternal Twitter vs Facebook debate... be consoled... they both have their place in the technological communications world. In fact you can now have your 'tweets' (a 140 character message) instantly linked to your Facebook page. Similarly you can put urls in Twitter which lead directly to your Facebook, LinkedIn or Bebo accounts (or a myriad of otherS).

Whether you are interested in up-skilling abilities which you feel need help in, want to build online networks or perhaps want to use Twitter as a communication tool for business or academic use then this book will go a long way to meeting your need.

Questions will be answered and you will find possibilities you would never have considered. The techie son and I both hunted through the book to see what was missing. Unfortunately for us and fortunately for the reader we came up empty handed. It is of interest whether you are looking to expand your business reach or just want it as a communication medium with other like minded souls. There is the possibility to join interest groups, to get information virtually instantly, and in a few extreme cases Twitter has even managed to be a lifesaver.

Twitter for Dummies is an excellent book... not only for the beginner but also as a resource book for those who wish to explore the medium further... I'm afraid my copy has been 'borrowed' by the son while I have been writing this review. I can see it becoming a valued resource in the family home as long as we don't all want to access it at the same time!





### *The Kiss and the Ghost: Sylvia Ashton-Warner and New Zealand*

Edited by Alison Jones and Sue Middleton

ISBN 978 1 877398 47 6

Published by NZCER Press

RRP \$

Having earlier featured the book *Who is Sylvia? The Diary of the Biographer* by Lynley Hood it made sense to jump at the opportunity to read and edit this book most capably edited by Jones and Middleton. And indeed the last chapter in *The Kiss and the Ghost* is one by Lynley Hood – the story of the biography we reviewed. (The review is available with other reviews at:

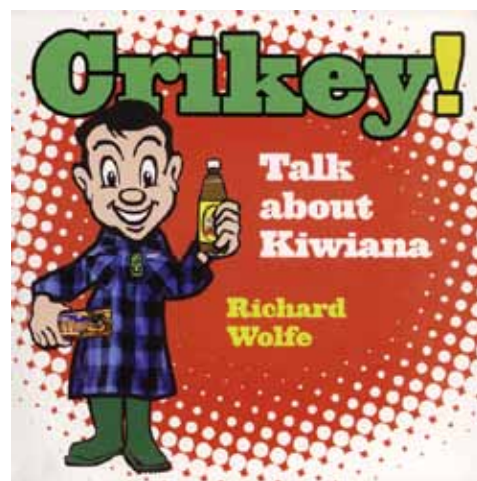
<http://www.goodteacher.co.nz>)

Jones and Middleton while editing a book which looks at Sylvia as an inspired educational theorist also have within the chapters they have edited numerous questions which hint at answers yet are not resolved. Was Sylvia an inspirational genius? Did her process translate to use by others or was it really only suited to her personality? Was all her work original thought or did she knowingly or unknowingly absorb what others were doing, adopt it and mould it to fit her style? Why are there such contrasts in the recollections of her interaction with Maori children? Why, when employed as a teacher (Infant Mistress), did she arrive at school at morning tea time? Should all her work really be credited to her in its entirety or to the young man who strove to make it legible? Why are there so many versions of the same event (see Lynley Hood's chapter)? and... Was she, as her son Eliot said, 'the most difficult woman in the world'?

Sylvia Ashton Warner could be described as a most complex character... most probably capable of all the above. In Tauranga there are many more colloquial tales of exploits which enter into conversations when her name is mentioned which have never been written about. The book covers a wide range of snapshots, from Sylvias 'Creative Teaching Scheme', recollections from the time spent in Waioamatatini, a fascinating discussion with CK Stead talking to Robert Gottlieb... all leaving the reader wanting to know more.

Were Jones and Middleton to research further into the world of this enigmatic woman and her life then *The Kiss and The Ghost* could well have sequels.

An interesting and readable book especially for those with an interest in this fascinating woman.



### *Crikey! Talk about Kiwiana*

Richard Wolfe

RRP \$24.99

Random House New Zealand

This delightful book is a must for any kiwi home..Richard Wolfe has amassed a wonderful collection of memories loosely grouped into themes, which in themselves evoke memories... Glad rags, at the chalk-face and Hard yakker. Add on Fair dinkum fun, number-eight wire and Cow cookies and you will get the drift! Introducing this book and its contents will spark conversation. in any group over 40 who remember the majority of elements introduced while those who are younger could well use it at a translation tool in discussions with parents and grandparents while also realising that it holds a large chunk of our social history in an easily digested and quirky form.

Presented in a 'dip in' fashion the themes are great though the subjects within those themes are not alphabetically listed which could be a little frustrating to some.. Me? I loved it from start to finish... Ches and Dale, the Art Union, a photo of littlies sitting drinking the ubiquitous school milk and the front of one of the early school journals... when I showed it to some colleagues it managed to engender exclamations on every page... a real winner.

Every school should have this book (it doesn't take up much room!) in fact I think it should be in every room, as a resource for memories of days gone by ... perhaps today's classes could guess what would be in a similar book in the future?

# books and things

# Parents... are they

***It goes without saying that if any education system is to do it's best by all of it's students, it needs to ensure their parents/whanau/ care givers can contribute everything they possibly can.***

***But any actions taken need to occur in a context that recognises that significant underachievement is part of the educational experience of all students, not just those who are the most obviously failing.***

***In fact those who are most visibly failing constitute only a very small proportion of the total loss of learning capacity being suffered, perhaps 10 – 15 per cent.***

***The reason: the “inherent inefficiency” of the learning process all schools use (Nuthall, 2001).***

As this wasteful inefficiency, then, affects all students, any scheme to increase parental involvement must encompass every parent and must seek to raise the quality of each of their individual contributions. Since underachievement affects all students, it's never going to be enough to focus intervention on just those students whose parents and homes provide insufficient of the kind of “social capital” required for classroom success. As history is now showing us, that policy has not raised the achievement status of those students in twenty years, but instead has created a situation bearing all the hallmarks of permanency.

Also, because the beliefs supporting the inefficient learning process have seeped into the very pores of the education sector, we'll only reap the full value from any improved parental contribution after those beliefs have been eradicated and their injurious influence nullified. There simply isn't any section of the education sector and its ministry that isn't due such a makeover.

Looking back, it's always seemed to me that schools have largely determined the nature of the parent contribution, fashioning it more to suit their convenience, rather than that of the parents and students involved. Also, things in education have long since moved on, rendering archaic much of what's still happening in this so-called partnership, signalling the need for change.

Two examples I came across of late serve to illustrate the need for change, both just happen to involve secondary schools.

One comes from a friend who employs casual labour for seasonal work on a forest park he operates. His

workers report that their school seems to regard newsletters as the way to involve parents and whanau – around 80 per cent of communication, they say, is occurring by such means. They also say at least 80 percent of those newsletters never reach home, being mostly thrown out school bus windows as darts.

The second concerns a secondary principal who writes a regular column in a local give-away weekly. Discussing parent involvement, he lists things like parents reading regularly to younger children, talking about things, supervising homework, monitoring absenteeism, monitoring television viewing and time on computer, having high but realistic expectations of achievement, and getting involved in the school. “*Setting limits and exercising discipline at home and out in the community*” and “*Encouraging an attitude of respect for teachers and to others in general*” completes his list.

The attitude embedded in the sort of examples quoted is that learning is the preserve of teachers and schools. The parent role is merely to provide the backup for what the school does. Much of that involves the school expecting parents to show they value education and be active in creating the conditions in which schools can do their job.

Some parents though, reject that premise. They say their job is merely to feed and clothe their children and to get them to school and it's the school's job to teach them and manage their behaviour while they're there. At the other extreme, there are some parents who'll completely take over a student's homework project and do it all themselves.

That admittedly limited snapshot contrasts somewhat starkly with





# the forgotten factor?

**Laurie Loper**  
**Reg. Psychologist**

all the rhetoric there is around how important parents and whanau are said to be in the scheme of things. However Tomorrow's Schools notwithstanding, and in spite of parents being recognised as first teachers, the degree to which parents are not accorded a real presence in the learning process makes you want to call them the forgotten factor.

Over the years I've found even the "best" examples of parent involvement leave me with a feeling there's got to be something better. On the whole, now that there is so much more known about the act of learning, there is simply much more value to be had from the parent tie-up with education than could ever have been imagined before. Particularly where the promotion of learning is concerned, now is an excellent time for both schools and parents to be reviewing their roles in relation to each other.

If full value is to be obtained from the possibilities that now exist, a partnership worthy of the name must emerge. The new knowledge about how learning works offers the chance for schools to become more proactive and innovative in how they go about working with and supporting their parent resource.

With the state long ago having been accorded the responsibility to provide for and manage the formal education of its citizens, the part played by parents and families has progressively diminished. The demands of modern day living, especially in times of recession, accentuate this trend. The knowledge explosion has also distanced parents on both the subject content and information technology fronts. In one and two parent homes, for reasons of necessity and/or preference,

work as a priority sees progressively more and more pre-schoolers receiving edu-care outside the home. In the sense that this helps relieve parents of some of their educative function, one wonders what unforeseen impact this is having.

One big issue is the degree to which children have been prepared for learning by school entry time. Those who arrive on day one already able to read, do basic maths and who know a lot, can face difficulties. If their knowledge and skills are not recognised, and no adjustments made to their curriculum, the chances are high for boredom and/or negative attitudes towards learning developing.

Likewise, the fate of their polar opposites – children arriving at school much less well equipped with the skills required for classroom learning – is even more dire. If the specific skills those children lack are not taught – as opposed to expecting them to be "caught" – they can suffer even more in the learning stakes. The number and type of skills involved here are much greater and far more varied than teachers or anyone else seem to realise. Taking them for granted simply isn't good enough.

Nuthall has demonstrated how little teachers actually know of children's knowledge and skills (Nuthall, 2001). If there's little or no awareness of what skills individual children actually possess and/or they're regarded as things that can be picked up incidentally, that places many at risk of getting turned off formal learning for life. The likelihood is that this will happen for many well within their first year at school.

Observing teachers in action, their management approach to learning

sees them concentrating more on establishing basic learning management things like listening, staying on task, following instructions, taking turns etc, not on the more specific learning-to-learn skills students require in doing their own learning. It also seems that the many important skills outside of those that teachers habitually reinforce are having to be picked up incidentally. In this sense, such skills have been taken for granted, as indicated it's creating a situation that makes learning a fraught experience for too many students.

Clearly the danger inherent in this has been underestimated. It seems inconceivable that such a situation should be allowed to continue. Notwithstanding the emphasis pre-schools are now putting on learning skills, what I've seen going on there doesn't give confidence that they are making any better a fist of this than is happening anywhere else in the education system.

It would make far more sense to settle for a certain means of knowing which learning skills individual children do or do not possess. Better still, why not go the further step of developing a programme such as one I had the privilege to be part of. It taught children to self identify their own learning skill needs and then to develop and implement an accountable plan to address them.

But just as economic necessity is seeing a return to gardening as a way for families to cope, ways must be found of mobilising all parents, especially those whose edu-care skills are already minimal anyway, in acquiring support skills for promoting the learning behaviours their children must be able to use competently.



Expecting to draw in all parents to learn how to better support learning isn't being unrealistic. If we continue to view it that way and do nothing about it, nothing will change. It's my contention that we all have to be drawn in and that it's possible to achieve.

Even those parents who don't have much idea of what's involved, and/or don't think they've much to offer, and/or are time strapped with other priorities, and/or have hedonistic pursuits they see as more engaging... they all have to be drawn in.

Two things encourage me.

For one thing, all parents learn from experience that supporting learning comes with the territory. Whether they do it expertly or otherwise, parents contribute in multiple ways to developing such things as language, socialisation, physical development, health and general well being. So being involved anyway, the trick is to hijack the underlying care motive parents are expressing in all this, and use it to better support learning.

The other ace in the hole here is that, almost without exception, parents want their children to do well. These two things combined offer the perfect segway.

To be honest, the idea of using the care motive as the vehicle for obtaining greater parental support for learning came about somewhat by accident. Acting on a hunch that the care motive might tie in with my purpose of getting all parents involved, a list of specific learning support skills that parents might use was drawn up. It grew to over 400 items that covered 16 areas of the parental role, each having either a direct or indirect bearing on children's learning.

Presented in the form of self-rating checklists, these listings covered a wide range of basic skills in things like behaviour management (especially positive feedback, limit setting and developing routines), language

development (including thinking skills), social development, health care and well being, along with areas to do with interacting with schools, and the teaching of basic language, reading and number skills.

Nothing could have prepared my colleague, George Middleton, and I for the response we were to get when we first showed these categorised listings to groups of parents. It was just overwhelming, they went for it like you would never believe. Likewise, we got the same kind of enthusiastic response from the few schools that we were at the time able to involve. Subsequent experience of working with groups of parents over some 6 years have continued to demonstrate both the power and flexibility of the materials developed.

One important realisation came out of the initial use of these materials, now known as *Chance is a Fine Thing (CIFT)*. Though tapping into that care instinct was what set things up to succeed, the major innovation was accidentally hitting on a way of countering the widespread parental antipathy there is for anything that smacks of parenting education. Because in fact each of the over 400 skills were nothing more nor less than parenting skills. However, calling them learning support skills made all the difference, not one parent of the many worked with has ever referred to them as such, presumably because that's not how they see them.

So the prospect of gaining a much greater level of parent and care giver participation in helping their children to develop learning skills suddenly brightened considerably. We found Maori parents are particularly receptive to it, comments like "Why has something like this never been available before?" were commonplace.

That parents in general and schools in particular show remarkable acceptance of it is shown by this example. In this instance it was presented as a year-long, self-teaching programme that parents could build up, one new topic each

fortnight, into their own folder (we provided each home with a 30 pocket Clearfile so that every home ended up with an archived resource). One teacher involved was so taken with it, she anonymously donated \$100 to cover the paper required on condition it was to be a distinctive/attractive colour (we chose lilac) in order that parents would associate the colour with the programme and would know to store it, even if they did nothing else with it.

The delivery home of each new topic was by pupil post. Doing things that way, with each child being aware what the material was about and what their parents needed to do with it, provided additional prompting for it's use by parents. Each additional bit provided another opportunity for parents to interact with the materials, a further opportunity to self identify their own needs and do what they wished about them (examples of how they could do so were supplied). When the school offered it to all of its 420 families, only one family opted not to take part.

Though no kumara worthy of the name ever speaks of it's own sweetness, it's evident that *Chance is a Fine Thing* is an innovation.

With a copy in hand, understanding it and its relevance, and appreciating its numerous features and flexibly, and the many possible ways it could be used, is a task of a few minutes. Describing it could never give the same quality of interactive experience that's involved in the hand-held situation. Besides, the amount of description involved that it would take to provide anywhere near the same amount of information, couldn't be encompassed in an article this size.

Being as yet still "new" even though it's nearly ten years since the first version was completed, it offers a new dimension to the business of getting parents much more productively engaged in supporting the learning their children do.

Any school wishing to strike up more meaningful and productive





relationships with all of its families and whanau should check it out.

Speaking generally, if we're ever to expect parents to be better at promoting the learning their children do, somehow the skill base of each parent must be increased.

Accomplishing that will require having more consensus than there currently is about what the task comprises – witness the plethora of parenting programmes on offer – and having a programme that comprehensively covers agreed parameters.

Obtaining the participation of all parents requires a programme that suits the circumstances and inclinations of them all. It has to suit more than just those willing to take on a formal course or turn out regularly to a group. Amongst other considerations, this means providing the programme in multiple formats, having it available in a variety of media, and of course, keeping it low cost. With there now being more clarity about learning as a process, incorporating the universality of the learning principles involved into all formats means adaptations to suit ethnic/cultural minorities would be unlikely to be required, or if they were, only minimal changes would be necessary.

In any new undertaking, the first step is often the hardest to take. But it's not as if the task here is to get every parent to the same level of competence. The imperative is to move each of them forward and to keep that forward movement happening with each parent driving their own participation and growth. Gifting to parents the ownership of the process offers a good chance of them developing the motivation that'll ensure their continuing involvement. They need the freedom to be able to meet their own needs, in their own way and to use the resource to the extent they decide, as and when they decide.

I'm certain the problem of getting parents en masse more productively involved in supporting the learning

their children do is solvable. All my experience in this field so far convinces me that my original hunch about this was correct. Just as the new knowledge Nuthall's produced demands a new model of learning, that same new knowledge demands we now develop a new model to help parents participate better in promoting/supporting their own children's learning.

Luckily, parents are a step removed from the influence of that inefficient learning model that so dominates teaching practice and, unlike teachers, they don't have to defend its use. That makes them a little more open to adopting a new approach thereby giving them the chance to play a more effective role in support of their children's learning than they've ever had before.

That and the returns parents so far involved with the CIFT materials have shown they've obtained, suggest that once started, parents are likely to continue. In my opinion, all this not only makes it viable to arm parents en masse with the skills needed to better support their children's learning, it also

has the potential to make quite significant inroads into improving educational outcomes quite quickly and exceedingly cheaply.

***Bring parents back into the fold.***

***Equip them all better.***

***Turn them all into the sort of learning-support partners no school could afford to be without.***

***Put them back where they belong.***

#### References:

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Loper, L, (2000). *Chance is Fine Thing: A learning support resource for parents and caregivers of children attending Primary and Intermediate schools.*



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# books and things

## *The Black Monastery*

By Stav Sherez

Published by Faber and Faber

Reviewed by Catherine George

RRP NZ \$37.99

It is well known in my family that I'm always up for a spot of murder (of the literary kind) so I leapt at the chance to review the second book by British writer Stav Sherez. He is now up there with my favourite crime writers thanks to this evocative and thought-provoking novel.

Set on a once idyllic Greek island, *The Black Monastery* is a dark tale of murder and corruption. Nikos is a policeman at the end of his career, who returns to his native island. A ritual murder of a boy near the monastery seems to be a copy of two murders committed 33 years before, when a mass cult suicide also took place. The island is as much of a character as the people in the story, and Sherez paints wonderful images that give the novel a film-like quality.

Nikos is joined in his investigation by bestselling crime novelist Kitty Carson, who is trying to escape her work and her marriage, and borderline stalker Jason, who is following Kitty in the hope she will read his manuscript.

## *Exam Stress? No Worries*

Su Dorland

ISBN: 97817421695834

RRP NZ \$33.99 Au \$29.95

Published by Wrightbooks, Distributed by Allen & Unwin

Who doesn't know, or is perhaps, one of those people who suffer agonies when exams are looming?

For some reason some brains are hard wired to make exams even more of a mountain than they already are, and the fear of exams can be debilitating to the advancement of students.

Su Dorland is a registered psychologist living in Australia, formerly from the United Kingdom.

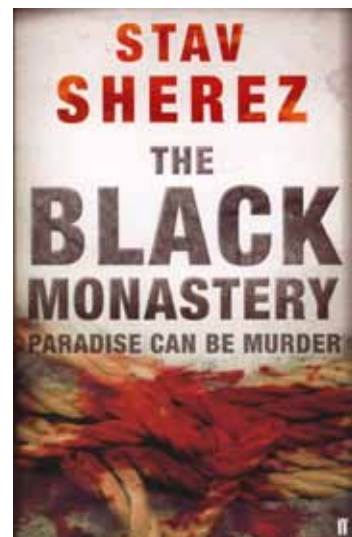
She has worked as a lecturer, tutor and counsellor and has in ideal background and understanding to write this novel book.

Su looks at exams and the anxiety they cause, not only in the generic sense but also as they may affect the reader as an individual. Once that is identified in this highly readable book the reader moves onto facing the question, "How do I get rid of my exam anxiety?"

Su offers strategies and solutions for the reader to work through depending on what affects them and how they react. She looks at procrastination and why we use it, and better still how to stop procrastinating and face up to what needs to be achieved.

She offers hints for

students who are working – or have other commitments



All the characters have secrets in their pasts that are enticingly revealed throughout the story, and the combination of an interesting, page turning plot and excellent prose make this crime novel a cut above many others. I found the character of Nikos to be particularly engaging, and the descriptive prose means you linger on the images (not always a good thing – did I mention it is a rather dark tale?)

I look forward to reading more from Stav Sherez, and highly recommend the book to fans of well-written crime fiction.



off-campus students

mature age students

International students

Emigrants – referring especially those in Australia who come from migrant families

The last section of the book is the final advice for the exam attendee... it offers strategies to work through before the exam to remain calm and focused.

*Best of all Su's book comes complete with a cd to help the whole process.*

This book is a must for any parent with children who find the examination process difficult, or if you are returning to study, or even if you have employment related tests which engender some form of anxiety.

It is easy to read, logical and thoughtful in its approach. A great gift also for those heading into the exam arena of study, well worth the investment.



# A Case for Respect and Responsibility

***It was recently suggested that Ministry of Education statistics on disruptive behaviour should be a cause for concern in our primary schools.***

***Rod Galloway suggests Character Education provides an answer.***

A class photo taken recently at our school captures the teacher with a rather strained look. Standing beside her was a six-year-old who wouldn't even look at the camera, let alone smile. Moments earlier a simple instruction to move into rows and face the camera had become the catalyst for a major confrontation. Without warning the six-year-old suddenly declared he was not taking part. An experienced and understanding teacher reasoned with the boy to join the class. This confrontation with a strong-willed and defiant child led to the teacher being physically struck. While she was trying to restrain and calm the boy, he spat in her face. Clearly this is not the behaviour we expect, experience often or tolerate. Nor was it the photo opportunity we had been hoping for!

During the days that followed this incident a familiar pattern of events took place. When students cannot manage their behaviour they are often stood down from class, parents are spoken to about rights and responsibilities and children may even, as in this case, change schools. Sadly for this child, as with many, disruptive behaviour became disrupted learning.

The Ministry of Education report, *Student Engagement 2007* celebrates a combined reduction in the number of student suspensions and stand-downs in the last seven years. But within the range of statistics presented it is evident that in primary schools alone there has been a large increase in the number of disciplinary actions since 2000. It has been surprising to some that this increase of 37% in primary school suspensions and stand-downs over these years has received no official acknowledgement or comment.

According to the revised New Zealand Curriculum, the Key Competency *Managing Self* is associated with self-motivation, a "can-do" attitude and students seeing themselves as capable learners. But it's not just learning that needs to be self-managed. Increasing autonomy requires appropriate behavioural outcomes to ensure positive engagement. Co-operation and participation are essential in most successful learning environments.

The key findings of two sector group reports on student behaviour in New Zealand schools released over the past year provide background to the Ministries figures. These reports demonstrate why for some schools *Managing Self* should become a first priority as a way to improve student engagement.

A New Zealand Council for Educational Research report commissioned by NZEI found that one in seven primary teachers surveyed reported being physically assaulted in the previous year. Most of these assaults were from five, six and seven-year-old boys. Being shouted or sworn at were the most common forms of abuse.

Earlier this year the Hawke's Bay Primary Principals Association reported the extent of disruptive behaviour from 525 teachers working in 79 schools in their region. One in

five of the students represented in these schools displayed behaviour that disrupted learning. The range of students displaying one or more negative outcomes each day in each class was from none to 29, with an average of 5.5.

If these Hawke's Bay results of difficult behaviour that disrupts learning are translated nationally, and there is no reason to think things are significantly better in any other region or at any other level of schooling, we begin to sense the significance of the problem. This is seven times the number who face official sanction – potentially an alarming and unacceptable 145,000 students.

But successful outcomes at school depend on foundations laid in the home. Changes in parenting styles have left many modern families struggling with exhaustion, high expectations and financial stress.

With New Zealanders working the second longest hours in the OECD and 30 percent of our mothers with school-age children working full time, many parents are too busy or tired for effective parenting. Children who lack respect for their parents, shown by physical and verbal abuse and repeated disobedience, can bring this set of challenges to the classroom, especially upon entry to school.

While many parents are doing a fine job and the best they can in difficult circumstances, New Zealand teachers are having to deal with too many problems brought from home that are disrupting the learning of everyone on a daily basis.

The discipline required for *Managing Self* is fundamental to the notion of lifelong learning. But it seems ironic that some parents who want the best for their children's lives are choosing parenting styles that are the greatest threat to this outcome.

Descriptions of these problems and the statistics that accompany them have been repeatedly documented by experts and the media. By contrast, few real answers are ever offered. But for an increasing number of New Zealand schools that have implemented Character Education, there have been positive results well documented by the Education Review Office. These results only occur when a whole school community agree to proactively teach, resource and model a greater sense of respect and responsibility. This in turn becomes an educational environment that allows good teachers to teach and good children to learn.

But will approaches such as these be enough to prevent children from spitting at their teachers and refusing to obey simple instructions? New Zealand principals claim that disruptive behaviour is the most common classroom barrier to learning that they have to deal with. *Managing Self* taught as responsibility and respect needs to find a more important place in every school as a context for building good character. For as long as children cannot make good choices, behave appropriately and take responsibility for their actions, little else of substance will ever be achieved.

***Rod Galloway is the Chairman of the New Zealand Foundation for Character Education and a Dunedin School Principal.***

***He can be contacted at:***

***rod.galloway@cornerstonevalues.org***

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*Editor: This article was first published in The Press in 2008 however it seemed timely to print it here*

Teachers are increasingly being encouraged to start, and maintain a reflective diary. This assists in many aspects of a teacher's understanding, of their children, processes - both their own and those of the classroom and the school and probably most importantly it helps in their understanding of themselves.

As a working tool it is an important facet in a teachers quest for improvement.

Good Teacher Magazine is privileged in having permission to print as a regular feature, the diaries and thinking of one of these teachers....

# Teacher Diary 2

I had decided, early on in my tenure at the school, even though I knew little about it, to introduce clay work to the children. Perhaps I did this because I can remember enjoying the activity when I was at primary school or because there were clays of interesting colours in exposed ridges around the school. We would explore clay work together.

At last the clay was here. We cleared the desks, and the timetable, and began. The children were ebullient. (In Teacher Diary 3 I describe a defining moment in my teaching which led me to a more informal and democratic style of teaching – in retrospect, the decision to do clay work and the way we undertook it, was probably a preliminary to this.)

Trevor's first coiled pot rose swiftly and largely, then slumped to the table. He pronounced it a huge success. His next one, though, was more cautiously built and it rose firmly and solidly. The potters talked about form and decoration as they worked. The ebullience became more focused as the work itself appeared to maintain a new control over the individuals.

There was a sense of intense satisfaction amongst all; everything seemed in balance – I felt we were surfing. (Only children involved in drama were ever to match the holistic satisfaction evident when children worked with clay.)

The children bent to their work.

Then, when completed, we carefully placed the prized objects on the table for drying. We were to be somewhat brought down to earth when the pots cracked. (The best environment we found was to place them in the dark of the store room cupboard for slow drying.)

However, as potters we were on our way.

In the months ahead, clay work became an important part of our classroom culture. As we persevered and experimented, design became an important issue for the children. We collected red earths from a ridge near the school and made it into slips. Designs were also drawn into the raw surface, as well as through the red slip to the cream coloured surface below. Much of the early decoration was clichéd, but I held to my belief of



giving children time to work through such issues. And I was rewarded – before long trees and fish gave way to line, mass, colour, and texture expressed in an abstract way.

After a time, a small group of children became recognised as the skilled experimenters, and it was these children who led the advance into large pot construction.

‘We’ll have to roll coils quite differently,’ said Bevin.

They prepared a large bin of clay mixed with shards and raupo and other seed-heads. The handling and thumping down of each coil required new hand techniques. When the coils began to rise on the pot shape it was found most convenient to sling coils over the shoulder so that both hands were free for the moulding. The process gradually assumed a rhythmic pattern as the potters shuffled around their growing pots.

The noise of children involved and enjoying themselves went on until they broke off to eat their lunches. They sat around their pots and talked about their experiences, in particular, about the satisfactions of clawing handfuls of clay off a pot to trim it to form, and ‘bonging’ a wall to correct contour.

The children worked out for themselves that the surfaces of the large pots were better if they had textured surfaces, so the shapes were smoothed off without water. They also decided that the surface should not be ‘busy’, but decorated with a few bold strokes. There was always a large audience during any transformation of clay into pots. Murmurs of approval, and of reservation, were to be heard. It was a useful forum for the discussion of artistic values.

Two other techniques became popular. The process of pressing clay into plaster mould, smoothing-off, designing, and decorating was quickly grasped by the children; the other technique was clay-pressing which involved pressing many kinds of natural surfaces like bark, leaves, and shells into clay to form, for instance, decorated tiles.

Finally, we gained access to a kiln. The use of the kiln was to be an adventure of triumphs and setbacks. As well, there were the struggles with glazing. There was great excitement amongst the children at both the first firing and the first glazing. Each re-beginning in pottery was



different, but each time, even though we became experienced in the processes involved, I attempted to preserve some of the feeling of discovery that we knew at the first firing.



# Gifted Children

***New Zealand's gifted and talented students are more at risk now than ever of languishing in their learning.***

***There are two reasons why this is a very real possibility.***

***First the National budget has axed invaluable professional Learning in gifted education for their teachers.***

***Second, the imminent introduction of National Standards by the Ministry of Education will ensure that the limited time and resources of teachers are directed to students at the other end of the learning continuum.***

After many years of advocacy by concerned stakeholders, the government now requires that all schools identify and cater for gifted and talented students (as gazetted in the National Administration Guidelines, 2005). Recently many initiatives have been put into place to ensure that gifted students have an education that meets their specialized needs, as is their right. The most effective of these was that all schools could access ongoing professional development in gifted education to support the teachers. Indeed, a recent Education Review Office (ERO) report stated that where good practice was found "school personnel had participated in school-wide professional development about gifted and talented education and relevant teaching and learning strategies to provide appropriate differentiation in the classroom" (pg 50).

Internationally, New Zealand is fast developing an acclaimed reputation especially in regard to the inclusive way that gifted and talented students are educated. At the 14<sup>th</sup> International Thinking Conference in Malaysia, one of the convenors said they were using the conference as "a platform to expand their horizons with knowledge they can apply in the development of the education system. We have 160 participants from New Zealand who can tell us what they are doing for gifted children" (New Straits Times, 2009). However, without professional learning in gifted education teachers simply do not know how to differentiate the learning for this group of students.

There are sound reasons why educators in Aotearoa/New Zealand would be well advised to focus more on gifted education. Today's gifted and talented students are tomorrow's intellectual, cultural, social and economic leaders and the nurturing of their talents must not be left to chance. When haphazard and unplanned, "evidence indicates that educational progress is not so much a question of intellectual merit but rather a question of affluence, with the most affluent receiving the best education and therefore achieving most highly" (Eyre, 2004).

Recently the Government published the Statement of Intent: 2009 - 2014 which sets out the key elements that the Ministry of Education will contribute to in order to deliver the Government's priorities for education. One of these priority outcomes, where the Ministry of Education is to focus the resources and funding, is to ensure that "Every child achieves literacy and numeracy levels to enable their success" (pg 8). Hence increased support for improving achievement in literacy and numeracy through the New Zealand Curriculum and the imminent introduction of National Standards.

The National Standards are likely to have the same effect in New Zealand as evidenced in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) era in the United States. Once accountability regimes were introduced there, the achievement of low performing students became the priority much to the detriment of able students. A recent (two part) report published by the Thomas B Fordham Institute found that during the NCLB years the bottom 10 percent made rapid gains from 2000 to 2007 (no mean feat even though these students were still far behind), while the performance of the top 10 students was token, having made only minimal gains. In the era of NCLB the achievement gaps were certainly narrowed, at whose peril is the real question?

New Zealand teachers may well find themselves in the unenviable situation of having to make difficult choices as to which learners will get their time and attention. During the NCLB years, 86 percent of teachers in the United States reported being committed to the principle that "all students (regardless of performance level) deserved their fair share of attention and challenges" (pg 6) irrespective of their backgrounds or achievement levels. However, with the best intentions in the world, this same group had to make tough choices about how to spend limited time and resources. In the Fordham Institute's report "81 percent of teachers say that 'academically struggling' are likely to get their one-on-one attention, versus



# en Left Behind

5 percent who say that 'advanced students' are" (pg 11).

In the United States 73% of teachers agreed that "too often, the brightest students are bored and under-challenged in school - we're not giving them a sufficient chance to thrive" (Farkas & Duffett, pg 52).

In this era of standards based reform, teachers will feel the pressure to lift the performance of the lowest-performing students and will need to be the moderating influence. One effective way to do this is to know how to differentiate the curriculum for the most able students knowing that 'a rising tide lifts all ships'. The premise is that by promoting an atmosphere of excellence and creativity for the most able students, by default the challenge for all students is increased raising standards generally.

A compelling case as to why professional development in gifted education is a must for all progressive schools in the forth-coming era of National Standards. If we want to compete globally don't we want all our students, including those who are gifted and talented, to make progress.

Commitment to gifted education professional learning for the teachers could salvage the future for all of New Zealand's students.

In this era of budget cutbacks, it is reprehensible not to be an effective advocate and to defend the necessity of gifted education – today, tomorrow and ... in the future.

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1 NCLB: No Child Left Behind

2 NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress

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# Here goes Lucy yet again...

**Some of you will recall an article in Good Teacher a while ago where we talked about using pictures and poems to support students to develop rich vocabulary.**

Here's a slightly different angle for you to consider. ...

***"Hey Miss, how come that was so easy!"***

So said a year 8 student to me recently. We were working together reflecting on their writing. They had come to the conclusion that their next learning step needed to have a focus on how they were using language to paint the best picture for the reader.

We began with two questions:

*What do 'good readers' do?*

Our list truly represented a wide range of comprehension strategies. The students' key points included; making predictions, creating images in my head, reading for meaning. This was an important part of the process as we needed to think about how a reader received text before the writer created the text. This naturally led onto our next question ...

*What do 'good writers' do?*

This list focused around the choices 'good' writers have to make so that the 'good' reader is able to make sense of the message. It was pleasing to see all the previous learning that came to the fore with suggestions like – we need to use specific nouns, what about strong adjectives, we could use personification ...

We made a list of all these possibilities and then worked out our learning goal and criteria from that. This meant that every student had ownership and the purpose for the learning was clear.

## **Learning Goal:**

*"To make vocabulary choices to create the best possible picture for the reader"*

## **Achievement Criteria:**

*Use of specific nouns*

*Use of appropriate adjectives to modify our nouns*

We began by using a piece of writing to help us revisit those key aspects that we identified that we would using in our own writing – The Old Place by Hone Tuwhare. This was a great springboard.

We used the old house pictures that you might remember from previous articles - this time with a twist. Each writer had a space to record their ideas linked to the learning goal and criteria then they compared notes recording those ideas in the box below the picture.

As each pair contributed a line or phrase that was written on the board, there materialized before our eyes was an amazing (first draft) poem!! (The example below was created by a group of beginning teachers)

Rusty old  
Swing bridge

Rotten timber

Silent and alone

Rickety

Str  
win

*Hanging at odds with itself, the battered path lonely  
waited for its final breath,*

*The last ribs break, the darkness from within the walls  
will disperse among the earth*

*Hidden from prying eyes, faded from memory,  
crumbling over the years, desperate and eroding*





Images of time past -

Footsteps on the swing bridge reverberating softly  
down into the valley

Faded memories waiting in the golden glow of the  
past.

Sitting in silence forlornly among the trees

Light blue  
cloudless sky

Faded memories

Encrusted with  
MOSS

Dilapidated

Images of the past

An example: a pair of students working together  
sharing each other's ideas and working toward a  
piece of writing.

rong steel  
es

*The abandoned wooden joinery lies awkwardly  
against the shady side of the paintless aged house*

*She rests stubbornly, stripped and weathered, soon  
changing from red to green*

*As I looked, I mused of an entity that could be a  
house though should be a home.*

Beginning Teacher Literacy workshop 09

Now, what a platform for each student to work  
on a piece of their own with confidence.

Hopefully that year 8 student would now be able to say ...

***"Hey Miss now I know why that was so easy!"***

**Chinese Whispers**  
*the natural solution to hair loss*

✓ Reduces hair loss  
 ✓ Stimulates hair growth  
 ✓ Cleans and soothes scalp  
 ✓ Strengthens hair  
 ✓ Reduces hair fall

It's a gentle and effective product.  
 First use the shampoo then the after-shampoo.

### Choosing an Early Childhood Education Centre

#### Types of early childhood education centres

There are three main types of early childhood education centres: **daycare centres**, **preschools** and **kindergartens**. Each type has its own characteristics and benefits. Daycare centres typically offer full-day care for children aged 2 to 5, while preschools and kindergartens focus on preparing children for primary school.

**Daycare centres:** These centres provide full-day care for children, typically from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm. They often have a focus on socialization and basic academic skills. Daycare centres can be a good option for parents who need to work full-time.

**Preschools:** Preschools usually offer half-day programs for children aged 3 to 5. They focus on social skills, basic academic skills, and preparing children for primary school. Preschools can be a good option for parents who want their children to start school early.

**Kindergartens:** Kindergartens typically offer half-day programs for children aged 4 to 5. They focus on academic skills, social skills, and preparing children for primary school. Kindergartens can be a good option for parents who want their children to start school early.

### Helpful hints on choosing an early childhood education centre

1. **Check the accreditation:** Make sure the centre is accredited by a recognized organization, such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
2. **Visit the centre:** Visit the centre to see the facilities, meet the staff, and observe the children.
3. **Ask for references:** Ask for references from other parents who have sent their children to the centre.
4. **Check the curriculum:** Make sure the curriculum is appropriate for the children's age and interests.
5. **Check the staff:** Make sure the staff are qualified and experienced.
6. **Check the fees:** Make sure the fees are reasonable and within your budget.

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**We prepare you for the  
cost of education**

At the University of New Hampshire, we're committed to preparing you for the cost of education. We offer a variety of financial aid programs, including:

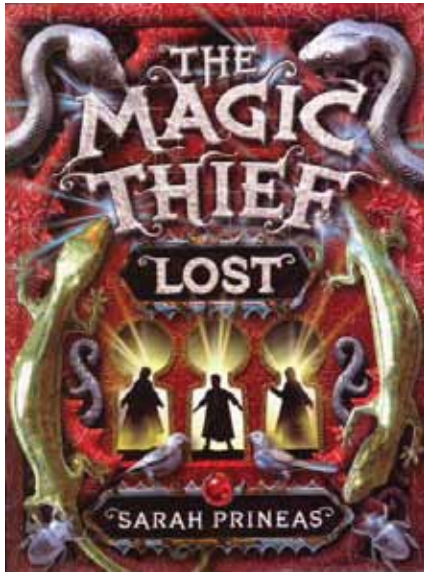
- **Need-based aid:** Grants, scholarships, and loans based on your financial need.
- **Merit-based aid:** Scholarships and grants based on your academic achievement.
- **Work-study programs:** Opportunities to earn money while working on campus.
- **Private scholarships:** External funding from private organizations.

For more information, visit [www.unh.edu/financialaid](http://www.unh.edu/financialaid) or contact the Office of Financial Aid at (603) 863-2222.

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### *The Magic Thief: Lost*

by Sarah Prineas

Published by Allen and Unwin

Reviewed by Gabriel Ford, age 11

You may remember that in my review of *"The Magic Thief"* I wrote, and I quote: *"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!"

Well here we are on book two in the series - *"The Magic Thief: Lost"*. Just to remind you, Conn is a wizard's apprentice. In *Lost*, Conn has developed a new experiment to save Wellmet from the death of magic. He has also lost his locus magicalicus, a stone used to focus magic. As if this wasn't enough, there are terrifying assassins stalking the people of Wellmet.

Many of the characters have returned, including my favourite character Benet, and there also new additions to the cast including the sorcerer-king Jaggus. The characters are still developing complex relationships between each other, including a very complex and complicated relationship between Conn and Captain Kerrn, the captain of the guard of The Dawn Palace.

I really like the way it is a mix of magic and city life where most books about magic aren't. I also like how Conn is a former pickpocket, and how it really shows in this book. Another reason I like this book is how explosions and magic are both ways for Conn to communicate with the magic.

As I said last time, *"The Magic Thief"* is a great trilogy and I'm really looking forward to the third books in this fantasy series. Recommended for readers aged 9 and up who enjoy books about magic and fantasy.

### *Teenagers: A Natural History*

by David Bainbridge

Published by Portobello Books  
Distributed by Allen & Unwin

RRP NZ\$39.99 AUS\$35.00

Reviewed by Catherine George (with the rather unhelpful assistance of Seamus Ford, age 14)

If you have ever thought your teenager's behaviour may best be explained by David

Attenborough branching out from animals to adolescents,

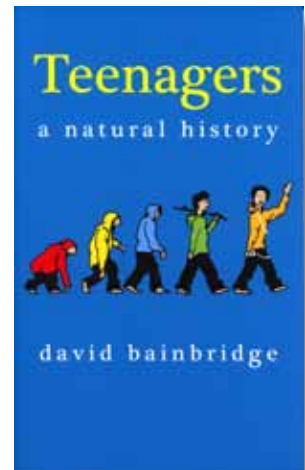
this may be the book for you. David Bainbridge is a vet who teaches veterinary anatomy at Cambridge University, and in this book he aims to use his biological knowledge to convince us that being a teenager is a positive and understandable experience. The book covers the gamut of teenage issues, like many others, but does it in the "popular science" genre.

It was possibly this lack of attempt to discuss broader social, cultural and gender issues which teenagers have to deal with that made it less successful with me. Of course if I'd paid more attention to the title, (*A Natural History*) I may have been more forgiving. While taking his point that many aspects of teenage development can be explained by biology, his dismissal of cultural influences makes the book less than convincing – there was no evidence that the teenage changes he discusses are international, as he writes from a very white and western perspective. One example is there was no mention of the impact of technology on teenagers lives, surely a huge omission.

There was a definite clash in the writer's voice over the course of the book. There are clear and concise scientific explanations of everything from why teenagers are better than everyone else, why all the sleep risk and anger, to whether teenage drug use is really a bad thing. For readers reasonably versed in science, these will be interesting and may really make you see teenagers in a different light – beholden to their genetic makeup rather than sullen and irritating! I, however, struggled with many of these passages, as it is very difficult to keep the easy read style Bainbridge is aiming at up without patronising readers with better knowledge of biology. And when he gets away from the straight science, his slightly twee informal voice gets extremely grating, as if he isn't sure of his audience.

While the book says it is for anyone, whether they are a teenager at the moment, know one or have been one, the real audience for this will be parents and teachers fairly well versed in science. My 14 year old was inspired by the great cover and snappy blurb, but when it came to help with the review said "It was sooooo boring. He thinks he's really funny. And he isn't." While this is a bit harsh, I have to go along with it a bit. I don't know if finding out that my son's brain is slowly replacing the tegmentum-accumbens reward-seeking system with a tegmental-accumbens-prefrontal pathway that allows emotions to be more controlled by intellect will make our house any calmer, but I'll try and keep it in mind.

Recommended for parents and teachers who would like a relatively easy explanation of the biology of the teenage years.



# Makauri School – Making C

**One of the many challenges for schools is how to make meaningful connections for students and teachers; connecting life beyond the classroom to learning in the classroom, making the purpose for learning explicit and real.**

**The context of Education for Sustainability is one way that Makauri School in Gisborne has approached this dilemma.**

**Teacher Emma McFadyen and her students have embraced a variety of opportunities to make learning real and make a difference for the environment.**

But:

**How can we communicate these ideas to the wider community and invite others to participate?**

**How can we support others to become environmentally aware and help look after their environment?**

Emma and the students discussed what they were already doing:

**Gardens**

**Worm bins**

**World Environment day**

**Recycling**

**lunch boxes**

**Beach Clean Up**

Room 4's creative process to save the world...

**In Term One Room 4 learnt about whales and how to conserve our oceans. We raised money and gave it to a conservation group called Sea Shepherd**

**Thinking of other ways to help the environment, we started hearing about carbon foot-printing**

**Room 4 spent the next few months raising money to help save our New Zealand dolphins. We wanted to make at least \$30 to adopt a Hector's dolphin**

**We had small groups create calendars of their favourite endangered animal to help raise money.**

**We raised money to support Sea Shepherd and their campaign, Operation Migaloo.**

**Growing Environmental leadership**

**Matariki**





# Connections –

They looked for opportunities to show the links between these activities and learning programmes in the classroom.

Links were made to the schools' curriculum and what they wanted their students to Be, Do and Know when they left Makauri School. Emma and the Envirocouncil collated and sorted all the things that had been happening to create a display in the hall.

They then invited the rest of the school and wider community to give feedback on Where to Next? Maybe it could be.....

***Whole school projects***

***Small seed groups***

***Continuing with old stuff***

***Starting new stuff***

***Watch this space!***



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# books and things

## *Mostly Sunny with a chance of storms*

by Marion Roberts

Published by Allen & Unwin

RRP NZ\$18.99

Reviewed by Catherine George

*"Mostly Sunny with a chance of storms"* is a delightful read – a follow up to Marion Robert's previous *"Sunny Side Up"*. *Mostly Sunny* begins with the announcement that Sunny's blended family is going to move into her recently deceased Grandmother Carmelene's house – a move away from Sunny's best friends. However Sunny is not one to let things get her down. She proceeds to use reverse psychology to get the turret bedroom, sets up a dog minding business in her new back yard and makes friends with Finn, a wonderfully quirky boy who knits and breeds pigeons!

This book will have wide appeal, it has a great set of characters and interesting themes - stereotyping in relationships, friendship, the blended family, divorce, a new baby, post natal depression and coping with death. Phew! While that sounds a bit much, the themes are not forced on the reader, but just reveal themselves through the story which romps along at an exciting pace.

## *Screw Inner Beauty: Lessons from the Fat-o-Sphere*

Kate Harding and Marianne Kirby

Published by Allen & Unwin

RRP \$32.99

This book started as two blogs by self admitted, (confessed is not a word to use here) fat people. The origins of the book have influenced the feel. So there are occasionally snippets where tense doesn't fit or where it jumps from talking in the 3rd person to talking as one of the writers. That said if you can get past these slight anomalies, if you are a 'large, overweight, chubby, chunky, or just plain fat' person – or trying to understand one - then you will find this book of interest.

*Screw Inner Beauty* covers a lot of ground... classed as a self help book it certainly gives permission for you to learn to live with your body and gives a large amount of evidence on the fallibility of diets... not necessarily in the short term but certainly when looked at in the longer term (over 3 years). The evidence that most weight losers eventually put the majority if not all the weight back on is looked at and discussed. The by-line on the cover 'trash the diet and self-loathing and get on with your life' certainly signals the premise of the book.

The book covers: Health; Mental health; Socializing; Avoiding negativity; Getting dressed; the Media; and; Getting your head on straight. All the chapters have strategies, processes and solutions to make you feel proud to be who you are and not a self deprecating person who sometimes inadvertently makes other feel embarrassed. This is not to say you will read this book and immediately feel at ease if you have a mindset that you are too big and

Marion Roberts, the author, always wanted to be a fashion designer, but she studied science, alternative medicine and psychotherapy instead. Read this book and her career path will not surprise you!

There is great complexity between the characters and relationships, but the book is charming and fun, in spite of the breadth of topics. A fabulous book that many children will relate to. A good one for reading aloud in class for intermediate level, though I would perhaps recommend reading *Sunny Side Up* first. Highly recommended for age 10 and up, particularly girls.



must diet... however it is certainly a book to go back to for self affirmation.

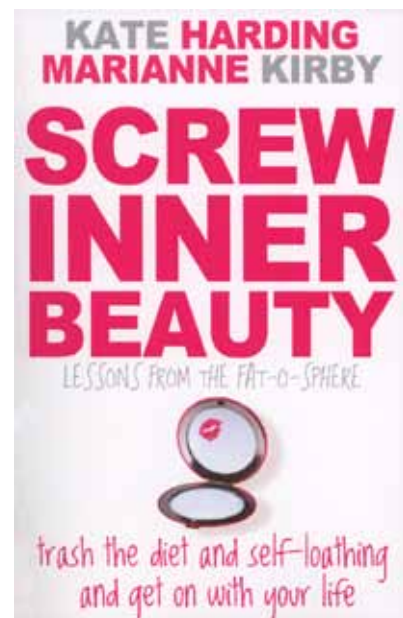
The last chapter heading says it all; 'Don't Diet Anyway. They Still Don't Work.'

It is a shame that this book and the blogs which inspired it ..have to be written. Our often unrealistic expectations of what is a 'right' shape and weight and what

is 'wrong' change as decades and fashion pass by. We tend to forget to take into account genetics and that for some the current 'ideal' will forever be an impossibility.

As an inveterate dieter I enjoyed this book and will probably return to it at those times when I feel tempted to diet again!

Kate and Marianne and the discussions and arguments they put forward make sense. A voice in the wilderness perhaps however the book (and blogs are being well noted in the USA where of course they originate.





**While we pride ourselves in NOT running press releases which are available to all the media... sometimes a release comes along which we can't resist ... Hector's World is one of those**

## ***Hector's World® helps Kiwi children deal with cyberbullying***

New cyberbullying resources were launched on the 7th of September for children, teachers and parents, and are free online at Kiwi website [www.hectorsworld.com](http://www.hectorsworld.com). These are the latest animated resources with Hector and his friends from New Zealand's Hector's World®, which helps children 2-9 years old stay safe online and learn about digital citizenship.

The new resources are designed for primary school aged children and include:

- an interactive animated episode
- a music video
- a song
- colourful song sheets
- teacher lesson plans for three different age groups.

Liz Butterfield, Managing Director of Hector's World Limited, says "It is very important that children in primary school understand what cyberbullying is, and that help is available for those who have been targeted. Messages to bystanders



about how to support someone who has been victimised can assist in bringing this often hidden problem to light where it

can be resolved in a caring way.

Hector's World is able to deliver these serious messages in an entertaining format that has lasting impact with young children."



The Australian Communications and Media Authority (the ACMA) sponsored the new resources and launched them at a primary school in Sydney recently. Hector's World® is the ACMA's flagship program for young children aged 2 to 10 years.

ACMA Chairman Chris Chapman says "Hector's World is an internationally-recognised online safety education resource and we are delighted to partner with New Zealand charity Hector's World Limited, to create a new episode and bring these inspirational and engaging characters to Australian children".

Hector's World resources exemplify Kiwi innovation in both the field of education and in digital media. The animation team is led by Mark Saunders, Creative Director of Inkspot Digital Ltd. The soloists on the song and music video are students at Papatoetoe High School. Ms Butterfield says, "We try to showcase New Zealand talent wherever possible, from the world-class animators to the actors who bring these characters to life."

### ***What is Hector's World®?***

Hector's World® is a visually stunning, effective digital citizenship education programme for children aged 2-9 years and their families. Hector's World® Ltd. (HWL) is a New Zealand charity and a social entrepreneurship venture.

### ***New Cyberbullying Resources***

Pitched at children (4-9 years old), the interactive episode explores the impact that cyberbullying can have on someone and encourages targets of cyberbullying to talk to a trusted adult for help. In this episode, two friends deface a photograph of one of the main Hector's World® characters, Ming—a clam, and repeatedly forward the image to Ming and her circle of friends via mobile phone and the internet. The story encourages bystanders to see cyberbullying as unacceptable behaviour and to support the young person being targeted to get help.

### ***Hector's World® in Australia***

Hector's World® is the Australian Communications and Media Authority's key online safety resource for young children. HW was launched on their website [www.cybersmart.gov.au](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au) in July 2009, and is part of a suite of cybersafety resources available to teachers for use in the classroom.

### ***Hector's World® in the UK***

Hector's World® is in widespread use across UK primary schools through partner The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre. Hector's World® is CEOP's key

resource for 5-7 year olds. The CEOP Centre uses a multi-pronged approach to tackle the sexual abuse of children online which includes gathering and sharing intelligence, executing operations, and harm reduction through their Thinkuknow education programme (<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>).

### ***Who leads Hector's World®?***

Liz Butterfield is the Managing Director of Hector's World and previously managed NetSafe, New Zealand's cybersafety organisation, from its inception in 1998 until 2006. In 2003, Liz was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her work in the field of internet safety, and was also awarded the NetGuide 'Living Legend' Web Award for her contribution to the internet industry. In 2006, she was made the first female 'Internet Fellow' by InternetNZ, the body that oversees the internet in New Zealand.

### ***Funding of Hector's World®***

These new cyberbullying resources were sponsored by the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Hector's World has been developed with assistance from funding partners, including New Zealand's Ministry of Education, the Digital Strategy's Community Partnership Fund, InternetNZ, the Tindall Foundation and more; and from corporate partners like Telecom and previous Foundation Sponsor Microsoft NZ.

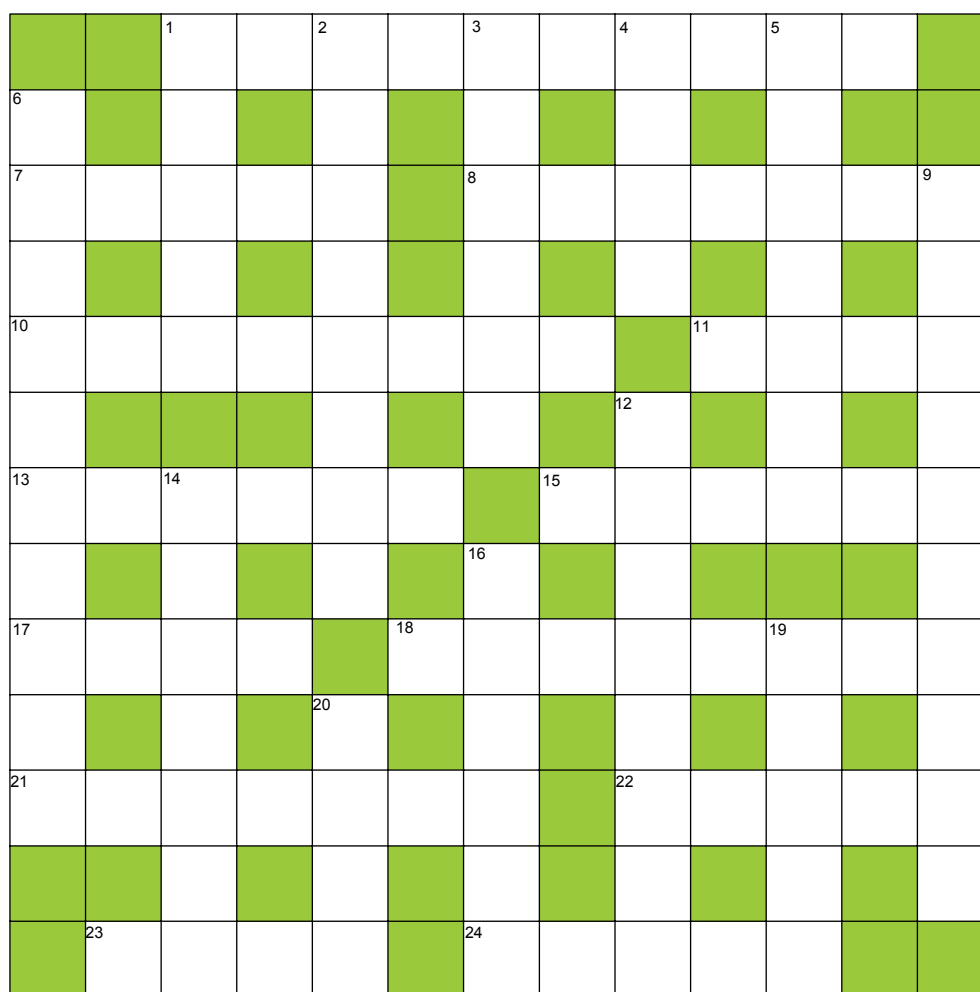
More and more film: Castlehill primary school, Bearsden, Glasgow, made an animated movie about the Victorians, while Park Hall school in Castle Bromwich, Solihull, brought Godzilla to life in its own corridors after a pupil complained that the film club wasn't catering to her taste for the Japanese monster genre.



Is your school doing exciting creative things? We want to hear about it. Perhaps we could send an article to the Guardian to show what is being done to brighten up the curriculum by the schools who read Good Teacher Magazine! Email your news to [info@goodteacher.co.nz](mailto:info@goodteacher.co.nz)



## Richard Crypt's challenging crossword



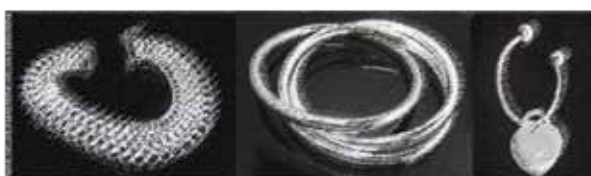
### Across

- 1 Bad, bad renters could also be shakers, stirrers and pourers (10)
- 7 Set up becomes upset (5)
- 8 Ancient god takes grapes and large gullies (7)
- 10 One backward street vests (8)
- 11 Pop article and cultural movement (4)
- 13 Commit money, wearing a singlet (6)
- 15 A wall painting could go with AI? (6)
- 17 Keep moving Spike Milligan (4)
- 18 Monsieur l'agent (8)
- 21 Rub coke into deer (7)
- 22 A tag I defaced for cold forests (5)
- 23 Remove heart of elm from fashion to created an eyesore (4)
- 24 Re Sis begets (5)

### Down

- 1 Graduate sin. You can put water on it. (5)
- 2 Hustlers can be without pity (8)
- 3 For example, about road and herons (6)
- 4 Enthusiastic but backward prima donna (4)
- 5 Take an article from fugitives for places to land (7)
- 6 Spice takes United Nations special licence initially to produce Billy the kid (10)
- 9 Would they be sung in the shower? (10)
- 12 Teardrop hunter (8)
- 14 Point in flower becomes very rough (7)
- 16 Genetic engineering, oversized, embraces carbon and potassium lizards (6)
- 19 Tracks birds (5)
- 20 You'll sound like Christmas, almost (4)

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**It's where teachers get it**

## Christmas Dough Ornament Craft

By: Amanda Formaro

Difficulty: **Easy**

Age: 7 and up

This shiny Christmas dough ornament craft is the perfect finishing touch to decorating the tree. It can also be altered and made into lapel pins, magnets and gift-toppers.

### What you'll need:

- ½ cup salt
- 1 cup flour
- ½ cup water
- Rolling pin
- Cookie sheet
- Toothpick
- Miniature cookie cutters: star and Christmas tree
- Acrylic paints: green, yellow, and various colors of your choice for tree ornaments
- Glitter glue or glitter paint
- ribbon

### How to make it:

Preheat the oven to 250 degrees F.

Mix together, salt, flour, and water until dough is formed.

Knead the dough on a floured surface until the mixture is elastic and smooth. If dough is too sticky, sprinkle with flour, continue to do so until stickiness is gone. Do not add too much flour, this will dry out the dough and will cause it to crack before you get a chance to bake it.

Roll out the dough to about ¼" thick with a rolling pin that has been dusted with flour.

Use cookie cutters to cut out as many trees and stars as you want.

Use a toothpick to make a hole toward the top of the shape.

# Christmas Fun

Poke the toothpick into the shape, then holding toothpick straight up and down, make a circular motion as if you were stirring something. Keep circling until the hole is the size you want.

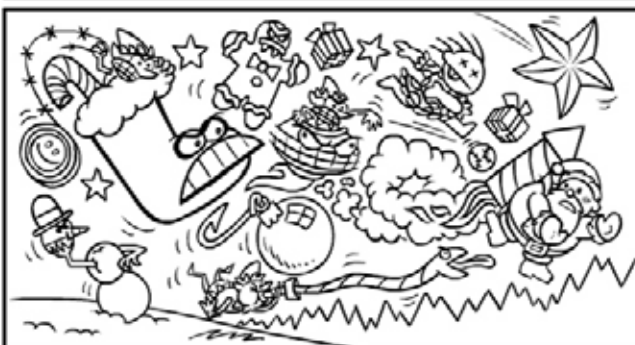
1. Place all shapes onto an ungreased cookie sheet and place into the preheated oven.
2. Bake for 2 hours.
3. Remove from oven and allow to cool completely.
4. Paint the trees green and the stars yellow.
5. Use the handle end of the paint brush to dot on ornaments by dipping into paint then dotting onto ornament.
6. When paint is dry, use glitter glue (we used green) or glitter paint (we used gold) to put a sparkling cover coat on your ornaments.
7. When dry, thread ribbon through hole and tie in a knot in the back.
8. Tie onto package.

### Tips:

- If your toppers are large enough, you can make two holes in each so that you can thread ribbon through like a button, only showing a small amount of ribbon on the front.
- These make adorable pins to wear to school. Just don't make a hole. Glue a pin back to the back of the completed ornament instead.
- Uncooked salt dough doesn't keep well, so only make enough dough for the ornaments you are going to make. If you are only making a few toppers, halve the ingredients above. The listed amounts will make enough ornaments for a classroom of 20.

## What's the Difference?

Find the seven differences between the two holiday pictures below.



## Hand Cut-out Wreath

Difficulty: **Easy**

**Supervision is recommended**

This hand cut out wreath is a great Christmas craft. Kids enjoy tracing and cutting out their hands and when the wreath is done they feel they've had a hand in the holiday decorating.

### What you'll need:

- Green construction paper or felt
- Pen or pencil to trace hands
- Glue
- Glitter
- Sequins
- Ribbons
- Other decorations for finished project



### How to make it:

Trace child's open hand onto paper. (8-10 tracings for a small child)

Cut out tracings.

Glue tracings together at wrists with fingers pointed out.

Decorate with glitter, sequins, ribbons.

Write child's name, age, and date made on back.



# Christmas Colouring



Our thanks to [www.funschool.com](http://www.funschool.com) and [www.kaboose.com](http://www.kaboose.com) for the Christmas activities

## Sudoku A

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

## Sudoku B

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

## EDUCATIONAL WORD PUZZLE #11

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

### ACHIEVED

STUDENT  
Caspian, North, Bering

### MERIT

CURRICULUM

### EXCELLENCE

TIM STUDENT

### SCHOLARSHIP

ER GOALS

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Sister	Birthday
Self	Anniversary
Brother	Friendship
Friend	Mothers Day
Father	Fathers Day
Self	No reason
Colleague	Because you can
Self	For fun

<http://store.goodteacher.co.nz>



***An occasional page on perfectly normal things which seem to think they are something else...***



# Roger's Rant

Greetings all you technology teachers out there. You must be doing back flips in celebration of the two new strands in the curriculum. Now you can get out there and compare, contrast, explore and many other exciting verbs. Your students can explore the exciting world of human invention, which can be as much about human folly as it can be about ingenuity.

There is a website where disgruntled consumers can vent their spleens about products which have, through their inherently inept designs, caused copious amounts of angst. It's not all totally negative, however, as people are encouraged to suggest improvements.

I am devising a list of my own and intend, in one fell swoop, to inundate the site and knock the collective socks off fellow contributors.

Here is what I have so far.

Plastic Wrapping: (thou shall not pass!)

A while back I purchased a screwdriver set from a local hardware store, which shall remain anonymous but rhymes with spammer. This set had, in my opinion, all the requisites to dismantle the Taj Mahal and then mantle it again. Screwdrivers of all sizes both metric and imperial were packaged in all their glory

alongside some items which were most impressive, even if their functions were obscure. There would have been no problem if I hadn't wanted to use one of the screwdrivers. I guess that was unreasonable on my part but my partner wanted some legs put on a table. I examined the set, looking for a tear tab, or some indication on how to access the goodies inside. There were words, probably instructions, on the package, written in proto-Bulgarian, I think, but I'm guessing that a translation would not yield the secret of access. The plastic was as hard as an All Black lock's ear, so I rapidly surmised that brute strength was out of the question.

After half an hour, I managed to locate the one pair of scissors still extant on the property and set to, with a will, which rapidly turned into a won't. The scissors managed to perforate but such were the folds and bends of the plastic, that cutting a straight line of more than two centimeters was impossible. Success was achieved, eventually but the wrapping was removed one shard at a time, each one with such a vicious point that if the Zulu impi at Rorke's Drift had used these, then the 24<sup>th</sup> Warwickshire Foot and Mouth regiment would surely have met defeat. I mentally awarded myself a Victoria Cross.

The designer of this piece of nonsensical wrapping/package must be related to the people who produce the mineral water handed out on Air New Zealand flights. You know, it's in those little punnets with a tear-top, which, theoretically

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

		1	B	A	2	R	T	3	E	N	4	D	E	5	R	S	
6	G		A		U				G		I			U			
7	U	P	S	E	T			8	R	A	V	I	N	E		9	S
	N		I		H			E		A		W				O	
10	S	I	N	G	L	E	T	S			11	D	A	D	A		
	L				E			S		12	P		Y			P	
13	I	N	14	V	E	S	T		15	F	R	E	S	C	O		
	N		I		S			16	G		E					P	
17	G	O	O	N			18	G	E	N	D	A	19	R	M	E	
	E		L		20	Y		C		A		A				R	
21	R	O	E	B	U	C	K		22	T	A	I	G	A			
			N		L			O		O		L				S	
		23	S	T	Y	E			24	S	I	R	E	S			

## Sudoku A

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

## Sudoku B

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



should slip off readily but in reality, requires about four tonnes of pressure and then comes away with such a rush that the contents gravitate unerringly into one's crotch. You might have had similar experiences with packets of potato chips or bags of compost.

### Aerosol cans

Well, I ask you. It's early in the morning and I have arisen before the sparrow can express its metaphorical flatulence. I shower, reach into the cabinet for the deodorant, locate a metal cylinder, aim and press. Do you know how hairspray feels when it is directed at parts reserved for deodorant? It should be law that different gases are encased in containers of different shapes and sizes. For example, fly spray could be in a can shaped like a bug, deodorant in one the shape of an arm and so on. You get the drift?

### Direction Indicators

I have the good fortune to drive different makes of cars in the course of my job. I am a law-abiding and courteous driver and always indicate when turning. The car designers, apparently, have thumbled their collective noses at the concept of standardization and have placed the indicator levers either to the right or left of the steering column; seemingly a random choice. I can envisage some Japanese car production line worker tossing a yen, heads to the left tails to the right. A heartfelt apology to those motorists who have encountered me on roundabouts and have had to wait as I have not indicated. They may be somewhat mollified to know that my windscreen is much cleaner, however.

### False Foods

I was at a dinner party once. The host went out of the room and after a couple of minutes I helped myself to some of the potato chips in a bowl on the table. I rapidly discovered that they weren't potato chips but some sort of pot-pourri and despite the fact that they resembled potato chips visually, they tasted like nothing on earth. I equate the producers of such products with those who make medication in the form of lollies.

## Fred's Educational Word Puzzles

### Answers: Puzzle #11

overseas student	crowded curriculum
part-time student	medium-term goals

## New ICT

I am not really a Luddite but I feel like taking up pitchfork and burning brands and doing exactly that -burning certain brands of computer hardware or is it software?

I only wanted to make a hypnosis recording for a relative, which entailed recording my voice over some relaxing background music.

I can remember when I first started teaching in the 70s. We had these nifty tape recorders, where we could flick a switch and record on half the tape and then flick the switch again and record on the over half. Bingo, some nice voice-overs! Now wouldn't you think that we should be able to do that at least as easily today? No way Jose!

First of all I tried to record my voice using the built-in microphone but it sounded like I was gargling with that wiry stuff you clean pots with. Then, on advice from a savvy techy, I purchased another microphone. So, \$50 out of pocket, I optimistically tried again. Still gargling, this time with pumice.

OK, Mr Techy suggested we try Audacity. I indignantly informed him that I had already been using that much-vaunted programme. Ah, but had I been working with Ubuntu? Ubuntu? I finally abandoned any semblance of pride and handed over everything to my friend with instructions to set everything up and just tell me when to start recording.

I must admit to a slight indulgence of Schadenfreude when he spent a few hours negotiating a series of false starts and blind alleys sorting out problems I won't even try to describe. Eventually he announced success and I recorded, with several more false starts, about fifteen minutes of relaxation suggestions.

Sending the recording to the relative involved another series of unsuccessful attempts (the file was too large) until techy decided to put it on a website, from which the relative could hopefully access it. This she managed to do and was pleased with the result, but could I remove some annoying clicks on the recording.

Decency prevents me from narrating the process involved (with accompanying comments from self and techy) in addressing this request.

*Roger*

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