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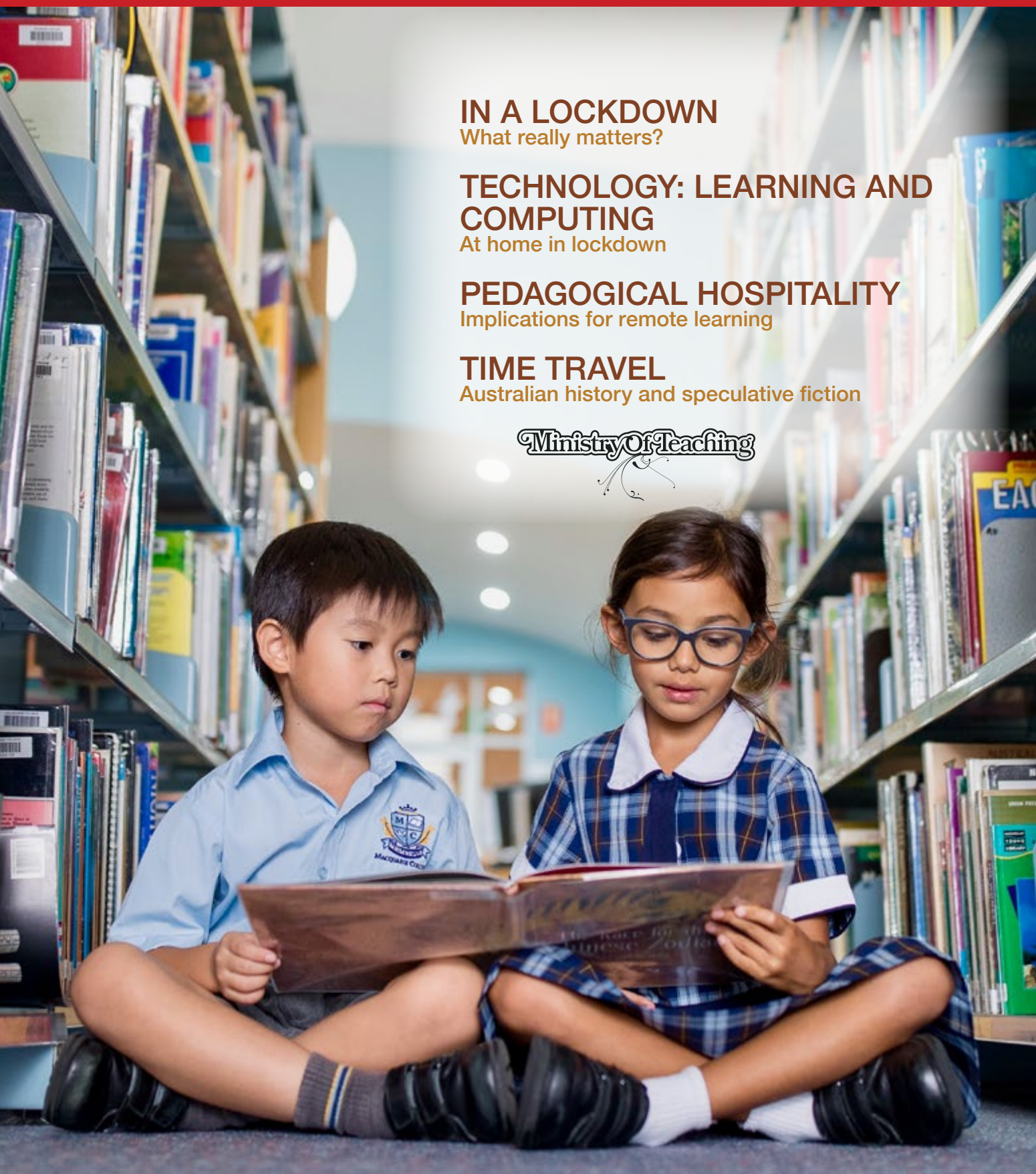

IN A LOCKDOWN
What really matters?

TECHNOLOGY: LEARNING AND COMPUTING
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Implications for remote learning

TIME TRAVEL
Australian history and speculative fiction

Ministry Of Teaching

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TEACHJOURNAL
of Christian Education

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TEACH is a journal that includes both refereed and non-refereed articles on various aspects of Christian education. It publishes articles of teaching and professional practice; educational administration; research and scholarship; and contains the reflections, impressions and experiences of Christian educators.

The journal invites and welcomes articles, papers, and materials that relate to its mission and vision statements. For further information, and notes for contributors, visit *TEACH* at **research.avondale.edu.au/teach/**

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Primary students relaxed and enjoying resources in the Macquarie College Library.

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NNSW Conference Education Department image files.

Ministry Of Teaching

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Ministry Of Teaching

EDITORIAL

Graeme Perry

This year 2020, has been an unprecedented year. Unprecedented fires across broad sweeps of the continent (about 6%) destroying millions of animals, human life and communities including Kangaroo Island, Combargo and Mallacoota. A disruptive Unites States of America presidential election process, confused by concepts of 'truth' and lies. Unprecedented 'Black Lives Matter' marches inflamed by racially based police brutality, including George Floyd's death on May 25. "I can't breathe" became a catch cry adopted globally by confined opportunity limited and oppressed minorities. The #Metoo movement, awarded the 2019 Sydney Peace Prize, maintained a continuing activism inflamed by emerging celebrity 'outing' and increasingly vehement national despair with levels of sex trafficing, sexual abuse and both social and family violence. There was a recycling declaration of "enough is enough", challenging the situation, but the protest gained only limited resources to achieve a modified moral compass.

But most devastating was the seemingly Wuhan sourced COVID-19 pandemic that rapidly spread, plunging nations into debilitation, loss of human life, lockdown – conflicted working and schooling at home, an economic down-turn with significant job losses, each a factor challenging satisfying levels of personal and community well-being. From expansive confrontation emerged the 'new' heroes. Celebrities and sports stars were supplanted by frontline medical staff from all levels and essential workers—and that included teachers. The innovative appreciation, exhibited from apartment block and roadside applause to impromptu musical performance, from the elderly to the pre-schooler, has become embedded in the historical narrative of coping with COVID-19.

Robert Bolton (2020) after interviewing teachers asserted "Teaching will never be the same again." Kaye Chalwell (cited in Bolton, 2020) describes her preparations for out of school learning and shares, "Teaching is about relating to kids. It's about the humour and fun of being in the room. It's about being relational. Online is a weird setting. … In class we know who needs an extra 'hello'. And that's different when you are online. One of the things I want to work out how to do, is the relational stuff."

Chalwell in this issue guides *Reflections on pedagogical hospitality and remote learning* (p. 33), Hurlow retraces *Rethinking learning in a lockdown: … "What really matters?"* (p. 4) and both Lounsbury and O'Neill in *Time Travel* (p. 26) and Christian and Page in *Why getting dirty matters* (p.39) support the links between engaging teaching and student well-being. The administrative role of ensuring whole of school well-being is addressed by Palmer in *Creating a Trauma Informed College Campus* (p. 14), Shields informs *Managing unsatisfactory teaching* from a Christian perspective (p. 19), and Gray models caring for technological barriers to students' learning (p. 48).

Research (Gore et al., 2020) has generalised that on average children did not miss out on learning in the lockdown, but variables considered confirmed the importance of special support to lower performing LSE school and student groups. TEACH chooses to honour the Christian educators who ensured children did not lose learning opportunities, but further also support their students' wellbeing in all crises, including COVID-19 contexts. TEACH

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[Photography: Glenys Perry]

CCAS teacher and students enjoy food preparation in Food Technology class.

Rethinking learning in a lockdown: The coronavirus prompts this principal to ask, “What really matters?”

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Keywords: Assessment, equity, learning processes and competencies, lockdown, technology

If you had asked me a year ago if we would be holding school at home and relying on technology to interact with our students, my answer would have been a resounding no. But in a short-time our lives have had to continue while being put on hold and in lockdown during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Here in New Zealand, we have had a heavy emphasis on sticking to our “bubble.” This means staying at home only with those living in our household unless venturing out locally for exercise, groceries or medical treatment. And school as we knew it became an impossibility.

In mid-March, just one week before the lockdown began, I received a call from the Ministry of Education asking about our capabilities for offering distance learning. New Zealand had only five confirmed COVID-19 cases at the time. Even though our numbers were comparatively low, with worldwide cases having just surpassed 100,000, Italy’s cases were exploding. New Zealanders realised it was only a matter of time before an outbreak could reach us.

In discussion with our staff members, it was clear

> *“in a short-time our lives have had to continue while being put on hold and in lockdown”*

Figure 1. Shaun Hurlow assists Bella a Year 7 student of Hamilton Seventh-day Adventist School with some video editing in ‘normal class’ times.

we had the infrastructure and the capability to offer distance learning. Some of our teachers had already been using Google Classroom and the "flipped classroom" learning method (video instruction followed by learning activity) so were excited about the challenge and saw it as an opportunity to test 21st century pedagogy.

For our emergent, or beginner, year groups, we set up the learning differently. The last thing we wanted was our five- to seven-year old's relying on a screen for everything, so we created learning packs. These included a table of must dos and can dos, with activities such as writing a lockdown diary, making their own weather station and recording log, and writing a list of questions to use on a recorded FaceTime interview with their grandparents. We supported these activities through use of online programs such as Matific for maths and videoconference platform Zoom for teachers to check in with parents. We also encouraged our parents to take learning cues from their child. If the child felt distressed, families could put learning aside and focus on wellbeing. The most important thing: ensuring learning at home didn't impact negatively on the environment at home. At the end of all of this, their kids' mental health will be more important than their academic skills. And how they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during those weeks in lockdown.

The big challenge we've been working to overcome is equitable access to learning. For some, distance learning has worked. It's given students flexibility around structuring their program, allowing them to develop strong self-management and take initiative. For others, distance learning hasn't worked. Access to their program—some families don't have the internet at home or a device for their children to work with, others have a single device shared between siblings—low levels of accountability from home and other distractions such as gaming have been a barrier.

As a staff team, we have been discussing this for the past few years. Students who've developed strong competencies for learning will continue to engage in learning with or without a formal learning environment. So, we need to teach students how to learn rather than what to learn. The process of learning is far more important than the product. Self-management, critical thinking, developing social emotional competencies, participating and contributing are key. But these don't develop in a vacuum.

Teaching has to change. The way we assess achievement in schools is often based on the student's ability to present a quality product or their ability to recall information under pressure in a test. Our assessment needs to change so that it focuses on the process of learning, and all feedback and feedforward we give to students should inform that process.

The biggest thing I've missed most through distance learning and what we can't foster easily through technology are relationships.

While many families, including mine, have noticed an increase in family time and reduced stress because of a decrease in the number of commitments and busyness of schedules, relationships outside of this unit—notably with our students—are on hold. Using the distance learning model within a classroom environment, could be a great leap forward, developing strong competencies for learning and independence while maintaining strong relationships that help children grow into well-rounded adults.

Research shows us we learn best when feeling safe and happy. Our feelings allow us to engage our frontal cortex rather than going into fight or flight mode. This notion will be at the forefront of our thinking and planning as schools open once again, ensuring to the best of our ability that our students are feeling positive and confident about their learning so their education flourishes. TEACH

"kids' mental health will be more important than their academic skills. And how they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did"

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Faith narrative and ethical practice in the literacy field

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Keywords: Effective teaching, faith, faith narratives, literacy instruction, practice, teaching reading

Abstract

What is the intersection between being a person of faith and a literacy teacher? How do educators experience literacy instruction when trying to connect their faith and practice? Using the lens of researchers Clandinin and Connelly (2000) these questions were explored from the perspective and experience of one of the co-authors. Three themes of Christian pedagogy emerged from the results of this narrative inquiry: the power of words, the power of forgiveness, and the power of voice.

> *we will be known as followers of Christ by the love we show to one another – yet it seems easier to simply decorate our office in crucifixes, inspirational mugs, and Jesus action figures.*

Introduction and Background

Imagine the experience of a teacher who is in charge of ensuring all students in a classroom read well, a goal that includes the avid readers in the group, as well as the struggling and reluctant readers who share this space. Now, imagine this work on top of the identity formation that takes place when trying to lead a life of Christian character. The work is complex and layered but is also a labour of love.

This project seeks to consider the experience of reading teachers who engage in this multifaceted work, balancing the demands of literacy instruction with their personal faith. The major question that guides this work is, "How do educators experience literacy instruction when trying to connect their faith and practice?"

To answer this question, we draw on Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) exploration of narrative inquiry. Our stories as educators, who happen to also be people of faith, serves as grounding for the work we do – and we are equally encouraged by one another's faith narrative. This approach is uniquely suited to our thinking, as one of the authors served as a research participant as we worked on this project.

It is our hope that some of the themes we share will resonate with a wider set of themes in the broader community of Christian educators. In our journey through this process, shared considerations centre around the research question: What is the intersection between being a person of faith and a literacy teacher?

Christ and the Academy

As Hove and Holleman (2017) pointed out, being a follower of Christ in academic communities is considerate work. The balance between inculcation and invitation is a real one, and the ways faith is incorporated in our daily lives is one of thoughtful self-reflection. We are told in scripture that we will be known as followers of Christ by the love we show to one another – yet it seems easier to simply decorate our office in crucifixes, inspirational mugs, and Jesus action figures.

Gathering the narrative

To serve as a starting point for dialogue about faith and practice, two of the authors engaged in a semi-structured interview process. One acted as a researcher, while the other reflected on their teaching experience, positioning themselves as an educator and interviewee. In this section, the broad strokes of that experience are shared, locating faith and practice

in the narratives recounted to one another. In order to value the words of the speaker, the following section is organized by codes that were drawn directly from the interview (Saldaña, 2015), referenced to the line numbers of the interview transcript.

As a final introductory note, this line of research also connected to a specific problem also explored in this interview—working with readers who struggle.

A Portrait in Practice

This portrait of the educator's practice has been shaped by words that resonated from the interview experience. In order to construct this portrait, we arranged codes in a set of categories that reflected the educator/interviewee's experiences.

Prior.

"Prior" codes were marked and grouped by the participant's experiences as a teacher in the public school system prior to teaching at the college level. This was the word the participant chose, so we applied the *in vivo* term "Prior." This first prior experience was at a school that closed down (line 70). The participant seemed to indicate that experience in the public education classroom, totaling seventeen years, had been one of the factors that led to this participant's later research in the area of literacy.

Having moved from place to place for a variety of reasons, this interviewee described experiences in the classroom with a variety of locations (line 69), and this background propelled our conversation about challenges and strategies in the field of literacy. Interestingly, this participant's teaching of younger children seemed to inform observations made later about members of a family who both excelled and struggled in reading from elementary through secondary education. Strategic information was also shared in this section of the interview, including the participant's advice to "listen to [students] read individually" (line 193), among other ideas for literacy improvement.

All approach teacher education based on our experiences in the classroom, and the ways Christ was experienced in the work that we have done, continues to ground the work we now do.

Grandsons.

The educator also mentioned "Grandsons," which emerged as a second *in vivo* code. Not only did this participant have a number of experiences in the public education sphere that contributed to an interest in later research, but also a very strong connection to grandchildren that emerged. The work we do, it seems, is not always so far removed from home. One grandson was an avid reader (line 80), while the other was a reluctant reader (line 88). This section, while brief, was a moment of self-disclosure for this person, and the other participant initiated revisiting the topic in a later portion of the interview, which was not part of this initial transcription.

It became clear that the dichotomy of these two grandsons formed a bond of interest for this person, particularly in the statement, "I watched him develop" (line 81), in which she applies her diagnostic knowledge, often practiced in the academy, to a very personal and familial setting. This was not a clinical observation from a pedagogue in a laboratory-style classroom of sterilized testing environment; rather, this was a grandparent watching a grandson and reflecting on behaviours at a much more personal level.

As has been suggested by one of our colleagues, "we are where we are from."

Research.

"Research" emerged as a third *in vivo* code when this educator discussed the question of instructional differences in educational equity (line 90), a line of inquiry that led to the co-author/educator creating and distributing a survey instrument to three schools of diverse ethnic demographics. In terms of the research work, this educator identified herself as a gatherer of information (line 140), and at the time of our interview had already begun to share about these findings in the academic community.

Asking students to 'select their own reading material for personal interest' was a theme that emerged as part of this investigated topic (lines 177-178), as well as asking students to 'conduct independent reading' (line 182) of this material. Additional strategies or sub-themes emerged as 'listening to students read on their own' (line 193), 'discussions of reading' (line 194), 'completing interest inventories' (line 200), and 'modeling reading' (line 205).

As teacher educators, part of our work is research, or the art and science of looking again. As Christians, but also in the general world of scholarship, we know the power of taking a second look to gather more information and truly see people, and working to resolve these imbalances in equity is central to our teaching. Truly seeing others as created beings with purpose, is endemic to our educational work.

Parents are the first teachers.

Additional challenges were discussed when detailing the differences between the educator/co-author's experience in urban versus rural teaching environments. The line that stood out first was "parents are the first teachers," and the educator went on to discuss the lack of success parents seemed to have in an urban environment.

The educator/co-author described disconnect in

> *As teacher educators, part of our work is research, or the art and science of looking again.*

communicating the kinds of reading materials that were desired for independent reading (lines 221-224). In one example, a parent asked the educator what material should be read at home and offered a science book as an option, but the educator felt that other enjoyment-based reading materials might have been more appropriate. Programs that provide books for the home were mentioned as part of this community-based solution. Information coded in this section provided brief information beyond the context of the classroom, expanding the teacher's role in literacy instruction into the frame of the community.

Struggle.

Along with the "Prior" codes in the initial stages of the interview came discussions of challenges this educator faced as a classroom teacher. Reading below grade level was a problem that permeated this teacher's classroom work (line 150). This experience was described as a "balancing act of trying to…work with individual students" (line 157), "frustrating" (line 160), "a real struggle" (line 171), and "stressful" (line 173). A principal's decision to combine third and fourth graders resulted in a classroom of fourth graders who actually functioned at a lower level than some third graders (line 168) in the same class, and the participant noted that male readers made up a group of struggling readers, in particular (line 169).

There were times during the interview that this person voiced her personal emotions, and persisting concerns, for students. This seemed to me to be both the confession and profession of a concerned teacher, a voice arriving through decades, after having explored multiple professional avenues. From these specific "words" this discussion moves to consider three larger themes of Christ-centered literacy pedagogy.

> *it is not the quantity of words children hear, but rather the quality of words that matter*

Three Themes in Christian Pedagogy

Moving from the story of a few to more generalizable themes, this discussion offers three "power" ideas that capture part of the narrative of what being a Christian educator in a university setting means, especially when teaching future teachers. The power of words, of voice , and forgiveness.

The Power of Words

Emergent from this interview as particularly significant was the way in which this educator described teaching experience. There were clear challenges, and they were described comprehensively. My reflections on my experiences as a third and fourth grader when this participant was discussing the split class challenges early in teaching affirmed authenticity. The conversation relayed with the parent, including a focus on selecting reading materials, played out for the interview process, even with dialogue included. A need for community, as well as familial discourse, underscored this section of the interview.

When discussing grandchildren, a personal connection to the topic of this interview was established and later portions of the interview included discussions of reading activities this educator engaged in with family. The early teaching experiences, coupled with family life, led this person into a field of research in which fifth-grade students are surveyed for their reading interests. The narrative suggested that as educators, the books and stories we share in the classroom often mirror the practices we value at home, with our families.

As people of faith, the words we share are gifts. Johnston (2004) rightly points to the ways teachers use words, and the capacity we have for helping students see themselves as readers or non-readers, as valued and undervalued, based on what we say and how we say it.

Faith is a powerful word for children to understand. Faith is a strong tool for moving them toward confidence that they can find solutions to problems and purpose in their lives. A teacher who demonstrates faith in their students' abilities provides them with impetus to take risks in their learning.

Children's literature in which the authors focus on the importance of believing something deep in the heart, point children toward the importance of faith as a vital part of their lives. It stimulates them to consider their own personal narrative and the themes threading through that story.

Another powerful word for children to learn is character. Good character evokes more powerful words: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship (Live Wire Media, n.d.). Martin Luther King, Jr. (cited in MLK Jr Day 2020, n. d.) said, "Intelligence and character—that is the goal of true education." Effective teachers model and teach the importance of good character.

Parents and teachers have not only heard children say mean and hurtful words to other, but also may have been guilty of this. The childhood response, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never harm me," does not ring true. Effective teachers stress the power of words to harm or to encourage; and then set out to teach and model positive words.

After a 1995 study that revealed a 30 million word gap between high and low-income children, new findings by Romeo et al., (2018) suggest that it is not the quantity of words children hear, but rather the quality of words that matter. Their research discovered that the brains of children from lower-income families are just as positively affected by quality words as those of children from higher income levels. Romeo's

research extends the importance of words spoken in the home environment to children's literacy ability.

Children deal with a variety of emotions as they grow and develop. Teachers use stories to help children understand their feelings as well as the feelings of others. Bibliotherapy is a way to use books as a therapeutic means for helping children understand their emotions in a variety of situations. Being able to identify with a character in a story who is struggling with a problem helps them better understand and handle their own thoughts and feelings. Maria Nikolajeva (2013) noted that fiction literature provides children an excellent understanding of the power of empathy. Neuroscience supports this with the idea that fictional stories stimulate our brains to see ourselves as part of the story, provoking empathy toward the characters. This sensitivity is then transferred to real life and real people. Readers, if they are engrossed in the story, live the characters' lives at a neurological level (Bern et al., 2013).

The Power of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is central to the Christian faith. Recognizing we have been forgiven much, our classrooms are spaces where second chances should occur. Not only that, but we value the sense of redemption that comes through in many stories, both within and outside of the faith tradition. The story of the Prodigal Son is one of the parables of Jesus in the Bible and appears in Luke 15:11-32. Children can identify with this young man who did something wrong to his dad. Even after he returned home to tell his dad how sorry he was, he still expected harsh punishment. Instead, his dad provided love, mercy, and forgiveness. Vaillant (2008) describes forgiveness as a key positive emotion that connects people to each other.

This sense of connection speaks not only to a positive classroom environment, but also to fostering connections with those that students meet as representations of their own experiences in fiction – as well as characters and storylines that introduce students to new ways of thinking. The notion of redemptive narrative is certainly true of many of the stories that we encounter as readers and lead students through. This is also a powerful theme we find expressed in scripture, as well as in the Christian worldview.

We are all, teachers and students alike, in a process of becoming better in our character and of shaping the world around us for the better.

The Power of Voice

In the first theme, the power of the words found in other places was explored, including those happened upon in the texts used in class instruction and in the scriptures shared. Beyond this use of words, it is suggested that being a Christian means embracing an all-encompassing sense of love.

This love for others leads us to value the voices of the students who spend time with us in classrooms – it is a hopeful and shaping kind of love that attempts to offer guidance as school students, but also preservice and in-service teachers, navigate the complexities of their lives. It is the kind of love that often finds its expression in listening and seeking to understanding rather than first rushing to judgment.

Giving children voice builds their confidence that they will be heard. It assures them that they are in a safe classroom environment. Helping children find their unique voice enhances self-concept and teaches them that they are valued. A child's sense of confidence, safety, and value plays an important role in how he or she learns to read and learns in general. In higher education this gift of "voice" continues to be important, supporting these same assurances.

Conclusion: Trust the Mystery

As Buechner (1993) points out, and Paul (1 Cor. 15) also asserts, part of the work of being a person of faith is simply trusting the mystery. For educators working at the university level, as well as others challenged by the doubts and traumas of daily life, it seems that this conclusion should be more complex. Our work often positions us in a place of expertise, and we work to find moments to express the humanity of continued, lifelong learning. One of the ways we are always growing is through the storytelling we encounter and encourage in our classrooms. Indeed, our brains are seemingly hard-wired for stories. Cutting (2016) tells us, "It is generally accepted that narrative text is easier to comprehend than expository text, which is consistent with research that proves this viewpoint" (para. 3).

"One of the ways we are always growing is through the storytelling we encounter and encourage in our classrooms"

We work together as a community – yet, we are told in scripture to work out our own salvation (Phil 2:12, KJV), and this work is both real and at times involves a trembling sense of humility. In a tentative answer to our overarching research question, a glimpse is offered at the ways we take up our own narratives. Storytelling is endemic to literacy instruction, and this is no less true in a community of faith. Jesus himself used stories and parables to illustrate his points, and we further this ethical practice by passing the parables down in our classroom expectations and in our daily interactions.

Stories connect to the human psyche. As might be guessed, this interview provided a support for more questions and study. The conversation that began in this initial interview process has provided a base to build from for further work as we continue to practice our faith on the public stage of higher education. TEACH

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Kings' Kids: Nurturing children's spiritual life during COVID-19

Beverly J. Christian
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with

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When planet earth stepped over the threshold into 2020 everyone was expecting normality. Now, as we prepare to see the year out it seems everyone is talking about the new normal. The year 2020 did not turn out as expected, forcing change and challenges on school leaders, teachers, parents and children. As churches were physically closed down or limited in their operation of children's and youth ministries, the role of Christian schools became even more crucial in providing spiritual nurture. Seeing a gap in children's ministries online programs, Abide Family Ministries, operated by Kimberly and Robert Houliston, decided to step into the void with a new online children's program with Christian content.

"As churches were physically closed down or limited … the role of Christian schools became even more crucial"

Called King's Kids, each 30 minute episode is a mix of original songs, storytelling, drama, Bible study, craft and other special features. Kimberly is a primary school teacher and is aware of the elements that create an engaging program for primary school aged children. Throughout each episode, Bible stories are presented in a variety of ways and from different perspectives. The resurrection of Jesus is seen through the eyes of a young girl and told skilfully using sand art; a scale model of Noah's ark is used to bring the Old Testament story of salvation to life; and puppets are used alongside children to explore biblical lessons. The Discovery Bible Reading method presents a child-friendly way to explore biblical passages.

The series to date have been broken into thematic chunks of around four episodes each, providing flexibility for teachers to share in their classrooms. For example, there is a series of four episodes ideally suited to Easter, another shares

Figure 1. The King's Kids team in action on the set: from left to right Kyrah Page, Ella-Jean Livah, Zayne Livah, Rosie Magus and Josiah Page.

Figure 2. Shane and Andy modelling how to study the Bible using the Discovery Bible Reading method.

the story of Noah, while others focus on the New Testament church, Old Testament families or the stories and miracles of Jesus. Each episode is designed with a focus on grace, worship, service or community.

King's Kids has now completed its fourth series and has been operating for a full year. The fifth series has just commenced. Kimberly's prayer for the King's Kids programs is "that children will come to know and experience that they are all valued and loved members of God's royal family; and that the best decision they can ever make, is to invite Jesus into their heart."

For more information go to the Abide Family Ministries website at abide.com.au and look for the King's Kids tab or access programs on the Arnie's Shack YouTube channel.

Figure 3. Arnie, one of the puppet characters, wrapping up the program with a reminder to viewers that they are children of the King

> *"that children will … know and experience that they are all valued and loved members of God's royal family"*

Figure 4. A scene from Series 1, Episode 8 about Noah's ark.

TEACH[R]

Creating a trauma informed college campus

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Keywords: Trauma, higher education, college campus, ACE Study

Abstract

Trauma has no limits and does not discriminate based on one's gender, ethnicity, social standing, educational background or religious affiliation. Those affected by trauma are not only present in our neighbourhoods, homes and congregations, but also in every academic institution. This pervasive issue demands a seamless and intentional multilevel-organizational approach which encompasses the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of academic preparation. Consequently, higher education institutions in providing optimal service to their constituents, should seek to create a campus culture that places high premium on the best-practices of a trauma-informed approach. This paper will discuss the key concepts associated with trauma including the ACE study and provide insight on educational practices that will assist in creating a trauma-informed college campus.

"children … exposed to five or more significant adverse experiences in their first three years are 76 percent more likely to have … delay in their language, emotional, or brain development"

Definition of trauma

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative (2014), describes trauma as "an event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being" (p. 7).

At the heart of this definition are the three E's of trauma: event, experience and effects (SAMHSA, 2014). Traumatic events are those single or repetitive adverse circumstances that affect an individual's physical or psychological wellbeing. The individual's experience of the different events determines whether or not it qualifies as a traumatic event. This is important in that the experienced event might be traumatic for one person, but not for another. For example, one veteran may interpret being deployed in a war-zone to be traumatic, while another veteran might not be affected. The short-term or long-lasting adverse effects from experienced events is the critical component of trauma. Consequently, the effects of trauma may result in altering one's neurobiological make-up, health and wellbeing, leaving the individual incapable of coping with the normal stressors associated with daily living (SAMHSA, 2014).

Impact of trauma on one's development and learning

Trauma experienced during childhood, often referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) have a lasting adverse effect on their social, emotional and cognitive development. Adverse childhood experiences have a lasting impact on a child's mental capabilities. Commenting on the effects that trauma has on the brain, Davidson (n.d.) highlights that:

> Physiological changes to the developing brain in response to trauma cause cognitive losses and delays in physical, emotional, and social development, and they provoke emotional and behavioral responses that interfere with children's learning, sensory processing, social relationships and engagement in school. (p. 6)

In addition, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (as cited in Davidson, n.d.) claimed that "Young children who are exposed to five or more significant adverse experiences in their first three years are 76 percent more likely to have at least one delay in their language, emotional, or brain development" (p. 6).

Recognising the pervasive effects of trauma, it comes as no surprise that while beginning college should be an exciting experience, many individuals find it difficult to adjust and unfortunately end up as college dropouts (Read et al., 2011). Boyraz et al., (2013) report that African American females with low high school GPA enrolled at predominantly white institutions, and who have been exposed to trauma and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) symptomatology, perform poorly academically and end up dropping out of college by the end of their sophomore year.

These ACE related social, emotional and cognitive development impairments predispose these individuals to health-risk behaviours that result in diseases, disability, social problems and early death (Felitti et al., 1998; Hughes, et al., 2017). The ACE study conducted from 1995-1997 revealed that as the number of traumatic childhood events increases, so does the risk for serious health problems in adulthood. Furthermore, as Fellitti et al. (cited in Davidson, n.d.) state, adults who experienced childhood trauma are:

- 15 times more likely to attempt suicide
- 4 times more likely to become an alcoholic
- 4 times more likely to develop a sexually transmitted disease
- 4 times more likely to inject drugs
- 3 times more likely to use antidepressant medication
- 3 times more likely to be absent from work
- 3 times more likely to experience depression
- 3 times more likely to have serious job problems
- 2.5 times more likely to smoke
- 2 times more likely to develop chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- 2 times more likely to have a serious financial problem (p. 6)

How can awareness of the potential impacts of adverse child experiences inform the interaction of educators with these students?

Definition of a trauma-informed approach

Scholars engaged in trauma research agree that a knowledge of trauma and trauma-specific interventions is not sufficient to optimise outcomes for trauma survivors or to influence how service systems conduct their business. Consequently, what is needed is a trauma-informed approach, which is not limited to only trauma-specific services or trauma systems. In addition to incorporating key trauma principles into the organisational culture, a trauma-informed approach must also include trauma-specific interventions, inclusive of assessment, treatment or recovery supports (SAMHSA, 2014).

SAMHSHA's trauma-informed approach is based on four assumptions and six key principles. It asserts these assumptions, also termed the 4Rs, must be at the heart of every trauma-informed approach. As the organisation states:

> A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed [1] *realizes* the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; [2] *recognizes* the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and [3] *responds* by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively [4] *resist re-traumatization*. (SAMHSA, 2014, p. 9)

In addition, the principles in which the organisation's trauma-informed practice is grounded are (1) safety – ensuring "the organization, staff and people they serve [students] … feel both physically and psychologically safe"; (2) trustworthiness and transparency – ensuring "organizational operations and decisions are … building and maintaining trust" among its constituents; (3) peer support – assisting trauma survivors in "utilizing their stories … to promote healing and recovery"; (4) collaboration and mutuality – "The organization recognizes everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed approach"; (5) empowerment, voice and choice –"Staff are facilitators of recovery rather than controllers of recovery"; (6) cultural, historical and gender issues – "actively moves past cultural stereotypes and biases … incorporates policies, protocols and procedures" that are sensitive to a wide array of needs (SAMHSA, 2014, p. 10).

Strategies for a trauma-informed campus

In becoming a trauma-informed informed college campus, it is important to first garner support from each division of the institution. This cooperative consensus will result in the college's administration, faculty and staff working together for the physical, social, emotional, and academic safety of each student. Through this more holistic approach to meeting the needs of students, traumatised students will be assisted in improving their relationships, regulating their emotions and behaviour, bolstering their academic competence, and increasing their physical and emotional well-being (Rodenbush, 2015).

> *"A program … that is trauma-informed [1] realizes … [2] recognizes … [3] responds … [4] resist[s] re-trauma-tization."*

Secondly, a trauma-informed college climate requires that all university personnel be engaged in professional development (PD) addressing the effect of trauma on student's cognition and the best-practices of trauma-informed care within an educational context. Hoch et al. (2015) advise that in this professional development, organisers should:

- Make [this] training part of new employee and incoming student orientation
- Incorporate [trauma-informed care] into Human Resources annual training opportunities or requirements
- Offer training to student leaders and student groups annually
- Offer in-person training to all department faculty and staff meetings
- Utilise student theatre troupes in training to bring to life realistic scenarios and offer valuable feedback

- Offer quarterly training opportunities with role-play and dialogue
- Mandate annual, advanced training for campus safety officials, hearing boards, appellate officers, and those who talk with students about safety and confidentiality
- Institute training on effects of trauma for all Student Health Services personnel (Slide 100)

Thirdly, the university leadership should create system-level strategies that will promote a healthy work environment that places emphasis on staff self-care and resilience. Owing to the fact that educators, counsellors, and other support staff who work with students exposed to trauma are at risk of being indirectly traumatised, campus-wide initiatives are to be implemented that will prevent burn-out, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress (STS) and vicarious trauma (Mathieu, 2011; National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, n.d.). Workers should receive education on how to identify and address the warning signs of vicarious trauma, such as hypervigilance, poor boundaries, avoidance, inability to empathise, numbing, addictions, chronic exhaustion, physical ailments, minimising, anger, cynicism and feelings of professional inadequacy (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, n.d.).

“support staff … are at risk of being indirectly traumatised, … initiatives are to be implemented that will prevent burn-out, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress (STS) and vicarious trauma”

Fourthly, the institution should implement academic and non-academic strategies that are geared at creating a safe-place for students who are victims of trauma. Being mindful of their students' lived experiences and the possibility that a student might be at risk for retraumatisation, instructors should become familiar with the implications of trauma for learning and the signs and symptoms of trauma. In addition, since some course content and assignments have the potential to retraumatise students, course material should be previewed for appropriateness and disturbing content eliminated. However, in the event that potentially traumatising material has to be retained, students should be provided with disclaimers ahead of time and given the option to opt out if necessary. Abrupt changes in the feature of the classroom, such as lighting and sound should be avoided as this might be triggering for some students (Carello and Butler, 2015).

Furthermore, instructors should never be dismissive of student concerns. Faculty should include in their syllabus specific information for student services offices that students can access for assistance (Carello & Butler, 2015). When outside of the formal academic setting, while mindful of the fact that they are not professional counselors and therapists, professors should be open to giving students space to share their stories if they so desire. The process of listening to hurting students assists them in gaining some sense of control (Supiano, 2019).

Elliot, Bjelajac, Fallot, Markoff, and Reed (2005) provide ten principles that reflect the values and practices of a trauma-informed institution. Organisations desirous of making services more accessible to and effective for survivors will (the headings for each principle form the following list):

1. Recognize the impact of violence and victimization on development, learning, and coping strategies
2. Minimize possibilities of retraumatization; maximize possibilities of successful educational and professional outcomes
3. Identify successful educational and professional outcomes as the primary goal
4. Employ an empowerment model
5. Strive to maximize choices and control
6. Mitigate power imbalances through relational collaboration
7. Create an atmosphere that is respectful of the need for safety, respect, and acceptance
8. Emphasize strengths, highlighting competencies over deficiencies and resilience over pathology
9. Strive to be culturally competent and to understand people in the context of their life experiences and cultural background
10. Solicit input from all class members and involve them in evaluation processes.

(pp. 465-469)

Finally, in adopting a trauma-informed approach, higher education institutions must ensure that its policies, procedures and protocols cater to the needs of its increasingly diverse student population. The institution should ensure that its government regulated (Title IX in the US) investigation process is trauma-informed. Such a process should naturally promote access for complainants by encouraging their participation and promote accuracy by enabling investigators and decision-makers to ask appropriate questions in order to better understand evidence that may be affected by trauma (National Center for Campus Public Safety, 2016). The University of Texas at Austin is a very good example of an institution that has adopted a trauma-informed approach to sexual violence. In addition to putting together a 174-page manual, their campus police officers were trained in identifying signs of sexual trauma. Policing tactics were brought into dialogue with the best practices of a trauma-informed approach, geared at creating more trusting relationships with sexual abuse victims and law-enforcement officers (Pettit, 2016).

Advantages of Christian institutions

Klett (2018) states Christian colleges and universities have "the unique opportunity to come alongside victims of trauma and to be a voice of comfort, healing, and hope" (para. 3). She further recommends that Christian higher education institutions can assist trauma survivors in their healing process by: (1) providing biblical counselling and pastoral care through single-sex Bible study groups, chapel talks, classes, and special seminars; (2) providing safe, intimate, and authentic communities of support that will walk with them through the healing process and allow them to express their emotions; (3) helping to dispel the shame that often stems from surviving a traumatic event; and (4) pointing trauma victims to the truth of God's forgiveness and grace, and the hope that only the gospel can provide.

Furthermore, the holistic development of students which is at the heart of Adventist education, makes Adventist Christian institutions of higher learning uniquely poised to address the adverse effects that trauma has on one's "mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being" (SAMHSA, 2014). Consequently, in guaranteeing the "harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers" (White, 1903, p. 13) of each student, the Adventist college and university system must be intentional in incorporating trauma-informed practices in its operations.

Recognising the important role that faith-based academic institutions should play in advocating a trauma-informed approach, Andrews University recently established its International Center for Trauma Education and Care (Panigot, 2019). Through collaboration with other departments on its campus, churches and other community organisations, the centre aims at providing a holistic approach to trauma care that is spiritually-informed, culturally sensitive and long-lasting. Individuals will be provided with the knowledge and skills to recognise and recover from traumatic events both locally and internationally.

Finally, Christian higher education institutions have an advantage to cater to the spiritual needs of all its constituents through its chaplaincy department. Given the spiritual challenges associated with having experienced trauma, students with PTSD could benefit from spiritual assessment and intervention as part of their overall treatment plan. Consequently, college chaplains who are armed with the requisite skills could be utilised to perform these functions (Sigmund, 2003). These chaplains can offer quiet assurance of hope and a spiritual presence to support the traumatised.

Conclusion

The adverse and long-lasting effects of trauma is present in every level of society. Owing to the fact that a higher education institution is a microcosm of society, it is not immune to the pervasive issue of trauma. For this reason, higher education institutions, along with all educational entities, must be intentional in creating trauma-informed campuses that will cater to the needs of all of its constituents who have experienced trauma. Administrators, faculty and staff must be educated on the best-practices of a trauma-informed approach, and policies should be drafted to ensure it becomes part of the institution's culture. Faculty and staff who provide care for survivors of trauma must avoid compassion fatigue and burnout by practising self-care through accessing the resources the institution provides. Since a brain in pain cannot learn, in order to aid students in their holistic development, a campus-wide trauma-informed approach is of utmost necessity. TEACH

> *"Since a brain in pain cannot learn, … to aid students in their holistic development, a campus-wide trauma-informed approach is of utmost necessity"*

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Managing unsatisfactory teaching performance in the classroom: A Christian approach

TEACH[R]

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Abstract

An area that is the cause of much angst and even heartache for educational leaders is the responsibility of managing unsatisfactory performance of staff members. This paper addresses the topic, and provides a step by step process that includes adherence to legislation, fairness for both leaders and employees, and more importantly, fairness for students who are the recipients of unsatisfactory teaching performance. The approach used within this paper is centred within a Christian worldview. Micah 6:8 (NIV) summarises this perspective: "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Introduction

Of all the in-school factors that affect student outcomes, quality of teaching has the greatest impact according to Hattie (2008). Gannicott (2019) explains:

> Teachers are the most important factor by which policy makers can directly improve student achievement. Today, all teachers in OECD countries are qualified, but just like any other occupational group there is a distribution of effectiveness. The difference between good and bad teachers is very large. On UK evidence, during one year with a very effective maths teacher, pupils gain 40% more in their learning than they would with a poorly performing teacher. (p. 23)

The importance of effective teaching cannot be underestimated and according to Gannicott (2019,) that effectiveness is underpinned by clear, explicit teaching, high expectations, evaluation with feedback, and teacher collaboration.

Managing the unsatisfactory teacher has been described as "the educational leader's most difficult job" (Hall, 2019, p. 12) and from personal experience it could be added: 'and the most avoided'. This challenge is usually perceived as difficult because, invariably, the path to improved performance takes considerable time and effort and a successful outcome is not guaranteed (Down et al., 1999). In fact, most school heads interviewed in a research project in the UK admitted they would go to great lengths to avoid the process (Torrington, 2006). Zepeta (2016) quotes rates of five percent to 15% of teachers who underperform in the classroom. Therefore, it is not surprising that Saulwick & Muller (2004) in their report on the health and wellbeing of educational leaders in the State of Victoria, Australia, found that 37% of the interviewees talked about dealing with nonperforming staff or with student welfare issues as their biggest sources of stress.

However, it is significant that both teachers and administrators in Torrington's (2006) UK research believed that action was needed when an individual's performance was unsatisfactory, and that action was needed quickly. The longer the unsatisfactory situation was left unaddressed, the more likely the behaviours would become entrenched.

As an educational leader, not only must you deal with the problem of unsatisfactory staff performance, but it is vital that you follow a series of basic steps and that you constantly work at keeping the process professional, objective, fair and not personal. You do this by reminding yourself and the teacher if necessary, that this is an expectation of your role as leader. You have an obligation to the students, the parents, the other teachers and the individual him/herself to ensure that your school operates at a satisfactory level, and therefore the staff member's unsatisfactory performance cannot be ignored. Further, as a Christian leader, you have an obligation to reflect Christian values and implement them in your leadership practice.

> *"Zepeta quotes rates of five percent to 15% of teachers who under perform in the classroom."*

Identifying factors impacting your "unsatisfactory or 'at risk' person

Start to find out why your staff member might be underperforming. Consider three areas:

> *Start to find out why your staff member might be under performing. Consider three areas: Wellbeing … Change [and] Competence*

1. Well-being

This refers to the *personal well-being* of the staff member, the old idea of personal problems staying at home just doesn't work for most people. Factors could include health, changes in marital status, grief, and financial or family worries. Many may not be able to cope with the pressures of work at such times.

Behaviours associated with these factors impacting the wellbeing of others might include:

- *Lateness* in arriving at work, moving to the classroom, completing deadlines
- *Emotive and/or withdrawn* around other staff – crying, arguing, loss of sense of humour
- *Absent* or developing patterns of days away from work
- *Concern* expressed by workmates or astute parents over incidents which appear out of character.

2. Change

Many people have felt uncomfortable and threatened by changes in the value systems, curricula, discipline, personal accountability as well as technology that are occurring today.

Staff members struggling with changes in these areas may experience stress and depression which restrict their ability to perform, even to learn new skills.

Behaviours associated with this situation might include:

Reluctance	to engage in group discussions in a positive way
Resistance	to attempts to plan cooperatively
Criticism	of the institution and often the program, process and administration.
Inadequacy	behaviours displayed which encourage others to take the responsibilities thus avoiding the issue.
Enunciation	of the particular change may be quite articulate, but the substance is not evident in the classrooms.
Frustration	is expressed by colleagues – often nicely.

3. Competence

This is about the skills used in ensuring effective learning occurs in the classroom – that is, the core business of teaching. These skills fall within two categories – planning and then implementation. Most staff members in this section are inexperienced teachers, or may not have been involved in an adequate supervision process in the past. The provision of appropriate supervision is often the starting point for all retrieval programs

Symptoms within this area might include:

- *Lack* of discipline,
- low expectations, monitoring of standards, untidiness
- *Inability* to focus on and address the real problem, e.g. blaming a class for behaviour when the content of the lesson and/or pedagogy was inappropriate.

Why is it we avoid this activity of addressing unsatisfactory performance?

As leaders, we are no different from the majority of our colleagues and fellow humans. We do have certain physical needs, but we also have some strong psychological needs. These include the need to feel comfortable, to be liked, to feel that we are in control and that we are right. We need to feel we are succeeding.

Working with those who may disagree with us, who are threatened by our need to improve their performances, who also want to feel comfortable and un-challenged by us, can sometimes be very unpleasant. Further, the possibility of legal action by a disgruntled staff member can be a great deterrent to action. This is why it is important to thoroughly acquaint yourself with the steps in this process and to remain calm, objective, fair and professional throughout.

First, set the scene:

There are two essential tasks which will improve your

Peter's Story: Some years ago the introduction of computers to the classroom was a threatening issue for many older teachers. Peter was one such teacher. Nearing retirement, Peter avoided professional development workshops involving the integration of ICT into the curriculum. As his highly inventive list of excuses was exhausted he became increasingly cynical and sarcastic about the value of technology in education as well as irritable with his students. Eventually his supervisor needed to confront him and discuss his changed attitude and possible causes. During the conversation, the threatening nature of the curriculum changes became apparent. The supervisor quickly arranged for some short coaching sessions with another older teacher, so that at the next workshop Peter was comfortable and able to display considerable ICT competence!

chances of success and reduce your stress:

- Create a positive workplace climate
- Create empathy between yourself and the at-risk person

Creating a positive work climate

1. Start as you mean to continue. Right from the very beginning take a personal interest in the school, the staff, the children – model positive, supportive attitudes.
2. Articulate and build the language into the core values, goals and plans. What your staff hear you say as a leader needs to be professional, dynamic and committed to the school and its community. You really have to 'talk up' your beliefs and values. In a tactful but firm manner, you also need to encourage staff and parents to talk up the school and become its champions as well.
3. So often staff in schools with low morale report that "no one values what I do". Make sure this doesn't happen in your school by going around the classrooms and specialists' rooms often and demonstrate that you know what they are doing and that you value their efforts. Set a specific time in your diary for this important activity. Take an interest in special activities that they or their classes have undertaken. Reward their efforts personally, and also in public – at meetings, in the school newsletter, on the school website, the community and the media.
4. Be honest and open with your staff – demonstrate that they can trust you – both to be discreet when needed and to share information when they need to know.
5. Professional development is critical to teachers' knowledge, competence and enthusiasm – ensure that you support PD for your staff and yourself during the budgeting process. Model this ongoing learning yourself.

Create empathy between yourself and the 'at risk' person.

Do this in two ways:

A. Create empathy by what you think:

Your words might sound perfectly acceptable and your facial expression might be quite pleasant and appear to reflect care, but if in your mind you view the person with less than genuine care and respect, the person will often sense this.

- Take seriously other's needs and concerns
- Value their feelings and attitudes even if you do not understand them
- Respect others' privacy, values and experience
- Reserve judgement and blame

B. Create empathy by what you demonstrate:

Your body language, the look in your eye and the way you sound, may give the wrong message. Many of us are completely unaware of the attitude we are portraying by our outward behaviours. Video yourself, or get some feedback by a trusted colleague.

- Listen actively, displaying interest
- Use open body language
- Make affirming gestures and statements
- Use a warm vocal tone.

Having set the scene, begin to address the problem through the initiation of a recommended, experience validated and planned approach. As a suggestion, the following Five Step Intervention Program has emerged from the writer's 30 years as a state school principal, 6 years as an education director and 12 years as a tertiary education lecturer! Mostly common sense and experience, though informed by multiple individuals and sources.

> *"Your words might sound perfectly acceptable, and your facial expression might be quite pleasant and appear to reflect care, but …"*

Five Step Intervention Program

Step 1 - Data gathering and problem definition

1.1 Accept there is a problem and gather data

Good administrators react quickly to situations which have the potential to damage the learning environment and emotional climate within the school. Procrastination or simply hoping that things will get better, is not an effective strategy within a problem solving framework. The signs outlined earlier provide some guides to the early identification of emerging performance problems. Check to ensure your staff handbook or other documentation, clearly sets out the job description / expectations of your staff member.

Data can be gathered from diary notations of your own observations or those of other administration staff, letters of complaint, incidents in the classroom, the teacher concerned, friends on staff etc. The collection of data is absolutely critical. Without this 'hard' evidence it is too easy for you to rely on 'gut reaction' which may relate more to your indigestion or a personality conflict than the actions of the person under observation.

Do not speak to the teacher concerned or mention this to anyone else until you have thoroughly established your facts and evidence.

1.2 Perform a 'drive-by'.

Casually pass by their classroom and mention what you have noticed (very briefly and in a supportive manner) to see if there is another 'side' to this apparent evidence. Be very aware of your facial expressions and tone of voice. If there is no valid reason for the behaviour, proceed to step 2. Pray for the person and for yourself, that God will guide your

words and help you to think clearly.

It is important that at this stage that you ensure personal acquaintance with the relevant legislation that covers the concept of natural justice and wrongful dismissal. Some useful sites are included after the reference list.

If you work within a systemic facility or are responsible to a board of management, it may be a requirement for you to report your concerns at some stage of the management process. If you are fairly inexperienced and you are not sure whether to start a formal process, discuss your data with a mentor or the chair of your governing body, in confidence.

for the meeting—you definitely do not want to be disturbed. (While it needs to be formal i.e., probably not in the yard, meet in his/her classroom or personal school space rather than your office, to lower 'power' perceptions. Ensure the cleaners don't interrupt if it is after hours).

- Have personal prayer before the meeting, stay calm, maintain a formal but relaxed facial expression and an empathetic controlled softer tone of voice.
- State your concerns and your expectations clearly (have copy of staff handbook/contract ready).

Some years ago, one of the office staff spoke to a young and inexperienced administrator about one of the teacher's aides. She described the inappropriate comments this staff member had made to a parent. The administrator was horrified and immediately went to the staff member to confront her about her comments. How embarrassing to find that the real agenda was a personal animosity between the two women and that action had been taken without ascertaining the context and the actual conversation that had taken place. Take the time to thoroughly check your information; it saves embarrassment, hurt and even potential legal action!

> *Pray for the person and for yourself, that God will guide your words and help you to think clearly*

Table 1: Documentation - Data gathering and problem definition

DIARY	Notations in a dated diary provide a starting point for the intervention. These notations may indicate other recording sources such as phone logs, parent letters of complaint, records of conversations, observations etc
RECORD OF INCIDENTS	Once the frequency or seriousness of events warrant attention, it is important to maintain a register of events. These should be dated and include resultant actions as well as an outline of events. This record should be kept in a secure place.
FILE	Copies of diary entries, incident reports, letters etc., should become part of a quick reference file. Again, this documentation should be kept in a secure place.

Step 2 - First meeting - An outline of expected performance

This is the stage where the first formal meeting is scheduled which addresses the aspects of poor performance outlined previously. It is sensible to have a witness present as well as a support person for the staff person, such as a staff member or counsellor.

DO

- Organise a meeting planner (agenda) & minutes,
- Maintain a calm and sensitive approach
- Remember conflict resolution strategies (non-judgmental, non-blaming)
- Expect displays of emotion (have some tissues and a glass of water ready in case either are needed).
- Choose an appropriate quiet time and area
- Allow the staff member to explain his/her perspective on the issues raised.
- Propose resolution through a Partnering Agreement (proposed strategies e.g.: peer coaching, in-service workshops, mentoring, specialist interventions etc., agreed timelines) that indicates expected actions to be accomplished by both the administration (or their appointee) and the teacher, to be developed by consulting together to address the issue.
- Remind that this is, however, a formal warning.
- Remind this is not personal intervention, it is part of the supervisory responsibility demanded by your role, which also includes a personal interest in both his/her wellbeing and his/her professional welfare in the school, and includes confidentiality.

- Finish with prayer, if appropriate—that is, providing the staff member is in agreement.

DON'T

- Expect this meeting to solve the problem immediately
- Mention dismissal or anything similar
- Allow yourself to be drawn into the problem or take ownership
- Attempt to become a counsellor if you are not trained in the field
- Pull out a preconceived plan of attack. Encourage the teacher to suggest a solution.
- Dominate the 'air time'
- Devalue solutions offered—try to make a list for discussion later

It is important at this stage to be well prepared and stick to the facts about the teacher's performance as observed. Take a summary of your notes into the meeting and have the file handy. If the facility is a Christian service or the teacher is a Christian it is appropriate to ask if you may pray with and for the person.

Once a list of possible solutions is developed, establish a time-lined management plan to be enacted. Start this plan with simple solutions first to increase the chances of success. This concludes the meeting on a positive note with agreements to achieve and then meet again to go further into the process. This plan is to be copied, and a copy given to the teacher before the meeting closes.

Step 3 – Subsequent performance evaluation and consequences

This second meeting is held as per the timeline for two possible reasons:

a. If the staff member has met the requirements satisfactorily and there is evidence to show that this has occurred, then they should be affirmed and given a short letter of completion that records the issues and achievements.

b. In the eventuality that the person has not complied with the agreement, or only in some parts and not others, this meeting is very important, and you need to have thought the issues and process through carefully. Have a witness present (e.g., deputy, counsellor, Board Chair etc).

DO

- Pray before-hand, then with the person, if it is judged appropriate and they agree
- Affirm them for the improvements they have made
- Remind them of the agreement they signed
- Find out why they haven't complied with some things.
- If there are valid reasons, ask them to suggest how they could meet the requirements
- And, if necessary, work together on how these

> *"It is important at this stage to be well prepared and stick to the facts about the teacher's performance as observed"*

Table 2: Documentation – First meeting

MEETING PLANNER	This proforma sets out step by step the process for the meeting and is used to stay on track. It is an elaborated agenda. You may wish to have a basic plan for the staff member and a more detailed one for yourself.
MINUTES	This set of minutes is used to record conversations. It should be a dated record of who was present and the issues discussed. It can be used to record informal conversations, but must contain a clear outline of expectations and the support offered. List the date and time for the next meeting. Scheduling within two weeks would affirm the significance, priority and level of commitment of the leader. • A copy should be given to the staff member after the meeting. • All documentation should be retained in the newly established file. • Be aware that some policies (both private and government) have mandated timelines for this procedure.
PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	A document, either school or organisationally based, which outlines the expected procedures or performance levels in the area where the staff member is experiencing difficulty (Refer to this formal documentation to emphasise the seriousness of the situation—not meeting expectations) for example: school policy, The Behaviour Management Plan, Staff Handbook, the individual's work contract.
PARTNERING AGREEMENTS	This is designed to enhance the understanding of the joint responsibilities of the stakeholders. A completed copy is given to the staff member. Should include: • the concern being addressed • initial agreed-on tasks and strategies • support being offered (e.g. coaching, professional development etc) • timelines including date and expectations for next meeting

Table 3: Documentation - Subsequent performance evaluation and consequences

MEETING PLANNER	As before
MINUTES	As before, plus • agreed-on tasks and strategies • support being offered (e.g., coaching, professional development, etc.) with agreed timelines, including the date and expectations for the next meeting

Table 4: Documentation - The Improvement / Maintenance Plan

PROGRAM OUTLINE	This outlines the goal of the intervention program and establishes some formal expectations All goals are to be specific, measurable and attainable in terms of what is generally expected within the school's supervision framework. The expected actions should be specified and outlined. Timelines should be written and a schedule of feedback meetings indicated.

"Amongst this 'busyness' it is all too easy to act hastily and without sufficient information or reflection"

could be achieved.
- Remind them that this is the second meeting and is a formal warning, that the procedure will have to be taken further and if unresolved could lead to dismissal if the matters are not addressed.
- Remind them that this is part of your role and it is not personal.
- Give the person a copy of the minutes of this meeting with the clear expectations of the person, outlined.

Step 4. - The improvement / maintenance plan

This stage is the 'body' of the process. It involves:
- Ongoing consultation – it is a good idea to set aside a regular time each week to review the progress of this plan with the staff member.
- Identification of a priority list of issues
- Planned strategies (e.g., peer coaching, in-service workshops, mentoring, specialist interventions etc.)
- Key personnel and their specific roles
- Agreed and negotiated timelines
- Goals (improvements to be seen) and end results/outcomes to be observed and measured
- Future consequences.
- Date for review.

Step 5 - Follow up

Often, if things improve, this last step may be forgotten. This is inappropriate. Clear completion of what was important to initiate, should be equally formally, resolved. It is really important to ensure that the quality of improved performance is maintained and that a decision is made at the end of the process as to whether it needs to finish, continue or lead to dismissal. Achieving the goals of the Improvement Plan should be affirmed in a tangible, recognisable way including notification that formal supervision reverts to the 'normal' school policy processes. If the final decision is that there is an insufficient improvement and that performance is persistently unsatisfactory, then the consequences and likely steps to be followed need to be made clear to the staff member.

This Step 5 can occur in place of Step 3 if things have been clearly resolved.

Some words of caution

As a school leader your day is filled with a myriad of tasks, often fragmented and sometimes chaotic. Amongst this 'busyness' it is all too easy to act hastily and without sufficient information or reflection.

As administrators it is vital that you are aware of natural justice, and the responsibility to avoid pitfalls – such as wrongful dismissal/unlawful termination including constructive dismissal. Appendix 1 provides a summary of these concepts.

Finally

As stated in the introduction, managing unsatisfactory performance is usually neither easy nor pleasant. As Christians, Micah 6:8 sums up the way God would have us act. To do justly - that is being fair to the students, other staff, parents and the person concerned. A clear, planned process with ample

Table 5: Documentation – Follow up

MEETING PLANNER	As mentioned before, this agenda sets out the course of the meeting and ensures that points you wish to make are included.
FEEDBACK REPORTS	This is your evidence on which the final decision is made. It indicates whether the staff member has reached the required improvement or not. It should also record the improved skills observed at set times through the program.
MINUTES	These minutes record the improvements noted, or not, as the case may be, and the resulting decision. The staff member should receive a copy of this.

opportunity for the person to meet contractual obligations is fair. To love mercy - is about kindness which in this context is achieved through openness, confidentiality, support and opportunity for improvement. To walk humbly with one's God – is about including God in every step of the process and recognising our own shortcomings and need of Him, asking "Here's what I want: give me a God-listening heart so I can lead your people well … for who on their own is capable of leading" (1 Kings 3:9 Message).

Take heart if you face this issue with some trepidation; plan and move carefully and prayerfully, ensuring that the standards at your school are upheld and that your school team knows you will do the 'right thing'.

Warning/disclaimer: These guidelines are only general recommendations and as each state jurisdiction has specific legislation, you are responsible for ensuring the regulations are complied with in the processes of the school administered.

TEACH

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Resources and websites

State government education sites - have details on managing underperforming or unsatisfactory staff.

NSW Government Education. (2020, May 26). *Guidelines for the Management of Conduct and Performance*. https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/pd20060335.pdf

Victoria State Government Education and Training - Human Resources. (2020, January 7). *Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance in the Teaching Service*. https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/Complaints_Misconduct_and_Unsatisfactory_Performance_TS.pdf [This is an excellent and comprehensive site that provides detailed information.]

National legislation - on workplace relations is provided by the Fair Work Commission.

Australian Government. (n.d.). Managing performance and warnings. Fair Work Ombudsman. https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/managing-performance-and-warnings

Some education and childcare resources

Hanson, C., Patterson, S., & Farrell, J. (2006). Children' Services and the Law: A legal guide for the childcare sector. Community Child Care Cooperative Ltd (NSW).

NSW Government (2020, March 1). Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010. https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2010-104. [A national law to regulate education and care services for children.]

NSW Government (2020, October 1). Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653). https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653 [The regulations for NSW centre-based early education and care services.]

> *Take heart if you face this issue with some trepidation; plan and move carefully and prayerfully*

Author information

Marion Shields after 30 years as a state school principal, six years as an education director and 12 years as a lecturer in higher education, holding two doctorates, is a retired educator intent on improving the learning and wellbeing of both students and teachers through effective administration and professional learning.

As administrators it is vital that you are aware of natural justice, … to avoid pitfalls – such as wrongful dismissal/ unlawful termination including constructive dismissal

Appendix 1 - Related legislation/definitions

Wrongful dismissal/Unlawful termination

It's illegal for an employer to dismiss an employee for a number of reasons. These reasons include:

- a person's race, colour, sex, sexual preference, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family or carer's responsibilities, pregnancy, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin (some exceptions apply, such as where it's based on the inherent requirements of the job)
- temporary absence from work because of illness or injury
- trade union membership or participation in trade union activities outside working hours or, with the employer's consent, during working hours
- non-membership of a trade union
- seeking office as, or acting as, a representative of employees
- being absent from work during maternity leave or other parental leave
- temporary absence from work to engage in a voluntary emergency management activity
- filing a complaint, or participating in proceedings against an employer.

Fair Work Australia: http://www.fairwork.gov.au/termination

Constructive dismissal: when you are forced to resign

1. What is constructive dismissal?

A constructive dismissal occurs when the conduct of an employer causes an employee to resign. The employer may expressly ask the employee to resign, or the employer's conduct may leave the employee feeling that he or she has no other choice but to resign. This conduct generally involves an employer engaging in a serious breach of the employment contract or indicating that it no longer wishes to perform its side of the employment contract. …

Types of constructive dismissal

3.1 Forced resignation

Forced resignation occurs where an employer expressly insists that an employee resigns. In this case, the employee can argue that his or her resignation was not voluntary. It is irrelevant that the employer's insistence on the employee's resignation was based on good intentions, for example, to save the employee from embarrassment or to make it easier for him or her to find future employment. However, there will be no constructive dismissal where an employee, without pressure from the employer, decides to "jump before they are pushed".

3.2 Legitimate reason for resignation

Constructive dismissal may occur where an employee has chosen to resign due to the unacceptable conduct of the employer. Such conduct may be an unauthorised variation to employment conditions, such as a pay-cut, demotion, change of working hours or relocation. It may also be the unacceptable personal treatment of the employee (such as harassment by a fellow worker) that the employer has unreasonably failed to prevent or punish.

http://www.elcwa.org.au/factsheets (The Employment Law Centre of Western Australia is a not-for-profit community organisation specialising in employment law)

Natural justice

"English legal system doctrine that protects against arbitrary exercise of power by ensuring fair play. Natural justice is based on two fundamental rules: (1) Audi alteram partem (Latin for, hear the other side): no accused, or a person directly affected by a decision, shall be condemned unless given full chance to prepare and submit his or her case and rebuttal to the opposing party's arguments; (2) Nemo judex in causa sua (Latin for, no man a judge in his own case): no decision is valid if it was influenced by any financial consideration or other interest or bias of the decision maker. These principles apply to decisions of all governmental agencies and tribunals, and judgments of all courts, which may be declared to be of having no effect (ultra vires) if found in contravention of natural justice."

Source: The Business Dictionary: http://www.businessdictionary

Appendix 2 - Summary of preliminary check list

- Are there policy documents or a detailed job description/contract that state the work requirements?
- Has the person been told what is unsatisfactory in a discreet and courteous manner, based on school or systemic documentation and collected data regarding his/her inadequate performance?
- Has he/she been given a chance to discuss this and explain why the inadequacy might be?
- Has he/she been given the opportunity to have a support person present during meetings?
- Has the person been clearly told what is expected and given written copies of

this together with timelines for required improvements?

- Has a plan been put into place to assist him/her in achieving these expectations? (e.g. coaching, mentoring, supervision, professional development, etc.)
- Has his/her performance been monitored regularly as per the timelines and has he/she been given regular feedback, and does he/she understand the consequences of failure to improve?
- Has the final meeting been minuted indicating decisions made and why, and has he/she been given a copy?
- Have you maintained appropriate confidentiality?
- **Have you prayed with and for this person and shown genuine care and compassion?**

Appendix 3 - Sample proforma: Meeting Planner

Date:	
Present:	
Location:	
Meeting Goals: (Areas that need addressing)	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
Action Plan	**Who and When**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
Additional tasks, Resources, Professional development	

Signed …….. Date …….....

Signed …….....

Meeting Review Date…….....

TEACH[R]

Time travel: Teaching Australian history through speculative fiction

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Abstract

Farah Mendlesohn, in speaking to the Children's Literature Association Conference - Imagined Futures (2017), made the following observation: "Science fiction is a fiction whose raison d'etre is the idea that human beings can fix the world" (para. 1). For writers retelling a colonisation narrative such as Australia's recent history, this point has significant resonance. The rhetoric around colonisation is, after all, describing an attempt, however parochial or misguided, to "fix" the world. Many speculative novels explore the idea of colonisation, particularly of other planets following the destruction or invasion of Earth. Many of these also base their ideas on the ways in which colonisations have occurred in the past with new scenarios and characters to either teach us a lesson about the ills and foibles of the past – or show us a way forward for the future.

When Mark Salber Phillips (2003) suggested that history could be written as a type of combinational genre, with traditional empirical elements and fictional, literary elements working together to create temporal distance between the reader and the events, he saw this as a way of forcing us to look more broadly at the meanings of history, rather than focusing on a singular event. Using his claim that history cannot be understood as a singular form, but rather as "a cluster of overlapping and competing genres" (p. 218) that press the reader to a new degree of involvement in a story, it can be argued that an understanding of Australian history and its people is enhanced by the experience of reading Australian speculative histories.

> *For decades historians have taught history as an explicit and 'true' common ground, but the fabric of this is unravelling*

At first glance, speculative texts have little in common with historical ones. One represents what *has* happened, one attempts to predict what might take place. And yet, the speculative allows an exploration of the potential that historical writing does not. It is moldable and predictive in a way that can allow the writer to create a new vision of the past. A strong focus in the history curriculum, as historiography becomes of greater significance and the subjectivity of experience both past and present continues to grow, is leading students to a personal understanding of the abstract nature even of history. For decades historians have taught history as an explicit and 'true' common ground, but the fabric of this is unravelling as teachers approach classrooms in which diverse cultural histories form the basis of student understanding.

As an example, Mirandi Riwoe's *The Fish Girl* offers a speculative take on female oppression and trade in the Pacific Islands – a potentially powerful adjunct to the study of Australian history often taught in Year 9 (Riwoe, 2017). Texts like this can be valuable in opening conversation around contemporary issues so that students can meaningfully connect with past lives and cultures. Following this, their awareness of actual historical events can be easily contextualised by research and enhanced through discussion of their unique post-modern lens, and can be further deepened through dialogue or writing on the ways that context can offer re-imagining of past events. Even excerpts from these texts can offer an empathetic reading of history that adds an additional layer to historical inquiry and creates opportunities to view history as a dialectic between the past and present.

Teaching speculative texts also offers

opportunities for cross-curriculum learning. *Tracker*, the Miles Franklin winning take on the life of a 'visionary' Aboriginal tracker by Alexis Wright (2017) lends itself to reading aloud, and could be powerfully incorporated into the Year 11 Reading to Write English module and connect well to the Year 11 topic 'Ancient Australia' which requires a focus on "representations of ancient Australia" (Ancient History Syllabus 2019-2021). This topic encourages a focus on values and versions of the ancient past, and using this potent text encourages an understanding of the value of language to historical storytelling.

The power of Socratic teaching in History is not to be underestimated. Offering students selected episodes, clips and excerpts from fiction within an inquiry-based framework that allows students to explore these texts with the goal of answering important historical questions like "to what extent is our understanding of history subjective?", or "can we evaluate the significance of the speculative lens in representing the past?" can increase engagement and encourage students to view sources as interpretive lenses into the past. Speculative fiction can also offer a powerful extension for gifted students whose capabilities may be developed through challenge and variety.

Two valuable examples of these speculative histories are Clare G. Coleman's *Terra Nullius* (2017) and Terry Pratchett's The Last Continent (1998). Both are atypical engagements with Australian history that examine influences on Australian cultural behaviour and evolution through re-imagined interactions with the nation's history, environment and mythologies. Janice Liedl (2015) asserts that when a history is presented speculatively, "the differences it presents can be strong enough to suggestively reshape the audience's understanding of the past" (p. 289). She suggests that the very nature of science-fiction adds a "what if?" component to storytelling that forces the reader to rethink what is already known and to wonder if, indeed, there are other ways to view the past. Building on this assertion, it can be seen through engagement with these texts that the alien setting of speculative fiction makes it possible for the student of history to engage with historical thought in a new way, extramural to the usual and culturally defined notions of that history.

Terra Mater: Reclaiming colonisation in Claire G. Coleman's Terra Nullius, 2017

Claire G. Coleman's *Terra Nullius* (2017) is a work of speculative fiction that interrogates the history of colonial Australia in a futuristic context where an alien species—The Settlers, seeking moisture, have invaded, defeated and colonised Australia, subjugating the inhabitants and treating them as little more than another troublesome part of an already difficult landscape. The novel reveals the power of speculative fiction to critique political and historical moments and takes a strong political stance on the 1788 invasion of Australia by the British and the subsequent dispossession, mistreatment and genocide of Indigenous owners of the land.

Terra Nullius seems upon first reading to be such subtle speculation that it takes time before the reader can even tell when the story is taking place. It isn't now. But is it then? Or is it soon? And while we do speculate on some parts of the story, others are far more familiar—a coloniser, an oppressed, misunderstood and despised native people. It is her history as a Noongar woman rewritten as something new, and it is this newness, this speculative history, that jars the reader into rethinking their engagement with the past. The novel reads like an account, perhaps fictive, perhaps not, of Australia's colonial history some time post-1788. It is only later that it becomes clear, incrementally, that this is not a story from a past they are familiar with, but from a future that echoes it; a karmic cycle of the coloniser and colonised that opens up a new vision of both our past and our future.

> *"the alien setting of speculative fiction makes it possible … to engage with historical thought in a new way, extramural to the usual and culturally defined notions"*

The story begins with a young man, called a "Native", escaping a mission run by nuns who are both charitable and unsympathetic, harsh and yet benevolent. He is trying to find his home and family while hunted by everyone from the local militia to his own people. The story moves from the personal to the broader world of the colony, an environment that feels dissonant in its systematic order and lack of chaos. It is not an entirely foreign world, however: the rhetoric becomes disturbingly familiar with the Natives described by their colonists as "possessed of the intelligence they needed to survive without us" (Coleman, 2017, p. 25) but not the intelligence to face the changes brought about by the colonisers themselves. For that, the forced and assisted assimilation was "the only chance they have to survive and one day be useful to society"(p. 25). The words are eerily reminiscent of the 1937 Aboriginal Welfare policy (Commonwealth of Australia, 1937) as it claims that the destiny of the natives of aboriginal descent "lies in their ultimate absorption" (p. 2 & p. 21) into the white community (see The Assimilation Years, Johnston, 1991; Australian Human Rights Commission, n.d.). When Sister Bagra wearily declares that "we educate them so they can have a place in society, a place as lowly as they deserve" (Coleman, 2017, p. 52), it is the natural assumption of any reader with a knowledge of Australian modern history that this nun

is speaking of Indigenous Australians, post-British colonisation.

Each chapter of Terra Nullius begins with an epigraph: a quote from a fictional text, an engagement with "primary source material" that gives the novel a historic feel, as though it connects to some concrete, unmoving truth:

> *"We must continue to attempt to educate the savages. We must try, although they will never truly be our equals."* *Sister Bagra (p. 69).*
>
> *"Natives, you can't live with them, killing them creates too much paperwork."*
> *Captain Black, Colonial Trooper (p. 34).*

The nomenclature is familiar: 'Sister', 'Captain', 'Trooper'. The reader readily connects those labels with the Catholic nuns who ran Indigenous Missions in Australia as early as 1883 and the troops who arrived with the first convicts in 1788 to maintain control of the colonised territories (Lydon, 2010, p. 8). It feels like truth. Coleman (2017) then forces her readers off-balance when they begin to suspect that this 'historical fiction' is, in fact, 'speculative' fiction and readings of the text have to be re-evaluated. The 'Settler Empire' we have assumed is the British, is not (p. 177). It is something new, something alien: the 'greyfella'. This revelation demands a new engagement with the text, as with the history it reflects. At the same time, the familiarity is jarring. The race politics that bleed through the quoted documents are hauntingly close to home. There are appeals to preserve the tendency of humanity "to produce Art" (p. 198) for example or suggestions that every species deserves freedom of movement (p. 259).

> *"Coleman shifts all Australians to the same side, making them siblings against a common foe"*

The race rhetoric is also familiar. Sergeant Rohan laments how difficult it is to track Jacky because there was "little difference in features from Native to Native" (p. 53) and nobody could remember seeing him. The United Graziers provide a complaint letter stating that "Every (Native) man, woman and child is either involved either directly or as accessories to crime"(p. 55). The clinical organisation of the colonists is reminiscent of the Australian government of the 1960s as they move the Natives around like chess pieces. Coleman's interplay between the familiar and the unfamiliar is a sharp engagement with Australia's modern history, forcing the reader to be both colonisers and colonised, perpetrator and victim. The discomfort in this duality demands a new perspective outside of the culturally defined notions of that history. Matt Hills (2009) calls this 'decentering history' and suggests that it destabilises "ontological perspectives to compel readers to perceive their world in new and more critical ways" (p. 441).

Terra Nullius does just this – decenters the traditional historical record of Australia's colonisation and forces its players into new roles and a re-imagined understanding of those roles. Coleman's re-imagining of history might be subtle, but the shift in perspective for her readers is not. The 2018 Stella Prize, for which the novel was nominated, released a judge's report which described Coleman's shift into the speculative as a device used to "grant what initially appears to be a straightforward if slightly allegorised story of colonial oppression, dehumanisation and resistance, an additional scourging layer of dramatic irony" (The Stella Prize, 2018, para 6.).

Coleman (cited in Sullivan, 2017) says of her choice of genre,

> *Speculative fiction is one of the most powerful political tools in fiction. It's a genre in which there's great scope for Aboriginal literature. A lot of speculative fiction is written with a firm eye on the past and to use speculative fiction is often to be able to sneak politics into places people don't expect to see it. You can create a world that says what can't otherwise be said and surprise readers by showing them that they understand something they didn't think they understood. (para. 13)*

In *Terra Nullius*, Coleman shifts all Australians to the same side, making them siblings against a common foe, rather than reinforcing the Indigenous and immigrant divide that usually occurs around discussion of colonisation. From this new perspective, as 'one' people, the view of the invaders takes a new shape and a different comprehension of old stories can be made. She uses familiar words and yet, they read divergently:

> *Maybe the aliens, the Settlers, were right – maybe they were harmless. They had done nothing to prove otherwise, had not fought, had not taken back land, had not even killed a noticeable number of Settlers once the first flush of invasion was over. What they were not, was subjugated; they remembered, they kept the stories alive, they knew what humans were and one day could be.* *(Coleman, 2017, p. 125)*

The quote feels as though it references something familiar – a traditional discussion of Australian Aboriginal peoples and their response to the invasion of their land. However, with the reader's knowledge that this text places all Australians, both indigenous and migrant, on the same side, that of "harmless" human subjugated by alien Settler, there is a new reading to be made of the traditional rhetoric, one that will feel particularly discordant to those used to being in the position of power as dominant, a colonizing race.

In *Terra Nullius*, Coleman has created an Australia where oppression has taught us something we have failed to otherwise learn about humanity,

race and oppression itself: that the side upon which one finds oneself is arbitrary and subject to change and that colonial power is ephemeral, connected not to race, but to physical domination. And while the novel's shifting timeline might be subtle, other elements are not, leaning more towards overt didacticism. For example, the presentation of colonists includes characters, such as Sister Bagra, who do not consider the Natives to be people at all, wasting no time learning their language. Coleman presents Bagra, the Devil, the troopers and other colonisers as so enmeshed in their opinions of the Natives that they lack any other identity. It is an unsettling insight into the mind of the coloniser—aloof, elite, and disconnected from empathy.

Of course, the readings of this novel will be very different for an indigenous and non-indigenous reader, and it is unlikely that the re-visioning of colonisation will be as jarring for a reader who has lived it already. Indigenous reviewer Alison Whittaker (2017) wrote that she felt "locked out of the surprise, revulsion and immersion" (para. 13) that the earlier chapters offer a non-indigenous reader because "the parallels, sparse and ambiguous as they were, ran simply too close to the truth to be speculative" (para. 13) to her. This reaction provokes the question: is Coleman's intent to bring non-indigenous Australians a fresh understanding of the historical and modern indigenous experience? The last paragraph of the novel would suggest that this is true.

> *There is nothing in their behaviour that humans are incapable of: we have invaded cultures more peaceful than us, we have murdered and enslaved. There is nothing in their hearts and minds that does not exist in the hearts and minds of the human species.*
>
> *(Coleman, 2017, p. 290)*

In fact, Coleman (cited in Sullivan, 2017) has claimed the book to be her way of sharing with "the average Australian, who doesn't necessarily understand the Aboriginal perspective on the invasion" (par. 15) a story that allows them to understand the history and current world of Indigenous Australians. "The entire purpose of writing Terra Nullius was to provoke empathy in people who had none (para. 15). However, Coleman also sees the book as a personal catharsis,

> *Terra Nullius came straight from inside my head, which means that every bit of emotion and politics and experience in it that is always there. I was able to vent all the pain. Aboriginal people live in a dystopia every day. The problem is that the world we live in, people don't understand that.* *(Sullivan, para. 14)*

The way in which Coleman connects her story and her characters to the land provides valuable insight for any student of history. It insists that the land is its own character, an echo of the "non-player character" of the old role-playing games, 'chaotic neutral' in its interactions with the humans and creatures who try to survive it. There is, in *Terra Nullius* a further insistence that the land cannot be owned or tamed. The title of the book itself is a phrase of Latin origin that means 'no one's earth'. While these words have accumulated meaning for an Australian (it was first used by James Cook during his 1770 voyage around the coast of Australia, despite recording the presence of hundreds of indigenous inhabitants), it has an added meaning for the characters of Coleman's book and it is clear that she believes the land cannot ever be owned or even clearly understood (Ogleby, 2018). She says of her geographic depictions,

> *I've deliberately taken an impressionistic view of landscapes and places because I was feeling unsettled at the time and I wanted to make it unsettling for the reader as well. The feeling of travel, of not knowing where you are, of landscapes constantly changing. I think that disoriented sense of time and place was important, because a lot of Aboriginal people have felt very displaced and disjointed, and have a history of feeling like refugees in their own country. (Coleman, cited in Sullivan 2017, para. 6)*

"*The entire purpose of writing Terra Nullius was to provoke empathy in people who had none*"

Terror Incognita: The Unknown & the Outsider in Terry Pratchett's The Last Continent, 1998

A very different re-imagining of Australia's colonial history is Terry Pratchett's book *The Last Continent* (Pratchett, 1998). To begin with, it is not written by an Australian writer and thus has the perspective of 'outsider' and 'other'. Its value lies in Pratchett's concern with connection to land and environment as a force for evolution. *The Last Continent* (TLC) is the twenty-second book in Pratchett's Discworld series and, as with the other books in the series, is a political and historical satire set in the fantasy of the flat *Discworld* as it is carried through space on the backs of four giant elephants who ride the great A'tuin (a space turtle). The premise, a nod to both ancient Indian and Chinese beliefs in the World Turtle, sets up the reader for a ride where nothing is predictable, and yet much of the content is derived from scientific truth and human belief. Pratchett's books take advantage of this paradox, at once convincing readers they are in a world of complete fiction and then incisively satirising the history and events of both the past and present. As he makes very clear at the outset of the novel, the Discworld is itself a world, but it is also "a mirror of worlds" (p. i).

The story of *TLC* involves recurring character Rincewind, a cowardly, inept and universally disliked failure of a wizard being transported to the continent of XXXX due to a magical mistake by the Unseen University wizards. There is very little doubt that this is a satire of Australia's colonial history and culture. Pratchett references Australia in his front-

page quote, “This is not…about Australia. No, it’s about somewhere entirely different, which happens to be, here and there, a bit… Australian. Still…no worries, right?”(p. i) The back-cover blurb describes the last continent as hot and very dry, a place where ‘practically everything that’s not poisonous is venomous. But it’s the best bloody place in the world, all right?’

The references continue throughout the book, some subtle, but most the antithesis: vegemite, thongs, cork-hats, Waltzing Matilda, Crocodile Dundee and even Mad Max. There is a sense in Pratchett’s work that this is parody as much as it is satire that, as Amanda Cockrell (2006) suggests, “borrow anything usable” (para. 26) from the cultures he invades fantastically. It is a type of colonisation of his host, allowing him both the parochial tones of the British colonialist and the undertone of the harsh critic. The humour is such that the reader is caught by surprise by the jarring disquisition. Rincewind is slapstick in his foolishness. Another character is an Orang-utan with a virus that keeps turning him into a variety of inanimate objects, and then there is Scrappy the talking kangaroo whose sole mission is to bring back the “wet” after the long drought. Crockrell describes it well when she says that “we don’t notice the serious stuff that he is talking about until it is at our throats” (p. 5).

> *we don’t notice the serious stuff that he is talking about until it is at our throats*

Pratchett’s handling of Australia’s history is irreverent but not disrespectful. Nothing is sacred, but neither is it without value. His representations of indigenous Ecksians are an example of this. He doesn’t shy away from mentioning the ‘natives’, but is not telling a ‘native story’. When Rincewind does encounter native Ecksians, he views them with respect and a sense of awe for the way in which they are at one with such a dangerous environment. “People here were good with spears because if you didn’t get efficient at hitting things that moved fast, you had to eat the things that moved slowly”(Pratchett, 1998, p. 58). They use the geography and flora, both seen as treacherous by Rincewind, to their advantage, as seen by their boomerangs. He notes that “you could laugh at the idea of wooden weapons until you saw the kind of wood that grew here”(p. 58). When Rincewind finally connects with Scrappy the kangaroo he discovers the truth of Fourecks: that there is always enough of what you need if you accept the land as it is, not as you compare it to your own place. Pratchett reminds the reader repeatedly that the only real geographic disconnection the alien has in Fourecks is the one they bring with them.

The story he tells is the one that is his to tell: that of an outsider attempting to survive a terrain and society that is at once trying to kill him and casually tell him not to worry about anything. In TLC Pratchett describes Fourecks as a place evolved solely around its harsh environment, where everything is difficult, including basic survival. It is a place of deadly creatures and excessive heat that seems to either drive people to insanity, drink or a lackadaisical and improbable casualness. The phrase ‘no worries’ appears sixty-two times in the novel, a repetition that cements the Ecksian attitude that nothing bad can happen because they are already living the worst of it. Within a land so difficult worries are few – water, food and not being killed by a jellyfish (or a spider, or a drop bear or indeed another spider). This simplicity of belief allows Ecksians a casualness about everything else. When Rincewind is told by the academics of Bugarup University to go to Hell, he is quick to suggest that the only way an Ecksian would know the difference between their own land and Hell would be that ‘the beer’s warmer’ (p. 349).

Hume and Drury (2013) describe Pratchett as offering a world that extends past humanity and into a deeper, more varied magical community (p. xiv). They suggest that Pratchett’s invocation of a new layer of magic over a recognisable world allows us a far broader set of interactions with our world experience (p. xv). We see ourselves in a different other, in a new way, without the usual view of the world to distort this reflection. In *TLC*, the Australian reader sees Australia. They see the usual stories and stereotypes, and yet they see them through the filter of a thick layer of magic – wizards, magical beasts, gods and dwarves. The need for defensive nationalism, something Australians have inherited from the convict era, is diminished and even nullified. The view of Australia is at once mired in magical humour and exposed in a new and unfiltered way. *TLC* shows an Australia where its inhabitants create their identity around the earth, the sun and the heat in between. The exaggerated nature of the elements and the reactions of the local inhabitants to those elements actually allows the reader a new reading of Australia – as a place forged meteorologically, rather than merely socially.

The novel’s secondary plotline is an exploration of the interplay between creation and evolutionary beliefs with a god as the centre point of the story, a relatively confused god trying to figure out the mechanics of creation. Whilst dealing with his limited control over his own creations and his lack of self-belief: “To tell you the truth, I’m something of an atheist” (p. 161), the god is also attempting to understand his own work – the epitome of which is, ironically, the cockroach (another unfortunate Australian icon). This idea that creation and evolution are a muddled and interactive set of theories is reinforced by the inhabitants of Fourecks who

have been both created by the harsh landscape and evolved through their interactions with it. They are purely a product of, and a response to, their environment.

It is an interesting distillation of Australian heritage that avoids the usual discussions and unpacking of colonial heritage and allows for a different viewing of the development of our culture. The question asked by the novel is an interesting one – to what extent are Australians a product of their difficult and often dangerous physical environment? To what extent are they the people they are because of this, as opposed to traditional notions of a convict and colonist engagement? The Eksians are a people of extreme pragmatism; optimists yes, affable to a fault and yet, to a certain extent hamstrung by their own beliefs that some things are just not worth worrying about enough to change. As the Bugarup University so eloquently puts it in their motto, 'NULLUS ANXIETAS' (p. 344).

Pratchett is not one to tread familiar turf in a familiar way – his Discworld novels allow the reader to see something they know and perhaps love, and then he pulls the carpet from beneath that understanding, presenting it in an unexpected way. He gives the reader what he calls 'signposts' about "what human beings have done, practised and believed in the last ten thousand years" (Pratchett, 1998, p. 160). Then he changes the story, re-versions it and rewrites it and, as John Stephens (1997) suggests, "if readers want to know 'what really happened' they must pay close attention and then draw inferences and make connections" (p. 30). Australian history is most often presented in terms of its colonial constructs, with only an occasional mention of the geography and usually in terms of its 'tyranny of distance' from England.

Pratchett's insistence that Ecksians are *who* they are because of *where* they are, is an interesting perspective for students of history. Australian historian Manning Clarke (1997) dedicates a great deal of the first few chapters of his *History of Australia* to the geography of the new colony and the ways in which the British struggled to adapt and survive. He notes that on January 20, 1788 when the first fleet of convicts laid anchor in Botany Bay, waiting to go ashore, they looked in vain for the meadows that Cook had described and saw instead only sandy, useless soil. They were watched by local Australians who shouted at them, incredibly unwelcoming and unhappy to see the arrival of the ships (p. 7). The weather was unlike anything they had ever felt – Sydney in January was hot and humid. They were given tents to live in and these seemed to soak up and magnify the heat.

In an attempt to build cooler dwellings, the colonists decided to cut down trees for wood. The trees were so hard that their axes blunted and broke. The sandy mud wouldn't set into cement. The same thing happened when they tried to grow small gardens. The ground was so hard that the spades and picks were destroyed and the seeds refused to grow (p. 13). Everything about the place, while it looked reasonably hospitable on the surface, conspired to kill them. The same could be said of the locals. The British government had honestly believed the Aboriginal Australians would welcome them and their 'civilised' ways and immediately and gratefully integrate. This did not happen. The Aboriginals were disgusted by the invaders, wished them gone and while they initially seemed to be "waiting them out", eventually turned to violence, stealing the white men's tools and food and eventually murdering several of them and mutilating the bodies (p. 14). Their inability to find comfortable shelter, safety or a food source meant that the colonists were miserable, sick and constantly at odds with their physical environment.

Clark (1997) describes periods in the early history of Australia as an interaction between man and an "ancient barbaric continent that was taking another revenge against the men who wantonly robbed it of its wealth" (p. 382). The colonists found themselves in a country where, during the heat of summer (heats they had never experienced or believed possible back in England), the grasslands would spontaneously combust causing raging bushfires that would leave the towns terrified and drowning in the smoke and the stench of burning goats, sheep and cattle. Drought was so prevalent and so harsh that streams would regularly dry up, the earth would crack open and herds of sheep, finally established, would die from lack of water and feed. There were stories circulating during the late 1880s of men killing themselves rather than facing death from thirst (p. 382). This is not the sort of land that could ever be tamed, and so the Australian colonists were themselves shaped by the land. It was the only way to survive.

Australians of the present regularly face fire, flood, drought and heatwaves and while none of these weather events is easy or desirable, there is no longer surprise associated with the notion that the land may kill them. This is who Australians have become – a people engaged in a tense understanding of the power and danger of their own environment. Weather is something of a national obsession – the highest trending words on Australian Twitter accounts are words associated with our meteorological forecast: hot, climate, summer and sunset being some of the most popular (Brown, 2015). It would seem Pratchett's speculative

> *"As the Bugarup University so eloquently puts it in their motto, 'NULLUS ANXIETAS'"*

take on Australian history has connected with a deep social conditioning – we are, and have always been a people at odds with our physical environment and our national psyche has been thus shaped.

Texts such as *The Last Continent* and *Terra Nullius*, while not a historical source, are valuable additions to the study of Australian history. The works provide a fresh experience of colonisation and the cultural mythologies of Australia rather than a retelling. An immersive re-imagining of history that is at once both familiar and alien. This dislocation of the familiar can, as Leidl (2015) describes, suggestively reshape the audience's understanding of the past, making it possible to find new understandings, a sense of empathy and a fresh interpretation of history, something that will be of immense value to students of Australian history. Speculative histories reframe and reimagine history allowing readers and students of history to ask new and experimental questions and to examine unique perspectives and are a valuable adjunct to traditional historical texts in the teaching of history. TEACH

> *"dislocation of the familiar can … reshape the audience's understanding of the past, … to find new understandings, a sense of empathy and a fresh … history"*

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Reflections on pedagogical hospitality and remote learning

TEACH[R]

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Abstract

Teaching involves teachers acting as hospitable hosts who create learning spaces that welcome their students into learning. Much of the literature on pedagogical hospitality works from the assumption that the teacher is the host and the students are the guests. However, in the period of remote learning during the Covid19 pandemic, this was reversed when teachers became guests as well as hosts as they 'entered' their students' homes, albeit remotely, to teach. This experience of being a guest is similar to the experience of Special Religious Education (SRE) teachers as they enter Australian Public School classrooms to teach about their Christian faith. This article explores pedagogical hospitality during remote learning with reference to the experiences of SRE teachers who experience being guests of the classroom teachers where they teach.

Introduction

Teaching involves teachers acting as hospitable hosts who create learning spaces that welcome their students into learning. Smith (2018, p. 95) asks his readers to reimagine teaching as an act of hospitality where the classroom is a "hospitable space". Parker Palmer (2017) draws on such a space when he describes pedagogical hospitality as the place where teachers treat their students with compassion and care, inviting them into a place where they can both listen and be listened to. Derrida's (2000) seminal work on hospitality explored welcoming refugees and others across individual and national borders helps with this reimagining. He defines hospitality as inviting and welcoming the stranger who is "treated as a friend or ally, as opposed to the stranger treated as an enemy" (p. 4). Each of these notions of hospitality underscore the importance of welcoming our students which is equally important during times of remote learning like those that took place during the school lockdowns of Covid19. This paper explores pedagogical hospitality in remote learning with reference to the experience of Special Religious Education teachers.

Like hosts at a dinner party, teachers carefully plan for involvement of all their student-guests to ensure that everyone feels welcome to participate and no one is left out. This hospitality takes two forms described by Derrida as unconditional and conditional hospitality. Unconditional hospitality is the perfect hospitality we aspire to that welcomes all people without question or condition, where there is a "welcome without reserve and without calculation, an exposure without limit to whoever arrives" (Derrida, 2005, p. 6). In contrast, conditional hospitality describes the reality of hospitality where both the host and guest/s have specific roles, rights and obligations attached to their behaviour. When a host offers conditional hospitality, s/he chooses who to welcome, how long they can stay and what they can do while they are guests (Westmoreland, 2008). Pedagogical hospitality is a mix of these two kinds of hospitality. On one hand, teachers graciously and expectantly welcome all students into their classrooms, regardless of who they are, but they also have conditions of entry that include their behavioural and learning expectations for each student.

Pedagogical hospitality

Providing a welcoming and open space for all students regardless of who they are, what they have done, or what they believe; eloquently speaks of God's love and welcome to all. Throughout the biblical narrative, God is a hospitable God who defends the cause of the orphan, the widow and the alien (Ps 146:7-9) and prepares an eternal table and rooms for His guests (Ps 23:5, Jn 14:2-3). By attempting to provide unconditional hospitality, teachers are able to enact God's hospitable actions towards the outsider, foreshadowing the heavenly feast (Smith & Carvill, 2000). When a Christian offers hospitality, s/he is demonstrating the welcoming nature of God. Consequently, Severe (2013, p. 7) suggests that "hospitality is a primary avenue the gospel is lived within the teaching profession".

Asymmetrical power relationships are inherent in hospitality (Derrida, 2000). Whenever a guest is invited to cross the threshold, go through the door and inside, a subtle, unequal power relationship is implied (Hung, 2013). This is because to be hospitable hosts, "must have some level of control over their home" (Mallia, 2018, p. 49) where they expect their guest to act in certain ways (Ruitenberg, 2015), The simple existence

> *during the Covid19 pandemic, … teachers became guests as well as hosts as they 'entered' their students' homes*

of the threshold and door "means that someone has the key to them and consequently controls the conditions of hospitality" (Derrida, 2000, p. 14). Therefore, regardless of how generous and welcoming the host is, being the one who welcomes means the host controls what takes place, reminding the guest of their place in the relationships.

This asymmetrical power also exists in teaching. However, pedagogical hospitality emphasises the need for teachers to reduce this imbalance by helping their students to become more than just guests, but co-hosts in the learning. Wright (2017) identifies three pedagogical principles for religious education that could be appropriate for any classroom: creating space, encountering others and listening for wisdom. She points out that underpinning these principles is a lived pedagogy where teachers enable students to flourish by being willing to be both hosts and guests in their classrooms. Similarly, Ruitenberg (2015) reminds teachers that they do not own their classrooms but must welcome their students and humbly make a place for them. This humble welcome is a consequence of the host understanding that he or she is indebted to others who have shown them hospitality in the past. Such a recognition of indebtedness makes more sense for the Christian who recognises that God has shown hospitality by inviting us to a relationship with him, making Himself known and enabling us to know Him. Paradoxically, while God is omnipotent, he humbly chooses to "make himself nothing", graciously sending His Son to earth—who is born in a stable, "takes the very nature of a servant" and "becoming obedient to death" (Phil 2:6-8).

> *"In the classroom, teachers can control … in their students' homes they … work within the constraints of the household's conditional hospitality"*

Pedagogical hospitality and remote learning

Remote learning changes the pedagogical hospitality relationships because teachers are not only hosts but become guests as they 'enter' their students' homes, albeit remotely, to teach. Rather than being hosts to students who cross the threshold into their classrooms, teachers find themselves sitting with their students who are working at kitchen benches, dining room tables, lounge chairs and desks in their homes. If teachers are teaching synchronously, they may encounter parents who wander in and out of the learning space because they are helping their child or as they get on with their daily lives. Teachers may, as happened to me on my first day of remote learning, become unwilling listeners to a family argument, or, as other teachers described, watch as their students are interrupted by pets, siblings, the radio, or any of the myriad of distractions that constitute their home lives. In the classroom, teachers can control many of these things, but as guests in their students' homes they must graciously work within the constraints of the household's conditional hospitality.

An initial exploration into pedagogical hospitality began during doctoral research into the pedagogy of Special Religious Education (SRE) teachers (Chalwell, 2015). Using participant interviews, reflective journals and document analysis, a constructivist grounded theory methodology investigated the beliefs and experiences of a group of respondent SRE teachers in state schools in two Australian states: New South Wales and Victoria. Twenty three teachers, who between them taught fifty eight classes in thirty two city, urban and rural primary schools, participated in the study to answer the research question: How do SRE teachers' beliefs and experiences influence their pedagogy? These SRE teachers were chosen through purposive sampling to ensure a broad range of experience and expertise. Included in the study were teachers from their first year of SRE teaching to over forty years of teaching, male and female teachers, teachers aged between twenty two and ninety one, teachers with formal education and/or theological qualifications, and teachers working at schools with between 34 and 620 students in them. The findings of this study inform subsequent comment on the context and practice of SRE teachers while comments on remote learning are anecdotally sourced from formal supervisory interactions as well as informal collegial experiences during school Covid19 lockdown during March and April, 2020, providing a narrative of Covid19 adapted practice.

Volunteer SRE teachers provide Christian education in state schools in many parts of Australia. They have a stronger sense of being guests in schools than school teachers because they are not part of the school staff, they borrow another teacher's classroom, and they only stay in the school for the duration of their lessons. In addition, students and parents can choose to not participate in SRE lessons and can make this choice at any time during the year. As guests of the school and the classroom teacher, SRE teachers have to teach within the constraints of a host and guest hospitality relationship. This is captured by Jane[1] who describes how her experience of being a guest in the classroom means that "it doesn't matter now nice the teacher is… my teaching is very different when they are there".

The SRE teachers' experiences of being guests bear similarities to online classroom teachers' experiences as they teach remotely in their students' homes[2]. Firstly, like SRE teachers, online classroom teachers teach in spaces that are not their own, where other adults (in this case, parents) are more

[1] Names and SRE teacher quotes in this article are pseudonyms of, and statements made by, participants in my PhD research.
[2] For the rest of the article, I will refer to SRE teachers, classroom teachers and online classroom teachers to distinguish between the three types of teachers.

involved in what is being taught. This is particularly pronounced when online classroom teachers teach about issues and ideas that might not be consistent with the beliefs of the home especially during Christian Development lessons, Chapel services or devotions. Secondly, SRE teachers often have limited access to school resources, a similar experience of teaching where online classroom teachers cannot control the resources students have available during their learning. Finally, like SRE teachers, online classroom teachers' students can more readily 'opt-out' of learning by not engaging in the lessons. The strategies SRE teachers have developed to manage their guest status in each of these situations may be helpful during remote learning and beyond.

Teachers are not teaching in spaces that are their own

Classroom teachers act as hosts to their students as they cross the threshold into their classrooms. Good hosts invite their guests to 'make themselves at home' and make sure their home is inviting to their guests. In the classroom, this transfers into ensuring that the attitude of the room is inviting and generous where students feel respected and comfortable with asking questions and sharing their ideas and opinions. It also means ensuring that practical things such as the temperature of the room and the availability of seats and desks for all students are accommodated. Throughout these actions, classroom teachers retain their power, implicitly and explicitly saying "you are welcome if you …"

In contrast, SRE teachers' experiences in the classroom are closer to being guests because they teach as the guests of both the schools where they volunteer and of the teachers who often stay in the room while they teach. As guests, they are humbly reliant on the welcome that they are offered. If it is positive, they are welcome to the resources of the school, are provided with appropriate spaces for teaching and are supported in their teaching. Conversely, in a less welcoming environment, SRE teachers must accept the classrooms they are allocated even when they are inappropriate. This is illustrated in how Nerida describes having no control over the rooms that she is given to teach in, that are "sometimes really pathetic and not conducive to learning".

In addition to accepting the teaching space they receive, SRE teachers must also accept the intervention or interruption of the classroom teacher even when it is not welcome. This interruption can take two forms. Firstly, the classroom teacher might intentionally interrupt the teaching to add his/her own thoughts or intervene in a behavioural issue. For example, Jane describes a classroom teacher who listens with "half an ear" to her lessons, "popping up with something" to add to the lesson.

Secondly, classroom teachers might interrupt the SRE teacher by their lack of consideration for what is happening in the classroom. For example, Shirley describes how while she is teaching, the classroom teacher will act as if there's no one in the class and "have a conversation with another teacher in the room" while she is teaching.

Remote learning bears many similarities to the experiences of SRE teachers. Like SRE teachers who work in spaces that they do not control, remote learning takes place in students' homes where online classroom teachers have limited control over the space. While online classroom teachers and schools may develop protocols and expectations of student participation in remote learning, ultimately, they share control with the parents who welcome them as they teach remotely in their students' homes. As hosts, parents determine where their children learn, whether other things are taking place during the learning, and the level of interruption the students experience. In this conditional hospitality that remote classroom teachers experience, parents can be a support and encouragement, but their presence may also be less positive. They may distract the students by, for example, talking during a lesson or explaining a task in a way that is not helpful.

As hosts of the classrooms, classroom teachers not only control the physical space they teach in, they also create the ethos of the learning environment. In contrast, SRE teachers are guests of the existing ethos of the classroom. As they enter classrooms to teach about their Christian faith, they encounter an environment that can range from being positive to hostile to their beliefs. SRE teachers recognise that they may be challenging the worldview of both their classroom teachers who are listening to their teaching and the students' parents who hear the stories after school. For example, in a classroom where Patricia knows the classroom teacher does not agree with her beliefs, she describes being aware of her guest status when she sees the classroom teacher "look up" when a student asks a "curly question, and then [the teacher] nods and goes back to what she is doing". In such a circumstance, there isn't the camaraderie that can sometimes happen between SRE teachers and classroom teachers. In a similar way, Elissa worries about teaching Christian content that her students' parents will disagree with. She acknowledges that there may be lessons "that almost end up disrespecting [parents' beliefs; and] at worse, they can think that it might be brainwashing".

However, when SRE teachers, like Bart, find a classroom teacher who is a Christian there is a meeting of likeness, a sharing in a common spirituality that acts as a modifier on the guest/host relationship. The SRE teacher is no longer Derrida's (2000, p. 7)

> *"The strategies SRE teachers have developed to manage their guest status … may be helpful during remote learning and beyond"*

"stranger"; someone who is "unknown, where I know nothing of him" but an ally and friend. Several of the SRE teachers comment on this experience; Nicole describes how the "whole atmosphere will be quite different" when there is a "Christian principal who is one hundred percent behind you".

Remote learning is similar to SRE teaching because when online classroom teachers enter their students' homes the values and beliefs that they hold and share in their classrooms may be different to the values and beliefs of the home. This is particularly the case as online classroom teachers share their Christian faith through prayer, Bible reading, Christian Development lessons and Chapel services. For example, in my Year 6 class where we start the day with a Bible reading and prayer, I have been strongly aware that this may be the first time that these things have taken place in a student's home. This has made me hesitate and consider carefully both what I am saying, and how I am saying it.

> *"start[ing] the day with a Bible reading and prayer, I have been strongly aware … this may be the first time that these … have taken place in a student's home"*

Teachers don't always have access to resources

Part of the responsibility of a classroom teacher is to organise the necessary resources for a lesson. This may include organising the furniture in the room, providing paper copies of necessary work, and distributing other necessary hands-on resources. When teaching at school this is a relatively simple organisational component of teaching. However, as guests of the school this is often not the case for SRE teachers. SRE teachers are reminded that they are guests when they must ask permission to use the classroom facilities and resources. This is exemplified in Ruby's description of how it is helpful when the "school is on board" because she can "ask for things that help you teach better". Because of this, many SRE teachers do not use the school's resources, preferring to make do with whatever they can carry in to the lesson. This can create a situation where, as Bart explains: "everything has to be portable, get up, put down, everything is rushed".

Regardless of the friendliness of the welcome, this experience is encapsulated in Jane's description of what it means to be a guest:

> Being a guest, there's no assumptions. I'm not assuming and teaching the lesson as if it's my classroom. We're the guest, we're the volunteer. We have to ask to use things.

As guests in students' homes, online classroom teachers also have limited access to the resources they would normally use in their teaching. As has already been stated, classroom teachers cannot control the spaces where their students learn. As a result, students may be learning at a dining room table, desk or sitting on their bed. In addition, because classroom teachers are not physically present, like the SRE teachers they must 'make do' with whatever we can 'carry in' to the lesson because students may not have the required resources available to them. For example, recently in a maths lesson I asked students to bring a ruler and paper to the lesson. However, three of my students did not have a ruler in the house that they could use. This further shifts the power balance, as online classroom teachers rely on the resources available in their students' homes and/or their students' willingness to ensure they have them with them during the lesson. To adjust to this situation, online classroom teachers need to create resources that can be accessed online or modify their lessons for a situation where there is less access to resources.

Students can more readily opt out

It is important that teachers establish a supportive and safe classroom environment where students are motivated and challenged in their learning. Coe et al (2020) describe aspects of hospitality when they emphasise the importance of teachers developing trusting, empathetic and respectful relationships with their students, and developing a learning climate characterised by high expectations and high challenge. These acts of hospitality are supported when teachers develop lessons that engage and support the learning of all students so that they are motivated and challenged in a safe space. For SRE teachers, the need to create engaging, interesting lessons is magnified because participation in SRE lessons is voluntary and students (with their parents' permission) can opt out of SRE lessons at any time during the year. For John this means always "having something that they really connect with so they go, 'yeah, I still want to come to SRE'". Ruby identifies the tension that this desire creates:

> if they are having a good time they will want to come and bring their friends. So there's a tension to walk. You don't want to turn it into a thirty minute slot of games and child minding; at the same time you want them to walk away saying, 'that was fun and I learned about Jesus'.

The experience of SRE teachers bears similarities to remote learning. While students cannot officially opt out of their remote learning, it is much easier for them to unofficially do so than it is when they are in a classroom. They can opt out by selective use of the mute button, having several tabs open on their computer, not showing up for a conference, inventing computer issues or being present but completely disengaged. For example, one online classroom teacher described how she called a parent to discuss how they could solve the problem of patchy internet and discovered that the problem had been invented by her student. In these situations, it is difficult for online classroom teachers to use their repertoire of classroom

management techniques that are effective in the classroom, once again reminding the online classroom teachers of their guest status in remote learning. In addition, the strategies that online classroom teachers use to engage their students may not be effective in the remote learning context, further challenging their role as hosts to learning.

Learning from SRE teachers' experiences

Because they want to retain good relationships in the schools where they teach, SRE teachers work at being "good" guests who behave in a peaceable manner. They are sometimes frustrated at how their hosts treat them and how this affects their teaching, but they continue in the relationship because teaching SRE is so important to them. Shirley illustrates this by explaining how as the visitor she must always be polite, even when the teachers are not polite to her and she, "can have three teachers in the room all talking while I'm trying to do my lesson".

As guests in the classrooms where they teach, SRE teachers are accustomed to having to develop relationships with their hosts in a way that classroom teachers are not used to. The intentional approach they take to improving the welcome they receive reveals their understanding of the conditional hospitality they experience. Their role as guests is typically a proactive one as they try to move from being a stranger who is treated as an enemy, to a friend or ally. This is not done simply to be friendly guests, but because it makes their job easier. Without this relationship, Nerida explains that there can be "a negative attitude or a culture that is negative about SRE that filters down to the kids; it's pretty hard to work in with that". SRE teachers predominantly approach improving the welcome they receive by working on their relationships with individual teachers, the principal and the office staff. This looks different for different teachers. When Joshua felt that his principal was "scarcely welcoming" he made a point of showing an interest in the school to indicate that "I'm not just an interloper". In a similar vein, Shirley helps her classroom teacher with playground duty before her SRE lesson, Ruby ensures that she says hello to the school receptionist, and Renee takes in an occasional special morning tea for the school staff to enjoy. Like good guests, the SRE teachers invest in the relationships they have at school because of the contingent nature of the welcome they receive.

While during remote learning, online classroom teachers are not going to provide morning tea or help with chores around the home, a starting point may be to understand how their students' parents are interacting with the learning and what support may be appropriate for them. Online classroom teachers may need to be more explicit about their timetable for the day and their expectations of students. For example, many online classroom teachers I have spoken to post a timetable for the day on the student platform and also send a copy to all parents to keep them informed. As good guests, online classroom teachers may choose to thank their parents for hosting the learning, at the same time considering how to make suggestions about the spaces that their students are working in. Because online classroom teachers are now guests in their students' homes, they may baulk at having such a conversation especially as they may feel like, in Joshua's words, an "interloper". The traditional lines have shifted, and online classroom teachers can now only gently make suggestions; a situation that will be greatly enhanced when a strong relationship exists between the online classroom teacher and parent. This takes additional time and I have spoken to many teachers who describe how they are in much greater contact with parents than in normal circumstances. This creates a level of cooperation and support that may bear fruit beyond remote learning.

As online classroom teachers are teaching in spaces they do not control, they must accept that they will have to make do with the spaces their students learn in. Like the SRE teachers who come fully prepared for a lesson and who have no expectations of the space where their students will be learning, teaching during remote learning requires a high level of preparation and thoughtfulness about what will be effective in this different environment. Because online classroom teachers cannot assume that students have certain resources, it is important that they find ways to adapt the resources they usually use, develop different resources, or communicate with parents about basic supplies that will be helpful in the lesson.

Just as the SRE teachers work hard to create engaging lessons to stop their students from opting out of SRE, this also becomes important during remote learning. As online classroom teachers work in a new context, they have to develop new ways of engaging their students, using technology, and creating engaging lessons. It is also important that online classroom teachers continue to develop strong relationships with their students, albeit in different ways to normal. For example, one online classroom teacher describes how he builds in time online for playing games and sharing stories with his students. In addition, online classroom teachers have had to learn to gauge their students' engagement in an online world so they can redirect them back to their learning. One online classroom teacher explained how she has developed a protocol for how students face their computers, how much of their body is showing during a conference, and that they must always have the camera on. She also described how she can tell from the reflections in their eyes whether her students are looking at the correct screen when she is teaching.

"SRE teachers invest in the relationships they have at school because of the contingent nature of the welcome they receive"

In remote learning, online classroom teachers may be experiencing being guests for the first time. However, they must also continue to work at being welcoming hosts to their students. As always, this is more than "creating a 'nice place' where 'nice people' can be nice to each other" (Andrews, 2015, p. 36.), it takes effort and risk (Anderson, 2011). Chalwell (2018) considering Christian teachers and hospitality asserts that the:

> hospitable work that teachers do in their classroom revolves around the way they treat their students and the way they present themselves. They try to treat their students with unconditional hospitality by remembering their names and welcoming them at the door, looking out for their individual needs, showing them love and care, and working at building strong relationships in the classroom. They also offer themselves to their students by telling personal stories, being willing to answer questions about their faith when it is appropriate, acting in a godly manner, and remembering that their students are made in the image of God. (p. 224)

"teachers work with their students to create a learning community where students not only feel welcome but can also begin to share a welcome with others"

In these ways, teachers work with their students to create a learning community where students not only feel welcome but can also begin to share a welcome with others.

Classrooms are never just teachers' spaces. Rather, they are spaces that are shared by students and teachers. Teachers can work to create a classroom that reduces the power imbalance of hospitality by encouraging student collaboration and decision making to enable students to play hosts to one another and to the classroom teacher. During remote learning this sharing of hospitality extends into the family home, where involvement with parents unexpectedly becomes part of the classroom dynamic. For some online classroom teachers this means explicitly welcoming and including parents in the learning; this is especially the case with younger students. Other online classroom teachers have described how they have increased the level of communication they have with parents; speaking directly to them during their online lessons, emailing and phoning parents to work together to develop strategies for supporting students' learning needs. Teaching within the shared hospitality of remote learning is challenging. Not just because online classroom teachers must share the hosting but also because it requires innovative use of technology, a degree of vulnerability as online classroom teachers try out new ideas, careful consideration of maintaining student safety in an online world, and developing ways for students to share their stories. Perhaps online classroom teachers need to be generous to themselves, taking solace from Hung's (2013) question: "How can a teacher treat her [sic] students with hospitality as much as possible?". That is, online classroom teachers' hospitality will look different, it won't always be perfect, it may be shared with a parent, it may rely on new strategies, it will take effort and risk, but classroom teachers can still offer hospitality as much as possible in this different context.

Hospitality matters because it helps to create safe spaces where students are excited about what they are learning. Hospitable environments give opportunities for students to share and to inspire one another with their new learning; they can share their stories in safety, share different ideas without risk, and listen carefully to one another. This is particularly important as Christian teachers bring Christian ideas and practices into their host's homes. This may be a completely foreign experience for families. It is important that Christian teachers come as humble guests to these homes, confidently, but not arrogantly, being open about their faith. As always, they need to provide opportunities for students to express their opinions and opposing ideas with a generous and kind welcome. Immanuel Kant (1983), in his discussion of universal hospitality, shares a conditional comment about a guest that "as long as he [sic] peacefully occupies his space, one may not treat him with hostility" (p. 118). Consequently, as guests in remote learning, it is important that online classroom teachers behave in a peaceful and generous manner towards their hosts.

In whatever context that teaching takes place, the starting point for pedagogical hospitality for Christian teachers must lie in their relationship with God. Pohl (2002) suggests that "hospitality emerges from a grateful heart; it is first a response of love and gratitude for God's love and welcome to us" (p. 37). Pedagogical hospitality needs to be understood not only in terms of particular tasks, but also as a way of being; "an intentional practice that reflects a process and perspective rather than specific tasks teachers must add to their already overtaxed schedules" (Anderson, 2011, p. 17). However, some tasks are worthy of consideration: devotional time spent with God helps to embed Christian teachers' awareness and joy of God's invitation to them and the students they teach. It keeps God at the centre of all hospitable endeavour and helps Christian teachers in these challenging times to welcome their students to learn.

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TEACH[R]

Geography field trips: Why getting dirty matters

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Abstract

Geography, as taught in schools, traditionally engages students in field trips which have a 'hands-on' approach towards exploring the physical and human environment. However, there is a trend towards running virtual field trips as sophisticated technologies enable more realistic on-line experiences. This investigation explores past and current literature about field trips and evaluates them against the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum. The literature reveals that virtual field trips have the potential to offer equal and sometimes superior opportunities to meet the curriculum aims relating to knowledge and understanding. The literature however suggests that on-site field trips potentially offer a stronger emotional connection that may lead to realising the aims of respect, tolerance and informed and active citizenship beyond the classroom.

> *[Students] huddle like small birds on the sand, seeking refuge from the elements and intermittently uttering pathetic noises of complaint.*

Prologue

The teacher is trying to talk. Her notes flap wildly as a strong onshore wind picks up the sound of her voice and carries it away from her Year 8 class. A small group of students are drawing diagrams of sand dunes; others bend over a tussock of dune grass, taking photographs. To one side, some students are kicking up sand and watching with glee as the wind whips it in the direction of their unsuspecting peers. Others huddle like small birds on the sand, seeking refuge from the elements and intermittently uttering pathetic noises of complaint. The teacher's goal in all this chaos: to teach her class about coastal landscapes, equip them with practical geography skills, and inspire them to be good environmental stewards. She also aims to build an understanding of the connection of Aboriginal people to this coastal region. On arrival back at school, she seeks refuge in the staffroom to ponder the field trip's value in terms of student learning. She wonders if the physical, emotional and mental energy required to run this type of field trip is worth the effort.

Introduction

Geography encompasses the study of space, place, environments, humanity and their interconnection and includes learning about the physical features of the earth and atmosphere. The human aspect of Geography includes population distribution, the use of resources and associated economic activities and political activities. Geography also explores sustainability and scale and how humans respond to change.

The rationale for the Australian Geography Curriculum (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, [ACARA], 2016) states, "in a world of increasing global integration and international mobility, it is critical to the wellbeing and sustainability of the environment and society that young Australians develop a holistic understanding of the world" (p. 10). This goal requires in-depth knowledge and understanding of environments and how people relate to them. Kersky (2012) makes the pertinent point that Geography "is a fundamental tool that can help us understand and solve problems related to those issues" (p. 65) of interconnectedness.

This investigation addresses the efficacy of field trips in helping to meet the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum by examining the scholarly literature that has been steadily accumulating on this topic. Two broad categories of field trips exist. The first is on-site field trips (OFTs). These field trips are any "activity involving observation and recording of

information outside a classroom" (ACARA, 2016b, p. 63). Fieldwork may occur in the school grounds, at a local site, or further afield. Students get 'dirty' as they engage in a 'hands-on' approach to learning. The second type of field trip is the virtual field trip (VFT). The advance of technology has led to the creation of VFTs: journeys of discovery with the same purpose as OFTs, except they rely on technology for their facilitation and are experienced by the students and teachers without leaving the classroom.

Field trips have traditionally played an important role in teaching Geography and are a mandatory component of the Australian Geography Curriculum. However, with increasing options that VFTs offer, balanced against the logistical challenges of running OFTs (Barton, 2017; Klem & Tuthill, 2002; LaVelle, 2017; Lisichenko, 2015), many schools are opting for the more manageable alternative. While evaluative comparisons between VFTs and OFTs have been made as far back as when virtual field trip software made its debut onto the education market (Çalişkan, 2011), this article specifically evaluates both virtual and on-site field trips against the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum. In a day and age where time is precious, budgets are tight, risk assessments are mandatory, social distancing applies and travel may be restricted, VFTs may be seen as a safer, less expensive and more efficient option than OFTs, leading to the question: Is there a need for OFTs, or will VFTs suffice?

Aims of Geography

As in other countries, the Australian curriculum extends beyond what happens inside a school environment. It has a broader vision that "all young Australians become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners, active and informed members of the community" (Council of Australian Governments. Education Council [Council of Australian Governments. Education Council], 2019, p. 4). Of course, this vision includes ensuring that "all young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) peoples thrive in their education and all facets of life" (CAG.EC, 2019, p. 3).

The Australian Geography Curriculum (F-10) has aims that relate to all aspects of geography including developing "a deep geographical knowledge", "the ability to think geographically, using geographical concepts", and "the capacity to be competent, critical and creative users of geographical inquiry methods and skills" (ACARA, 2016a,2016b, p. 8). These three aims relate to knowledge, understanding and skill-building. Two further aims exist, the first being to ensure that students develop "a sense of wonder, curiosity and respect about places, people, cultures and environments throughout the world" (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b p. 8), inclusive of ATSI people, place and culture. This aim shifts the focus from knowledge, understanding and skills to values and attitudes, as does the final goal, "that students develop as informed, responsible and active citizens who can contribute to the development of the environmentally and economically sustainable, and socially just world" (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b p. 8). These last two goals move further than what teachers want their students to possess (knowledge, understanding and skills), to what they want their students to be (curious, respectful, informed, responsible and active citizens).

Although citizenship is more commonly associated with the study of History, Standish (2009) notes, in his evaluation of geography textbooks, that geography makes a sound contribution to citizenship education. Humans are globally connected as at no other time in history, so the teaching of Geography needs to extend to developing global citizens who are informed, responsible and active participants in their world. Citizenship develops through knowledge, understanding and empathy, which may also be outcomes of field-trips.

> *"this article specifically evaluates both virtual and onsite field trips against the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum"*

The role of field trips in Geography

Traditionally, field trips involve an excursion on or off the school property to observe, question, interpret, analyse and draw conclusions about the environment. In the twenty-first century some educators claim there is little need for the traditional field trip, with VFTs and incursions overriding the need to leave the classroom.

Preston (2016), however, maintains that "geography is in a uniquely privileged position in that experiencing the world first-hand is an accepted part of geography practice" (p.19). Hutchinson (2016) agrees, adding that it "develops environmental ethics" (p. 4), while Catling (2013) cites fieldwork as a proven strategy for teaching Geography. Fieldwork is a clearly stated purpose of the Australian Geography Curriculum. There are sections in the Australian Curriculum devoted to planning Geography field trips, fieldwork in local areas, and a section on outdoor learning in Geography. The following statement in the curriculum identifies the role of outdoor learning.

> Outdoor learning programs provide opportunities for students to learn to question why the world is the way it is, reflect on their relationships with and responsibilities for that world, and propose actions designed to shape a socially just and sustainable future" (ACARA, n. d., para. 1).

The curriculum also acknowledges the importance of 'country' to indigenous learners as

students "investigate meanings and significance of places to people" (ACARA, n. d., para. 1). The inclusion of outdoor learning is clear; taking students out-of-doors to learn is one way to promote critical and creative thinking about their roles and relationship to the environment and the people who live in it. Fuller (2006), and Fagan and Sturm (2015) agree, asserting that OFTs are not only enjoyable but effective learning experiences. While VFTs cannot provide an actual out of doors experience, Klemm and Tuthill (2002) posit that VFTs offer learning experiences that are enjoyable and engaging.

The competing benefits of OFTs and VFTs prompted an investigation to determine the efficacy of each in meeting the Australian Geography Curriculum aims.

> *"taking students out-of-doors to learn is one way to promote critical and creative thinking about their roles and relationship to the environment and ... people"*

Research method

The question prompting this investigation was:

According to previously published research about field-trips, how effectively do OFTs and VFTs meet the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum?

To answer this question, the researchers used a focused literature review combined with content analysis to investigate the curriculum documents and scholarly publications relevant to the research question. The Australian Geography Curriculum: 7-10 was examined to identify the aims of Geography as taught in Australian schools. Aims for the senior years (11 and 12) were not included as they identified the same goals but with more specific application to the content. Key search words as shown in Table 1 were identified during this process.

Table 1: Search words used for content analysis

Aims of ACARA Geography Curriculum	Key search words
Geographical knowledge & understanding	knowledge, understanding, content
Geographical skills	skills, thinking (problem-solving), planning, collecting, recording, analysing, reflecting, responding, observing, communicating, (sharing), questioning, concluding
Geographical attitudes & values	attitudes, values, affective, emotions, feelings
Citizenship	citizenship, participation, social responsibility, community

For this focused literature review, parameters were set. Initially, only publications relating to Geography field trips in a secondary school context were identified. Research literature in this area was scant, so environmental field trips were added to the search. Finally, in order to source sufficient publications for a thorough investigation, research publications about Geography/environmental field trips in higher education and primary schools were included. The higher education publications were carefully screened to ensure that their findings were also relevant to school settings. It was also necessary to extend the publication dates to find sufficient research articles on the topic. A total of 30 scholarly publications about field-trips that satisfied the criteria were reviewed. Of these 30, ten focused on VFTs, 13 on OFTs, and seven related to both VFTs and OFTs (Table 2).

Data were extracted using content analysis (Bowen, 2009; Flick, 2019; Mackieson et al., 2019; Marshall & Rossman, 2016) by searching each scholarly publication for keywords relating to the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum (Table 1). These words were then carefully checked in context to ensure they applied to student learning and not teacher behaviour, the research method of the publication, or some other aspect of the reported research. The content analysis process allowed the researchers to interpret and compare the efficacy of the two types of field trips in meeting the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum. As knowledge and understanding combine to form one strand in the curriculum, and there was also generally little distinction in the field trip literature between these terms, they were amalgamated as one aim for this investigation (Table 3).

Table 2: Focus of field trip articles

Focus of the Field Trip	No. of Publications
Virtual Field Trips VFTs	10
On-site Field Trips OFTs	13
Both VFTs and OFTs	7
Total Publications reviewed	**30**

Table 3: Aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum and occurrence in reviewed publications

Aims of ACARA Geography Curriculum	Fraction of reviewed publications
Geographical knowledge & understanding	27/30
Geographical skills	27/30
Geographical attitudes & values	16/30
Citizenship	8/30

Results

The results of the content analysis are reported under the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum. Table 3 indicates the number of scholarly publications that matched each aim of the Australian Geography Curriculum after content analysis was applied.

Aims 1 and 2: Geographical knowledge and understanding

One aim of the Australian Geography Curriculum: 7-10 is that students develop "a deep geographical knowledge of their own locality, Australia, the Asia region and the world" (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b p. 8). This includes "the ability to think geographically, using geographical concepts" (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b p. 8), to make connections between concepts, and to apply geographical knowledge to solve problems in new contexts (ACARA, 2016a,b).

Twenty-seven sources referred to knowledge and understanding in the context of field trips (Table 3). Seven of those sources compared both types of fieldwork and acknowledged the role of both VFTs and OFTs in building geographical knowledge and understanding (Table 2).

The literature identified that both VFTs and OFTs extend and enhance the geographical knowledge developed within normal classroom activities. VFTs have the abundant potential for imparting deep geographical knowledge to students as more sophisticated technology increasingly creates more realistic experiences (Lisichenko, 2015). In developing deep knowledge, VFTs have several benefits. First, VFTs make distant or difficult places accessible. Morgan (2015) makes the salient point that VFTs "expose students to places teachers cannot take them" (p. 220), something which is acknowledged elsewhere in the literature (Çalişkan, 2011; Zanetis, 2010). Secondly, VFTs offer instant access to a wide range of virtual field specimens, including those that may not be visible when on-site (Qui & Hubble, 2002). Thirdly, students engage easily with virtual reality at a meaningful level (Jacobsen et al., 2009; Klemm & Tuthill, 2002) through techniques such as immediate magnification of objects or aerial views of landscapes. Finally, experts create VFTs and often include specialists who share their knowledge via video clips. Although VFTs do not literally take students into the environment they are studying, Klemm and Tuthill (2002) point out that the quality of instruction available may make a case in favour of VFTs. Morgan (2015) agrees, noting that students enjoy many of the same advantages of an OFT through strategies like video conferencing technology and argue that it is almost the same as being on location.

While VFTs are very good at holding attention (Jacobsen et al., 2009), they have some limitations in developing in-depth geographical knowledge. The information presented represents only a snapshot in time and is static. Therefore, VFTs rarely reflect the climate, weather changes or other impacting factors, whereas OFTs are a work-in-progress that reflect the current conditions. Additionally, while an OFT may not provide the consistency of specimens to examine or weather that is conducive to completing fieldwork, these very experiences contribute to geographical knowledge by introducing the concept of unpredictability to the students. In-depth knowledge often comes from first-hand experience, which helps to bridge the gap between the theoretical learning and the real world (Balci, 2010; Gaillard & McSherry, 2014). As Klein et al., (2014) maintain, there is no substitute for immersion in real places.

The literature supports both OFTs and VFTs as valid learning experiences for meeting the aims related to geographical knowledge and understanding, although the continuing development of technology and the quality of VFTs appears to be increasing the popularity of virtual reality learning in Geography classes.

> *"the continuing development of technology and the quality of VFTs appears to be increasing the popularity of virtual reality learning"*

Aim 3: Geographical methods and skills

The skills listed in the Australian Geography Curriculum: 7-10 fall into five main categories:

- Observing, questioning and planning
- Collecting, recording, evaluating
- Interpreting, analysing and concluding
- Communicating
- Reflecting and responding (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b p. 12)

Twenty-seven sources made reference to geographical skills in the context of field trips (Table 3). Of these sources, four of the ten that referenced VFTs made only generic comments about geographical skill building (Klemm & Tuthill, 2002; Çaliskan, 2011; La Velle; 2005; Qui & Hubble. 2002), and focused more on the logistics of VFTs. Elaboration on geographical skills and how they could be enhanced was much more robust in those articles focused on OFTs. Three articles advocated a hybrid approach, using OFTs and VFT's to complement each other (Harrington, 2009; Klemm & Tuthill, 2002; Lisichenko, 2015), while those articles more focused on OFTs gave more elaboration on the types of geographical skills that OFTs could develop.

'Thinking skills' was a common theme across the identified publications, with 20 out of 26 sources highlighting the importance of thinking as a geographical skill. Six sources specifically elaborated on critical thinking (Friess et al., 2016; Holton, 2017; Hope, 2009; Morgan, 2015; Simm & Marvel, 2015; Leydon & Turner, 2013). Observing, collecting, and recording featured more frequently in articles on OFTs than VFTs, while Jacobsen et al. (2009) claim that although VFTs do provide limited observation, they are superior for observing specific field samples. Reflecting and responding as geographical skills were identified in both types of field trips, although the skill of questioning featured more during OFTs. The skill of communication featured in articles about both OFTs and VFTs.

> *On OFTs, sensory input is high, increasing opportunities for emotional engagement and collaborative decision-making*

The focused literature review also revealed that field trips cater for two levels of student engagement: observational and participatory (Friess et al., 2016). If students are to learn skills, field trips where they are required to participate, rather than merely observe, are desirable. Preston (2016) and Lisichenko (2015) maintain that students on OFTs become active participants by engaging in the physical environment they are studying. Other researchers claim that VFTs, through their engaging activities in virtual reality, are also participatory (Qui & Hubble, 2002; Çaliskan, 2011). There is evidence that both types of field trips contribute to the development of geographical skills.

Aim 4: Geographical attitudes and values

Values and attitudes found in the Australian Geography Curriculum include "a sense of wonder, curiosity and respect about places, people, cultures and environments throughout the world" (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b, p. 8). Sixteen sources made reference to the development of positive geographical attitudes and values as an outcome of field trips. Only one source directly linked VFTs to the development of attitudes and values, while twelve sources offered evidence that OFTs help develop the affective domain. Three acknowledged the usefulness of both types of field trips in building positive attitudes such as respect, tolerance and empathy.

Golubchikov (2015) has coined the term feel-trip, claiming that OFTs provide far more than knowledge, understanding and skills, but enter the affective domain where sensory, and therefore emotional engagement is heightened. Qui and Hubble (2002) agree, highlighting the sensory experience of OFTs as a reason to maintain them and are supported by Holton (2017), who claims that OFTs affectively modify the nexus between people and places, and Hope (2009) who also asserts a link between direct experience and affective response.

It is this raw connection that fosters a sense of connectedness as real-life learning takes place in real-world contexts (Klemm & Tuthill, 2002). D'Acosta (2008) adds more to this discussion by raising the importance of choosing destinations that have "an exceptional potential to elicit emotional responses" and further reminds us that "emotion drives intellect" (p. 71). It is interesting to note that the indigenous people of Australia have always valued their emotional connection to the land and this is viewed as integral to their identity, culture and sustainable practice (McKnight, 2016; Rigby et al., 2016).

According to the chosen criteria focused literature, sensory input appears to be a critical factor in eliciting emotional responses during field trips. On OFTs, sensory input is high, increasing opportunities for emotional engagement and collaborative decision making (Leydon & Turner, 2013). While the graphics and sound capabilities of VFTs have improved exponentially since their introduction, there is evidence that during screen experiences, sensory input is restricted (Aitken et al., 2012). Therefore, to rely exclusively on virtual experiences may be limiting the life learning of students. Haigh (2107), in contrast, believes that virtual experiences offer excellent opportunities for students to respond with awe and wonder. Louv (2016) proposes that humans need both computers and natural environments; "computers to maximise our ability to process intellectual data, and natural environments to ignite our senses and accelerate our ability to learn and feel" (p. 23). Medzini et al. (2015) agree and suggest a blending of OFTs with technology by using mobile devices to assist with learning.

The field trip literature accessed during this investigation places OFTs in a stronger position than VFTs in terms of eliciting an emotional connection. Emotional connection may lead to positive geographical attitudes, a finding supported by Lisichenko (2015) who acknowledges that "perhaps one of the highest goals to reach is conveying emotion in a virtual environment" (p. 63).

Aim 5: Informed, responsible and active citizens

The final aim of the Australian Geography Curriculum is that it develops students "as informed, responsible and active citizens who can contribute to the development of an environmentally and economically sustainable, and socially just world" (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b p. 8).

The intentional inclusion of citizenship was scant across the scholarly publications investigated. Just eight publications referred to the development of citizenship in the context of field trips (Table 3). Of these, two sources indicated that VFTs might play a role in developing global citizens. In comparison, the remaining six sources indicated that OFTs play a decisive role in nurturing responsible citizens for the future. Sources referring to citizenship also referred to the development of positive attitudes.

When investigating the role of field trips in developing citizenship, La Velle (2005) included a list of VFT sites that address real-world problems and encourage global citizenship, positing that interacting with actual issues helps to develop an awareness and sense of responsibility in students. Jacobsen et al. (2009) concur, stating that VFTs allow access to environments otherwise out of range of geography students, and therefore promotes a sense of global citizenship. Beyond these two references, little was found that linked VFTs to citizenship.

Alternatively, there appears to be accumulating support for the belief that OFTs elicit emotional reactions, which, in turn, may encourage responsible citizenship. Golubchikov (2015) describes OFTs as an opportunity to connect emotions to learning in a way that helps students develop into thinking and active citizens. Klein et al. (2014) claim there is "no substitute for face-to-face immersion" (p. 25), with Krakowka (2012) positing that OFTs are memorable and that students remember their emotions longer than they remember the theory. The emergent idea is that physically interacting with both natural and human environments is vital to developing citizens who can make a positive contribution to their communities and world. The emotional responses to natural and built environments play a role in learning to respect the people who inhabit and value these environments. This includes the original landowners. Geography teachers should note, however, that isolated OFTs will not produce the same emotional connection as regular exposure and experience in natural environments does (Hope, 2009).

Logistical considerations in teaching Geography

While the purpose of this investigation linked to the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum, the content analysis also revealed a significant trend in Geography field trips. It highlighted that teachers were increasingly likely to choose between OFTs and VFTs based on logistics, rather than learning considerations or outcomes. Numerous sources attribute a variety of logistical benefits to the VFT. These benefits include time efficiency, reduced cost, reduced paperwork, reduced safety risks, reduced supervision issues and weather suitability (Barton, 2017; Boyle et al., 2007; Jacobson et al., 2008; Klemm & Tuthill, 2002; LaVelle, 2017; Lisichenko, 2015; Morgan, 2015). These factors outweigh the identified disadvantages. They also cite technology issues and website closure as issues, while Jacobsen et al. (2009) point out that creating tailor-made VFTs can be time-consuming and expensive, but this considered, VFTs are simpler to conduct.

An advantage of VFTs is that they hold attention and offer educational advantages in a format that engages students for extended amounts of time (Klemm & Tuthill, 2002). Additionally, advances in technology, such as 3D glasses, offer an illusion of being on-site for students. Developers of VFT software intentionally seek out experts to present concepts and demonstrate skills. The experience and skill levels of these experts may exceed that of qualified and experienced teachers, presenting a further reason for the shift towards VFTs. In defence of OFTs, students learning skills on-site can receive immediate feedback from their teachers. There are opportunities to engage through asking and replying to questions, further students also learn to adjust and respond to changing variables such as the weather, time of day or season. These adjustments more fully reflect real-world situations. Confronted with a daunting list of logistical hurdles to clear before leading an OFT could explain why teachers may increasingly favour the safer, more comfortable option of VFTs over the more challenging but experiential OFT.

> *"physically interacting with both natural and human environments is vital to developing citizens who can make a positive contribution to their communities and world"*

Discussion

This investigation of publications about geography-related field trips revealed that OFTs and VFTs have both benefits and limitations in meeting the aims of the Australian Geography curriculum. Owens (2013) highlights the need to "maximise learning and motivation through more fieldwork opportunities", and to "make the most of new technology" (p. 384). She further claims that students will benefit from both VFTs and OFTs to achieve their educational outcomes, especially when it comes to geographical knowledge and understanding.

For skill development, both OFTs and VFTs play a pivotal role. Lisichenko (2015) advocates using a hybrid approach but cautions that poor teaching and preparation will limit the effectiveness of either type of field trip.

There is accumulating evidence that connection with the natural world promotes positive environmental attitudes (Braun & Dierkes, 2017; Chawla, 2012; Lloyd & Gray, 2014; Place, 2016). The development of positive attitudes through experiential learning suggests that on-site field trips may be not only desirable, but indispensable in Geography. It is the act of students getting their hands dirty; of engaging in a wide range of sensory experiences to explore the environment, which, in turn, arouses the emotions. Students may develop the skill of making connections between concepts through participating in either type of field trip; however, the real experience of place, space and time supports the inclusion of OFTs for geographical learning.

While sensory experiences may influence values and attitudes, attitudes and values appear to influence behaviour. Positive attitudes are more likely to be enhanced by OFTs which place students in environments where all their senses are attuned to their surroundings (Gaillard & McSherry, 2014; Golubchikov, 2015; Hutchinson, 2016; Preston, 2015). Simm and Marvel (2015) make the pertinent point that students develop a "greater sense of affinity and engagement" (p. 613) when immersed in place.

> *"experiential learning opens a world of awe and wonder that may connect students with God, and which may, in turn, positively affect their attitude to stewardship of the environment"*

The Australian Geography Curriculum also aims for a sense of "wonder, curiosity and respect" (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b p. 8) in each student. Field-trips can elicit these values across diverse learners. This may occur through a sense of transcendence as students connect with their environment, as is experienced in indigenous cultures, or "an inner sense of relationship to a higher power that is loving and guiding" (Miller, 2005, p.28). Kessler (2000) supports this notion of transcendence or flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) as a state of optimal experience. The arousal of emotions, especially when experiencing the natural world, may be a spiritual experience. From a faith-based perspective, experiential learning opens a world of awe and wonder that may connect students with God, and which may, in turn, positively affect their attitude to stewardship of the environment.

Concerning activities conducted outside, but not directly associated with field trips, several authors note that early connections to the natural world raise awareness and positive attitudes that continue into adulthood (Chawla, 2012; Lloyd & Gray, 2014; Place, 2016). OFTs are one possible way of building this affinity to environments. It is this sense of affinity that can help develop the qualities that create informed and active citizens.

Many of the environmental issues that challenge humanity are the result of ecological, economic, and political decisions. The challenge for geography teachers is to create empathy that leads to responsible participation. Today's students are future decision-makers. Both virtual and first-hand experiences may contribute to sound choices, but OFTs have the added capacity to connect emotionally, and emotional connection contributes to the development of "informed, responsible and active citizens" (ACARA, 2016a; 2016b p. 8).

Monbiot, writing in '*The Guardian*' (2017) says, "It's not a matter of high-tech or low-tech; the point is that the world a child enters is rich and diverse enough to ignite curiosity, and allow them to discover a way of learning that best reflects their character and skills" (par. 13.). Therefore, this investigation advocates for a hybrid approach to field trips, with a balance between experiences using all the senses, and experiences that offer learning experiences based in the world of virtual reality. Morgan agrees, positing that "VFTs cannot replace traditional field trips" (2015, p. 221), and is supported by others (Jacobsen et al., 2009; Kirchen, 2011; Qui & Hubble, 2002), who recommend combining OFTs with VFTs to maximise learning. Even those who tout the benefits of VFTs make statements such as "there is absolutely no substitute for the real thing" (La Velle, 2005).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Both VFTs and OFTs assist students in meeting the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum. Each has strengths and limitations. Therefore, a combination of both will provide a variety of engaging experiences. If Geography was just about knowledge, understanding and skills, VFTs could probably meet the aims. However, the aims of Geography extend into the affective domain and stretch towards the future, requiring positive attitudes towards the diverse environments found on our planet, and the people who inhabit them. Therefore, while VFTs may be able to provide students with the answers for a sustainable future, it may be the OFTs that motivate them with the will to make the ongoing commitment to change that our planet needs for sustainability.

In the light of the aims of the Australian Geography Curriculum and past and current literature about Geography Field Trips, this evaluative investigation offers the following recommendations to Geography teachers.

1. Field trips should be chosen for their outcomes and capacity to engage despite logistical challenges.
2. An appropriate balance between OFTs and VFTs should be maintained in school Geography programs to ensure that all students may meet aims of knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes, and citizenship.
3. Geography teachers should plan OFTs that

are intentional in providing opportunities for an emotional connection with the land and the people who inhabit it.

Epilogue

The Geography teacher reviews the field trip in her mind. Her Year 8 students have 'dirty hands'. They have shivered at the delicious tickle of a ghost crab running lightly across their palms. They have felt the sand trickle through their fingers. They have tasted the saltiness on the breath of the wind and heard the shrill squawking of seagulls over the crash of the waves pounding the beach. They have smelt the seaweed strewn on the sand and listened to it crunch underfoot. Their eyes have rested lightly on the panorama of the coastline and the sparkle of sun on the water. They have left nothing but footprints as the evidence of their engagement with the environment, but they have taken with them new knowledge, understandings and skills. More importantly, they may have also discovered an emotional connection, a sense of awe and respect. The next time some of these Year 8 students go to the beach, they may observe with aware eyes, what surrounds them. This heightened awareness may start to change how they think. Their connections with the coast and its original inhabitants may begin to shape them as global citizens, and position them to impact the world they will inhabit as they move towards a future where their 'active and informed' (CAG.EC, 2019, p.6) choices make a difference. TEACH

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Technology: Learning and computing from home in lockdown

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Keywords: Learning, lockdown, pedagogy, technology

Abstract

Students' levels of out of school access to computers, peripherals and the internet was investigated by surveying Singleton High School students and parents in 2020 both pre and post the covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Though only 54% indicated unrestricted access to a device, 89% accessed at least one of their classes in the first week online. The restraints impacting student completion of learning within the 'learning from home' period are discussed within an intention to achieve equity in learning opportunity.

The context

In 2019 Singleton High School (SHS) decided to investigate the level of technology available to students outside of school. The education environment at SHS had become increasingly reliant on technology for delivery of lessons, with multiple opportunities to use devices and the internet at school, however there was concern about the technology available to students at home. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 87% of Australians have access to the internet at home (2018). This figure is lower in regional Australia, and for those from a lower socio-economic background. SHS being located outside a metropolitan area, and with more than half the students from the lowest SEO quartile (ACARA, 2020), the fear was that SHS students would have a lower access to the internet than most schools. As this could affect both student opportunity to learn, and staff teaching methods, this survey was considered important.

The Principal, and the Teacher-Librarian, decided to initiate this survey (Survey 1 - Students) in Term 2 of 2020. A Google Form was prepared by the Teacher-Librarian and reviewed by the school computer teacher and senior executive. With the threat of the Covid 19 pandemic rising, the Executive decided to move the survey to early March 2020. Surveys were conducted in class, since surveys emailed home could only be completed by students who already had access to the internet. Before students were advised to stay home at the end of week 8 (March 20th), 190 students, or 17% of the school was surveyed.

After the lockdown had commenced a second survey (Survey 2 – Parents) was sent out by the Head Teacher of Administration to parents in hope of getting better and more accurate results. This second survey was completed by 106 parents, representing 144 students or 13% of the school.

This information was used to help direct the school's efforts to ensure all students could access learning while offsite. An administrative attempt to make sure that the least well off within the school community, would not be left behind in a 'time of trial'.

On return to face to face teaching at Singleton High School, some staff were curious to know how the students had fared during the period of learning from home. The teacher-librarian designed a short survey (Survey 3 – Students – post-lockdown) to gauge some aspects of the students' experience. In particular issues with technology.

> *"the fear was that SHS students would have a lower access to the internet than most schools. … this could affect both student opportunity to learn, and staff teaching methods"*

Survey results

Participants - Which year* ?

Both the student (Figure 1) and parental survey (Figure 2) sought recognition of the Year a student was enrolled in, the parental sampling providing more equal numbers from each year. Consequent analysis of the data by Year could reveal grouped results, particularly how much overall access the seniors had, which was of specific interest.

Circumstances – Student and parent responses

The frequency and frequency percentage of student responses for questions common to both surveys are summarised in adjacent columns within the following tables, each addressing a specific question.

The second question (Table 1) enquired whether internet connected devices were available

to the student outside of the school. The type of device potentially limited the student's after school interaction. For example, a work video or podcast could be accessed on a phone, but attempting to write an essay response on anything smaller than a tablet would be very difficult.

The third question (Table 2) was included due to internet speed/data concerns. If a student had only

> *The type of device [accessible] potentially limited the student's after school interaction*

Figure 1: Student sampling by Year

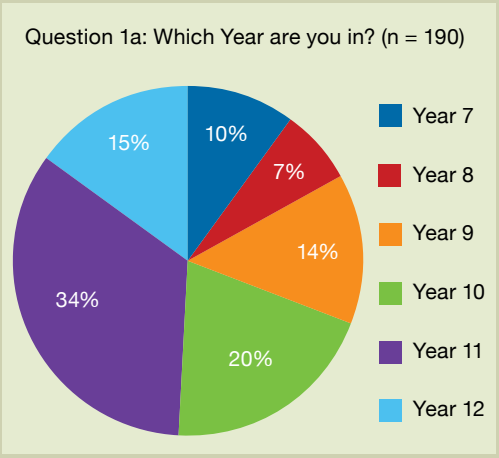

Figure 2: Parental survey sampling by Year

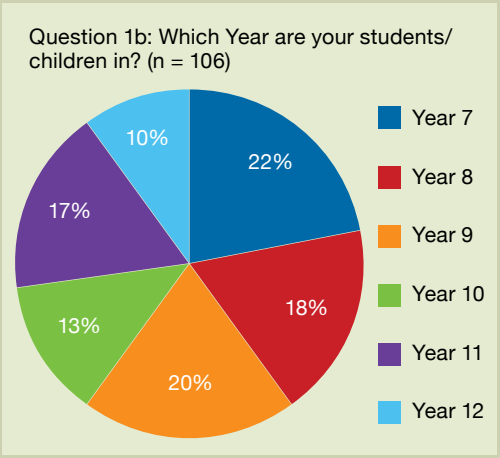

Table 1: **Accessible devices for after school access to the internet**

Question 2: What internet connected devices do you have easy access to outside of school? (Tick all that apply)

QUESTION	SURVEY 1 - STUDENTS		SURVEY 2 - PARENTS	
	Frequency	Frequency Percent	Frequency	Frequency Percent
Desktop computer at home	82	43.2	30	28.3
Laptop computer at home	136	71.6	78	73.6
Tablet (iPad, android)	93	49.3	43	40.6
Smartphone	165	86.8	77	72.6
I have access, but only at a friend or family member's house.	9	4.7	N/A	N/A
I have access, but only at a public place, e.g. youth venue, town library.	9	4.7	N/A	N/A
I have no easy access to a device outside of school hours.	9	4.7	N/A	N/A
I have no access to a device outside school hours	2	1.1	6	5.7

a mobile phone plan for internet access, data heavy work would not be feasible.

This fourth question (Table 3.) was designed to check limitations on the internet. An example of a potential limitation would be an old device that may not be able to access newer websites, had lower data quota specifications or slow speed that could prevent accessing videos or distractingly disrupt viewing.

Parents were also asked about their student's access to peripherals (Table 4). A final unique enquiry, Question 6 (Figure 3) asked each student whether they had access to the Singleton Library, and specifically the advantages gained through membership.

Third survey: Post-lockdown student responses

From the approximately 1,100 student enrolment of the school, a sample of 175 (16%) completed the post-lockdown survey. One younger than expected student was included (See Table 5). Responses to questions could consequently be analysed in terms student age grouping.

Questions 8-12 examined coping with learning in the lockdown, including dealing with disruption (Table 6, Question 8, Figure 4), technology restriction (Table 8, Question 11), need to purchase computers (Table 9, Question 10), learning at home as compared to face-to-face classes at school (Table 7, Question 9) and accessing hard copy support from the school (Table 10, Question 12). Finally, some comparisons between contexts before and after the home learning period are sought (Table 11).

Analysis

First survey: Student response

While responses were received from only a small sample, if assumed representative of the whole school, the results would have a dramatic effect on how work was delivered during social distancing. For example, two senior students (Stage 6, year 11 or 12) said they had no internet/device at home. If this was extrapolated across the two year groups, staff could expect 11 students in the senior school to need hard-copy work packs, this was slightly under the actual number requested for printing by senior students. While only 6 respondents said they had zero access to technology out of class hours, this number would increase rapidly when lockdown conditions came into place. Students who could access the internet or devices from a friends/relative's house, or from the town library, would no longer have access. Other complications would likely to occur, students who had been limited by a lack of devices would only have this barrier amplified once all family members, including parents, were working from home.

During the increased use of the internet in the first week of school students staying home, some senior students called teachers as their internet had either slowed down dramatically or had failed completely.

Ultimately though, despite only 54.7% of the respondents saying they were unrestricted in their internet use (Table 3), by the end of week 10 term 1, the second full week of offline learning, 89% of students had accessed at least one of their classes

> *"students who had been limited by a lack of devices would only have this barrier amplified once all family members, … were working from home"*

Table 2: After school internet access

Question 3: What type of Internet access do you have outside school? (tick all that apply)

QUESTION	SURVEY 1 - STUDENTS		SURVEY 2 - PARENTS	
	Frequency	Frequency Percent	Frequency	Frequency Percent
Landline/NBN internet	126	66.3	63	59.4
Satellite or wireless internet	89	46.8	33	31.1
Mobile device internet only, (e.g. hotspotting a phone, internet only on tablet)	49	25.8	22	20.8
I have no access to internet outside school	4	2.1	5	4.7
I have access but not at home, e.g. family member's house, town library	9	4.7	N/A	N/A

> *To ensure equity of learning the school was planning to provide older, internet capable notebooks to students in need of devices*

on CANVAS (the school learning management system). This high figure would suggest students and their parents had been making a concerted effort to use technology access they did have for school work. Anecdotal evidence from local computer sellers suggested that new computers were selling faster than usual in the last month, some of these may have ended up in the hands of students now forced to access online work.

While the school and community technology were working well at the end of March, a much larger than indicated proportion of junior students collected hard copies of work in the first week of enforced absence, week 9 (March 23rd to 27th). Across the Junior school, 317 students collected hard copy work. This was explained by office staff as dealing with parents to address their initial panic, or fear students would work better with paper than screen tasks. In week 10 (March 30th to April 3rd), this figure dropped off and online class access increased. Students who had not logged into classes or contacted the school, were called by year advisors or classroom teachers to see if there was any way the school could assist in making sure students had access to learning while in isolation.

Second survey: Parent's response

While the results of the first survey were useful, and were passed on to the Department of Education, the school executive felt that a more accurate picture would be required to respond optimally. To ensure equity of learning the school was planning to provide older, internet capable notebooks to students in need of devices, and the Department of Education was looking into providing mobile wifi dongles with data subscriptions to 'at need' students (Dizdar, 2020).

It was decided in Week 11 to send out the survey link again, but this time to parents via SMS, and through the school android and Apple applications. The hope was that parents would provide a more accurate picture than students, and that more responses would be completed. The survey was slightly modified to consider the number of students in a family. Reference to using the town library or other services was dropped due to the isolation conditions already imposed and reference was made to peripheral devices, such as printers and scanners, which had taken on greater importance in a time of remote learning.

Although there was a drop in the number of houses saying they had a laptop or Desktop, no year 11 or 12 students in this sample were without a device, and only 1 senior (yr 11) student was without internet access at home. However, with less than half unrestricted, this placed limitations

Table 3: Internet access limitations

Question 4. Are you restricted in how you use your internet? (tick all that apply)

QUESTION	SURVEY 1 - STUDENTS		SURVEY 2 - PARENTS	
	Frequency	Frequency Percent	Frequency	Frequency Percent
Yes, by internet speed. (e.g. can you watch Youtube without buffering?)	52	27.4	24	22.6
Yes, by internet data quotas	16	8.4	7	6.6
Yes, by poor service	26	13.7	16	15.1
Yes, by an old/faulty device	2	1.1	5	4.7
Yes, by parent/carer limits	17	8.9	18	17.0
Not enough devices (e.g. 1 computer for 3 children)	11	5.8	18	17.0
No, I am not restricted	104	54.7	50	47.2
No internet/device at home	6	3.2	5	4.7

Table 4: Access to computer peripherals

Question 5: Do you [your student] have access to a printer or a scanner?

QUESTION	SURVEY 2 - PARENTS	
	Frequency	Frequency Percent
Printer	83	94.3
Scanner	60	68.2

Table 5: Post-lockdown respondent age distribution

Question 7: What age group are you in?

Age Group	Number
11	1
12	4
13	27
14	33
15	40
16	57
17	10
18	3
Total	**175**

Figure 3: Membership of the Singleton Library

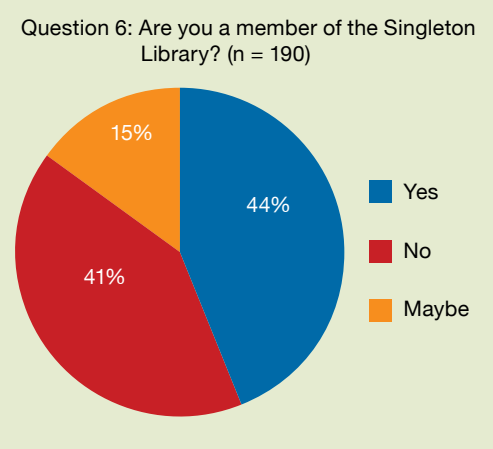

Table 6: Technology disruption during learning at home

Question 8: During learning from home, was your access or ability to use technology disrupted?

Response	F	F%
Yes	53	30.3
No	99	56.5
Unsure	18	10.3
No access to technology at home	5	2.9
Total	**175**	**100.0**

*f = frequency
f % = frequency as percentage of the sample

> *with less than half unrestricted, this placed limitations on what could be sent over the internet*

Table 7: Learning during isolation

Question 9. Compared to face-to-face learning, how well do you think you learnt during isolation?

1 - Much worse		2 - Worse		3 - The same		4 - Better		5 - Much better	
*f	f%	*f	f%	*f	f%	*f	f%	*f	f%
24	14.3	46	26.3	55	31.4	33	18.9	16	9.1

*f = frequency, f % = frequency as percentage of the sample

> *Zoom meetings could happen, but if more than 1 student in a household needed a device at a time, problems could occur*

Table 8: Technological restrictions during learning in isolation

Question 10: During isolation/learning from home, were you restricted in using technology for learning by any of the following?

Restriction	F	F%
Not having access to the internet at home	12	6.9
Not having access to a device at home	17	9.7
The internet at your house not being reliable (prior to isolation)	26	14.9
The internet being slower than usual (during Isolation)	59	33.7
Having to stop the internet due to financial pressure	3	1.7
Your modem or internet provider breakdowns	12	6.9
Not having an internet enabled device at home (prior to isolation)	2	1.1
Restricted access to an internet enabled device due to other family members needing to use it members needing to use it	24	13.7
Device breaking down	13	7.4
Device being too old to access the required websites or applications	15	8.6
Device being unsuited for the task? e.g. trying to write an essay on a phone	18	10.3
Lack of access to a printer	35	20
Lack of access to a scanner	24	13.7
Lack of a camera	15	8.6
Lack of a microphone	18	10.3
Lack of a space in the house to study	22	12.6
No interruptions to my technology use	76	43.4

*f = frequency, f % = frequency as percentage of the sample

Note: Students indicated multiple restrictions so the sum of frequencies and of the percentage of frequencies exceed 175 and 100% respectively.

on what could be sent over the internet. Livestream or heavy use applications would be difficult. Zoom meetings could happen, but if more than 1 student in a household needed a device at a time, problems could occur.

Table 9: Acquiring new technology

Question 11: During or after isolation, did your family acquire new technology? Tick all that apply.

Purchases	F	F%
A new computer	32	18.3
A new tablet or smartphone	16	9.1
A new periphery device (printer, scanner)	12	6.9
A new accessory (mouse, headset, webcam)	10	5.7
New FREE software (e.g., Zoom, Google Chrome, free school Office 365)	42	24
New PAID software or applications	9	5.1
New computer desk/chair	12	6.9
Paid for any other extra to aid with learning from home?	8	4.6
We have made no changes	109	62.3

*f = frequency, f % = frequency as percentage of the sample

Table 10: Accessing hard copy for learning

Question 12: Did you access hard copy work from the school?

Response	F	F%
For all subjects	28	16.0
For most subjects	23	13.1
For some subjects	64	36.6
A new accessory, (mouse, headset, webcam)	10	5.7
For no subjects	60	34.4

Without access to friends, youth venues or libraries, the number of students with no access to the internet/device increased from 3.2% to 4.7%, meaning across the school some 50-55 students would need a 'loan' computer or paper copies.

A significant jump was seen in restrictions due to not enough devices. In the initial survey, only 5.8% of respondents believed they did not have enough devices, however after 2 weeks of working online from home, this had jumped to 17%. There was also an increase in students limited by old or faulty devices from 1.1% to 5.7%, presumably faced with a requirement to use devices, many had found their device no longer up to the task. There was also an increase in the number of students facing parental limitations on use, which was surprising as now students had a legitimate need to use their device. Possible explanations could be the need to share devices amongst the whole family more regularly.

Ultimately some 32 senior students requested paper copies of work, a much higher percentage than was indicated by either survey. Again, this was put down to a preference for paper over screen, but also to issues with increased demands on home internet and devices.

Only 30 computers were loaned out across all years. This lower than expected number may be due to parents buying more devices when the lockdown started, or a reluctance to travel to school to pick up laptops after lockdown had commenced, or it may be a result of the majority of the school population, who did not respond, not needing the laptops. No mobile internet dongles were supplied to the school for distribution and so none were available to be given out.

In junior years 176 students asked for hard copy work packs. Parents reported to office staff that there had been difficulties using technology. Many households had faced greater restrictions due to greater demand from all family members for access to devices; Several parents reported that it was easier to monitor their children's work on paper than on technology. Many parents reported that their children found using the technology too difficult. The school was finding that the myth of the digital native, was just that, a myth; not just in terms of what students could do with technology, but also in terms of how little access to technology many students actually had.

"Ultimately some 32 senior students requested paper copies of work, a much higher percentage than was indicated by either survey"

Third survey: Post-lockdown

Of the students surveyed, 104 (59.4%) said that they learnt just as well, if not better with offsite learning than they did with face to face learning (Table 7). There was only a slightly greater number of students who suffered no interruptions in this group, suggesting that technology access was not the main factor influencing whether students learnt well in this time. Better learning could be accounted for by preferred learning styles, not questioned here, or the large number of hard copy work packs handed out by staff; 64.7% of students surveyed had accessed physical copies of work at some stage during lockdown (Table 10).

When asked about their technology at home, 77.7% thought their set up was adequate before

Table 11: Comparisons of before and after context

Before and after comparisons	Yes		No		Maybe	
	F	F%	F	F%	F	F%
Before isolation/learning from home, did you think your home access to internet/computer devices was good enough for your school needs.	136	77.7	11	6.3	28	16.0
Before isolation/learning from home, did you think your technology skills were good enough for your school needs?	133	76	17	9.7	25	14.3
During isolation/learning from home, did you think your technology skills were good enough for your school needs?	129	73.7	15	8.6	31	17.7
Do you think your technology skills have improved during the learning from home period	87	49.7	42	24.0	46	26.3
After isolation/learning from home, did you think your home access to internet/computer devices was good enough for school needs?	121	69.1	13	7.4	41	23.4

*f = frequency, f % = frequency as percentage of the sample

lockdown, dropping to 69.1% after lockdown (Table 11). Of the remainder who made changes, 32 (18.3%) bought new computers, not an insignificant number (Table 9).

When asked to think about their own technology skills, both before and after lockdown, 76% believed their skills to be adequate, dropping to 73.7% after a return to school (Table 11). This would show the need for continued explicit teaching of the technologies used in lockdown, in post-lockdown classes. Matching the individual results in spreadsheet data, indicated a slightly higher proportion of students who believed they had sufficient skill and technology, also believed they learnt better from home than at school. Age did not appear to be a significant factor. The practical exercise in needing to use technology did yield some benefits in technological skills learning. Almost half the respondents believed their technology skills had improved while learning from home, though 26.3% asserted only "maybe" (Table 11).

"Given they now understand the need for technology and have had to use it consistently, there may be more motivated eagerness to learn with technology in face-to-face environments"

Conclusion

The difficulties experienced at SHS were seen mirrored in other schools worldwide. The Winter edition of the Australian Educator published reports from teachers across Australia, explaining the technology difficulties at their schools; The very first mentioning internet blackspots for country kids (Australian Education Union, 2020, pp. 17-19). The Wall Street Journal reported that "The problems began piling up almost immediately. There were students with no computers or internet access. Teachers had no experience with remote learning. And many parents weren't available to help" (Hobbs & Hawkins, 2020). The same inequity in access was occurring in America as in Australia.

While over 90% of the Singleton High School population had access to the internet and devices, a far higher percentage than would have been suggested by the ABS figures for a low SEO area, the technology was not equal and not adequate. Once there was a need for everyone to use technology at home, the previously acceptable resources could not cope, and in many cases neither could the parents or students.

What this global pandemic has done, is show once again that the least amongst us are currently last when it comes to accessing the opportunities they need to succeed. Students with no access to the internet or internet enabled devices, have the potential to be left behind in a schooling 'world' which required remote access and assumed that it was affordable and available to all, if not already possessed. The response of teachers has shown us, once again, that the profession has an opportunity and responsibility to work for the less fortunate and if not provide them with what is missing, doing their best to provide a workable alternative. In this, educators can lead by example, and follow the example of the great teachers who have gone before, acting to eliminate or at least reduce inequity.

Moving forward educators will have to understand two important points which will have to shape how they teach. Just because students have access to technology, or are 'tech' consumers, does not mean they are 'tech' creators or digitally literate (Duggan, 2020, pp. 14-15). Furthermore, students may not be digitally literate, because they actually don't have easy or reliable access to technology. School teachers will have to explicitly teach the skills they want students to have and be ready with differentiated lessons for those without home access.

This post lockdown period may provide an opportunity to improve the students' use of technology at school. Given they now understand the need for technology and have had to use it consistently, there may be more motivated eagerness to learn with technology in face-to-face environments where it can be more readily supported. Teachers also would now be more familiar with a variety of technology, such as Canvas, which was only introduced last year, and can see how useful and usable it is, consequently utilising it when it provides a an appropriate pedological application. TEACH

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"Left behind" and invalid comparisons

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Keywords: Authenticity, comparisons, entitlement, evaluation, NAPLAN, PISA, testing, and validity

Hardly a month or two go by without some 'informed' commentator admonishing Australians that they are in danger of being "left behind." It is as though the country's inhabitants are being scripted as actors in a religious, dispensationalist, prophetic drama of sorts. Seemingly, we constantly are being analysed and compared to one or another nation — whether South-east Asian, Scandinavian, or some other group on the globe.

This is *not* to say that we can't learn from the decisions, undertakings, experiences and programs of others. However, comparisons can be inappropriate, ill-judged, misinformed, or disturbing; the latter as in the case when Captain James Cook's 1770 voyage up the eastern coast of this country was recently analogised to Covid19 (Towell & Colangelo, 2020).

Nowhere, it appears, are comparisons more ubiquitous than in the area of education and schooling. Educational methods, programs, outcomes, as well as teachers are often the target of media criticism and commentator pity parties (Baker, 2019). At best, the glass is presented as half empty; at worst there is an obsession in today's media with the bad and the ugly (de Botton, 2014). Rarely do media reports praise the work of people in the education sector in general, and teachers in particular. Although, given the 2020 Covid19 epoch, many parents may have acquired a new realisation and appreciation of the challenging and valuable work that is being done in classrooms (and hospitals) every normal day — not merely in this country, but worldwide.

What is the basis of many misplaced and badly chosen comparisons? Essentially it comes down to assuming an equivalence, or at least considerable similarity, between A and B that permits a transfer between the two sets. In the real world it implies that solutions which appear to work in one country can be 'exported' to or 'appropriated' by another. All one needs, so to speak, is an array of 3D printers and a conveyer belt to go into production. This may function effectively for a range of industrial, household or medical products (the latter after rigorous tests and scrutiny by the Therapeutic Goods Administration), but it is ineffective and an unacceptable 'quick-fix' for addressing and remedying complex situations; educating children being one of them. No, we shouldn't have to re-invent the wheel, *and* neither should we expect that 'one size fits all'.

Comparisons and transfers make least sense in cases where 'pairs' are widely distanced on a number of measures or categories such as:

- type of political system and stability of government;
- cultural norms, diversity or absence of;
- GDP/ prosperity level,
- type of political system and stability of government;
- geography and climate;
- size of disadvantaged population;
- social structures, laws, taxation, etc.

There are often too many intervening variables to make simplistic comparisons. After all, that's the reason why medical researchers trialling drugs use placebos, so they don't end up with distorted comparisons.

The initial intention for the implementation of the National Assessment Program – Literacy & Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Australia was simply to provide parents and schools with information about students' individual performances regarding core skills necessary to progress through school and life. Moreover, NAPLAN actually provides teachers with a valuable tool for diagnosing pupils' strengths and weaknesses; a tool that can be applied across a whole school. It didn't take long, unfortunately, for the test to be misused for comparisons and taking on various pejorative forms — league tables, boasting badges and put-downs — with the media aiding and abetting willing contenders to stake out a claim in the field of academic accomplishment for some to profit from the prestige that comes with it. One wonders whether state education jurisdictions were (un)willingly complicit in a process that turned out

"It didn't take long, unfortunately, for the test [NAPLAN] to be misused for comparisons and taking on various pejorative forms"

to be a distortion of purpose; a 'shame and blame' exercise for many disadvantaged, struggling schools. Comparisons that subvert the purpose of assessment and testing processes end up devaluing schools and individuals, tearing down rather than building up.

The *misuse* of items, programs, or ideas may clearly lead to some unintended, adverse consequences. Using an electric drill as a kitchen whisk, or a shopping trolley as a mobility scooter is a case in point. Similarly, when a test is misused to establish 'league ladders', one should not be surprised if deleterious outcomes occur, resulting in misplaced comparisons that in turn may influence or distort both curricula and pedagogy. 'Teaching to tests' is not an unheard of phenomenon (Patty, 2010, para. 5), a practice where enormous pressure is put on teachers and students alike to conform to test expectations and requirements above other priorities.

The OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is another well-known testing instrument. It assesses the extent to which 15-year-olds have learned knowledge and skills for adult participation in society, in the areas of science, maths and reading. It is 'NAPLAN on an Olympic scale'. With 79 nations participating in the most recent 2018 PISA tests, the exercise has morphed into a juggernaut that, similarly to NAPLAN, compares and ranks 'contestants' according to performance in selected knowledge areas. PISA has patently developed into a competition for prestige; a comparison of countries' student academic prowess, resulting in some unhealthy rivalry.

> *In comparing, we value and … devalue. Prestige, power and economic rationalism end up in trumping human well-being*

The upshot of extreme test pressures at the upper secondary school level in some top performing PISA nations, has historically led to students suffering from high rates of depression and suicide (Berry & Anderson, 2011). In comparing, we value and simultaneously devalue. Claiming superiority, also assigns or implies inferiority. Prestige, power and economic rationalism end up in trumping human well-being.

Why all this concern regarding Australia's latest downward-trending PISA results? Australia was ranked 21, with an overall score of 499 (Facts Maps, 2018). Is it indicative of a sense of loss of confidence and an increasing national inadequacy in the field education, or perhaps an externalised inferiority complex—a fear that our education achievements stand in the shadow of our sporting accomplishments? Is it a triumphalist yearning for being able to punch above our weight in both spheres, while simultaneously pointing to a feeling of personal and collective insecurity?

National comparisons are often a recipe for unhappiness and anxiety that is being other-driven. Philosopher Alain de Botton (2014) may be getting to the heart of the matter when he asserts, "We are the inheritors of an idea, endorsed by the right and left wings of the political spectrum, that the most fundamental reality of nations is their financial and economic state" (p.127). If he is correct, then countries' PISA results are perhaps no more than proxy listings on international stock markets!

Because of the work of detractors, the apostle Paul in his letter to the church in Corinth refers to comparison issues in which he was personally caught up. Speaking disapprovingly of the practice, he says, "in all this comparing and grading and competing, *they quite miss the point*" (2 Cor. 10:12, The Message, emphasis supplied). The apostle makes it quite clear that he won't be distracted by comparisons because he is single-mindedly committed to purpose —the sharing of the Gospel. In an earlier letter to the same church he uses the illustration of the different roles of individual body parts and the varied gifts of believers which should contribute to the well-being of the whole—"the purpose of all these things should be to help the church to grow…"(1 Cor. 1:26. NCV). Paul's enunciated principle, I believe, can also find application in the secular sphere; i.e., benefitting the good and welfare of the community and society at large.

Comparing typically engenders a feeling of 'better than', 'a cut above' others. In times of crises, such as pandemics, it may even signal entitlement. For instance, are workers in health, education, and transport deserving of, or entitled to 'needed' pay rises, whereas those employed in other areas are not? Does Ms Kylie Ward, ACN chief executive, have a compelling case in claiming, "… the timing is right to revalue essential workers, so their newfound status translates financially …" (Daniel, 2020, para. 42)? This assertion raises a series of questions. Should that list also include workers in sewage treatment, electricity generation, food production and distribution? And where is the border between "essential" and non-essential? Do we then relegate personnel in the arts, ministry, counselling, law etc. to the dispensable category? If the latter, aren't we then living in such a reward-based, transactional world that a job well done is no longer truly its own reward? And if Ms Ward's claim has *gravitas* and legitimacy, we then become involved in a race to the bottom of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. As part of such a society's *modus operandi*, expertise and skills will therefore focus on aspects of survival, on tools which will be most highly prized and rewarded—a regression to a pre-modern, decivilized social order.

In comparing, we tend to think highly of ourselves. The apostle's counsel is then also for us/me. "Don't cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities…" (Romans 12:3, Phillips). Comparisons

have a habit of killing such qualities as peace, joy, generosity, love, kindness, patience, well-being, creativity — members that belong to the set of the fruit of the Spirit. Rather than comparing that limits, let's appreciate that which liberates, valuing what is unique, good and noteworthy about one's country, region, town, or school, freeing people individually or collectively to strive and do better on their own terms.

Dixil Rodriguez (2020), a medical centre chaplain, has a distinct 'take' on the practice of comparing and evaluating on a personal as well as a spiritual level. She muses on the subject:

> All of us have different abilities and spiritual gifts that transcend borders of evaluation. At the end of the day, we are evaluated by no rubric, but through Jesus Christ. Having accepted Him as my Savior, my defective self is replaced by perfection that's not mine, but motivates me to excel in my self-development, my desire to serve Him. *I'm motivated to care for others, and my reward is fulfilling a mission of service for Christ.*
>
> (p. 55, emphasis supplied)

Her reality is an authentic life in which comparisons have been left behind and are not merely invalid but have become obsolete.

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> *Rather than comparing that limits, let's appreciate that which liberates, valuing what is unique, good and noteworthy*

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BOOK REVIEW

Getting more out of restorative practice in schools – A practical approach to improve school wellbeing and strengthen community engagement

Margaret Thorsborne, Nancy Riestenber, & Gillean McCluskey. (2018). Jessica Kingsley, 280 pages.
ISBN: 978-1785927768

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> *Restorative Practice (RP) is all about focussing on community, relationships and healing rather than punishing wrong doers.*

This book is an easy to read, yet engaging, interesting and informative. Restorative Practice (RP) is all about focussing on community, relationships and healing rather than punishing wrong doers. It has been successfully implemented in many schools across the world.

This book showcases different practices of RP from a wide range of settings and locations in Part 1 of the book. In Part 2 (my favourite section) RP is aligned to a variety of different approaches and knowledge.

Chapter 1 is all about the need for the school to assess their own interest and willingness to adopt RP in their school. It also highlights the problems with implementation that could happen if the school is not ready.

Chapters 2 – 5 discuss individual case studies from Glasgow, Minnesota and California and how RP has been implemented in a range of schools or school districts. These chapters reflect honestly the individual journeys implementing RP and give good insight into the pitfalls for others to avoid.

Chapter 6 is set in London and discusses how to evaluate and measure success when implementing RP in schools. This chapter sums up Part 1 of the book in a very practical way.

As mentioned earlier, Part 2 of this book aligns a variety of approaches and knowledge with RP:

1. Theory of Mind: Chapter 7 aligns the Theory of Mind and the Theory of RP. The researchers from Edinburgh believe both of these theories may enhance the understanding of each other.
2. Mindfulness: In Chapter 8 the researchers from Vermont discuss the strengths with incorporating Mindfulness with RP.
3. Wellbeing: The New Zealand Researchers discuss how there is a strong link between Wellbeing and RP and how both can strengthen the other program.
4. Student Trauma: This study from Minnesota shows that students can come to school with various amounts of trauma and RP can actually help decrease tensions.
5. Peace Practices: Peace Practices from England were coupled very successful with RP to strengthen the outcomes for students.
6. Therapeutic links to Maturing Young Brains: The connection was made by Neuroscientists in NZ that schools who responded with RP when students make mistakes had better outcomes than normal means of punishment for wrongdoing.
7. Transitions to new schools: The researchers in Minneapolis found that when schools adapted a version of Family Group Conferencing, the transition to a new school for a student who had been suspended or expelled, was significantly more successful.
8. Restorative Parenting Program: The restorative parent program in Ireland was found to be very successful when combined with RP in schools.
9. Supporting Families with Complex Needs: Some schools in NZ found that RP worked best in their school if they also implemented a strong program to support families with complex needs.

The final chapter succinctly gives important advice to those wanting to implement RP into their own school. This chapter also includes a series of questions that need to be considered before implementation.

Restorative Practice aligns very well with Christian principles. It is my belief that while there were many sections in this book that schools could implement readily, it would be important to ensure that Christian principles were overlayed over all decisions when implementing Restorative Practice in Christian schools. TEACH

Digital Life Together: The Challenge of Technology for Christian Schools

David I. Smith, Kara Sevensma, Marjorie Terpstra & Steven McMullen. (2020). Eerdmans, 348 pages.
ISBN: 978-0802877031

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According to Mark Scott[1], "Since the time of the ancient Greeks, this is what great education has been all about. Asking the right questions. Challenging the assumptions. Seeking insights and understanding. Searching for the why" (Scott, 2019b, para. 4). He laments that these are things we have failed to do when confronted with embracing technology in schools. He asserts that, "What good teachers are always ready to do is demand a hypothesis. Challenge the assumptions using the evidence" (p.18). This is especially relevant where technology is concerned as its progress is "hardly predictable or linear" (p.18).

This book's resonance with Scott's thoughts is firstly apparent in the *Table of Contents* where "The Shifting Landscape" is how the challenge of technology for Christian schools is introduced, and following an extensive research undertaking, "The Finishing Line Keeps Moving" is its conclusion. This is the landscape in which teachers have to use faith to inform their pedagogical processes. Yet for many, this landscape is neither the one in which they trained, nor were students themselves, so to educate in this context requires reimagining.

Digital Life Together overcomes the failures Scott lamented, as it reports on a large-scale investigation into technological change in relation to education – more specifically – in how digital technologically mediated education matches, or not, the mission and vision of education in Christian Schools; how it is impacting Christian education. This is done by providing the background, methods of data collection, analyses, findings and conclusions related to a multi-yeared, in-depth empirical study reporting on a group of Christian schools that had implemented one-to-one computer programs, and how technology interacted with faith and learning in the context of these programs for these Christian schools.

An important aspect of the study was the mixture of methods used to collect information, with surveys, focus groups across the school community, case studies, classroom observations, in-depth interviews, school records and artefacts, all employed to examine the real impact of technology on Christian learning. This enabled the authors to provide more than surface-level tips and techniques, imparting deep Christian wisdom about technology use in the Christian classroom within the domains of mission, teaching, learning, discernment, formation, and community. An apposite example of how faith can inform pedagogical processes was in the area of discernment. While parents feared the moral degradation of their children through online engagement, they were not concerned about the most distracting element of the internet for their children - shopping. Closer investigation showed that this was not a "good" aspect of their online experience. Materialism is not a characteristic one would expect faith informed pedagogy in a Christian school to promote, but by technology allowing tasks to be completed more quickly and providing access to the internet, digitally mediated lessons availed students of the opportunity to shop. Thinking anew led to the reshaped practice of having two/three students share computers which led to greater focus and engagement, and opportunity for connection and community rather than isolation, which was more suggestive of a faith informed pedagogical process.

It was consistently apparent throughout the book that the range of data collected provided opportunities for triangulation, to clarify findings, and to establish internal consistency. In Part 3, for example, with regard to digital technology's capacity to differentiate learning and enhance the success of all learners, "Survey data showed both teachers and students affirmed gains… and observational evidence confirmed this" (p.136). These benefits were in both academic achievement and inclusion, illustrating the examination of digital technology in relation to enhancing faith-based

> *Digital technology as a means for reaching out into the world, … illustrated the benefit of corroboration of input from more than one source*

> *Rooted in empirical research rather than anecdotal impressions*

requirements such as inclusion and community, beyond it just being an academic tool. Digital technology as a means for reaching out into the world, discussed in Part 5, also illustrated the benefit of corroboration of input from more than one source. Successful examples of student formation through outreach were found to be repeated in different groups, inflating their apparent occurrence, revealing they were not representative of the average school experience. Reporting less positive results was very helpful. It made the process reported by the book attainable, that is, looking at one's own context, the school's mission and what it envisions, and whether digital technology-based practice is missionally aligned and is enriching Christian formation and community. The author's method of parsing the Modern Christian School's mission statement provided an excellent example of how to consider digital impact on one's own Christian education practices and that of one's school. The thought-provoking questions at the end of each chapter were similarly beneficial.

The mixed method allowed the readers to see the findings as confirmable, credible, and dependable, which importantly made them transferable to contexts beyond the cohort of schools investigated (e.g. Devault, 2019) with higher confidence. As J. K.A. Smith (2020) noted, the book's content is, "Rooted in empirical research rather than anecdotal impressions", which, "helps us learn from what is happening to better frame what we hope might happen" (Editorial Reviews – 3). TEACH

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