Merged Worlds

LANGUAGE AND LIFEWORLDS: FOSTERING EMPATHY AND EXPRESSION IN ENGLISH THROUGH LITERATURE AND REAL WORLD CONNECTEDNESS

Please keep on Notes View if you wish to have some notes to enhance the presentation.
Introduce: JPC, UK, Northside, Drama. Q: Students in England, thought I was Australian but learned I was born in Canada. “Are you an illegal immigrant?” Narrow reference points; assumptions.
Today’s session
*What did we do?
*What does it look like?
*How did we do it?
*How might it look in your context?
What did we do?

TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM BOUNDARIES SMASHED
CURRICULUM ENERVATED
STUDENT LEARNING ALIVE IN A MULTICULTURAL WORLD
Starting with the WHY, coming back to the WHY
Graphic organiser we came up with afterwards to express what we do
Engagement and Empathy

Empowerment requires desocialisation, which starts with understanding and respecting the divergent narratives, identities and perspectives in society.

Education can “de-centre” students, enabling them to see themselves as multifaceted individuals in a complex world.


University paper on my educational philosophy has stick with me, ten years later
Australian Curriculum: English

“language, images and vocabulary can influence an audience/create different levels of meaning”

“different perspectives in texts/ways texts position an audience”

“own interpretations/interpretations can vary”

“draw on personal knowledge, textual analysis and other sources to express or challenge a point of view”
English Syllabus, QCAA (Queensland)

“ideas, attitudes and values underpin texts and influence audiences”

“subtle and complex creation/evaluation of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places”
The following are marked changes in English Faculty (~150-250 per year level, 7-12; 15 teachers) from 2012 to 2015
Binary to Multiplicity
Before | students | After

"boring" "confusing" |   | "fun" "interesting"
Before  teachers  After

“over-complicated”
“stifling”

“meaningful”
“allows me to be creative”
Before | parents | After

“I nearly withdrew my children, it was so poor”

“My sons have more rigour in Year 7 than their brother had in Year 11”
Before  quality of work  After

simplistic writing and analysis  Complexity, rigour, sophistication
Year 12 final results.

Before results After

5% A 20% A
30% B 40% B
What does it look like?

CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY
FOR EMPATHY AND EXPRESSION
Crucial to map skills and build for progression (one kind of relevance = developing long term capacity)
Year 7

IMAGINATIVE – NARRATIVE ABOUT YOUR FUTURE SELF
PERSUASIVE – SPEECH ABOUT SOLUTION TO UPHOLD COMMUNITY VALUES
EXPOSITORY – EVALUATION OF PICTURE BOOKS ABOUT COLONISATION
FORMATIVE PROJECT – TRASH INQUIRY
Narrative about your future self
Personal Relevance

“when students experience what they learn as having personal relevance, and feel emotionally supported in learning by both their teachers and peers, they are more likely to feel interested and to value learning activities in school.”

Students chose their own way to immerse in the idea of their future self (only a handful found this ‘future self photo’ program)
Teaching narrative – ways for new indigenous students to access this - bridging gaps in their knowledge. (totem, current new world of boarding school, future?)
Past #1

When I was younger I travelled to Sydney.

Teaching tense – exploring the self
Present #1
This year I am joining the basketball team.
Future #3
When I am older I will help my family live.
From personal to community – local or global. Inquiry into real problem of ‘values not upheld’ then solve. Values = not right/wrong but what matters more/most to that group.
Engagement through Relevance

“The work students undertake ... needs to be relevant, meaningful and authentic - in other words, it needs to be worthy of their time and attention”


Why educate? To make a difference. Does it matter?
The Rabbits – analyse – alter and justify – improve analysis (contextualise) – share improvement + Extended group – alter and justify new picture book, share. Pollution example shows excellent critical thought to see ‘rabbits’ (colonisers) blaming pollution rather than their own society.
Global relevance for lasting learning

“Learning is most significant and lasting when it is connected to the world around the student.”

*Trash*

By Andy Mulligan

(also made into a film)

Fiction beyond their own experience. Again connected to the real world. Bringing together all their learning thus far.
Connecting to the world beyond ‘self’

“Stories you read can transform you because they help you imagine beyond yourself. If you read only what mirrors your view of yourself, you get locked in...buried.”


“Without a complete vision of all that it means to be human, we live impoverished and isolated lives. Fortunately, the world of literature of children and teenagers is gradually being transformed to embrace the wondrous complexity, diversity, and depth of the human experience.”

Year 8

EXPOSITORY – ANALYSIS OF VALUES PROMOTED IN CHILDREN’S TELEVISION
PERSUASIVE – SPEECH RELATED TO REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS
IMAGINATIVE – MEMOIR TO REVEAL SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER
Values = not right/wrong but what matters more/most to that group. Showing not telling (constructing representations).
Values = not right/wrong but what matters more/most to that group. Showing not telling (constructing representations).
Nowar Islam -- I really enjoyed listening to Yahiya’s story. Listening the hard ships of asylum seekers rather then reading it, is a lot different. I found the workshop interesting as well, though some of the things I already knew because of my culture and background, it was still nice to look at something that was both beautiful and familiar.

Johann Bell -- I really enjoyed learning about Yahya’s story about moving to Australia and how he moved across the world to achieve that. It also helped my understanding of asylum seekers that they are not que jumpers or terrorists but good people.

Julija Cvetkovic: If we changed the way students in year 8 look at asylum seekers and refugees then we could probably change the way students at JPC see asylum seekers and refugees, then if we could achieve that we have a good chance of changing people’s minds in our community about refugees and asylum seeker.

Sophie Terris -- I really enjoyed listening to Yahya’s story and hearing his life and hardship compared to what is written in a fictional book. I felt grateful for everything I take for granted.
Students are ‘de-centred’ (not about our views but multiple views, ability to understand own view and question it too)

De-centred for multiple interpretations

As teachers it is our role to “not impose our own interpretations or belief systems upon students, but to help them to become conscious of the origins of their own interpretations and to respect the considered interpretations of others, and the cultural differences they imply.”


Show don’t tell. They LOVE sharing about themselves. Drama, drawing, memories. Perspective. Revealing.
Students are ‘de-centred’
Year 9

PERSUASIVE – NAPLAN-STYLE RESPONSE ABOUT REGIMES
IMAGINATIVE – NARRATIVE SET IN A REGIME
IMAGINATIVE – GOTHIC DESCRIPTION
EXPOSITORY – JUSTIFICATION OF OWN CHOICES WHEN WRITING GOTHIC PIECE
Regimes: power, propaganda, persuasion

Fiction extracts – 1984 (+theatre visit), Handmaid’s Tale, Hunger Games, Divergent //
Real-world – WWII, Taliban, North Korea, Mao’s China,
Recognising similarities → Understanding difference

“Once students realise their basic similarities, they will be able to engage in thoughtful discussions of the differences among various peoples, such as school experiences, the role of government in one’s life, technology experiences, the perception of family, the perception and use of time, religious beliefs and practices, world events and their impact, and daily routines and lifestyles.”


Students are ‘de-centred’
Fiction and real world project – to hook a JPC audience into gothic through teaser + project display + justify decisions. Dracula theatre, multiple extracts from gothic classics
Pedagogy

PERSONALISED, REFLECTIVE = CO-CREATED
Multiple spaces. Alone, paired, groups. Indoor, outdoor, comfortable chairs, floor, desks.
Visual, Aural, Kinaesthetic

Huge variety (kinaesthetic shown here)
“Show your learning, your way”

Personal connection
Kenny is from a remote community, living with grandparents, rugby boy, low literacy. This is him holding his plan for his narrative – his future self.
Teacher directed, optional, then YEAR 10 CLASSES = selected style and structure, grouped for best fit.
Year 10

PERSUASIVE – MULTIMEDIA MESSAGE IN AID OF MARGINALISED GROUP
EXPOSITORY – SPOKEN ANALYSIS OF POEM IN ROLE AS POET
EXPOSITORY – EXAM ANALYSIS OF TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
IMAGINATIVE – NARRATIVE ON ANY TOPIC, IN ANY GENRE AND STYLE
Engagement through empathy: personal connections to topics and texts

“...the teacher should assist students in developing their own understandings in the context of their own emotions and experiences.”


“When the images and ideas presented by the work have no relevance to the past experiences or emotional needs of the reader, only a vague, feeble or negative response will occur.”

IB TOK Ways of Knowing -- many methods...including poetry. In role as poet, ‘justify’ choices and explain poem in context.
Community groups + inquiring into world issues now/history + personal ways of knowing = empathy
From ‘othering’ to ‘de-centred’; from binary stereotypes to a multiplicity of complex identities

Post 9/11, the “new racism” is a kind of “culturalism” that assumes the dominant cultural behaviours and beliefs are normal and pushes ‘others’ to the margins.


When ‘othering’, people tend to essentialise, that is, assume all members of the ‘other’ cultural group have uniform behaviours and beliefs, resulting in simplistic representations of identity.

How does the writer construct representations? Now I am the writer – how will I?
Builds on all up until now – crucial to focus on core skills in middle years and position students to be ready for conceptual underpinnings of Senior course. Not ‘teaching’ basic skills – manipulating, evaluating with increasing complexity
How did we do it?

EMPOWERMENT, ENGAGEMENT
TAKING RISKS, REFLECTING
# Major leadership influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful concept</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>authentic leadership</td>
<td>Duignan, P. (2014) <em>Authenticity in Educational Leadership</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Problem: Define and Discover (using data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Viviane Robinson, Student-Centred Leadership, (2011)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Leading teacher learning:&lt;br&gt;• has biggest effect size – 0.84 (p104) and is a collective endeavour (p106)</td>
<td>Defined problem:&lt;br&gt;“We are enabling learners to be passive consumers of ‘learn and burn’ knowledge.”&lt;br&gt;Why? “Fear of repercussions if we gradually release responsibility and they fail.”&lt;br&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patrick Duignan, Authenticity in Educational Leadership, (2014)</strong>&lt;br&gt;“Collective ethic of responsibility for the shared leadership of quality teaching, student learning and outcomes”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fullan et al, Breakthrough, (2006)</strong>&lt;br&gt;“role of leadership is to help provide the focus...with an emphasis on what is needed to personalise each classroom”</td>
<td>Student focus groups (range of abilities/attitudes to learning) in Years 7 &amp; 8 to ask about learning:&lt;br&gt;Whole class constructs paragraph – “teacher takes over”&lt;br&gt;Repetitive: similar learning goal and approach every single lesson – “getting bored and mucking up” (ALL agreed)&lt;br&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heifetz and Laurie, The Work of Leadership, (2001)</strong>&lt;br&gt;“Get on the balcony”&lt;br&gt;Don’t calm the storm: stir the pot and stimulate the search for solutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not linear!!
Chestnut #1

Good leaders ask great questions.
### Solution: Dream

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heifetz and Laurie, <em>The Work of Leadership</em>, (2001)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Don’t give solutions: empower people to solve together</td>
<td><strong>Shared vision:</strong> <em>Students are active, reflective, co-creators of lasting learning.</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired outcomes / values:</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>We are also learners: let’s be active, reflective co-creators of lasting learning with students and as team.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patrick Duignan, <em>Authentic in Educational Leadership</em>, (2014)</strong>&lt;br&gt;“Collective ethic of responsibility”</td>
<td><strong>Student focus groups:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- If we do PEEL paragraphs again, each get a whiteboard marker and nominate some to discuss – choose best ideas.&lt;br&gt;- Being our own critic – checklist to go through and highlight yourself – better than teacher saying to do it – more self-directed.&lt;br&gt;- Break down of checkpoints for teacher to check off and then give the next bit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parker J Palmer, <em>The Courage to Teach</em>, (1998)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Educational reform comes from teachers who “remember the passions that led them to teach, and they do not want to lost the primal energy of their vocation.” (p177)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chestnut #2

When we want it, we’ll pursue it.
Solution: Design

Research

Relational trust is key: (p34-43)
- Higher trust → teachers “more willing to innovate and take risks”
- Trust requires: respect, personal regard
- Open-to-Learning Conversations (OLCs): valid information, respect, internal commitment

“Leadership...means seeing more in teachers than teachers sometimes see in themselves”(p164)

“role of leadership is to provide the focus and expert support system for teachers”

REGULATE DISTRESS, Provide:
- Direction (frame key issues)
- Protection (manage rate of change)
- Orientation (to new roles by clarifying realities and values)
- Conflict management (expose and spark resolution process)
- Norm shaping (maintain good, banish bad)

“Collective ethic of responsibility”
Chestnut #3

We’re all human.
Carla,
Can’t contain my excitement.
Students are sitting in differentiated groups, looking at different persuasive features in Jolie’s speech.
Here are some of the conversations I heard in my Year 8 class.

- ‘WOW, there’s heaps of first person pronouns – that’s weird’
- ‘But there’s no second person pronouns... oh no, wait, there’s heaps’
- ‘Millions is definitely an emotive word’

Students teaching each other and having authentic conversations about persuasion. Loving it!

△ C
English and SOSE Teacher

Research
GIVE THE WORK BACK TO THE PEOPLE
Don’t foster dependency.
Empower.
Let people carry the problem and solution within themselves.
And example of one rollout of Inquiry learning – student and teacher reflection
Chestnut #4

It’s about *us*, not about me.
Relationships and Vision: trust + vision + collaboration = wildfire

- Good leaders ask great questions.
- When we want it, we’ll pursue it.
- We’re all human.
- It’s about us, not about me.
How might it work in your context?

EMPOWERMENT, ENGAGEMENT
TAKING RISKS, REFLECTING
Who cares?

Making learning matter.
Where are you at? Where to next?

Useful for students and for teachers – we are all learners, after all.