

CREATIVE

Learning

Edited by Julian Sefton-Green



Creative Partnerships

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Lotte Friedrich and Naranee Ruthra-Rajan for their help in developing and supporting this project, and to all attendees of the Creative Learning seminar hosted by Creative Partnerships on 13 February 2008.

Creative Partnerships is the Government's flagship creative learning programme, designed to develop the skills of young people across England, raising their aspirations and achievements, and opening up more opportunities for their futures. This world-leading programme is transforming teaching and learning across the curriculum.

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You can get this publication in Braille, in large print, on audio CD and in electronic formats. Please contact us if you need any of these formats.

To download this publication, go to www.creative-partnerships.com

Printed by HPM www.hpm.uk.com
Designed by Tangerine www.tangerinelimited.com

ISBN 978 0 7287 1413 7
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creative

introduction: what is 'creative learning'?

**Julian Sefton-Green, David Parker and
Naraneeruthra-Rajan**

learning

Context

Although Creative Partnerships began as a programme in 2002, it was conceived in response to Ken Robinson's report *All Our Futures* published in 1999. Over its first two years, Creative Partnerships began to explore the intersections between creativity, culture and education and in around 2005 the term 'creative learning' came to stand as a shorthand description for Creative Partnerships' contribution to school change, curriculum development and teaching and learning practices. Whilst one phrase is never quite going to sum up an entire programme, Creative Partnerships believed that the term captured its mission, significantly because of its attention to the learner, given how the programme has always been concerned to place the voice of the young person at the heart of its activities¹.

This booklet continues to explore the notion of creative learning. The term is perhaps still not widely used but, like the idea of creativity itself, it is a kind of common-sense summing up of an aspiration, if not a precise scientific understanding. Whilst the essays here interrogate the idea of creative learning seriously, the authors also acknowledge a necessary looseness to the term. While it may not always lead to the formation of final answers it consistently takes teachers and learners into new, challenging and positive spaces. The arguments contained here are not prescriptive, rather they try to unpick core values, principles and ambitions to describe and better understand a broad field of activity.

This search for focus reflects how in the last six years, as Creative Partnerships has become more confident in how it works, it has tried to define its unique mix of activities in a more systematic fashion. Creative Partnerships did not originally offer a single format or programme of activity or intervention but worked tactically at local levels, utilising expertise and working to need in a range of

¹ See the Youth Voice in the work of Creative Partnerships Research Project: http://www.open.ac.uk/education-and-languages/people/people-profile.php?staff_id=1890925&show=researchInterests

school contexts. From 2008 these interventions have been structured around three levels of programme offer. Creative Partnerships' national strategies and the common use of a self-evaluation framework have more explicitly described Creative Partnerships interventions in terms of promoting 'creative learning'. Coming out of a set of writings in educational research, (e.g. Cropley, 2001) this has proven a successful and attractive headline or banner around which Creative Partnerships has mobilised; and within Creative Partnerships the term appears to offer a common language and shared set of values.

However this phraseology does give rise to a set of questions: is the new formulation a way of talking about activity or values or does it offer a precise 'forensic' script defining kinds of interventions? In what ways does creative learning underpin all of Creative Partnerships activities or is it aspirational? And finally, in those cases where it seems to be agreed that creative learning is taking place, what sets of indicators do we have of its impact and process? Is there any way that Creative Partnerships might develop the capability to evaluate progression in creative learning?

In February 2008 Creative Partnerships convened a seminar of experts to tease out and investigate these issues². Participants were asked to consider a deliberately robust set of questions:

- can we define creative learning as distinct from other notions of 'learning'?
- if we can, what might be the value of doing so?
- and if agreed, would any potentially useful

models of progression be available and useful?

Although the event initially aimed to offer back clear policy advice to Creative Partnerships about how it should develop the creative learning agenda explicitly addressing how or whether Creative Partnerships should develop models of progression in creative learning, this may have been trying to run before we could walk. More fundamentally, if Creative Partnerships has essentially taken its own journey from 'pilot' to 'programme' how can it ensure it continues to give practitioners the kind of reflective space needed to work out what this formulation may be adding to the pressure-cooker of curriculum reform? Finding the balance between structure and flexibility will be an ongoing challenge for us, but virtually all of the essays here suggest that concentrating on assessment is a helpful lens with which to review the concept of creative learning in the first place.

This booklet publishes the papers presented at this event and a more general discussion. The essays lay out a series of challenges and contexts for Creative Partnerships and the creative and education sectors in general.

Themes and arguments

The booklet opens with an essay by Sefton-Green discussing the intellectual and academic traditions lying behind the idea of creative learning. Although in many ways Creative Partnerships derives from an earlier more established tradition of Arts Education, as Cochrane *et al* make clear in their subsequent essay, the attention to creativity as both part of the process of learning and the

² A list of seminar participants can be found on page 13

qualities that seek to be instilled in young people, position the initiative very much in its time. Our current emphasis on cultural and creative industries as well as the need to prepare for work in the new information or creative economy, position Creative Partnerships at the cutting edge of attempts to thoroughly 'modernise' education for tomorrow's societies. This volume does not have the scope to explore these larger socio-political questions but the essay does try to show how the idea of creative learning fuses three distinct traditions. First he discusses the distinct and conjoined traditions of learning within discrete art forms (mainly drama and visual arts) and how such separate traditions have become entwined in a more general notion of arts education; secondly, the current attention to the presentation of the self in schools and how creative learning supports the making of a different kind of student; and thirdly, those psychological traditions which focus on developing the mind.

The essay by Cochrane *et al* looks at creative learning in the context of contemporary and recent policy pronouncements. The authors trace the place of creativity across a range of education and young people centred legislation, and explore its place in a range of policy pronouncements and implementation discourses. Whilst their piece takes a slightly broader look at creativity, rather than exclusively focusing on creative learning *per se*, the essay shows how the topic is a key concern in recent political thinking albeit one which is open to a range of interpretation. The essay offers a valuable survey of the range and scope of how creativity now appears a central value in education and social policy and although the authors are concerned that

such aspirations should be backed up with investment and activity, it points to the mainstreaming of notions of creativity as a central principle of educational interventions.

Emily Pringle has conducted original research exploring artists' perspectives about their work in education and her piece both extrapolates how artists' ways of working model a kind of creative learning and also show how introducing such practices to young people can affect ways of thinking about teaching, learning and classroom activities. This attention to the material activities of doing and thinking helps us locate creative learning as a grounded series of actions and helps us concretise some of the abstractness that inevitably creeps into discussions about creativity. Pringle's work helps us contextualise grand aspirations in the nitty-gritty of classroom activity and messiness of much artists' work. The piece also warns us against fetishising artists as having a privileged or exclusive insight into creativity and encourages us to be careful that in our enthusiasm to introduce artists and other adults into schools we don't lose sight of the role that teachers play.

Lois Hetland's contribution reflects on her use of an important publication, *Studio Thinking* which she has developed along with colleagues (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2007). This is a systematic attempt to reflect on how artists' working can be translated programmatically into the classroom and is built on research into such partnerships. Not only does she enumerate the principles and practices of such processes, but she explores how such findings can be taken into classrooms. Her work is valuable not just for the originality of the primary research but

because it also helps understand what kinds of further training and investment are necessary if we want to scale up the processes we care about.

A key theme in Hetland's piece is how the principles and practices of assessment and evaluation inform our understanding of creative learning and this theme underpins the final contributions. Avril Loveless explores creative learning with new technologies. Like Creativity, Information Communications Technology (ICT), has been at the forefront of dreams to change education systems and schools around the world. Loveless introduces us to key ways of thinking about learning with and through ICT. Her review of the impact of the creative uses of new technologies, although conducted in respect of a sister discipline, support both Cochrane *et al* and Hetland's analysis of the core fundamental principles of creative behaviour. Much of this, all three authors argue, comes down to how learning is assessed and valued.

The final contribution by authors at the Centre for Language in Primary Education (CLPE) takes this challenge head on. They report on a project working with primary teachers developing a framework for assessing creative learning. It describes both the principles of assessment and how these were derived from current curriculum thinking as well as how the actual practices of assessment were developed with teachers. Not only does the account base its analysis of assessment in an understanding of 'deep' learning but also it shows how implementing new forms of assessment in this area can actually work to stimulate interesting and vibrant practice in the classroom. It also points to the sorts of work

that needs to be done if creative learning is going to become a meaningful option for many children and young people.

Challenges

Many of the pieces collected here reference and describe a common contradiction, one that fuels much of the work of Creative Partnership: is creative learning when described and evaluated in the ways the authors here suggest, actually compatible with how schools are currently organised? The essays imply that there are unresolved systemic issues which prevent creative learning making more of a long-lasting impression in common practice for these kinds of reasons. The reasons for this are many and discussed in several of the chapters, ranging from the emphasis on teaching for terminal exams to large classes and non-individualised projects. Clearly, though, Creative Partnerships has been making some progress in this regard, and the more structured programme on offer from 2008 will contribute to testing out possible resolutions to such systemic issues.

One key arena this seeming contradiction plays out in, as is already suggested, is that of assessment. Not only is it suggested that the current approach to valuing learning in mainstream education may inhibit the development of creative learning in general (in that it sways how schools set their priorities), but that it may also have the effect of de-skilling teachers (and students) from understanding how other kinds of learning might be valued and developed. The work of Hetland or the CLPE goes some way in beginning to address this deficit and offers alternative ways of understanding how we could re-structure teaching and learning.

Together these two concerns raise the spectre that a key function of creative learning is not simply to describe other ways of organising learning but also to act as an irritant – as a positively disruptive agent – because creative learning models other and different ways of carrying out what is perceived as the *status quo*. Here it should be considered that a key virtue of creative learning is that it acts in a way that can raise questions about structural or systemic tensions.

The essays collected here, are, it should be stressed, more focused in their ambitions. Whilst it is undeniable that collected together they raise these larger questions, their remit and the focus of this booklet makes such questions more of an implicit than an explicit challenge. This then leaves us trying to work out whether creative learning offers solutions to these kinds of problems or can it only raise further challenges? In reality will ideas of creative learning only seek to trouble how evaluation is currently conducted or does it offer new ways of solving long term difficulties inherent in the education system at large? It also begs the question as to whether creative learning has to involve some element of critique within it? Is being creative incompatible with being critical or are they two sides of the same coin?

Framing problems is of course a good way to start solving them and whilst creative learning is clearly an experience in itself and, as suggested by several authors, capable of being developed further, it may be that one of its first achievements is to help teachers and policy makers who want to develop change and encourage other ways of learning, to imagine and describe alternative possibilities.

Creative Partnerships has clearly touched a deep chord with many teachers and schools around the country. It has garnered cross-party political support and much of this in no small measure stems from how creative learning offers a banner under which many different colleagues have rallied. Whilst it may be an imprecise term, it does stand for a set of values focused around developing individual potential and with an emphasis on authentic ‘deep’ educational experiences. These papers may not offer solutions to all of the challenges they raise, but in exploring and unpicking the notion of creative learning they model the essence of the process as it plays out in schools – each author refreshes and renews the interrogation of an idea in the same way creative practitioners, teachers and young people might re-imagine the curriculum within schools.

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List of attendees at Creative Learning seminar on 13 February 2008

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Pat	Cochrane	CAPE UK
Paul	Collard	Creative Partnerships
Anna	Craft	University of Exeter and The Open University
Sue	Ellis	Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE)
Walker	Ewart	Education and Training Inspectorate, Northern Ireland
Dorothy	Faulkner	Open University
Lotte	Friedrich	Creative Partnerships
Maurice	Galton	University of Cambridge
Bethan	Gritten	Creative Partnerships
Joe	Hallgarten	Creative Partnerships
Valerie	Hannon	The Innovation Unit
Lois	Hetland	Project Zero, Harvard University
Sue	Horner	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
Mary	James	Teaching & Learning Research Programme
Graham	Jeffrey	University of the West of Scotland
Avril	Loveless	University of Brighton
Jackie	Marsh	Sheffield University
Chris	May	Creative Partnerships
Peter	Muschamp	
Jonathan	Neelands	University of Warwick
David	Parker	Creative Partnerships
Emily	Pringle	L C Associates
Naranee	Ruthra-Rajan	Creative Partnerships
Julian	Sefton-Green	
Pat	Thomson	University of Nottingham
Alice	Young	Trinity Guildhall, Arts Award

1 from learning to creative learning: concepts and traditions

Julian Sefton-Green

This chapter aims to sketch out three different theoretical traditions lying behind the idea of creative learning. The argument is that creative learning as an idea (or ideal) represents at this point in time, a synthesis of these traditions. Whether the yoking together of these three approaches is producing a true synthesis or merely a kind of temporary 'compound', only time will tell. On one level it will be a test of Creative Partnerships' lasting impact. Whilst practice on the ground will probably offer an emphasis from one or other of these models, it is interesting to see how the contemporary thrust of creative learning may be bringing about a new kind of fusion of these ideas; and historically, creative learning may then say more about our times' distinctive hopes for education.

By way of scene setting the chapter will begin by laying out some general principles about learning. After all, distinguishing between good learning, creative learning and learning is on one level a question of semantics and the contributors to this volume want to move beyond such concerns to explore the ambitions of deeper levels of engagement. It then explores three approaches to learning which use ideas of creativity. First, the different models of creative learning embedded in approaches derived from Arts Education. These mainly include (sub-)traditions derived from Drama and from Visual Arts, as both sets of disciplines have spawned what can only be called their own epistemological frameworks as they exemplify different ways of knowing about the world. The chapter will also consider how generalised notions of arts education derive from ways in which these disciplinary approaches have been fused and synthesized.

The chapter then moves on to consider other traditions which take related but separate approaches to creative learning. Our second approach is a kind of neo-behaviourism and I

look at how certain kinds of personal attributes and behaviours are now seen as desirable outcomes of education – especially those which relate to the outcomes of creative activities. This approach sees it as the purpose of schools to ‘make’ certain kinds of individuals and certain kinds of personalities, and that these are also seen as necessary for the changing nature of work, especially that found in the growing sector of the creative economy. It should be noted that scholars who have written about this tradition tend to offer diametrically opposed interpretations of this approach. Because it is a relatively new formulation, there isn’t the same expansive range of discussion and evaluation as there is around, for example, the arts education paradigms.

This question of scholarly partiality also affects our third approach: developing creative thinking. Because this approach is framed in cognitive terms and because it is focused on a more psychological paradigm, namely developing the mind through repeated activities and exercises, and is indeed ‘measured’ as such, it does not receive equal attention from across the scholarly spectrum. Not only does this mean that writing about such approaches is more difficult, but it should also be acknowledged that it also derives legitimacy and meaning from a kind of folk wisdom – attitudes to how you make children more creative in this way are often engrained and populist – rather than scientific. This is not necessarily a comment on their validity but a warning that we can’t always compare like with like because the evidence base is incommensurate. This point is important in considering how ideas of creative learning derive legitimacy and possibly why they have

been taken up by different political interests - an issue that will form part of the conclusion to this chapter.

Learning in general

This section is concerned with how (or if) notions of creative learning differ from theories of learning in general or whether ideas of creative learning offer a different theory of learning in and of themselves. In very general terms there are two kinds of ways in which we theorise how learning works. The first derives from behaviourism; and the second is broadly cognitive including both socio-cultural approaches and types of constructivism. Behaviourist theories broadly suggest that we learn from imitation and practice; while socio-cultural theories suggest that the mind creates meaning through interaction with experiences and symbolic tools – of which the most important is language. In reality, and day-to-day in most schools, we use a variety of these approaches and over time both approaches have fluctuated in influence over the last century, and have been refined and distilled by countless theorists. In general, and again I am cautious about making generalisations, people tend to associate behaviourist theories with young children and the cognitive sort with older children and young people. Cognitive theories tend to be associated with ‘higher-order’ more complex thinking.

The other factor influencing how we imagine learning derives from psychological theories of child development. Most proponents of models of child development, tend to follow notions of linear, block-by-block development or progression. This is sometimes associated

with age-related stages of mental development, of which Piaget's notions of human development are the most well known (Boden, 1995).

I have reprised these broad principles here because all contemporary theories of creative learning either explicitly or implicitly engage with these traditions either to align themselves within a particular way of thinking or, and this is a key role for creative learning, to act as a way of troubling and reconceptualising these dominant common sense ways of thinking about learning.

I now want to suggest that the key traditions in arts-learning in effect model the deep narratives of socio-cultural theories of learning and to that extent also contain within them a similar hierarchy of values (that is moving from experience through forms of mediation to reflection). Again to generalise: socio-cultural theories of learning stress how the developing mind works in an active fashion, making meaning. Vygotsky, (1986; 1978) shows how children move from 'spontaneous' to 'scientific' concepts through the use of specialised language and through structured and scaffolded support. Within this tradition learning isn't just about the acquisition of knowledge (although this is not to minimise the role of context and being enculturated into societies' key ways of knowing) but privileging certain kinds of 'higher' intellectual capacities. This usually involves possession of a specialised discourse and the capacity to reflect and critique, to offer different perspectives and to offer abstract analysis. In a sense, I suggest most notions of arts learning follow this model even if the routes to such understanding are often conceived as far

more experiential, and I should acknowledge here, not quite as 'developmental' as it is usually conceptualised. By this I mean that despite these notions of a hierarchical value-chain moving from the concrete to the abstract, learning in arts is not always solely and exclusively valued by a privileged end-position of abstract reflection. These questions about developmental and other progressions should become clearer by the end of the next section.

Arts Education/Visual Arts

The key issue to raise here is the generality of an idea of creative learning. Given that many scholars have questioned whether the Arts as an aggregated plural really means anything at all (for an overview see Fleming, 2008), a preliminary question must be to distinguish between creative and arts learning and within the first of these categories to work out if we are talking about an Art-based theory of learning (in the singular) or an Arts-based theory. It is worthwhile recalling that the contributors to this volume tend to represent discrete traditions within this matrix of ideas. Eisner notes that some of his generalisations about the nature of both the aesthetic experience and his theories of learning and the arts are derived from his own discipline – that of fine art (Eisner, 2002). Other scholars are also often careful not to rush into wider claims about learning and the Arts. Hetland's piece in this volume deriving from her larger co-authored project (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2007) belongs in this sceptical tradition. Despite these caveats Hetland *et al* and Eisner have thought-through developed theories of art-learning that offer

themselves as holistic theories of learning in general. The same ambition is also evident in the work of Kieran Egan. His best known book, *The Educated Mind* (Egan, 1997) also located fundamental ways of knowing in an arts-based domain. Egan is interested in the imagination and has developed a socio-historical theory of human development which locates language (in its different expressive modes from somatic through oral to written) as a cognitive tool. Egan, it is worth noting, derives from a literary tradition, of writing and poetry and theatre so again his background too is from one discrete art form.

It is here that we can see more generic connections between these theories of arts-learning and socio-cultural traditions of learning. Both the Egan and the Eisner/Hetland *et al* approaches implicitly and explicitly model a progression (only sometimes expressed as a hierarchy) which privileges meta-reflective and distanced forms of understanding built on 'spontaneous' experiential understanding. Egan talks about ironic discourse while the visual-arts traditions place at one end of their concrete/abstract continua, the value of critique and reflection. We can see here how such approaches show great affinity with the mainstream educational thinking that builds on Vygotskian principles (Vygotsky, 1986 and see Bruner, 1996). Although the visual arts and imagination models possess their own specificity, they both prioritise the role of language and a way of reflecting on experiences in an iterative fashion leading to deeper understanding. Other writers for example (Pope, 2005) have located the epistemological orientation of these approaches in prevailing philosophical traditions which privilege the intellectual, the

abstract and the values of perception and distanciation.

Arts Education/Drama

However, within the 'family' of arts learning traditions, it is interesting to compare how notions of drama learning offer an alternative tradition. Whilst a history of drama education, shows how the field has steered a course between very different ideological positions (from speech 'elocution' to theatre to child theatre and so on), a key principle of drama learning is that it is experiential and subjectivist (Bolton 2007). Of course in several manifestations, theories of Drama learning, like the visual and literary arts traditions described above, also suggest that reflection on experience draws attention to a meta-reflexive position – which is also valued as an end of learning. However, possibly because so much of the construction of social reality, especially in theories of persona and masks (Goffman, 1959), is itself derived from a dramatic construct of social activity, there is more value attributed to unmediated experience. In other words understanding different perspectives from within different roles, developing empathy, is also an end in itself – rather than only and necessarily having to lead to a reflexive and critical position.

I am not trying to create artificial distinctions between drama and visual arts learning, although I think that in practice the two traditions are not co-terminus. They do have in common the socio-cultural claim which crudely implies that reflection on experience, mediated through a specialist discourse is ultimately how learning works. But they also value

experiential ways of finding out, in the studio through experimentation, and in drama through role (also a kind of play-experiment). Different traditions in each approach offer different roles for the teacher; in both child art and child drama we can see examples of transmission as much as we can see types of learning through doing.

What of course both the drama and the visual arts approaches do possess - and this is where they depart from general theories of learning – are practices, traditions and indeed current forms of economic production relating to their sphere, e.g. painting, theatre etc.

Again both traditions share differences and similarities in their attitudes to these facts. They both offer a craft based approach and use forms of apprenticeship, professional modelling and initiation into professional practices. They both draw on traditions of 'communities of practice', going back to the Renaissance studio or the travelling troupe of *commedia del arte* players. They both can offer employment and real-world experiences within the marketplaces of the school play or exhibition. The very practical traditions behind approaches in both drama and visual arts do give both subjects a grounded reality and this domain specificity is more particular than many other subjects. Funnily enough it is easier to understand what artists or actors do, than scientists or geographers (or I guess writers). For all the exclusivity in the arts as careers, they are far more accessible and easy to imagine than many other professions – perhaps even more so in our age of culture and this lends their practices an easy applicability to young learners. If this is the case, it is not just the nature of the

epistemological strategies, being in role or learning by doing, which makes learning in the arts any more creative, but tradition and relevance. It is the social nature of arts practices which makes their modes of knowing successful, and not necessarily inherent cognitive processes.

Ultimately, both approaches also share an existential set of values, and offer themselves as a way of knowing. This can be and has been set against scientific curiosity or indeed a sociological imagination as deep and profound ways to understand the world. Nobody in their right mind would ever really claim priority for any one of these approaches, but they do inspire fierce loyalty and a kind of educational partisanship where aficionados claim singularity. This is untenable if pushed to extremes in the way that John Carey analyses in his study of Art and the 'silly' pronouncements of some artists (Carey, 2006), although the enthusiasm and motivation of teachers will clearly translate into exciting classrooms; and again the marginal status of much arts practice may paradoxically act as a significant precursor to engagement. Similarly, the specialised nature of arts practices and their difference from other approaches in school also work in their favour offering the simple attraction of being other-than-the-norm. This is always appealing.

Creative people

Although there is no doubt that 'hard' outcomes from education, that is to say qualifications, are 'necessary' criteria for entry into work and act as a key 'sorting' mechanism, allocating roles to young people

as they enter the labour force, they are in and of themselves not 'sufficient' as a way of judging employability. Indeed from the middle of the 1990s, there have been attempts by both employers' pressure groups as well as in education policy to recognise that 'soft skills' are crucial and play a complementary role to qualifications in determining success both at interview and at work. Whilst there are important differences between discussions of soft skills and creative learning there are key overlaps, especially around working collaboratively, in teams, negotiation skills, problem solving and communicating and making presentations.

It is true that much Arts education markets its own distinctive qualities using the same language. However, embedded within the overarching aim of making certain behaviours the desired outcome of education, and in relating this quite specifically to employability and contemporary trends in labour force needs, is the distinct idea of finding a new kind of identity. This is well summed up in a recent speech by David Lammy:

Learning soft skills is part of a process of coming to terms with the world around us, which continues through nursery school, primary and secondary school and into adult life. Indeed, how to relate to and communicate with other people is something we never stop learning.

In the workplace, employers are looking for bright, able individuals, who are passionate about what they do. Who, as well as having a good understanding of the job, can work in a team, find creative solutions to problems, and treat others with respect.

CBI [Confederation of Business Industry] say that businesses consistently rank this as one of their most enduring problems. Who can blame them? We have all been irritated with those who lack soft skills: the autocratic boss who can't motivate his staff, the team member who is always late or the pupil who always answers back.

DWP [Department for Work and Pensions] research shows that overall, employers are less demanding of technical skills, considering them trainable, if candidates exhibit employability, soft skills, and positive attributes. (Lammy, 2008).

From our point of view it seems clear that being creative is integral to this approach and in other kinds of description, these kinds of behaviours are part and parcel of what it means to be a creative person. Thus in Sean Nixon's ethnography of advertising, the ability to behave in this way merges with the more neo-bohemian character-types that strut through the pages of studies of creative workers at the cutting edge of the cultural economy (Ross, 2003; Lloyd, 2005). Lammy's argument is also borne out by recent surveys of the UK labour force showing how arts graduates do in fact appear to utilise these kinds of skills across a wide gamut of employment opportunities as can be seen from the UK graduate careers website³.

If we were being pedantic we might ask if it might be possible to possess these sorts of soft skills and not be creative, just as it should be asked if all forms of arts learning are implicitly or explicitly creative. DEMOS makes this assumption valuing adaptability and creativity equally and make the case that

³ http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/What_do_graduates_do_2005/Arts_creative_arts_humanities_editorial/plecdXeJg

these values lie at the heart of a modern or contemporary skillset (DEMOS, 2007). Indeed, it is clear that many descriptions of the outputs of education now characterise different kinds of behaviours and personality attributes in this way. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) current review of curriculum models talks of 'successful learners who (amongst others things) are creative, resourceful and able to identify and solve problems' (QCA, 2008).

Overall, this attention is focused on producing a certain type of person, who possesses personal 'attitudes and attributes', and is 'confident' and 'successful' (these descriptions are from the QCA Big Picture, 2008). The DEMOS report for NESTA referred to above recognises that these character abilities are as likely to be learnt elsewhere:

The report also looks at the influences on young people and where they learn most from. 'Parents and family' were identified ahead of school (39 per cent vs. 37 per cent), showing the importance of both formal and informal learning environments (NESTA, 2007 press release).

This raises very deep questions about identity, socialisation and how our subjectivities are formed. Furthermore, an attention to personality and character not only re-frames the moral purpose of education in contemporary ways, but it also exemplifies how modern society produces forms of subjectivity appropriate to its economic needs. We should also note how these forms of creative behaviour are bound up with certain class-bound ways of behaving and that maybe, talking about creative behaviour is no

more than cipher for talking about certain kinds of middle-class attributes. In the QCA, Personal, Learning and Thinking framework (2007), for example, the phrase 'self-manager' is used to describe a notion of an individual's efficacy. The studies of the new creative class and the bohemian work this entails (as referenced above), demonstrate these forms of subjectivity in greater detail. A meta review carried out in 2007 found evidence of an attention to these new forms of subjectivity in twenty innovative curriculum development projects around the world (Facer & Pykett, 2007). Again, my purpose here is not necessarily to engage with these arguments but to trace how the different discourses of creative learning have come into being and how the older value of arts learning have become overlaid with this new value-set. I do want to stress its behaviourist rationale, that unlike the socio-cultural traditions outlined at the beginning of this chapter, this approach is more about imitation and modelling and also how it is about producing certain kinds of individuals. Of course it could be argued that this kind of behaviour, modelling, is antipathetic to definitions of authentic creativity, but on the other hand, in paying attention to what makes people effective in the workplace, it could be countered that this type of education is harnessing hitherto untapped potential.

Creative thinking

This idea of untapped potential underpins our final section in the anatomy of contemporary creative learning as it looks at how psychological and popular brain science discourse has also infused the field. The

argument here is that psychometric approaches to developing intellectual processes effectively releases potential and facilitates the development of more productive creative thinking. Despite the fact that serious neuroscientists stress that our knowledge of how the brain works is still in its infancy and that we are a long way from what is described as 1:1 correspondences – that is a simple model of mapping input to the brain against output or performance – such ideals are a popularly held belief.

Creative thinking basically consists of ways to improve thinking or cognitive skills often through exercises and drills. These cognitive capacities are broken down into discrete elements, memory, cognitive processing, logic, intuition, problem solving, brainstorming and so on. Mark Runco's recent review of theories of creativity and learning (Runco, 2007) suggests that in fact this is quite an old view of how people have theorised the relationship of creativity to intelligence and details a range of research investigating this. He concludes that the main finding about research into creativity and thinking (cognition) is its diversity and suggests that in fact the research is not so much inconclusive as representative of the different metaphors of mind fashionable at different eras and across different societies (Runco, 2007: 37). Much of the research is attractive because it suggests that we can become more creative, that there are processes under our control although some studies of genius and exceptionalism can also be profoundly un-generative for education policy as they identify kinds of individual difference. On the other hand other studies of genius actually offer extrapolations as a kind of wisdom to improve all of us, as is suggested in

the work of popular psychologists and their output⁴.

However, it is the prospect of deep change that has helped such ideas gain currency. Indeed, an extraordinary amount of folk knowledge accretes around the idea of developing creative thinking. Ideas of creative learning tap into these folk-theories even if their basis in fact is more contentious than other knowledge bases. Indeed, the power of a belief in creative thinking (and possibly creative learning) is that it over-rides and short-circuits the perceived negative attributes of regular school learning. The recent controversy over Brain Gym and especially its critical review in *The Guardian* (Goldacre, 2006) exemplifies this tension between forms of popular and formal knowledge. There are indeed many popular kinds of creativity/cognitive development approaches on offer in the marketplace and they feed off more scientific studies onto the popular imagination⁵.

Again, like the discussion of art and arts learning or creative behaviour, I am not so concerned here with the relative truthfulness of any individual claims about the elements of creative learning, but I want to show how popular and disenfranchised values have come together to create a rhetoric of empowerment and change in learning which drives forward contemporary aspirations of the role of education in our society.

Conclusion

This chapter has made the argument that the idea of creative learning, as it has been

⁴ See, for example, http://www.creativethinking.net/WP05_Articles.htm Titles include *Thinkertoys: A Handbook of Creative-Thinking Techniques* (Michael Michalko, 2006) and *Cracking Creativity: The Secrets of Creative Genius* (Michael Michalko, 2001).

⁵ See for example http://www.positscience.com/science/studies_results/cognitive_interventions/IMPACT_Study/

developed and used in the last few years has developed as an amalgam of several historically discrete traditions: art /arts learning, self-management, and creative thinking. Each of these ideas is actually located in very different paradigms of learning, so fusing them together creates awkward tensions and inconsistencies. However, as a single idea, creative learning represents a very contemporary aspiration to fit young people for a vision of the future which is situated in a progressive creative economy. It also embodies a series of values and deep beliefs about human nature and personal development, which although at odds with some social scientific models, again derive their legitimacy from their popularity and broad principles. We should not underestimate the power of these frames as they help position creative learning as a desirable aspiration at the heart of our education system.

Like many abstract arguments we cannot extrapolate how things work out in practice as day-to-day lessons in the classroom are likely to be a mix and match of different approaches, and much teaching is pragmatic and uses what works rather than following the book. Equally there is often a disjuncture between many teachers' theoretical explanations of their practices and how they are evaluated day-to-day. The fact that the creative thinking and creative learning approaches described above have popular weight may mean that they are advanced as explanations and justifications for activities whose origins lie in the older arts learning traditions. In other words, even though we might arrive at definitions of creative learning, it may be that what actually happens in classrooms only bears a tangential relationship to underpinning rationales when looked at in practice.

In a way a key theme to this chapter has been that we need to think carefully about how or whether we can make claims about creative learning that distinguish it from learning in general. More general studies of learning like that by Kalantzis & Cope, (2008) note that older models of education are not 'replaced' but incorporated and reworked under changing circumstances. This chapter has argued that we need to explore the behaviourist and socio-cultural paradigms underpinning their activities within the current formulation. Ultimately this will circumscribe the kinds of creativity that such curriculum and pedagogy make possible. Equally, the benefits of creative learning are clearly bound up with questions of quality. There are examples of good and bad arts learning, transformative and conservative ways to make creative people, and probably standardised ways of doing creative thinking! From this perspective it might make as much sense to think of creative learning as not so much an absolute rupture from previous incarnations but more in a comparative sense, as a more creative learning. This would acknowledge continuities with the past as well as trying to set standards for the future.

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2 mixed messages or permissions and opportunities? reflections on current policy perspectives on creativity in education

Pat Cochrane, Anna Craft and Graham Jeffery

This paper maps out policy developments to inform discussion of the following:

- Can we define creative learning as distinct from other notions of 'learning'?
- If so, what might be the value of doing so?
- If agreed, whether any potentially useful models of 'progression' might be available and useful?

The emergence of creative learning from a policy perspective

Attempts in recent policy to define 'creative learning' began with the publication of *All Our Futures*, the 1999 report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE, 1999) which recommended among many other priorities, that the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) develop non-statutory guidance on 'creative teaching and learning'. In laying the ground for this work, NACCCE synthesised much empirical evidence from researchers such as Woods and Jeffrey (1996), Craft (1997), and Harland *et al* (1998) who, during the 1990s, had distinguished between creative teaching and teaching for creativity. The key findings from this work were that creative learning involves innovation, control, relevance and ownership - and that these are also characteristics of creative teaching (Jeffrey & Woods, 2003).

Exploration of many aspects of creativity and how it might be promoted in pupils' learning was taken up from 2000 by the QCA (QCA, 2005). And from 2002, the notion of 'creative learning' was given added momentum by the establishment of Creative Partnerships –

another of NACCCE's recommendations. Creative Partnerships has promoted creative learning as an agenda, seeking to foster imaginative, inventive thinking and engagement through active, meaningful learning, across the curriculum; often involving, but not always restricted to, the arts.

From the outset the elision of 'creative' and 'cultural' learning has led to some ambiguity in policy documents which refer to creativity. A common approach to creativity has been to employ an argument that the processes and procedures of arts education model kinds of creative learning which could be applied elsewhere in the curriculum. This concern to promote the broad benefits of arts education is often combined and occasionally counterpoised with the rhetoric of the creative and cultural industries, which includes the 'arts sector' but is not limited to it. The justification for creativity is often posed in terms of developing skills needed for largely technological 'innovation' and economic competitiveness in a rapidly changing world (e.g. Bentley and Seltzer, 1999, *inter alia*). These perspectives have to sit alongside concerns that the school curriculum should engage with cultural heritage, identity and citizenship. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that there has been some confusion of interpretation and usage of the term 'creative learning' in both policymaking and practice.

Understanding of what creative learning might mean varies. The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) held a seminar in 2002 to explore its possible meanings and from this emerged diverse perspectives, ranging from those who saw creativity as freedom of personal expression, to those who understood

it to reflect discipline, practice and craft, and as progressively developed through learning experiences (NCSL, 2003).

The importance of both imagination and collaboration through enquiry focused on change was increasingly reflected in the work of Creative Partnerships from 2002 (Creative Partnerships, 2008), and developing partnerships between teachers and the visiting 'creative professionals' or artists has been seen as a significant model for creative work enabling young people to emulate collaborative social practices often modelled on team-working and shared problem-solving (Jeffery, 2005).

The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) again places high value on imagination combined with experience, emphasising that creative learning thus conceived has the potential to motivate pupils working both individually and collaboratively (Hobbs, 2007). The influential work by the QCA, *Creativity: Find it Promote it* (2005) identified the characteristics of creative thinking and behaviour as involving, primarily:

- Questioning and challenging conventions and assumptions
- Making inventive connections and associating things that are not usually related
- Envisaging what might be: imagining – seeing things in the mind's eye
- Trying alternatives and fresh approaches, keeping options open
- Reflecting critically on ideas, actions and outcomes

The publication also suggests teacher behaviours which support creativity. As we will

see, this approach is still informing ongoing curriculum reform, although it was 'creativity' rather than 'creative learning' which was explicitly a focus of the QCA endeavour.

The question of whether creative learning can be distinct from other kinds of learning is not a direct focus of any policy work, although commentators, practitioners and researchers have grappled with this question (e.g. Craft, 2005, Jeffrey, 2006, Cochrane and Cockett 2007). Such commentaries conclude that creative learning attempts to bridge pedagogy and learning, and seeks to recognise and value the learner's experience. It has been called the 'middle ground' between creative teaching and teaching for creativity (Jeffrey and Craft, 2006).

The challenge of integrating creative learning into policy soundbites

Concern with how policy may be reported will always tend to influence how policy is written and presented: it may therefore be unrealistic to expect the rather slippery concept of 'creative learning' to be explicitly articulated at the top level of policy. Other nations of the UK have also now made creativity a commitment (Scottish Executive, 2006; Department of Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Wales, 2006), as have nations further afield, including Australia, Canada and Singapore. However, after six years of the Creative Partnerships initiative and the considerable head of steam and enthusiasm for creative learning, evidenced in the response to the House of Commons Education Select Committee (2007) there is only one specific reference to creativity

and none to creative learning in the Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007). Nevertheless, there is plenty of evidence of policy commitment to creativity in the detail of policy and in implementation of the latest round of educational reforms at a publication level below that of statute.

Brave new territory?

The Roberts Review was set up in late 2005 under the auspices of Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and commissioned jointly by James Purnell, then Minister for the Creative Industries and Andrew Adonis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Skills. It was to be a review of creative and cultural development of young people and creativity in schools as well as creativity as a set of skills to feed the creative and cultural industries. This formed part of an emerging narrative developing at the DCMS about 'Making Britain the World's Creative Hub'. (Purnell, 2005). The review was briefed to assess progress since the 1999 NACCCE Report; not to make recommendations but provide a 'set of assumptions' upon which future policy in relation to creativity could be based.

The report (Roberts, 2006) maps out a framework for creativity starting with early years, and considers extended schools, building schools for the future, leading creative learning including initial teacher education and professional development, practitioner partnerships, frameworks of regulations and support and introduces the concept of an individual creative portfolio. As well as

emphasising creativity as preparation for work within the creative industries, the report made the point that there is a wider, 'moral' case for developing creativity as part of the development of young people as citizens and learners. The Government's formal response was positive but limited in its commitment. However, the review's influence has been longer lasting.

The Cultural and Creative Education Board (CCEAB) was set up in late 2006, to progress the outcomes of the Roberts Report (2006). Established, under the auspices of the DCMS, the DfES (subsequently Department for Children, Schools and Families - DCSF), QCA, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OfSTED), the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) and Futurelab were all represented as well as a Headteacher and a Director of Children's Services. Significant representation came from the cultural and creative sector - UK Film Council, The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), Arts Council England (ACE), Cultural and Creative Skills (CCS) etc. but little representation from the fields of engineering, technology or science. This perhaps reinforced a perception that the government's understanding of creativity was rooted in the cultural and creative sector.

The increasing use of the term 'cultural learning' rather than 'creative learning' by agencies working to DCMS may also prove significant. Given an apparent reluctance to embrace a comprehensive definition of the concept of creative learning it seems possible that policy will drift towards 'cultural learning' –

perhaps a more tangible concept - so for example when describing Creative Partnerships, the McMaster Report, *Supporting Excellence in the Arts* (2008) describes it as a 'cultural' rather than 'creative' learning programme. That report, commissioned by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to consider "how the system of public sector support for the arts can encourage excellence, risk-taking and innovation" (McMaster, 2008, p6), says nothing about the relationship of the arts sector to wider debates about the creative and cultural industries. Its vision of 'education' appears limited to 'outreach and audience development', young people 'experiencing' culture rather than making it – a significant omission which may risk a shift in policy thinking about the arts towards a more 'contained' position. This particular DCMS-commissioned report does not seem to make connections between the cultural production, learning, participation, regeneration and community development in quite such explicit ways as hitherto.

It seems likely therefore that the policy drivers in relation to creativity across the whole school curriculum may need to come from the education sector and DCSF rather than DCMS. The *Creative Economy Strategy Document*, published by the Government in February 2008, focuses strongly on creativity as a set of skills to be developed in relation to careers and progression into the creative and cultural industries. Two clear narratives seem to be emergent – the first of 'nurturing talent' to enable young people to progress into careers and further education in the arts, cultural and creative industries; the second to do with broader support for the notion of 'cultural

learning' enshrined in the pilot 'cultural offer' of five hours a week in 10 areas around England (Creative Partnerships, 2008).

Beyond these two commitments, creativity is clearly identified as a strand within a range of other government policies pertaining to formal and informal learning, as follows.

Every Child Matters outcomes

The change of departmental name from DfES to DCSF in line with the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda from July 2007 perhaps reflects a shift to locate an agenda of educational standards and attainment within the five Every Child Matters outcomes: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being⁶. Although there is no explicit reference to creativity in the ECM outcomes, they seem to enshrine a concept of childhood in which children and young people have the opportunity to play and have an active role in shaping their lives. Such values may open up ways of broadening the conception of educational achievement, not simply valuing the achievements of young people mainly in terms of qualifications and assessment outcomes.

Early years

Early years education has seen considerable change, with integration of provision for children aged 0-5 in the new Foundation Stage to be implemented in all early years settings from September 2008. Education and care in the early years have been integrated with

health and welfare under the umbrella of integrated children's centres. Within the curriculum, creative development forms one of six areas of learning and development. The roles of those working in early years education are being professionalised, with the introduction of the Early Years Professional (EYP) qualified to level 6 with one EYPS practitioner in every children's centre by 2010 and the announcement of a Graduate Leader Fund in December, 2007, to ensure a graduate leader in every full day-care setting (two in the most disadvantaged areas) by 2015 (DCSF, 2007; DCSF 2008). The demands on practice include capability in fostering children's creativity, requiring greater professional imagination.

Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto

Launched by the DFES in 2006, the Manifesto affirms principles of both creative and cultural learning. It refers to the need to make links between feelings and learning, to enable children to develop a deeper understanding of concepts that span traditional subject boundaries and to respond to children's curiosity and nurture creativity (DfES, 2006).

Primary curriculum

The Rose review of the Primary Curriculum, currently under way at the time of writing (Spring, 2008), was instructed by the Secretary of State, in January 2008, to ensure that the new Primary Curriculum encourages creativity and inspires a lifelong commitment to learning.

⁶ See <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/>

Secondary curriculum

The reformed secondary curriculum, to be introduced in schools from September 2008 is a significant opportunity to transform the experience and opportunities for learners in secondary schools. The curriculum includes 'Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills' (PLTS) which cut across the curriculum. Alongside functional skills in English, mathematics and ICT, the PLTS framework comprises six groups of skills, each with a subset of skills, behaviours and personal qualities:

- 1 Independent enquirers
- 2 Creative thinkers
- 3 Reflective learners
- 4 Team workers
- 5 Self managers
- 6 Effective participators

In addition the curriculum comprises non statutory 'cross-curriculum dimensions' which schools are encouraged to utilise when designing their curriculum. These again refer to 'creativity and critical thinking'.

Although there is a possibility that the 'creative thinker' could be translated into a set of formulaic creative thinking techniques, the framework gives schools permission to design teaching and learning processes placing creative learning at the centre of their curriculum. A QCA-commissioned mapping exercise (Facer and Pykett, 2007) emphasizes interrelationships between assessment, curriculum, pedagogy and school cultures.

Creative and Media Diplomas and 14 – 19 reform

The new creative and media diploma has a focus on vocational skills for work in the creative and cultural industries and 'encourages students to think and work creatively, giving students the practical skills to bring their ideas to life. A focus on Creative Business and Enterprise places creative work within a business context and teaches students the skills to succeed at work' (DCSF 2008). The extent to which creative learning will form part of the core specification for Diplomas in other areas is not entirely clear, although indications are broadly positive, given that they all place emphasis on a blend of academic and practical skills, theoretical and applied learning, suggesting that supporting 'active learning' and student agency as a component of creativity are likely to become more important.

Innovation, networked learning communities and practitioner research and development

Another potential driver for an increased emphasis on creative learning is the Government's commitment to develop a set of national strategies to support innovation, signalled by the establishment of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS).

In early 2007 NESTA published a policy briefing calling for a greater emphasis on creativity within teaching, learning and curriculum as one of the building blocks of enabling a more innovative society and

economy, and highlighted four areas of action where policymakers could make a difference (NESTA, 2007):

- enabling peer to peer learning between schools,
- embedding 'soft skills' (i.e. interpersonal skills, collaborative skills) across the curriculum,
- making 'subtle' changes to assessment and the professional development of teachers, and
- considering how existing initiatives fit into a wider drive for education for innovation.

Numerous initiatives address the first three points of the 2007 NESTA agenda, led by the SSAT, for example, through networks of specialist schools and practitioner-led CPD initiatives. TDA, the NCSL and the General Teaching Council for England also support a number of initiatives which are intended to enable schools to share practice and undertake peer-to-peer learning. Others are led by the Innovation Unit through their 'Next Practice' programme, and many other locally-led initiatives are independently funded through a mix of local authority, arts, regeneration, and private sources.

The networked learning communities and leadership programmes led by NCSL and, in the Further Education (FE) sector, the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL) have emphasised professional learning, practitioner action research, peer mentoring in workforce development and building capacity for wider innovation. Many universities are strongly engaged with regional consortia addressing issues of progression, professional development and capacity for creative learning across all sectors of employment, including

education and the cultural industries, for example through the 'Creative Way' consortium of universities and FE colleges in the Thames Gateway (see <http://www.creativeway.org.uk/>).

The Innovation White Paper, *Innovation Nation*, published by DIUS in March 2008 (DIUS, 2008) makes some reference to the relationships between creativity – the capacity for the creation of new knowledge and novel solutions - and different forms of social and business innovation, although much of the language of the document is couched in terms of basic 'skills', 'talent' and knowledge transfer rather than a broader conception of creativity as a life-wide skill. There is a latent opportunity here for creative learning to become much more prominent in policy thinking if DCMS, DIUS and DCSF can agree an agenda, although there may also be considerable risks if a narrowly functional economically-driven approach is allowed to dominate. Nor is it yet clear, beyond pilot projects, small scale initiatives and experimental programmes, how the *Innovation Nation* agenda is to be practically supported within the 5 – 18 education policy more generally, given that standards-based instruction and a strong emphasis on competitive testing regimes still remain the dominant approach within schools policy (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008).

The Children's Plan

The impetus behind the Children's Plan (2007) is to raise standards and narrow the gap between those who are underachieving and those who attain 5 GCSE A-C grades; coupled with a wider intent to 'intervene early' in the life

courses of those young people who might appear to be 'at risk' of social exclusion. One possible interpretation of the plan is that schooling should be focused on cognitive learning, with social and emotional awareness acting as an underpinning set of skills to support attainment, and that although play and experimentation are appropriate in the early years such activities should remain outside the main school day in extended school, out of school hours activities and beyond the school gates in improved play spaces and youth provision. The plan refers explicitly to creativity only once - in the context of preparation for employment in the creative industries.

Young people also need to develop the ability to think and act creatively and be innovative. As the Roberts Review Nurturing Creativity in Young People noted, creativity will be key to young people achieving economic well being in adult life because of the increasing importance of the creative economies. (DCMS & DfES, 2006, p.73)

The discourse at the core of the NACCCE report (1999) suggesting creativity is an essential capacity for preparation for the complexities and challenges of 21st century living, the pace of change and a range of employment beyond the creative industries per se does not appear in the Children's Plan. Instead it is replaced by a functional view of creativity largely as preparation for employment in the creative industries.

The two clear strands emerging in relation to culture and creativity are:

- supporting the development of creativity as a route into the creative industries, and

- a cultural offer as a way of stimulating children and young people and stimulating new 'talent'.

The Children's Plan places great emphasis on personalised learning, an agenda which has considerable potential to support the development of creativity, given that it emphasises the individual needs, skills and talents of young people. However, although placed within a context of tailoring the curriculum for 'individual needs', increasing choice and moving away from the content dominated curriculum of the past, the Plan describes personalisation largely in terms of assessment and tracking progression rather than pedagogy. The emphasis therefore is on "personal targets, rapid intervention to keep pupils on trajectory and vigorous assessment to check and maintain progress." (DCSF, 2007, p64).

The Education and Skills Select Committee report and the Government's response

The House of Commons Education and Skills Committee (2007), reporting on its enquiry entitled *Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum*, was robust in its affirmation that creativity was a set of skills which applied across the curriculum.

Most now appear agreed on a definition of creativity which goes beyond the expressive and aesthetic arts, and agree that in educational terms creativity should extend right across the curriculum (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2007, paragraph 17, page 14)

It also identified the “urgent” need to prioritise “developing new methods of assessing incremental progress” stating that “existing measures of progress which focus on the attainment of Key Stages, are unlikely to capture small but steady improvements, or progress in areas such as self- confidence, and team- working, and risk-taking” (*ibid*, paragraph 28, page 17).

The Select Committee also questions “whether the current make-up of the Creative Partnerships board adequately reflects the full range of professions to which creativity is key.” (*ibid*, paragraph 18, page 14).

The Government response to this report recognised that “creativity is not just about the arts ...it applies across all subjects.” (House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee, 2008, Appendix 1, page 1). It also stated that “while there will always be scope for collaboration with other sectors, both Departments consider that Creative Partnerships’ principal focus should remain on arts and culture.” (*ibid*, page 3). Following the publication of their response the formation of a new Youth Culture Trust led by Creative Partnerships was announced (DCMS, 2008). Current policy statements refer to creativity rather than creative learning, perhaps reflecting difficulties of definition discussed earlier. It is not clear in policy terms what the distinctive value of creative learning as distinct from creativity might be, although external to policy many studies indicate that creative learning brings many benefits both in its own right and in the context of creative partnership (Craft, Cremin and Burnard, 2008; Fiske, ed. 1999; Griffiths & Woolf, 2004; NFER, 2006; OfSTED, 2003; 2006).

Opportunities or challenges?

A number of questions in relation to creativity emerge from current policy statements, posing both opportunities and challenges. As this brief paper sets out, the policy landscape is crowded with agencies, initiatives, programmes and targets. Given this complexity and occasional confusion, we pose some questions for further consideration by policymakers and practitioners:

- How far can the new Early Years Foundation Stage framework support practitioners in implementing an approach to fostering creativity in children across the curriculum?
- To what extent do the ‘personal learning and thinking skills’ built in to the Key Stage 3 (KS3) school curriculum for 11-14 year olds from September 2008, offer opportunity for fostering creativity – both in terms of ‘creative thinkers’ and in terms of the cluster of skills as a whole, in the development of curriculum, learning, assessment and pedagogy so as to nurture pupil agency and engagement?
- Does the emphasis on personal learning and thinking skills and social and emotional behaviour in the new KS3 curriculum adequately encompass all aspects of creativity?
- Does the term ‘creativity and critical thinking skills’ implicitly limit creativity to a cognitive and logical skill disconnected from any emotional or spiritual reaction and exclude intuition, or spontaneous non-linear behaviour?
- Is it possible to frame creativity within the approach to target setting and assessment outlined in the Children’s Plan? Or are further adjustments necessary?

- Is 'developing individual talent' being used as a replacement term for creativity? If so, does this adequately take account of creativity as both solitary and also a social and collaborative process?
- What are the implications for creative learning given the emphasis in the Children's Plan on schools reporting regularly to parents on pupil progress
- Should OfSTED require schools to monitor and report their approaches to developing creativity? If so, how does this begin to open up how we might talk about 'progression' in creative learning?
- Does the phrase used in the Children's Plan transition from mainly play based learning to largely cognitive development demonstrate a misplaced polarisation of cognitive development between play and logical-mathematical thinking?
- How can different strands of Government's stated ambition to create a more innovative and personalised education system be translated into practical, system-wide support for practitioners to develop innovative practice and more creative models of teaching and learning?

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3 artists' perspectives on art practice and pedagogy

Emily Pringle

‘To put the artist at the centre of the art education programme is to place a particular subject and a particular type and quality of discourse at its centre. This discourse is characterised by rigorous doubt which must, in the face of all forms of authority, be directed, pointed, shaped, not just by the student.... But also by the teacher.’ (Thompson, 1994:46).

This quotation, from the then Head of Fine Art at Goldsmith’s College, University of London suggests that artists working in educational scenarios contribute something specific. This is characterised here as a combination of discipline and uncertainty. In the context of debates around creative learning a degree of ‘rigorous doubt’ seems appropriate, partly to consider whether this facet of artistic practice can facilitate active and reflective forms of meaning making, but also because the term ‘creative learning’ itself is open to multiple interpretations.

Creative Partnerships’ discourse locates creative practitioners as particularly adept at stimulating creative learning. Such professionals, by being creative themselves, are potentially able to develop creative learning skills in others (Collard, 2007). This paper examines to what extent the connection between art practice and creative pedagogy exists. It considers how visual artists working in educational contexts perceive art practice and artist-led teaching and learning. It explores the different roles artist educators occupy and attempts to connect one understanding of art practice with the learning process. This analysis provides a basis from which to identify why artist educators can facilitate creative learning, but also where potential tensions may arise.

The paper draws on two studies (Pringle, 2002; Pringle, 2008). Both examined visual artists' perceptions of their artistic and pedagogic practice. Arts education and visual art are highly complex and varied and this research focused on a small number of practitioners. Whilst recognising the value of the wide range of artists' interventions in education, (such as the long-standing tradition of theatre in education), this research examined visual art practice exclusively. Nonetheless, the case studies provide valuable insights since they involve visual art practitioners with considerable experience of working in education scenarios. In this way, I suggest the research can contribute to a greater understanding of artist-led pedagogy by interrogating artists' perceptions in detail.

Background to the practice: the legacy of community arts

The practice of artists working in learning environments, especially schools, and community contexts is long established. Antecedents can be traced to those artists working in the community as part of the 'New Deal' in America in the 1930s (Meecham & Sheldon, 2004). In the 1970s and 80s the community arts movement in Britain embraced a range of artists and activities. It took as its starting point the notion of empowerment through participation in a creative process, a dislike of cultural hierarchies and a belief in the creative potential of all sections of society (Morgan, 1995). Within this 'democratic' creative framework (Banaji *et al*, 2006), community arts constructed people as active meaning makers and potential participants in a creative process.

The legacy of community arts is evident in recent more 'socially engaged' art practice (Butler & Reiss, 2007) and in the current practice of artists working in, for example, gallery education contexts (Taylor, 2006). Although Creative Partnerships has sought to distance itself from previous arts education interventions, arguably the initiative shares certain common concerns with community arts. The latter's emphasis on individuals as active makers of meaning is relevant to creative learning debates. Equally, community arts promoted a model of participatory art practice, wherein creativity is developed and meaning emerges through the collaborative processes of facilitated dialogue and making activities - processes evident within Creative Partnerships and other arts education initiatives (Harding, 2005). A further reason for re-visiting community arts practice emerges from certain artist educators' own constructions of their creative practice and how they rationalise and explain their own forms of pedagogic engagement.

Artists' construction of creative practice and artistic expertise

My research examined how selected visual art practitioners defined themselves as 'artists' in terms of the knowledge and skills they perceive they possess. Significantly the case study artists did not describe their practice in terms of making images, or were wedded to a particular medium or technique, but rather as a process of conceptual enquiry and meaning making. Drawing on their own experiences, these artists engaged in creative investigation and problem solving, which culminated in the manifestation of their conceptual

preoccupation: the artwork. Thus, whilst they may have been proficient at welding or digital photography, they utilised these skills in order to articulate their specific ideas and did not define themselves as sculptors or photographers exclusively.

Consequently the knowledge and skills they considered essential to the artist are those that enabled them to negotiate the process of enquiry. This expertise has been described as 'aesthetic intelligence... [which is] about judgements and ...a form of intelligence that can know what to do when making' (Grizelda Pollock interviewed in Raney, 2003:149). Artists' knowledge enables them to act effectively to realise their ideas and resembles what has been defined elsewhere, as 'practitioner' knowledge (Eraut, 1994) or 'know how'. As such it is experiential (it is gained and revealed through practice) and complex. In some cases (the 'feel' of a piece of sculpture, for example) it is embodied and resists systematic and explicit organisation. Such practical knowledge can be differentiated from more theoretical knowledge or 'know what', which is capable of written codification and generalisation. Whereas an academic, for example, commonly demonstrates their knowledge through erudition, an artist reveals theirs through engaging in the art making process and effectively articulating their ideas.

The case study artists' constructions of the artistic process revealed the skills they considered intrinsic to their expertise. Active questioning and enquiry underpinned the creative process and art making was seen to involve moments of inspiration alongside rationality. Playfulness, risk taking and productive failure were considered central, as

art making is necessarily uncertain and fluid. These artists perceived they were skilled in accommodating the unexpected; they valued curiosity, imaginative responses, open-mindedness and the freedom to explore concurrent strands of interest.

Spontaneity and intuition were important, but looking, reflecting and critical thinking were equally significant skills. Art making was considered purposeful and, contrary to the model of the Romantic creative genius, was not fuelled exclusively by inspiration: these artists saw that artistic meaning making involves production, but also evaluation and rationalisation, so that ideas were realised coherently as pieces of work. Artists' expertise therefore involved judging how to balance 'poetic play' (Pollock interviewed in Raney, 2002) with formal decision making and critical reassessment. Prentice describes this process as 'analogous to a conversational exchange' (Prentice, 2000:148), which allows for experimentation, but also tolerates failure.

Art practice was thus constructed as an experiential process of conceptual enquiry that embraced inspiration, critical thinking and the building of meanings. What emerged through the research was how these artists saw art practice providing a model for a creative learning process wherein learners drew on their experience to gain understanding, develop new knowledge and articulate their ideas.

How do artists engage with learners?

In terms of direct pedagogic engagement, the research found that artists draw on their own

experience as creative practitioners to instigate a particular type of learning process which resembles their art practice. This has implications in terms of creative learning both because of what the artists' perceive they are 'teaching', but also how they engage with learners.

In line with 'constructivist' learning models, the artists adopted a more facilitative stance, engaging students in the processes of learning, sparking their curiosity, improving the quality of their thinking and increasing their disposition to learn (Watkins, 2003). These creative practitioners prioritized the development of learners' ideas and individual creativity, whilst encouraging them to reflect on their activities. The teaching of specific techniques or craft skills was perceived as important, but necessary mainly to enable participants to realise their ideas more effectively in visual form. The artists encouraged learners to question and embark on a process of enquiry, with some of the artists actually describing their pedagogic practice as resembling a participatory research process.

Echoing the concerns of the community arts movement, these artists located learners as active makers of meaning rather than as passive recipients of disembodied knowledge. The artists considered that they have a responsibility to enable learners to articulate issues and concerns that have significance or relevance to individuals in creative and innovative ways. They sought to give participants 'a voice' and to encourage their broader critical and reflective thinking.

The artists also promoted experiential learning, with an emphasis on giving participants the

opportunity to experiment, take risks and play, within a supportive environment. An example is provided by the artist Esther Sayers, who describes working with a group of deaf students who were interested in making films:

They had never used video before and certainly the four year old was just amazed with the idea that we were just giving her the video. The learning how to hold it so she didn't drop it was as much an important part of the process as turning on the camera and filming something. It was about the opportunity to get confidence, using it more freely rather than in a structured school-type setting. I think that was better than just standing up and saying this is how you turn it on, we did almost the opposite of that. We just gave them the cameras and let them figure it out for themselves. (Esther Sayers quoted in Pringle, 2002).

The emphasis was on enabling learners to take responsibility for, and actively participate in, their own learning as much as mastering how to use a camera.

As in Esther's quotation above, whilst describing their practice these artists tended to define themselves in opposition to teachers or to conventional school scenarios. They resisted describing their practice as 'teaching', associating that term exclusively with a restricted notion of transmissive pedagogy. Although respecting the teaching profession, the constraints of the curriculum and the need to transmit a specific body of knowledge, such values were seen by the artists as counter to their mode of pedagogy. Instead artists sought to engage participants primarily through discussion exchanging ideas and experiences.

There was evidence of 'co-constructive' (Watkins, 2003) learning taking place, whereby shared knowledge is generated between all participants including the teacher. In line with the co-construction learning model these artists' identified themselves as co-learners, who question and re-organise their knowledge, rather than as infallible experts transmitting information.

There is some evidence that the attributes of effective learners (for example being active and strategic, skilled in developing goals, reflecting on and understanding their own learning: Watkins *et al*, 1996) are shared by art practitioners. This suggests why artists resist describing themselves as 'teachers' and approach their pedagogic work more from the perspective of the learner who is keen to make meaning. Positioning themselves as the didact who imposes or transmits is counter to their experience as artists. Therefore, although their resistance to seeing their practice in terms of more transmissive modes of teaching reveals itself in opposition to teachers, it can be seen to stem more from their allegiance to an experiential and creative process of meaning-making.

By exemplifying the attributes of a creative learner the artist can act as a mentor or role model to those working with them. This works most effectively when they exhibit a profound level of engagement with their practice and demonstrate their particular working methods and critical and creative approaches. The pedagogic model of apprenticeship is relevant here – where the artist or teacher is perceived as a 'master practitioner' who embodies their practice and reveals their know how through their actions (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The

following quotation from artist Liz Ellis illustrates this:

I tried to be very overt about the way I made work so we got sketchbooks and I kept my sketchbook alongside theirs and I showed them what I thought was working and what wasn't working. I showed them ideas I'd had in between or when I'd got stuck, so I tried to be very concrete about what I was doing. (Liz Ellis quoted in Pringle, 2002)

As an educator Liz is not to 'teach' drawing skills, for example: rather she is sharing her artistic knowledge and enabling learners to participate alongside her. Through witnessing the artist engaging in her sketchbook activity as well as having the opportunity to maintain their own versions, learners gain understanding through experience. Arguably, by making her artistic process explicit, this artist is demonstrating her own creative learning journey. The pedagogic relationship between artist and learners revealed in this example has implications for how teacher and learner relationships can be constructed in creative learning scenarios more broadly, but also for how creative learning can be assessed.

What are the implications for 'creative learning'?

Evidence from this research indicated that artists' perceptions of their practice and pedagogy correlated in many ways with creative learning and teaching strategies. In his examination of creativity and early childhood education, for example, Roy

Prentice identifies specific criteria for creativity (including inventiveness, flexibility, imagination, risk taking and a tolerance of ambiguity). He identifies creative learners as active meaning-makers and argues that creativity flourishes where the 'co-existence of alternatives' and 'the value of individual interpretation' are encouraged (Prentice, 2000: 155). He places a premium on experiential learning and concludes that the foremost skills required for creativity are enquiry, reflection and criticism.

Although not describing their activities explicitly in the language of creative learning, the case study artists exhibited these characteristics outlined by Prentice. The constructions of their pedagogic practice also included many of the criteria for creative learning that he advocated. In terms of what they were seeking to facilitate (the development of participants' ideas and their critical and reflective skills), their mode of engagement (experiential, experimental and participatory,) and their positioning of learners as active and self-determining, their practice chimes well with the discourses of creativity promulgated by Creative Partnerships in general. As creative makers of meaning themselves it would appear that artists are well equipped to facilitate creative learning in others.

Yet consideration must be given to how and whether artist-led pedagogy can engender broader and longer-term creative learning strategies across a school. One issue associated with artists' interventions in education (which these artists are aware of) is that art practitioners can adopt creative and experimental pedagogic modes because generally they are free from curriculum constraints, whereas teachers are not always

at liberty to do so. The artist thus becomes the creative 'other', whereas the teacher (who frequently in the case of secondary schools is an art practitioner in their own right) can be cast in a stereotyped role of didact or classroom police. There is a danger that artists 'reinforce normative relations because they act as a one off bubble where they are perceived as limited outsider interventions' (Addison & Burgess, 2006: 92). Creative Partnerships has sought to overcome this issue by supporting artists to work in partnership with schools over the longer term. However, the dominance of the transmission learning model in schools, coupled with the current culture of assessment suggests that teachers will need considerable support and professional development opportunities to adopt more co-constructive, open-ended and participatory modes of working, with or without artists' interventions.

The case study artists were also conscious of the limits of what they could achieve in terms of changing broader learning agendas - particularly as they were only involved with participants for relatively short periods of time. Therefore, whilst these artists differentiated themselves from teachers, they acknowledged that projects were more successful and sustainable when they worked alongside staff, particularly in school contexts which promoted more collaborative, less constrained modes of teaching.

A further issue concerns the form of engagement visual artists typically adopted with participants. The case study artists favoured working intensively with smaller groups over a longer period, which allowed for individual enquiry, dialogic exchange and incremental learning through direct experience.

The practitioners valued working alongside learners, establishing trust and sharing knowledge; a scenario that is more difficult to establish if there are large numbers of participants involved, or the intervention is short term. Within most education initiatives involving artists (Creative Partnerships included) there is pressure to include more participants rather than less, which can result in superficial or briefer engagements between artist and learners. In such cases it is less clear how the pedagogic exchange favoured by artists can be sustained.

Finally questions arise over how a creative learning process can be maintained if there is an emphasis within an artist-led project on particular and more restricted outcomes. Are artists in a school to engage participants in a process of creative learning specifically or to teach them certain craft skills? Or, as is frequently the case with visual artists, have they been employed to address an identified issue (raising awareness of bullying, helping improve the physical infrastructure of the school or addressing one area of the science curriculum, for example)? In some cases those involved (including the artist) may seek a 'high quality' product. Achieving this outcome can require participants to shift away from experimental and collaborative processes to focus more on the finished artwork. In several cases these artists acknowledged that they took complete control of a project near to completion to ensure it reached the standards they, or the commissioners, desired. Whilst having a clear purpose is a key element of any creative process, in such cases skill is required to ensure that the participatory structure does not break down and learners become disenfranchised from their own creative learning trajectory.

Implications for the assessment of creative learning

Considerations of art practice and creative learning suggest that attention must be given to the process of meaning making. In the same way that these artists frame their practice as an experiential and conceptual process, creative learning can be constructed, not as knowledge acquisition, but in terms of the ways people learn. Appropriate assessment should, it seems to me, embrace learning competencies and how such competencies are manifest in practice. Furthermore notions of progression can be linked to how these competencies are developed and are made explicit. For example, progression will note how learners take more risks, reflect more deeply and coherently on their actions and their failures, take greater control over their learning, feel more comfortable experimenting and are more able to articulate their ideas.

Evaluating how these competencies have developed furthers understanding of the creative learning process. However, it is equally important to foreground and reveal who is doing the assessment and for what purposes. In order to sustain a feasible creative environment learners need to retain responsibility and ownership as far as possible. Ideally young people, for example, engage in assessing their own progress. In line with the principles of arts practice described above, learners should be aware of what they are being assessed on (what criteria are being applied) and why. For an arts practitioner such as Roz Hall 'process generated evaluation' which 'acknowledges the subjective nature of 'quality' and extent to

which notions of quality are transient' is crucial (2005). She argues that:

It is important to recognise the extent to which a notion of quality, as a fixed and naturalised element of educational discourse, is aligned with a very specific set of social and cultural understandings and experiences... the contemporary significance of ever more unique, and distinct fusions of diverse and specific cultural and social experiences can be understood as challenging any notions of quality as being, in any way, ultimately fixed (Hall, 2005: 11).

Assessments of creative learning, as Hall identifies, therefore need to take account not only of what is being evaluated, but also how that evaluative process constructs the learner and values the outputs of the learning process. Within a creative learning scenario the dynamic and collaborative relationship between teacher (and/or artist) and learner accommodates a flexible and negotiated assessment process, where the learning of all participants is recognised. Despite support for such procedures being given by the Department for Culture Media and Sport in their sanctioning of the concept of 'creative portfolios' (DCMS/DCSF, 2006), the extent to which ongoing, participatory and self-regulated forms of assessment are possible within current school cultures is questionable.

Conclusion

It is generally accepted that artists can play a vital role in facilitating creative learning. The research into specific visual artists' perceptions

illuminates how and why these practitioners' art practice and approaches to teaching and learning can develop learners' intellectual and intuitive modes of enquiry, whilst bolstering their critical and reflective skills. However, tensions arise between this kind of artist-led teaching and the expectations and procedures of certain types of school context. For arts-practice to enhance ongoing work within the institution effectively and for assessment of creative learning to recognise the complex, dynamic and fluid nature of the process will require a deeper kind of structural change if we want to make creative learning a persistent feature of everyday education.

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4 studio thinking: a model of artistic mind

Lois Hetland

What is the Studio Thinking Framework?

The Studio Thinking Framework (Hetland *et al*, 2007) describes two aspects of art classrooms: (1) three ‘studio structures’ that art teachers use to organize time and interactions and (2) eight ‘studio habits of mind’ – dispositions (that is, skills and attitudes about their uses; Perkins, Jay, & Tishman, 1993) that are taught through studio art classes.

Studio Structures is the term we use to describe three basic patterns of time, space, and interactions that teachers employ in studio classrooms. They describe the many complex activities that occur in arts classrooms.

‘Demonstration-Lectures’ are offered through visual demonstrations and images supplemented by verbal explanations to quickly convey to students the challenges, processes, information, and ideas that students will need immediately in the work to follow.

Students-at-Work sessions, which make up the bulk of classroom time, are when students make artworks and teachers observe and offer personalized responses to advance students’ thinking, efforts, and works.

Critiques are periodic descriptive conversations among students and teachers about students’ in-progress and finished works, which are displayed informally and temporarily. Critiques can be conducted one-on-one or in small- or whole-groups; they can be verbal, silent, or written; they can involve comments by the student artist, peers, teachers, and/or outside experts; and they are organized in many ways.

We also defined **Studio Transitions**, when students move from one structure to another or prepare to start or end art class, as

a management rather than a learning structure, to remind teachers to handle them carefully so that they do not eat up valuable learning time.

We used the term **Studio Habits of Mind** to describe eight important kinds of general cognitive and attitudinal dispositions that are taught in serious visual arts classes. These are:

- 1 Develop Craft: Technique and Studio Practice;
- 2 Engage & Persist;
- 3 Envision;
- 4 Express;
- 5 Observe;
- 6 Reflect: Question & Explain and Evaluate;
- 7 Stretch & Explore; and
- 8 Understand Art World: Domain and Communities.

We saw teachers working to instil all eight Studio Habits of Mind; and all the teaching and learning we observed during the research on this project was classified into one or more of these dispositions. Our observations suggested that these habits ‘stack’ during instruction and art-making, often operating in clusters related to the understanding teachers intend students to develop through the challenge or problem to be pursued. For example, in a class focused on creating a ‘unit’ that is repeated to create a sculpture, the emphasized habits were stretch & explore, engage & persist, observe, and envision. In a puppet-making project, the emphasis focused on the cluster of develop craft, envision, and express.

It is easy to hypothesize a relationship between the Studio Habits of Mind and creativity. Both are dispositional – that is, each Studio Habit is comprised of skills, inclinations, and alertness to opportunities (Perkins, Jay, & Tishman, 1993); creativity seems similarly dispositional. While the arts are not the only creative domain, they decidedly are creative arenas – like creativity, arts tie subjects together interpretively (Efland, 2004; Perkins, 1994), aim to create adaptive novelty (Perkins, 1983), and are structured so that individuals interact within a field and domain (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996).

Why we developed the Studio Thinking Framework

The Studio Thinking research was motivated by two related interests. First, the status of the arts in education increasingly relies on clear descriptions of what arts teach and how arts learning might credibly be assessed. Second, findings from our previous review of transfer from arts to non-arts learning and cognition (Winner & Hetland, 2000; 2001) concluded that many of the advocacy claims about transfer were not supported by the data – they could not be generalized from studies that were accumulated and analysed. We realized that rigorous tests for transfer required first that the field understand what arts teach, what arts students learn, and how that could be measured. Both perspectives compelled us to pursue a rigorous, empirically-based description of teaching and learning in the arts. Our goal was to understand the kinds of thinking that teachers help students to develop in visual arts classes and the supports they use to do that. We also wished to provide

strong evidence that the real curriculum in the visual arts extends far beyond the teaching of technique and that such teaching engenders the development of serious thinking dispositions that are valued both within and beyond the arts: possibly what this publication envisages as creative learning.

We conducted our study at the high school level (age 14-18). We realized that we were entering a complex disciplinary landscape, and we aimed to find a language to help teachers and researchers describe it. We were not looking for a prescription that dictated what *should* be done and what is best. Rather, we wanted to map visual arts teaching in ways that would allow teachers and researchers to see that territory more clearly, to convey more easily what they knew about classrooms and teaching, to ponder alternate routes that might be taken, and to learn more readily from other experienced travellers.

What such an approach might achieve

Since its creation, Studio Thinking has been used in promising ways by a variety of audiences for a number of purposes. The remainder of this paper describes four of those contexts.

(1) A language for reform.

The most extensive use of Studio Thinking to date has been in Alameda County, California, a county of about 1.5 million people and 18 public school districts located just east of San Francisco. An Alliance for Arts Learning

Leadership (<http://www.artiseducation.org/>) begun there in 1999 includes five stakeholder communities: K-12 educators, higher education colleges and universities, parents and community organisations, artists and cultural organisations, and resource organisations (e.g., funders, school reform organisations). The Alliance's goal has been to re-establish the arts as a central component of public education given that the state's arts education infrastructure had been gradually dismantled as a consequence of tax-relief measures from the early 1980s.

In 2003, the Alameda County Office of Education, the California College of the Arts, and Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education began a pilot project funded by the US Department of Education. We worked with five visual art teachers and fifteen K-8 teachers who set out to improve instruction by using the Studio Thinking and the Teaching for Understanding frameworks (Blythe *et al*, 1998) along with practices for Making Learning Visible (Project Zero & Reggio Children, 2001). Arts teachers used Studio Thinking to support assessment of learning, and non-arts teachers worked with all three thinking frames (Perkins, 1986; 1987) to learn to teach arts in general classroom contexts, both as stand-alone and integrated instruction.

When the project concluded in mid-2006, the Alliance set in motion a county-wide project, funded by the US Department of Education and the Ford, Hewlett, and Haas Foundations, to spread what had been learned to all 18 school districts over the next five years. That process is now well underway, and 'Studio Thinking' is a pillar of this endeavour. Three

lead districts are enacting plans for developing capacity for arts teaching and learning among their faculties. These districts partner with arts organizations who provide ongoing coaching and collaborate in running summer institutes to educate district teachers about teaching the arts rigorously. Six more districts are beginning to carry out the early stages of their own district arts plans, and nine more are creating plans for their district's arts development.

The Alliance also advocates for the arts at the state level, and California's governor responded to advocacy efforts by going from \$0 to \$105 million annually for district support of ongoing professional development in arts education, along with a one-time grant of \$500 million to districts to rebuild arts and physical education infrastructure.

Louise Music, Coordinator of Arts Education for the county and a founding member of the Alliance, holds Studio Thinking as the 'lingua franca' of the initiative. By stating explicitly the kinds of thinking the arts require and the teaching structures through which art educators teach such thinking, Studio Thinking serves as a sort of Rosetta Stone for us to translate the potential of the arts across disciplines, audiences, and contexts.

(2) Professional development

Pre-service teachers: At the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, students in beginner-teacher courses work under close faculty supervision in a 12-week course to design and co-teach eight, 2.5 hour classes to Boston-area students who take Saturday morning art classes at the college. Before the

art education faculty feels confident in moving students into schools, students must, at minimum, demonstrate the ability to manage a class. But we expect much more!

I teach this course and see it as my chance to convey to students the importance of focusing teaching on student learning and growth, on creating a supportive and nurturing a community of learning with colleagues and students, and on developing the habits of a reflective practitioner who looks, considers, decides, and assesses instructional revision in ongoing, iterative ways. The Studio Habits are one of two main tools for doing that (the other is the *Teaching for Understanding Framework*, Blythe *et al*, 1998).

Over the past decade when facilitating professional development, various co-presenters have urged me not to overwhelm teachers with too much information – too many frameworks, too many intentions, too rich a meal. But I'm always tempted to reveal the full menu of possibilities, because any one teacher might want to tackle different parts first. There's no set sequence of instruction for learning to use the thinking frames that support a focus on student learning for understanding, professional community, and reflective practice, and teachers learn as differently as students. There are many pathways to competence, and the critical nuggets vary for different people.

In this class, I have not held back. In the first four weeks, before students enter their own classrooms, I flood them with what we call 'the tsunami.' They read and plan with *Studio Thinking* (Hetland *et al*, 2007), the *Teaching for Understanding Guide* (Blythe *et al*, 1998),

and Saphier and Gower's *Skillful Teacher* (1997). It is obviously too much to expect a beginning teacher to internalise in just four weeks, before they've met any students or learned the basics of managing a group. But I acknowledge with my students this 'too muchness' (usually repeatedly) and that their job is to let it all wash over them and grab onto whatever keeps them afloat. The goal is to swim in these waters. I assure them that, by doing so, they'll eventually understand how to navigate with the full complement of tools in the face of a full range of challenges – they'll learn to facilitate serious learning about important content, manage a group, build rapport, operate professionally, plan usefully, and reflect thoughtfully.

My students see that the Studio Habits focus them on disciplinary understanding in visual arts and aids them in building rapport, working professionally with others, and managing groups of students. They experience the value of making mistakes, reflecting on them, and sharing them with a group of trusted colleagues who support them. They experience teaching and learning as collaborative endeavours, how art offers limitless opportunities for engagement, depth, and development, and how reflection on actions in relation to Studio Thinking's categories supports their development as teachers of critical and creative visual arts understanding.

Though management, too, is fundamental for beginning teachers, the Studio Thinking framework helps my students begin their careers as they need to continue, treating teaching as a creative endeavour based in a disciplinary field and domain to which they each develop and contribute in ongoing, individual and collective ways.

Young professionals: Studio Thinking has also been useful with young teachers who have moved beyond the status of beginners and have either a handful of years in the art classroom or are experienced teachers in non-arts contexts and who are tackling art teaching for the first time. For these groups, Studio Thinking has been valuable in two ways: Studio Structures suggests simple ways to design instructional sequences to teach; and Studio Habits, which help them understand and make explicit to themselves and their students (and others) what they want to teach and have students learn. Studio Habits also help them to see more in their classrooms and to assess the understanding their students develop in a more informed fashion.

Arts teachers at this level began to analyse their own instruction with the Studio Habits and redesign lessons to focus more on meaning (express), imagination (envisioning), and exploration (stretch & explore). For experienced non-arts teachers newly required to teach arts, Studio Thinking seems like a lifeline. They have few resources for thinking about how and what to teach, beyond technique, that might be learned through visual art instruction and experiences. One teacher of language arts expressed her appreciation of the Studio Thinking framework in this way:

I think the parts I understand are really useful in terms of the different kinds of ways of structuring time. They gave me an opening and shifting in my thinking, sculpting out my lesson in terms of thinking about when you are talking and when are kids working. I really like that. I can name that. I love that. I can see that.

Experienced teachers: While many experienced teachers saw Studio Thinking as a resource from the start that helped them to develop ways to support students' thinking processes and self-reflection about arts learning, others were more sceptical. One experienced teacher said that the Studio Habits affirmed what she already did, but she did not see how they added anything to her teaching. 'Well, to me it's a way of organising ideas but it's nothing we haven't always done.' As she worked with Studio Thinking, however, she saw that it helped her communicate with her students about what she valued, and it helped her students to speak in greater depth and with more sophistication about artworks.

Over time, all the experienced teachers with whom we've worked have expressed appreciation similar to teachers with less experience. These teachers were able to name what they were doing that worked, to see more clearly the areas of their teaching that they wanted to develop, and, most importantly, to communicate with students what they valued in a shared, simple language that accommodated the broadest range of their intentions and supported self-, peer-, and teacher assessments of learning.

(3) Assessing learning. Studio Habits have great potential in supporting the assessment of learning in the arts. Teachers with whom we've worked have designed systems of anecdotal record-keeping through notes and photographic images, ways to reflect on and reveal growth through portfolios of student work, and ways to structure critiques so that students see more and

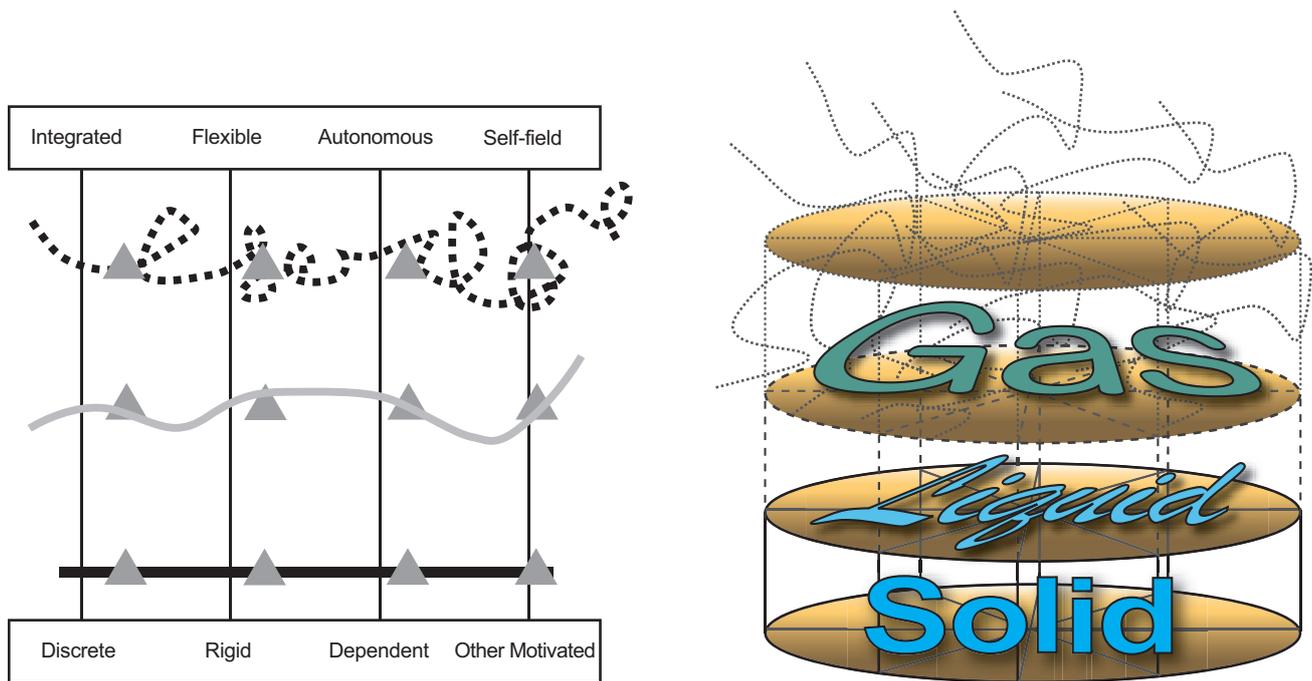
comment more thoughtfully on each others' work. I have begun using the Studio Habits to assess progress in college-aged art education students, recently piloting a form that captures and communicates my impressions of students' work and working during final reviews.

Based on our analyses of student learning with the Studio Habits, I used four continua of growth, developed first by Kimberly Sheridan (Sheridan & Hetland, 2007), that can be evidenced in student work: discrete to integrated handling of knowledge networks, rigid to flexible approaches to thinking, judging quality dependently to autonomously, and being motivated by others' (e.g., assignments) to self- and/or field-motivated work.

Lower levels along these continua are metaphorically equivalent to a solid state of matter – handling of knowledge, approach to thinking, making of judgments, and motivation are discrete, algorithmic, bounded, and external. Mid-levels are analogically equivalent to a liquid state of matter – categories are more permeable, fluid, related, responsive, and internally provoked. At the highest levels, thinking is more like a gaseous state of matter: It is highly interactive and instantaneously responsive; expertise is tacit; and categorical distinctions are nearly dissolved in the immediacies of practice.

Most promising about this pilot was the ready understanding of the analogy by the art education students. Also, the structure allowed me to see patterns in students' work that were otherwise invisible or difficult to convey, and the format supported very personalised responses that captured and conveyed in

Figure 1 States of Matter metaphor to describe levels of learning



qualitative terms the wide diversity of students' approaches, thinking, and development. The system did not result in a quantitative assessment, however, and could not contribute at this stage to a numerical average of any sort. It is, however, useful as diagnostic and formative assessment.

(4) Mechanisms for transfer. The question of cognitive transfer is complex and vexed. As David Perkins suggested after the results of our REAP meta-analyses (Reviewing Education and the Arts, Winner & Hetland, 2000), 'it is important to stand back from their findings [about lack of transfer] and ask whether the game is essentially over.... Some would say that it had never really begun' (Perkins, 2001, p. 117).

The Studio Habits of Mind offer a vehicle to consider mechanisms of transfer of learning between art and other disciplines. We recently proposed a study exploring whether and to what extent envisioning learned in visual art informs the visualisation required in geometry (Goldsmith, Hetland, & Winner, 2008). If such is the case, rigorous art instruction may be a pathway of equitable access to higher-level mathematics and science for students who would otherwise not have the requisite skills for success in such endeavours. Similarly, Studio Habits might help researchers examine mechanisms for supporting language development in some populations with visual arts instruction (e.g. Reflect: Question & Explain might offer practice in thinking, speaking, reading, and writing, while Engage & Persist supports motivation for sustained focus); or explaining why arts might support

scientific thought (e.g. Stretch & Explore might support an approach to error that is productive in investigating scientific phenomena); or why visual art might contribute to historical understanding (e.g. Observe might nurture taking reasoned, multiple perspectives on historical events).

Teachers, too, can benefit from use of the Studio Habits when planning, teaching, and/or assessing interdisciplinary and/or arts-integrated units of instruction. Generalist teachers in the Alameda County projects have increased their intentional uses of art to support learning in the academic subjects, and the Studio Habits help to orient that planning. For example, one teacher's visual art unit on homelessness (Todd Elkin's 'Do-It-Yourself Homeless Shelters' unit in Boix Mansilla, manuscript in preparation) exemplifies the potential connections between art and history. As students considered the purposes and aesthetics of shelter, explored construction materials gleaned from local dumpsters, designed and built shelters that accommodated at least one person, and used surface and ornamental treatments to convey personal meaning and aesthetic, they became more deeply aware of the issues of homelessness and the importance of taking action to solve this societal dilemma locally and globally. As a tool supporting creative thinking, the Studio Habits helped the teacher focus the unit on understanding the contemporary art world's commitments to social critique and action, on artistic envisioning, and on stretching & exploring, while also developing craft, the capacity to engage & persist, and reflect on and develop criteria for quality.

This brief tour of contexts and audiences who have used Studio Thinking suggests the potential I believe the framework holds for enhancing education when creativity is a desired outcome.

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5 creative learning and new technology? a provocation paper

Avril Loveless

In the past ten years of education policy initiatives and change, both information and communication technologies (ICT) and creativity have been themes which have attracted attention, activity and resources. Each are perceived to be worthy of support, yet each are complex, and the interaction between creativity and new technologies raises challenging issues for educators. This paper is therefore presented in the context of work developed in these two significant, yet troublesome, areas over a period of change in practice and policy.

Our understandings of the term 'creative learning' are emergent. At first, I thought it to be somewhat contrived, but have been interested in the thought-provoking work of colleagues. (see for example Craft, Cremin, & Burnard, 2008; Craft, Jeffrey, & Leibling, 2001; Jeffrey, 2006). The discussions and projects associated with the ideas help us to look a little differently at creative experiences in varieties of environments. There is useful work being done to describe, explain and reconceptualise 'creative learning', and draw attention to the complexities in policy, practice, theory and research. In this provocation paper I will discuss my understandings of some current approaches to creative learning, and make links to my wider understandings of creativity and the role of digital technologies as tools in creative processes. I will make some observations on how imagination, experience and meaning can be observed and worked out in some of the projects in which I've been engaged in the last dozen years and then pose some questions for further discussion. I suggest that questions about models of creative learning and formal sets of programmes for evaluating progression might be inappropriate and simplistic, failing to recognise not only the complex interactions

between learners, teachers, knowledge and tools, but also the wider contexts and connections in which these interactions take place.

Creative learning and creativity

The development of discussions, projects and understandings of the term 'creative learning' have been well documented, tracing the policy, practice and research in creativity in education over the past two decades in the UK and internationally (Craft, 2005; Craft *et al*, 2008; Craft *et al*, 2001; Jeffrey, 2006; NACCCE, 1999; Spendlove & Wyse, 2008; Troman, Jeffrey, & Raggl, 2007). Creative learning can be considered from different perspectives, either as the learning which enables creativity to be expressed, or the imaginative activity supporting learning and intellectual enquiry. Woods and Jeffrey (1997) suggest that creative learning includes innovation and a radical shift, ownership of knowledge which makes a difference to the learner, and control of learning processes through intrinsic motivation. Craft *et al* (2008) discuss the encapsulation of imaginative achievement, the creation of new knowledge, judgements of originality and value in different domain contexts, and a useful focus on imagination and experience to develop learning.

In the research and project activity in which I've been engaged in recent years, we have worked with an understanding of creativity as in the interaction between people and communities, creative processes, subject domains, place, tools, and wider social and cultural contexts (Loveless, 2002). This has enabled us to explore not only the

characteristics, dispositions and processes of individuals and groups, but also to pay attention to the subject domains in which conceptual connections are made and new knowledge constructed; the places or 'niches' where creativity can flourish or decline; the tools and technologies that shape the creative activities; and the wider social and cultural influences that provide contexts for judgements of originality, purpose and value. Creative learning for individuals and communities is an important element emerging in this interaction, but cannot be easily separated or isolated from the others.

The QCA identified five elements of creative learning which could be recognised in learners' behaviours: asking questions, making connections, imagining what might be, exploring options, and reflecting critically (QCA, 2005). We have also given attention to the processes of fashioning as the active and deliberate attention in order to shape, define and manage an idea, often with particular tools and media; and flow - where the person's capacity was being stretched despite elements of challenge, difficulty or risk (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; NACCCE, 1999).

Creativity, technology and learning

In 2002 Futurelab commissioned me to review the research and policy literature on the teaching and learning of creativity with information and communications technologies (ICT) at that time. In 2007, there was an update to identify what progress, if any, had been made in the field. I argued that there had been a growth of activity in the development of

policy, practice, digital resources and research; each of which played a role in the nurturing of creative processes, environments, and outcomes. It was noticeable too that the sharper focus on creativity has also raised awareness of some of the 'tensions and dilemmas' which face educators as they place debates about pedagogy and curriculum in the wider landscape of the economic, social and cultural purposes of education in our society (Loveless, 2002, 2007a).

These reviews drew attention to two ways of approaching the affordances of digital tools for creativity, first, in active learning processes, and secondly in creative endeavour and outcomes. One way of looking at digital technologies in use is to focus on the 'ICT capability' of learners, which relates to understanding and competence in the general processes of dealing with information. The word 'capability' carries the meanings of having power or fitness for a task, being qualified and able, being open to or susceptible to development and implies a knowledge or skill being turned to use: an ability which is used actively, involving understanding and choice (Loveless, 2003a). A development of understandings of ICT capability includes the recognition and exploitation of the affordances of the technologies for learning. Digital technologies can be tools which afford learners the potential to extend or enhance their abilities, allow users to create novel ways of dealing with tasks which might then change the nature of the activity itself, or provide limitations and structure which influence the nature and boundaries of the activity. The potential lies not in the technologies themselves, but in the interaction with human intention and activity.

Conole and Dyke offer a taxonomy of the affordances of ICT as accessibility; speed of change; diversity; communication and collaboration; reflection; multimodal and non-linear; risk, fragility and uncertainty; immediacy; monopolization and surveillance (Conole & Dyke, 2004). Fisher *et al* (2006) identified clusters of purposeful approaches to learning with digital technologies, in which there are a number of connections with ideas of creative learning:

- **Knowledge building:** adapting and developing ideas; modelling; representing understanding in multimodal and dynamic ways;
- **Distributed cognition:** accessing resources; finding things out; writing, composing and presenting with mediating artefacts and tools;
- **Community and communication:** exchanging and sharing communication; extending the context of activity; extending the participating community at local and global levels; and
- **Engagement:** exploring and playing; acknowledging risk and uncertainty; working with different dimensions of interactivity; responding to immediacy.

The use of digital tools in creative endeavour and outcomes in physical and virtual learning environments was reviewed using the following framework:

- **developing ideas:** supporting imaginative conjecture, exploration and representation of ideas;
- **making connections:** supporting, challenging, informing and developing ideas by making connections with information, people, projects and resources;

- **creating and making:** engaging in making meanings through fashioning processes of capture, manipulation and transformation of media;
- **collaboration:** working with others in immediate and dynamic ways to collaborate on outcomes and construct shared knowledge; and
- **communication and evaluation:** publishing and communicating outcomes for evaluation and critique from a range of audiences.

The range of creative activity with digital technologies is wide. Creative imagination not only generates ideas, but also discerns those with potential for growth, and there are many examples of digital tools for conjectural play, exploration and developing ideas, from Logo (Papert, 1980) to simulations and multi-player online games offering opportunities for direct 'hands-and-minds-on' experiences (Shaffer, 2007). Network technologies offer opportunities for making connections with information, case studies, exemplar materials, resources, and creative practitioners in formal and informal settings – from international galleries and museums, to small scale webcam connections. ArtisanCam, for example, is a website which uses video and interactive activities to introduce children to the work and lives of contemporary artists - www.artisancam.org.uk. Social software, such as *Flickr* and *del.icio.us*, enables users to categorise and retrieve web content, tracing the links made by others.

Digital technologies have long been used to create and make meaning, from early manipulations of text and image with word processors and painting programmes to the

composition and presentation of multimedia, music and digital movies. Creative collaborations are possible in the networks and exchange of material. 'Virtual Puppeteers', for example, allows children in different places to use virtual 'space' or 'studios' to create their own 3D designs for puppets and work together online to write their own plays. Such activity can offer a distinctive contribution to collaborations across time and place, engaging new audiences and disrupting traditional structures and commercial interests.

In recent years there have been lively developments in tools for communicating and publishing creative outcomes, from Facebook to YouTube, for showcasing, feedback, tagging, and networking both content and personal links and connections. A recent and interesting development has been in the use of 'context-aware' mobile technologies, which are able to detect and respond to locating signals in the immediate environment using applications such as GPS, Bluetooth, or infrared beacons placed in a space. These devices can bring together experiences of physical and virtual spaces where people can interact with the environments, each other and information from many sources associated with a location⁷. There is evidence, therefore, of the wide scope of creative activity with digital tools in education, through the enthusiasm of pupils and teachers engaging with a variety of technologies as well as through partnerships with experienced creative practitioners. How then might digital technologies shape the 'terrain' for creative learning, and how might such work affect pedagogy and curriculum?

⁷ For examples of 'Mediascapes' which enable users to link text, sounds and images to landscapes, see www.mscapers.com, and see the large scale interactive work of electronic artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer at www.lozano-hemmer.com).

Imagination, experience and meaning

Despite work in research projects in the field of creativity and digital technologies in collaboration with creative practitioners over many years, and the development of a number of modules in teacher education courses, this field is still a great challenge. In the 1990s, we worked on such projects as the Glebe Project, Access, and Art on the Net, focusing on artists working in schools using digital technologies in their visual imagery, performance and sculpture (Loveless, 1997; 2003b; Loveless & Taylor, 2000). In the recently completed CREATE project with student teachers using digital video in primary schools, we have adopted action research models to explore understandings of creativity and pedagogy with student and newly qualified teachers (Loveless, Burton & Turvey, 2006). In all our work we have been encountering similar issues in realising the potential of digital tools; in placing such work in the curriculum; in documenting, evaluating and assessing the outcomes; and in developing pedagogy with the substance and flair needed to provoke and promote the learners' imagination and experience in a meaningful way.

Digital tools

The tools used in making work are integral to the nature of the creative dialogue between the 'maker' and the 'made', and the nature of the digital tools themselves present challenges. In the early days of photography and film making, people made work that looked like painting and theatre, falling back on familiar forms and taking a while to become

familiar with the new tools and create ideas in a manner unique to the medium. It can take time to learn the range of techniques, as well as understand the distinctive contribution that each bring to making meaning (Mitchell, 1994). Without careful design and preparation in the projects and interventions, creative engagement with digital technologies could be superficial and instrumental, missing opportunities for experiences of fashioning and flow. One teacher commented, for example, that creativity was about making pretty things and that he used graphics software to reduce the mess of paint. Early examples of visual work often relied on mimicry of images created in other media, rather than engaging with the characteristics of the digital to make meaning. Some did recognise the need to understand digital technologies as a different medium and tool, which would take time to become familiar and distinctive. A secondary Art teacher noted pupil tantrums when they were frustrated by digital technologies just as much as when they were first introduced to acrylic paint, as they had to learn how to use the particular characteristics and limitations of the media. Multimedia tools demanded approaches to digital literacy which incorporated hypertextuality, iconic association and interactivity, rather than merely linear presentations. The tools of digital movie making offered learners opportunities to collaborate in teams and play a number of roles – scriptwriter, director, actor, camera operator, and editor, each requiring a different capability with a range of techniques with digital tools. After completing a movie in an intensive day, one child suggested that 'the editing was hard, annoying, frustrating and it got on my nerves sometimes...but if we didn't do that it would have been a rubbish movie'.

Recognising the affordances of the digital tools for realizing and fashioning imaginative ideas requires an understanding of the aesthetic challenge, not only of the technologies and techniques, but also of the connections between the tools and the conceptual domain of the ideas.

The curriculum

The curriculum is at the core of making meaning in education, situated as it is within the wider purpose and value of education systems in our society. In the ICT curriculum, there is ambiguity between the construction and presentation of ICT as a subject, and ICT as tools for learning 'embedded' in a range of subject domains. Engaging with imaginative starting points, drawing upon and developing experiences of fashioning and flow, and relating creative activity to a wider purpose and relevance to the lives of pupils and the concepts of the subject domain are not processes which are widely seen in the practice of ICT in schools. The National Curriculum for ICT is presented as processes for developing higher order capabilities: finding things out, developing ideas and making things happen, and exchanging and sharing information. Yet the focus can be on the teaching of ICT applications related to business productivity and the world of work, rather than making connections between the wider cultural experiences of the students and the intellectual demands of the content of the curriculum. Facility with the tools can mask a superficial understanding of the ways of knowing in the activity. Capturing a moment on digital video and showcasing it on *YouTube* is not necessarily a creative act. Indeed, Tara

Brabazon, refers to 'Google, the white bread of the mind', in her call for critical engagement with information and other people in our mediated world (Brabazon, 2007). The Enquiring Minds approach⁸ highlights the interaction between the knowledge that students bring and questions that they wish to ask, with the wider context of the social, cultural and political purposes of education. Digital tools are technologies which are shaping our times, and we need a critical, active engagement to counter technological determinism.

Evaluating and assessing creative learning with digital technologies

Understanding progression in the creative use of digital tools is a challenge. We don't yet know much about how such tools make a developmental difference in learning activities for 5, 10, 15 and 20 year olds, and perhaps there is much more work to be done here. We may, however, be in danger of focusing on the technologies instead of the purpose and nature of the use of the tools, thereby trivialising the quality of the learning and opportunities for development. The National Curriculum 'levels' can be seen to adopt a somewhat broad-brush approach to developments in awareness, use and evaluation of technologies in relation to information, but the conceptual domains are not yet well explored. Digital tools also offer opportunities for the imaginative remix of digital information from a wide range of sources and domains. This can raise interesting questions about how and who to

⁸ See <http://www.enquiringminds.org.uk/>

assess. Additionally, Lessig (2004) urges us to understand the implications of these tools in matters of intellectual property and copyright for future creativity and voice⁹.

One project which holds promise in this area of the role of digital tools in evaluation and assessment of learning is Project e-scape at the Technology Education Research Unit at Goldsmiths, University of London¹⁰. Pupils use hand held digital tools to support the processes involved in a course work activity and the building up of a dynamic portfolio. The portfolio supports the assessment of imagination and innovation in the work in progress as well as final products. I suggest that this approach offers possibilities for further research in creative learning, evaluation and assessment, and the pedagogic 'kick back' for teachers observing the pupils' activity and use of digital tools.

Developing pedagogy: Teacher artistry with digital tools

In our various projects we have noted two significant characteristics of pedagogy which offer space for creative learning with digital technologies: preparation to improvise, and skilful neglect (Labett, 1988; Loveless, 2007b). In these times, teachers are generally very good at planning learning objectives and teaching strategies. There is, however, a noticeable difference between being well planned, and being well-prepared. Being prepared is an aspect of teacher professional knowledge that is 'draft' in character, engaged in design of opportunities and possibilities for pupils, and that requires an openness of mind in the moment of the relationship between

content, teacher and pupil. The metaphor of jazz can be applied to discussions of teacher performance of professional knowledge, where 'the best teachers are not only well prepared, but also practised and skilful improvisers' (Humphreys & Hyland, 2002:11). Such openness of mind helps to make a link between the careful, organized preparation and planning for teaching, and the interactions in the moments of teaching that are unscripted, yet enable teachers and pupils to make conceptual connections within subject domains. These unscripted moments can be described as experiences of improvisation when the artistry of teaching is expressed and performed. Student teachers making digital movies with children remarked that they hadn't realised 'how much they knew', until they were able to draw upon their understandings of the potential and constraints of the digital tools, conventions of film and media literacy, and their knowledge of conceptual meanings being expressed in the movies. 'Skilful neglect' is a term used twenty years ago by Labbett writing of her observations of teaching with Logo, and developing strategies for stepping back and offering a safe space for learners to explore, make mistakes, and solve problems (Labett, 1988). Our own observations of teachers and creative practitioners have recognised this approach where there is both a confidence in expertise with the subject domain and the digital tools, as well as a commitment to supporting active, creative learning for the pupils. Such pedagogic approaches can be disruptive to more familiar models of organising time, groupings and resources. These challenges are not insurmountable in terms of organisation, yet require an understanding of the benefits of loosening up, slowing down and creating space.

⁹ See <http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/view/id/187>

¹⁰ See <http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/teru/projectinfo.php?projectName=projectescape>

Final questions

Although, as I noted in my opening paragraphs, our understanding of creative learning is emergent, I have tried here to show how the study of the creative use of ICT may offer interesting opportunities and challenging perspectives to help us develop that understanding. We learn in interaction with each other and with a variety of tools and artefacts in our culture (Salomon, 1993). Digital technologies are 'tools in our times', the contemporary artefacts of our information society. As we develop our practice, policy and strategies for the use of ICT in education, we need to be mindful of not only the narratives of standards, targets, achievement, performativity, and progress with ICT, but also the positive contribution of the tension, uncertainty, contradiction and risk in exploring the terrain of creative learning with these technologies.

My final comments are framed as questions because this field is growing and contested. I would hope that as our discussion of creative learning settles and becomes more widely understood that it can take on board these issues.

- How might we encourage the understanding of the affordances of digital technologies in relationship to the purposes of creative activities, providing clearer expectations of, and more time for imaginative exploration, fashioning and flow with these tools?
- How might we encourage approaches such as *Enquiring Minds* to construct a curriculum which reflects learning with imagination, experience and meaning in our 'Knowledge Society'?
- How do we articulate key questions for research and professional development in evaluating and assessing creativity with digital tools without missing the point, or perpetuating inappropriate goals for assessment?
- How do we recognise, develop and mentor professional knowledge which creates space for improvisation and skilful neglect with digital tools?

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6 the assessment of creative learning

Sue Ellis and Myra Barrs

The size of the challenge

When in Spring 2006 the research team at the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE)¹¹ embarked on the development of an assessment that would focus on learning in the creative arts – the Creative Learning Assessment (CLA) – we were fully aware of the contentious nature of the task, and the size of the challenge.

Creativity itself is a contested issue: attempts to pin down what it is, to arrive at some kind of quintessential definition, are more often than not hollow and unsatisfactory. The *assessment* of creativity is even more strongly contested – some people would say that it is neither possible nor desirable to assess creativity. We sympathise with this view – attempts to assess creativity in general are likely to run into the sand. But we also feel that it is both possible and potentially valuable to assess creative work and creative learning.

It is difficult to assess any complex learning; breaking down higher level abilities into discrete criteria is rarely an adequate solution. In creative learning these difficulties are compounded: if creativity involves originality and the use of the individual imagination, how can these qualities be judged against a set of predetermined criteria? The assessment of creative work will always involve interpretation and negotiation.

Creative learning challenges conventional thinking about assessment and demands changes in forms of assessment. For this very reason it was an area that CLPE wanted to get involved in. We have a long-standing interest in classroom-based assessment and its potential educational benefits. Assessment always influences practice and creates backwash into the curriculum – but in our experience assessment could create *positive* backwash, influencing teaching and learning in constructive and helpful ways.

¹¹ <http://www.clpe.co.uk/>

A bottom-up development

The development of the CLA came about as a consequence of a request from a group of primary school head teachers in the CfBT Education Action Zone (EAZ) in North Lambeth, London. They had defined the need for an assessment that would enable them and their staff to evaluate the creative learning going on in their schools that they were unable to observe and describe in any systematic way. They wanted to be able to focus evaluation on creative learning so that they could better represent pupils' progress to parents, governors, and in particular to OfSTED. Armed with this request from the grassroots, the CfBT EAZ and CLPE applied jointly to the CfBT for funds to develop an assessment and pilot it over the course of a whole school year.

The head teachers in North Lambeth felt that recent government initiatives and statements on creativity provided an opportunity to make creative and artistic learning count for more in their schools. Many of the teaching staff in these schools were inexperienced in teaching across a broad curriculum; their training had foregrounded the core subjects of Literacy, Numeracy and Science and focused on the literacy and numeracy strategies. The development of an assessment for Creative Arts learning would be a means of professional development; it would help teachers to focus on the encouragement and analysis of work in the creative arts.

Head teachers also believed that the introduction of the Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) for OfSTED inspections¹² offered them a major opportunity to set the agenda for inspections and to direct inspectors' attention

to areas of substantial achievement, such as the creative arts, which they felt were being marginalised by existing inspection procedures.

This was an opportunity to work in partnership with a group of interested schools, many of them in areas of social deprivation, which were prepared to give time and support to an extended development project.

Starting points

We were influenced from the outset by the work of Donald Schon (1987) and Elliott Eisner (2002) on what Schon called 'reflection-in-action'. Schon and Eisner saw on-the-job reflection as being at the heart of creative learning and its assessment. We also drew on the work of the Assessment Reform Group and on Black *et al's* book, *Assessment for Learning* (2003), which showed how important self-assessment and reflection was in pupils making progress.

We explored work on portfolio assessment and electronic portfolios (Barrett, 2000). We were aware that only a portfolio approach would help teachers to capture the range of creative work that children would engage in during a school year and sought means of making portfolio assessment user-friendly and doable.

The Lambeth head teachers had asked for some means of relating achievement in creative learning to progress in academic areas. We aimed to provide them with ways of assessing literacy which would be compatible with their assessments of creative learning.

¹² See the Ofsted website for more information on this: [http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-forms-and-guidance-by/Title-A-to-Z/Self-evaluation-forms-writing-a-SEF-that-works/\(language\)/eng-GB](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-forms-and-guidance-by/Title-A-to-Z/Self-evaluation-forms-writing-a-SEF-that-works/(language)/eng-GB)

We consulted studies of the effects and effectiveness of arts education, in particular the relationship between involvement in the arts and academic achievement (Harland *et al* 2000, Harland *et al* 2005) and the cautionary report edited by Winner and Hetland (2000).

The assessment of learning in the creative arts has generated diverse models of assessment, from the National Assessment of Educational Progress' standardised assessment tasks (White & Vanneman, 1998) to small scale studies in a particular domain, such as Shirley Brice Heath and Shelby Wolf's *Dramatic Learning in the Primary School* (2005). We were strongly influenced by a landmark report from the Assessment of Performance Unit (APU) on the assessment of Design and Technology (Kimbell *et al*, 1991) that contained a thorough discussion of holistic assessment and how it can be underpinned by descriptions and a shared assessment vocabulary rather than sets of discrete criteria.

We drew on the recent work of Anna Craft *et al* on progression in creative learning (2006). This comprehensive attempt to define progression in creative learning tested a general model of progression in relation to development in two domains – music and writing.

Our own approach to assessment in creative learning was necessarily pragmatic. We knew that we had to produce a practical assessment for the classroom and we believed that it should relate to progress in the creative arts rather than to creative learning or creativity in general. We believed that the assessment would be stronger for being grounded in a domain, or related domains¹³.

Relevant previous experience

CLPE's previous experience as developers of the Primary Language Record (Barrs *et al*, 1988), and our involvement in related developments in the USA, meant that we had ample experience of developing a viable teacher assessment system in literacy. After a year's trial in a group of 50 schools, the Primary Language Record had been used in 500 schools across the Inner London Education Authority. In a revised form it had also been extensively used as part of the state assessment system in California. We had therefore confronted some of the key issues involved in the assessment of complex skills and processes, and had successfully worked with teachers across London and in other education systems to develop their skills in observation-based assessment.

As part of this work we had developed a system of moderation and had consulted leading experts in the field such as Mary James and Royce Sadler on the moderation model to be implemented. We had tested this model in the UK, and it had been further implemented and tested in California where it had been the subject of several annual evaluation reports and a doctoral study (Hallam, 2000).

In the field of creative arts learning, we had carried out two relevant pieces of research for Creative Partnerships in London. In one project, *Animating Literacy* (Ellis & Safford, 2005) we had worked with teacher researchers in eight London primary schools to look at the effects on their practice and on children's learning, of working closely with arts partners on literacy-related arts projects. In the

¹³ In this we were supported by the experienced guidance of Professor Mary James, head of the Teaching and Learning Research Programme at the Institute of Education, University of London, who was a member of our steering group.

other study, *Many Routes to Meaning* (Safford & Barrs, 2005) we had looked across these 8 different sites so as to be able to identify the success factors in these partnerships, and to analyse how children's learning and teachers' practice was changed by their involvement in particular arts projects. This work meant that we had extensive experience to bring to the development of the CLA. In *Many Routes to Meaning* we had identified the need to grasp the assessment nettle in relation to creative arts learning.

Process of development

The development process took place in three stages:

- Carrying out a research review, establishing underpinning principles, the shape of the assessment tool and a pack of prototype materials (Spring Term 2006)
- A short trial of the materials in a small group of schools, allowing for revision before the pilot (Summer Term 2006)
- A year-long pilot (including a moderation meeting) with an expanded number of schools, which informed the ongoing development and the final revision of the CLA before publication (September 2006-July 2007).

In creating the framework, we knew that it had to be a development that fitted the times. It had to be manageable and sufficiently informative for teachers to want to use it despite its status as a non-statutory assessment tool.

Consequently, we needed to ensure that paperwork was kept to a minimum without compromising its value as a process for informing the teacher about both children's progress and the effectiveness of the curriculum provision. We were faced with a choice of a) applying the framework to the whole class by simplifying the demands (and so risk making it reductive as an instrument) or b) developing an in-depth instrument but not applying it to the whole class. We decided to focus on a small sample of children (between three and six) to represent the range of achievement in the class. It is a sampling approach we had regularly used in professional and school development projects with positive outcomes for the learning achievement of all children, not only those sampled.

We decided that the assessment framework should relate to the arts subjects in the National Curriculum (NC), as a way of anchoring the 'slippery' and marginalised area of creative learning. This would help to strengthen the link between planning and assessment and prompt teachers to revisit the NC documentation for arts subjects, so often eclipsed by the focus on core subjects. Basing a five-point scale of progress (see CLA Scale – figure 1) on the NC statements of attainment for arts subjects made visible the common structure underpinning the NC assessment. A strong link with the NC was important for connecting the CLA framework, and a focus on creative learning, to the mainstream curriculum.

Figure 1 CLA Scale

Creative Learning Scale	Date	Class	Year	School
<p>Level 1 Children play with creative materials and elements and use them to express feelings and ideas. They practise simple skills, exploring possibilities. Children begin to recognise and describe some creative effects. They describe what they think and feel about their own and others' work.</p>				
<p>Level 2 Children develop their imagination, exploring and investigating the possibilities within a creative medium. They choose different elements to create different effects. They expand their range of skills and begin to draw on and vary their use in appropriate ways. Children recognise that different elements and processes are involved in a creative work. They comment on differences in their own and others' work and suggest ways of improving it.</p>				
<p>Level 3 Children work with increasing personal involvement, independence and creativity. They communicate ideas through a particular art form, combining different elements and using them expressively in a creative work. They select and use skills and techniques appropriately with growing control. Children discuss the way meanings can be conveyed in a particular medium. They identify similarities and differences between their own and others' work, commenting on intended effects. They adapt and improve their own work.</p>				
<p>Level 4 Children develop creativity and imagination through engaging in increasingly complex artistic projects. They organise different elements, techniques and processes to realise their ideas and intentions in a particular art form. They consolidate a growing range of skills and use them with increasing precision and control. Children discuss the ideas and approaches in creative work, relating it to context. They evaluate and develop their work, commenting on how their intentions have been achieved.</p>				
<p>Level 5 Children are increasingly conscious of the imaginative possibilities in a particular creative medium. They select and organise their material to express their ideas and intentions, making choices for different purposes and to create different effects. They use skills with precision, control and fluency, combining them appropriately and effectively. Children analyse how meanings are conveyed, with increasing critical awareness, drawing on their knowledge and understanding of an art form and using appropriate vocabulary. They reflect on their learning and show awareness of purpose and context in refining and developing their own work.</p>				

(taken from NC PoS, ATs for PE/Dance, Music, Art, English/Dra.a, D&T

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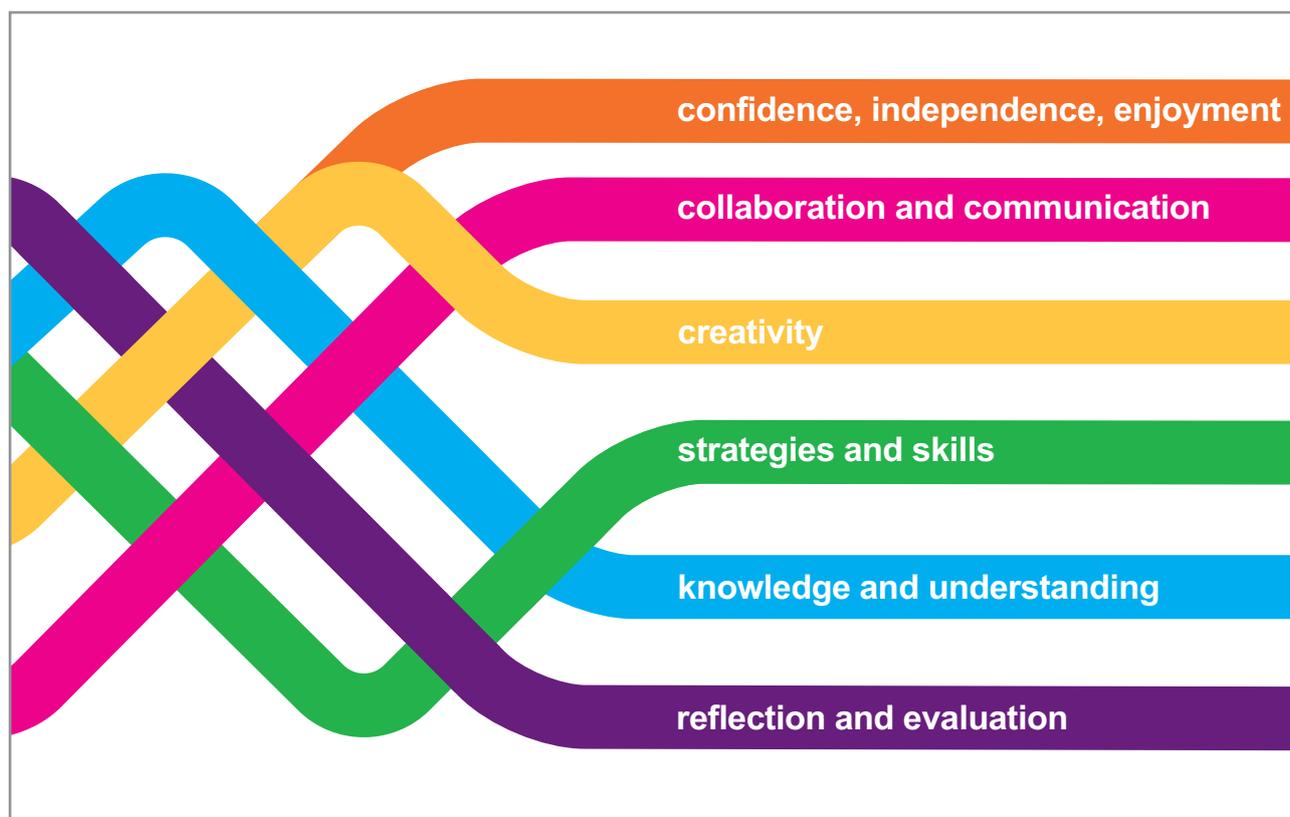
The materials needed to encourage teachers to look closely at the children's learning process as well as reflect on the end point or end products of their activity. CLPE had already developed a 5-strand learning continuum which had proved a clear and informing structure for reflecting on literacy progress. This was further developed to provide a model of creative learning assessment, comprising the following six strands (see CLA Continuum – figure 2):

These strands formed the key headings within the CLA observation framework (see CLA Observation Framework – figure 3); glosses were added under each heading to provide guidance for teacher observations, for example:

Reflection and evaluation

e.g. responds to and comments on own and others' work, responds to artistic/creative experiences, analyses and constructively criticises work, reviews and evaluates own progress

Figure 2 CLA continuum



Reflection, highlighted as a significant element in the research review, was further strengthened by the inclusion of portfolios of work in the assessment model. Portfolios, in addition to the observation framework and the scale of progress, provided the third element in the assessment (see CLA assessment map – see figure 4). We designed a portfolio template (see CLA portfolio template – see figure 5) which could apply to individual, group or class folders, or e-portfolios. Portfolios provided a record of work, both in process and end-products, together with children's and teachers' comments, photographs, writing, drawing, and video.

During the year-long pilot, the revised CLA was road tested thoroughly in real time, in real classrooms, in a range of primary schools.

This was a collaborative venture, with teachers informing revisions along the way and helping to shape the final instrument. The pilot teachers were interviewed about the impact of the CLA on their practice:

'The framework helps you to view children's learning through a different lens: 'the doing,' listening to them as it happens, and the product 'the done'. It's a more balanced approach than just assessing the outcome. You learn so much more about the child that you can use to help them move forward.'
Teacher B

'I could see what I was aiming for. It drew my attention to the different 'parts' of creativity. The scale has made me more aware of planning time for reflection, evaluation and commenting on others' work.' Teacher K

Figure 3 The Creative Learning Observation Framework

Teacher/TA	Year	Date	Date
		Dec. 06	Feb 07
Names(s)		Elisha Y3	Elisha
Creative context		Cat sculpture in clay - Egyptian God - Hist. topic	Drama, mime & improvisation
<p>1 Confidence, independence, enjoyment</p> <p>eg developing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pleasure and enjoyment • engagement and focus • empathy and emotional involvement • self motivation 		<p>Confident approach to the sketch & clay sculpture. A secured. V. engaged & focussed in this practical activity.</p>	<p>During drama teacher's demonstration, Elisha needs reminding to focus. However, once miming himself - very focussed & shows he was watching & listening hard.</p>
<p>2 Collaboration and communication</p> <p>eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • works effectively in a team • contributes to discussion, makes suggestions • listens and responds to others • perseveres, overcomes problems • communicates and presents ideas 		<p>Independent. Commenting on his work - not to anyone in particular overcomes difficulties of standing Easter car. All others sitting.</p>	<p>Full of ideas for the movements of the tiger. "It might eat some meat first to ask questions in not seating activity, gave detailed thoughtful answers in role.</p>
<p>3 Creativity</p> <p>eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is imaginative and playful • generates ideas, questions and makes connections • risk-takes and experiments • expresses own creative ideas using a range of artistic elements 		<p>Uses own design for making his sculpture only when reminded. Playful, adventurous approach. - adding, twisting, changing. Inventive - adds whiskers. Not afraid to be different.</p>	<p>V. Confident at moving like a tiger - lots of facial expressions, growling & miming of eating, rolling in the sun. Makes connections w. TV. documentary on tigers. Relates to other w. improvisation. Invents own movements</p>
<p>4 Strategies and skills</p> <p>eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies issues and explores options • plans and develops a project • demonstrates a growing range of artistic/creative skills • uses appropriate subject specific skills with increasing control 		<p>More sophisticated drawing than sculpture. Bold in choices of design. Prepared to try different techniques & tools to perfect model.</p>	<p>After demonstration by drama teacher his movements are more controlled & purposeful. Trials out tiger voice in role.</p>
<p>5 Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awareness of different forms, styles, artistic and cultural traditions, creative techniques • uses subject specific knowledge and language with understanding 		<p>Very sure about the Egyptian style. Comments on authentic features. Uses smoothing, pressing & drawing in clay. Knows about the effects of drying.</p>	<p>Clearly understands need for expressive movements in mime. Keen to answer questions related to specific terms: voice projection, improvise. All answers show his knowledge & understanding of tigers & drama medium & techniques</p>
<p>6 Reflection and evaluation</p> <p>eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responds to and comments on own and others' work • responds to artistic/creative experiences • analyses and constructively criticises work • reviews and evaluates own progress 		<p>Comments on others' drawings. "It looks real - looks strong." "It's like the model by Maddie (art partner)." "Clay can look very realistic."</p>	<p>Talks about his plans for extending mime & his progress from last time. "now it's like real tiger... slower... I found it easier now! know how a tiger moves."</p>
<p>7 Areas for further development</p>		<p>Very keen to repeat success - wanted to make a clay horse. Build on his ability to concentrate in practical activities - plan more. More opportunities for talk & sharing ideas.</p>	<p>Needs opportunities & support to effectively collaborate w. others & plan a sequence with others.</p>

You may need to refer to the NC PoS and ATs © CLPE/CfBT July 2007

Figure 4 Map of CLA System

Map of Creative Learning Assessment system (CLA)

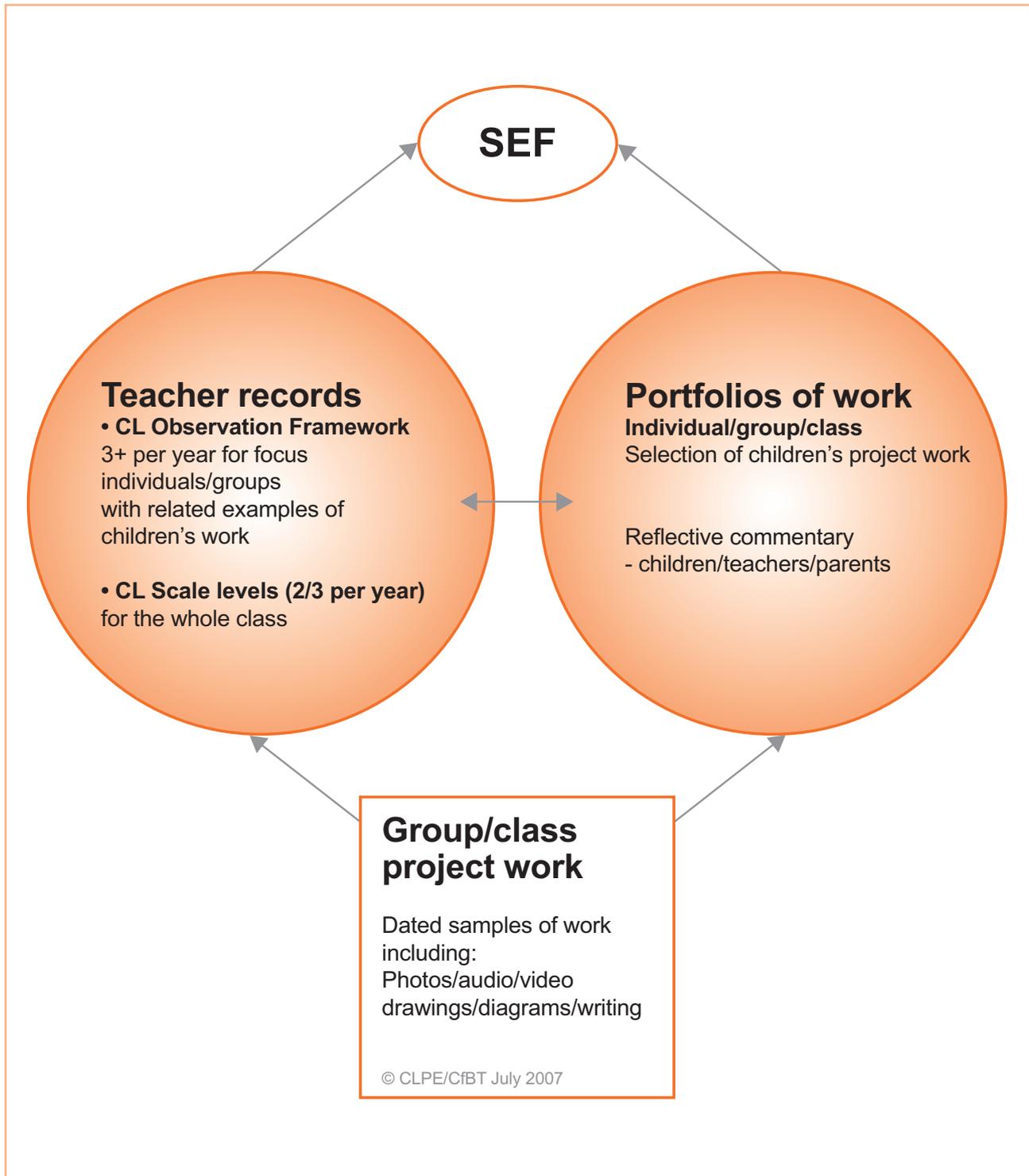


Figure 5 CLA Portfolio Template

Portfolio example

Possible forms:

An A2 book
 A Learning Wall
 e-portfolio
 (individual/group/whole class)

Process:

Developed together with children over time (selection, reflection)

Sample page:

The sample page is a template for a CLA Portfolio, organized into several sections:

- Top Left:** A box for "Description of activity" with sub-sections for "Child/teacher scribe" and "Teacher Comment" (in a circle).
- Top Right:** A large box for "Children's writing/talk/planning".
- Middle Left:** A box for "Teacher annotation" with prompts: "What", "Who", "What it shows", "Decisions made...", "because".
- Middle Left (Right of Teacher annotation):** A box for "Children's writing/questions".
- Middle Right (Top):** A box for "Children's drawing".
- Middle Right (Bottom):** A box for "Photo of children's work".
- Bottom Middle (Left):** A box for "Children's diagram".
- Bottom Middle (Right):** A box for "Parents' Comments" (in a circle).
- Bottom Left:** A box for "Reflective commentary: Child(ren)" with prompts: "Most pleased with", "Might change/why...", and a bulleted list: "• Shared writing activity", "• Child written/teacher scribed...".
- Bottom Right:** A box for "Reflective commentary: Teacher/TA" with prompts: "Significant areas of learning eg collaboration and communication", "Next steps", "Evaluative".

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Using the CLA observation framework

The CLA framework allows teachers space to record what they are noticing while children are working on a creative project – it asks questions like:

- In what ways are children able to take risks and experiment in their learning?
- Do they generate ideas, questions and make connections?
- Are there examples of responding to and commenting on their own and others' work?

Teachers found the open framework flexible yet supportive in helping them to look closely at how children were learning in different arts subjects (classroom projects included painting, sculpture, construction, animation, drama, dance and literature). They saw it as an opportunity to find out what children know and can do and as a way of developing a deeper knowledge and understanding of individuals and their approaches to learning.

Within this paper we can only give a glimpse of the CLA in use in the classroom. In the following example, a teacher at a school in Lambeth describes how the CLA helped her to observe one aspect of children's arts learning: subject knowledge and understanding.

'The teaching of the arts in its diverse forms can be a challenge, as many primary teachers do not have formal art training. The CLA provided me with a clear framework for thinking about what I needed to build into my planning. The project encouraged, though did not depend on, the involvement of arts partners. An artist and actor were involved in three of our projects

(the Bastet Cat sculpture, watercolour painting and improvisation based on Zoo by Anthony Browne). They did not lead the projects or replace my role as the teacher. Instead they worked alongside, demonstrating and modelling the activities and working with the children in small groups. The involvement of the arts partner impacted on my professional development, I was learning alongside the children. As I developed my skills and knowledge, I was more empowered and informed to teach and assess the children's subject knowledge and understanding.

My vocabulary and explanations became more specific and explicit; I was using the technical language of the subject with greater confidence and understanding. Gradually the children's talk also became more skilled: they took on the patterns of talk appropriate to the artistic context, began to use subject-specific language and expressed their thinking more clearly and with greater focus.

"I used the sculpting tools, cutting, scooping, smoothing my statue. Can you see the fibres in the clay? I think it'll dry quickly as it's warm in here. But if it dries too quickly - it might crack." Lamarna (Age 8 years)

From my experience, children love to experiment and use "big" words and the creative forms are full of technical and expressive language. By experiencing the artistic form, the children were able to understand the meaning of these "big" words and use them purposefully.

“Look how the clay is sucking in the paint. It’s because it’s porous it absorbs the paint...Clay can look very realistic. I like painting it [silver]... changing it from clay to looking like metal. It’s good seeing my sculpture develop. This bit’s very delicate...”
Elisha (age 8 years)

As the teacher, I had to identify what experience the children needed and then negotiate this with each artist. For example, the children needed to develop their writing, so we planned an improvisation project to support this. I wanted the children to explore their own ideas through drama before writing, as well as to develop their understanding and skills within this creative form. Through mime, the visiting actor helped children to imagine the experience of caged zoo animals, to become the animals and to improvise a story of escape. Initially the actor concentrated on demonstrating how a tiger, gorilla, and penguin moved in a cage. The children’s miming skills rapidly developed because they were more informed and supported. The sessions were videoed and the difference between the first and third sessions were fascinating, from a riot of noise and movement to cathedral-like silence as children watched each other move with poise and expression. Following this, children’s writing became far more expansive and vivid. It was drama that supported them in writing more powerfully and convincingly, from inside the text.

The explicit headings in the observation framework, and the descriptions of progress in the CLA scale, enhanced teachers’ knowledge of the different aspects of creative arts

learning. Many teachers reported an increased confidence in teaching arts subjects because of a deeper subject knowledge. The clear model of creative learning in the framework also supported explicit discussion of the creative process with children, enabling them to understand clearly what they needed to do.

Moderation

At the end of the pilot year, and following an earlier preparatory session, the teachers who had been involved in the pilot attended a moderation meeting. The records and work of seven focus children were moderated, and each child’s work was moderated by at least two pairs of teachers.

Teachers found no difficulty in arriving at a judgement on the scale and it was apparent that they were experienced in the process of moderation from the NC assessment. 6 out of the 7 records were successfully moderated with both pairs of moderators in agreement (and in 5 out of the 6 cases also in agreement with teacher’s scale placement). This was a very high level of agreement and an encouraging first outing for the use of the scale for teacher assessment. It also indicated that most teachers had provided the moderators with adequate evidence for them to arrive at a judgement.

‘The moderation process was confirming. I felt more confident about my judgements afterwards.’ Teacher N

The moderation discussions pinpointed the need for a range of evidence; records were always more informative when more than just

one art form was represented – different learning contexts provided richer and more convincing evidence. This moderation meeting suggested that those involved in the pilot had developed a strong shared set of standards and a shared assessment vocabulary:

'It made you appreciate other people's observations – how accurate observations, that were related to the elements of the scale, could record and convey to others a clear picture of a child's progress.'
Teacher B

Conclusions

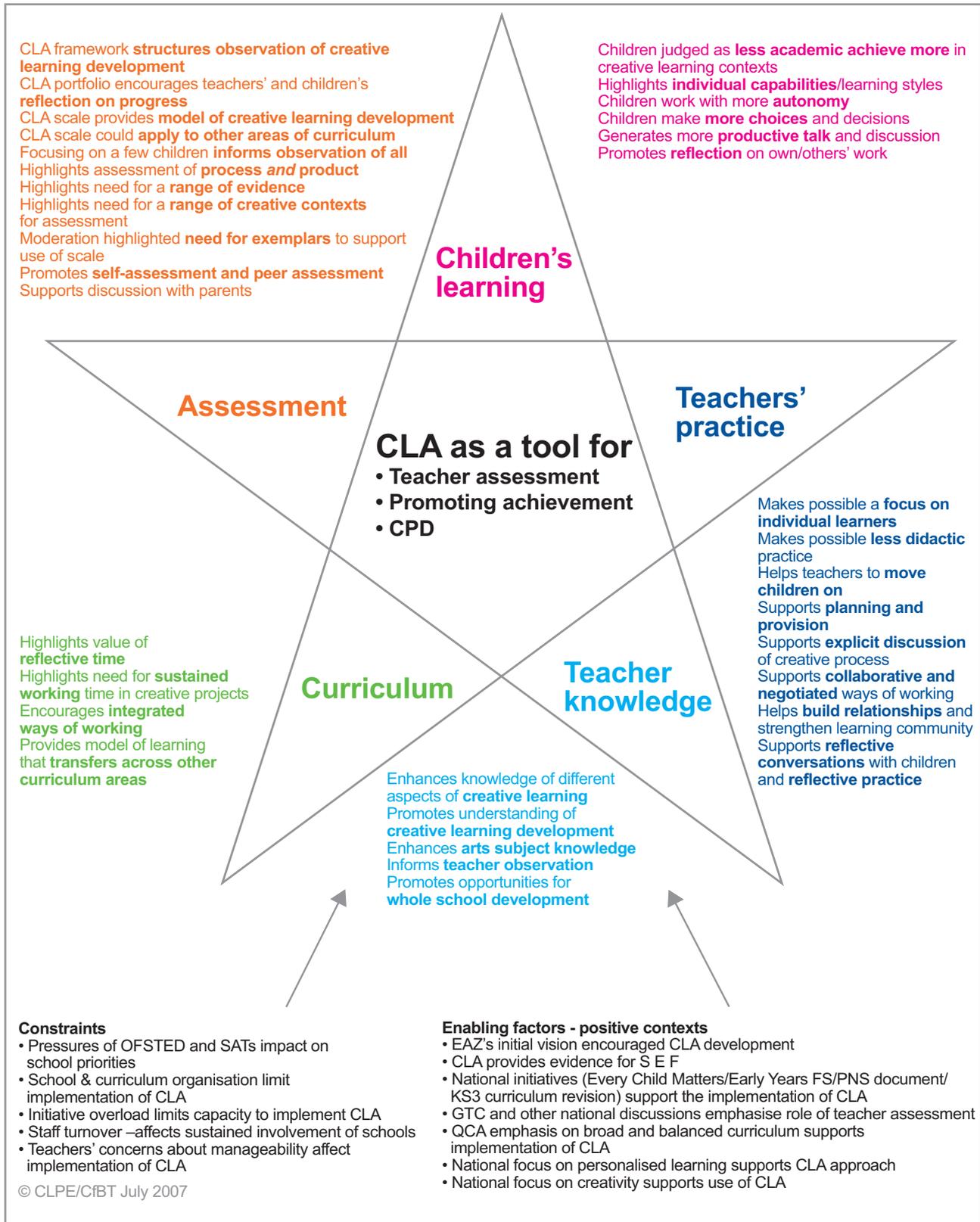
Our experience of developing, trialling and piloting the CLA has enabled us to see its applications as a practical tool for teacher assessment, professional development, and promoting achievement.

The findings arising from the pilot year tended to cluster around the areas of assessment, children's learning, teachers' practice, teacher knowledge and curriculum, illustrating the reach of assessment and its complex and multifaceted nature (see CLA Star Chart of outcomes – figure 6). Below are some of the highlights.

- A key finding was that as an assessment tool, teachers found it both manageable and informative. They could make sampling work. Focusing on a few children informed their observation of all children and fed directly into their planning. Teachers were able to quickly internalise the criteria, the strands and the prompts, for observation.
- The viability of the CLA as an assessment model was confirmed by the moderation process.
- Reflection and evaluation was the key strand for children and teachers, including children's self-assessment and peer assessment. 'Reflective time' encourages children to review their own learning and needs to be built into the curriculum for primary and secondary schools.
- The cross curriculum possibilities of the CLA were strongly signalled by teachers in the project. Focusing on creative learning enabled teachers to see the links with the rest of children's learning: risk-taking, making choices, reflection and persistence transfer across subjects.
- The CLA had a distinct effect on pedagogy, which moved from a more didactic, delivered curriculum to one that was negotiated and collaborative. One effect for children was that talk expanded significantly. One effect for teachers was that through close observation, teachers became more aware of children as learners.
- The focus on creative learning showed that creative contexts empower children who are not revealed as 'achieving' in academic subjects or through current testing systems.
- Teachers' observations demonstrated that children need time, space and a more integrated curriculum to make the important connections necessary for real learning progress.
- Though regarded as a difficult area to define and pin down (Craft, A. 2005; Craft, *et al.* 2006), the moderation process showed that teachers recognised the elements of creativity described in the CLA framework and scale, and were able to use these to observe, assess and develop children's creative learning.

Figure 6 CLA Star Chart of Outcomes

The impact of the Creative Learning Assessment (CLA)



In developing this assessment framework in partnership with teachers, we have given recognition to the complex, dynamic and creative nature of learning and teaching. We are encouraged by the response of teachers and head teachers in the project and the interest shown by CP, QCA and the TDA.

To build on this work, we hope to develop further projects including:

- Disseminating the findings of the development project more widely, through courses, conferences and publications.
- Disseminating the use of the CLA materials more widely, within local authorities and internationally, including collaborations with national organisations such as Creative Partnerships. We have already begun this work by working in an intensive four-month project with a group of schools in Lambeth. Teachers in this project have strongly endorsed the value of using the CLA. One project teacher commented: “I’m really learning as a teacher to be much more open and confident in my teaching.”
- The CLA may have wider uses – for example in professional development and initial training – and we shall continue to explore these uses.

The model of learning and development on which the CLA is based has proved to have a high recognition factor among project teachers who have found it very helpful in considering both children’s learning and their own pedagogy. It has enabled them both to make creative skills a fundamental part of their classrooms, and to understand how they can be developed. We believe that this assessment helps to put creativity at the heart of the curriculum.

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CREATIVE Learning

Edited by Julian Sefton-Green

In February 2008 Creative Partnerships convened a seminar of experts to tease out and investigate the notion of creative learning.

This booklet publishes the papers presented at this event and a more general discussion. The essays lay out a series of challenges and contexts for Creative Partnerships and the creative and education sectors in general.

While the authors may not offer solutions to all of the challenges they raise, in exploring and unpicking the notion of creative learning they model the essence of the process as it plays out in schools – each author refreshes and renews the interrogation of an idea in the same way creative practitioners, teachers and young people might re-imagine the curriculum within schools.

ISBN 978 0 7287 1413 7

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