

creative schools

deep learning, hard fun



NEWSLETTER ISSUE TWO

FORM. creative learning

08 9385 2200
learning@form.net.au
form.net.au

Placing Creative Learning at the Heart of the Curriculum

The impact on the teacher has been huge. The teacher told me that it's not about the process; it's about the journey. She feels like she has a mentor and a coach in her Creative Practitioner and that has had a big impact.

**STEPHEN, PRINCIPAL,
HIGHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Welcome to our second Creative Schools newsletter, our way of keeping schools, parents, teachers, creatives and supporters of Creative Schools up to date with what's happening in the 16 schools currently participating in the 2019 program, co-funded by the Department of Education for Western Australia.

Term 3 is now well under way, and the Creative Schools team at FORM has been collating feedback from schools and creatives on progress to date. Integrating the Creative Habits of Mind into students' learning processes have given rise to exciting developments and experiences, some of which we share in this newsletter.

We introduce you to two of the key influences on our program, Paul Collard of UK-based global organisation Culture & Creativity in Education (CCE), and Professor Bill Lucas, the brain behind the Creative Habits of Mind, who is an international adviser and expert on education and creativity. We also introduce independent researcher and evaluator Mathilda Joubert, who is working closely with the Creative Schools team to track the results and impact of the program.



Dates for the diary:

Friday 25 October join us for a talk by Bill Lucas about the skills our children need for the workplace of the future. Later in October: we'll be having a Celebration of Learning where teachers and creative practitioners will share the outcomes of their 16-week collaboration, and tell us what happened in their schools.

With warmest best wishes,

Lamis Sabra and Vanessa Bradley
Manager and Co-ordinator of
Creative Learning at FORM

The teacher is learning so much about our kids through this program. My own grandson is in the class. He is such a reluctant writer, but out there he is bursting with ideas.

**BETTY, PRINCIPAL,
MELVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Creative Schools:

- Trains and partners teachers with artists (who could be dancers, painters, musicians or writers) to devise and deliver creativity-based learning activities in the classroom
- Uses creativity to help children to engage with learning; to collaborate and listen, challenge and discover, fail and grow, think and reflect; to solve problems by combining imagination and materials with technology, performance, executive and motor skills and play
- Addresses a priority learning area (e.g. mathematics, HASS or science) and employs creative ways of teaching the curriculum: the three R's are still important, it's just that there is more than one way of helping students achieve them
- Recognises that if some students have difficulty learning or even just being in class, creative learning can help ease or eliminate that difficulty, and increase achievement for those students who can already cope well
- Engages the whole of the school community (including principals and parents) in the support, delivery and outcomes of the program
- Is an important component of FORM's Creative Learning strategy, which includes the annual Scribblers Festival of literature and art for young people
- Has independent academic and educator Mathilda Joubert from Sheridan College carrying out research, observation and evaluation



If these names are not familiar, they should be! Meet two key influences for FORM's Creative Schools Program:

Paul Collard

The catalyst for FORM's Creative Schools program has been Paul Collard's expertise in delivering programs that use creativity and culture as drivers of social and economic change. Paul is Chief Executive of Creativity, Culture & Education (CCE), an international organisation with a particular focus on unlocking the creative potential of children and young people in order to prepare them for success in the creative economy of the 21st century.

Independent research has shown that CCE's programs are successful in boosting children and young people's academic success, raising their aspirations and improving their attendance at school while engaging disengaged parents in their children's education.

Thanks to FORM, Paul has been a regular visitor to Perth during the last four years, working with us to develop our Creative Schools program, and to train the educationalists and creative practitioners involved.

Bill Lucas

The Creative Habits of Mind so crucial to the Creative Schools Program were devised by Bill Lucas, Director of the Centre for Real-World Learning (CRL) at the University of Winchester, and his colleagues Guy Claxton and Ellen Spencer.

Bill is an international adviser to several organisations, including the Mitchell Institute; the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority; Vinnvard in Sweden; and the OECD/CERI research into critical and creative thinking in France. Co-chair of the OECD's strategic advisory group for the 2021 PISA test of Creative Thinking, Bill is also Director of Learning for the Fellowship Programme at the new Healthcare Studies Institute at the University of Cambridge.

FORM is an independent non-profit organisation based in Perth. Through our work we've seen how people and places can flourish, children's confidence can grow, and how governments and businesses can be influenced by what creativity can achieve.

- We explore how CREATIVITY sparks art and culture, and inspires learning, conversation and social connection
- We build CREATIVE CAPACITY through projects, programs and people, and through culture, visual arts, learning and community engagement in Western Australia
- We believe creativity drives POSITIVE CHANGE and helps us achieve more fulfilling relationships with our environments, each other and the rest of the world

Four Creative Schools snapshots:

Donnybrook District High School | Year 7/8

Teacher: Jonelle McLoughlin | **Creative:** Andrew Frazer

Learning Focus: English and literacy: texts and the contexts in which they are used.

Creative Habits:

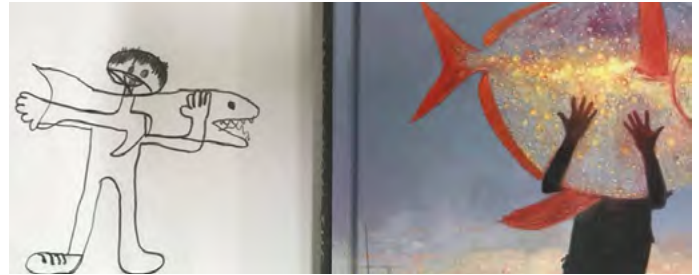
Disciplined Collaborative Inquisitive

Andrew says: *I was inspired to see Jonelle was already implementing many elements of what the Creative Schools program advocates: a great class atmosphere through an inspiring interior, collaboration through creative seat layouts.*

We started the term with an exploration into typography/hand lettering and drawn character development with the desire of seeing each student create their own graphic novel. I realised after the first few weeks that though skill development is a good thing, what the students really needed was a sense of self-worth: the belief their story was worth telling. We scaled back on the skill development side and began to dive into collaborative exercises that encouraged connection. This wasn't easy as there is considerable tension between various students and at times a real lack of motivation, but we persisted. We ended the term with an open parent night to exhibit the graphic novels students created. It was brilliant to see so many students come along with various family members. We could see them demonstrating such pride in what they had achieved.

Term 2 culminated in a "show and tell" night for parents/carers and we had a strong turn out where parents could see the impact it was having. Students are producing more work, the work they produce is more detailed and expressive (I noticed a vast improvement in their imagery development) and they are more engaged.

RENEE, ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL, DONNYBROOK DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL



Building relationships with the students was a real highlight. Being given windows into their lives I was reminded of how intimidating high school life can be. There are so many pressures coming from all angles it can be hard to be vulnerable, but when they chose this path we collectively benefited from their input. I feel there is a genuine sense of anticipation of where we are going and how creativity is essential in their learning development.

ANDREW, CREATIVE, DONNYBROOK DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

Boyare Primary School | Year 5/6

Teacher: Alison McEvoy | **Creative:** Jodie Davidson

Learning focus: HASS

Creative Habits:

Collaborative Persistent Disciplined Inquisitive



Jodie says: *The underused and neglected school garden space had the potential to provide a wonderful setting to explore HASS - Migration (year 6 Geography) and Swan River Colony (Year 5 History), and also to be of use to the rest of the school.*

Students had little to no knowledge of how to design a planting layout. This new experience required putting themselves in the shoes of someone else, in some cases, almost 200 years ago, and imagining what life may have been like. In clearing the land, we would stop and listen, considering what may have been heard or seen.

The first experiment of planting vegetable and herb seedlings in eggshells provided the forum for inquisitive conversation about types of seeds brought by both the early settlers and migrants, where they may have originated from and their capacity for survival. Unfortunately, it also resulted in a complete failure of plants to grow. It did enable critical reflection as to why; not enough water, not enough light, incorrect soil and not enough soil.

The last session of the term was spent designing information boards for the school garden. Students' capability of working in groups, many of them independently while talking about the various possibilities and happenings that may have occurred during settlement and when migrant groups came to the Swan River Colony showed that this group were slowly starting to engage in their ability to learn, to think and to question.

Melville Primary School | Year 3

Teacher: Michelle Roberts | **Creative:** Trudi Bennett

Learning focus: English, procedural writing and literacy

Creative Habits:

Collaborative **Disciplined** **Persistent**
Imaginative **Inquisitive**

Trudi says: *Next to Melville Primary School is the ideal outdoor classroom: a beautiful park called Kadijini (a Noongar word meaning Learning). The aim of the project was to learn about writing procedures by playing different games in the park, then breaking them into small steps. The students were then given the opportunity to develop their own game in a small group, trial the game, write the procedure and present the game to their older buddy class.*

The sessions outdoors pushed the children out of their comfort zone and into a creative zone encouraging their persistence and sticking with the difficulty of learning in a new place and in a new way. The students were thrilled by the sense of freedom in being allowed to explore and being invited to construct their own game.

In later sessions, Michelle and Trudi were able to join in the games as players, confident the students knew what they were doing, how to collaborate appropriately and respect the place. Michelle reflected 'the less involvement we have out there, the more the children get out of it.'



Children had been going home and sharing their excitement for the project with their parents. Some families who hadn't visited the park together for years started to visit the park again. One of the parents shared how impressed they were with the program to Michelle, 'Do you share this? It is phenomenal. Please share it with the other teachers.'

Highgate Primary School | Year 6

Teacher: Lauren Hay | **Creative:** Elaine Olsen

Learning focus: Design and Technology

Creative Habits:

Imaginative **Collaborative** **Persistent**
Inquisitive **Disciplined**

Elaine says: *When the teacher and I planned the sessions to encourage the students to lead the learning. The focus was then on creating opportunities for the students to learn through linking the curriculum to things that they liked doing and developing their independent and interdependent learning skills.*

The students learnt how to define the problem. Using a problem-solving protocol, they learnt to break the problem down further, and in so doing crafted their problem statements. They set about collecting data about their problem statements by interviewing each other as well as the teacher and myself.

During the course of the term a couple of unexpected things happened. The teacher felt so inspired by what she was experiencing through the creativity we were introducing that she felt compelled to re-create the physical layout of the class. She brought in colourful, bright and easy furniture, introduced fit balls and cushioned milk crates. Bland, rectangular tables were replaced with bar high tables and blob-shaped tables.

In my literacy lesson today the kids needed to do a character profile from our class novel. Normally I give them an outline of a person and then let them choose whether to write or draw the character traits. Today I allowed them to choose any form. I even tried NOT to give them examples for fear of stifling their creativity. They immediately became so excited and threw themselves into making. Here are what some students are creating: character cube with traits, pic collage on the app, flipbook, sculpture, drawings, plasticine, personnel file on Word.

LAUREN, TEACHER, HIGHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

I had a teacher come to me this morning VERY excited by the look and feel of my classroom, and asking for my help in making her classroom a more flexible and creative learning space. So we are meeting to have a Gumtree shop and planning session! Out with the old desks, and in with the new seating.

LAUREN, TEACHER, HIGHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL



We are looking for case studies for the next newsletter.
If you have any learning stories please share them with us by emailing: learning@form.net.au

Meet the team: Introducing Mathilda Joubert

Mathilda's role is to research and evaluate the impact of Creative Schools, so that FORM can track the program's success and processes. Mathilda is Director of Excellence and Innovation, Researcher and Lecturer at Sheridan College and PhD Researcher at the University of Western Australia studying measurement of creative thinking skills. As an experienced teacher (primary and secondary), teacher trainer, business innovation consultant, policy maker and researcher she is a true cross-disciplinarian and an advocate of lifelong learning with two bachelors and three masters degrees (in music, languages, education, cognitive neuropsychology and business). She has also authored numerous publications.

Recently Mathilda caught up with her old colleague and education guru Sir Ken Robinson, at the EduTECH Conference in Sydney. Mathilda was invited to talk about the future of educational assessment, including the assessment of creative thinking skills, while keynote speaker Sir Ken's message to the conference dovetailed perfectly with the ethos behind Creative Schools:



Mathilda with Sir Ken Robinson

'Children are full of boundless potential and we only tap into a small part of that. Human resources are like natural resources; they are often buried, you need to go looking for them and they need to go through a process of refinement. Children's natural capacities for creativity need to be turned into practical abilities.'



News round-up:

Hot off the press! FORM's Creative Schools will be featured as a case study in Bill Lucas' new book, *Zest for Learning*, written especially for teachers and schools wanting practical tips for encouraging engaged, curious and knowledge-hungry students. We've offered some of the most compelling learnings from the program thus far. *Zest for Learning* will be published by the University of Winchester's Centre for Real-World Learning.

Representatives from the Creative Schools program attended a special 'thank you to the arts educators and community' reception hosted by the Governor of Western Australia, the Hon. Kim Beazley AC. Jodie Davidson (Creative Practitioner), Rod McNeill (Principal at Mundaring Christian College), Mathilda Joubert (Sheridan College), and Elizabeth Phillips (Program Coordinator, Governor Stirling SHS) heard Arts Minister David Templeman's encouragement to 'keep going and continue the contribution to the cultural vibrancy of WA.'