



**creative
schools**

**MERRIWA
PRIMARY**

CASE STUDY – TERM 2

creative schools

Visual Artist

Andrea Tenger

Teacher

Sophie Perkins

School

Merriwa Primary School

Year group

Year 6

In 2019, with support from the Department of Education and DLGSC, FORM partnered with 16 metropolitan and regional schools to deliver its Creative Schools program. FORM developed Creative Schools in partnership with *Creativity, Culture in Education* (CCE), an international foundation dedicated to unlocking the creativity of children and young people in and out of formal education, and *Hidden Giants*, an education consultancy agency supports schools to re-imagine their curriculum by placing 'disruptive', creative, and critical thinking at its heart.

Creative Schools Program aims to improve the learning outcomes of young Western Australians. It does so by activating creative learning strategies through the establishment of meaningful partnerships between teachers, creative (arts) practitioners and young people. The program is a valuable and imaginative addition to class and school strategies for raising attainment, improving well-being and supporting inclusion

Creative Schools engages with the participating school over a full academic year. In Term 1, the creative and teacher participate in an intensive Professional Development on Creative Learning. The program then partners each teacher with a creative practitioner to co-design and co-deliver these learning activities, which focus on a priority area of the curriculum as identified by the school and teacher (e.g. mathematics, HASS or science).

Teachers and Creatives co-facilitate a 90-minutes sessions for students on a weekly basis in Terms 2 and 3. Each class has access to 16 weeks (24 hours) of direct engagement of the creatives with the students. Two classes from each school were selected to participate, a total of 32 classes in 2019. Term 4 is an opportunity to reflect on the program and FORM's independent researcher, evaluates outcomes.

This document describes the activities and outcomes of the first term of delivery: Term 2 (over 8 weeks). It also includes reflections from school leaders, teachers and students.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2019



TERM 1

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ARTISTS AND TEACHERS

Observation and diagnosis of student engagement in the classroom.
Planning time for teachers and artists



TERM 2

PROGRAM DELIVERY IN THE CLASSROOM

Creative Learning workshops per week for eight consecutive weeks



TERM 3

PROGRAM DELIVERY

Learning workshops per week for 8 consecutive weeks



TERM 4

REFLECTION AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

CURRICULUM FOCUS

Literature

Literature & context: Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts. (ACELT1613)

Features of literary texts: Identify, describe and discuss similarities and differences between texts, including those by the same author or illustrator, and evaluate characteristics that define an author's individual style (ACELT1616)

Literacy

Oral presentations: Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations selecting and sequencing appropriate content and multimodal elements for defined audiences and purposes, making appropriate choices for modality and emphasis. (ACELY1710)

CROSS-CURRICULUM LINKS

HASS knowledge and understanding

History: Australia as a nation: Stories of groups of people who migrated to Australia (including from one Asian country), the reasons they migrated (e.g. push-pull factors) and their contributions to society. (ACAHASSK136)

HASS skills

Analysing: Identify different points of view/perspectives in information and/or data (e.g. analyse language, identify motives) (WAHASS57)

Communicating & Reflecting: Present findings, conclusions and/or arguments, appropriate to audience and purpose, in a range of communication forms (e.g. written, oral, visual, digital, tabular, graphic, maps) and using subject-specific terminology and concepts. (WAHASS61)

A focus on Critical & Creative Thinking: Reflect on their assumptions made, consider reasonable criticism and adjust their thinking if necessary. Apply knowledge gained from one context to another unrelated context and identify new meaning.

Personal and Social: Analyse factors that influence ability to self-regulate; devise and apply strategies to monitor own behavior and set realistic learning goals. Devise strategies and formulate plans to assist in the completion of challenging task and the maintenance of personal safety.

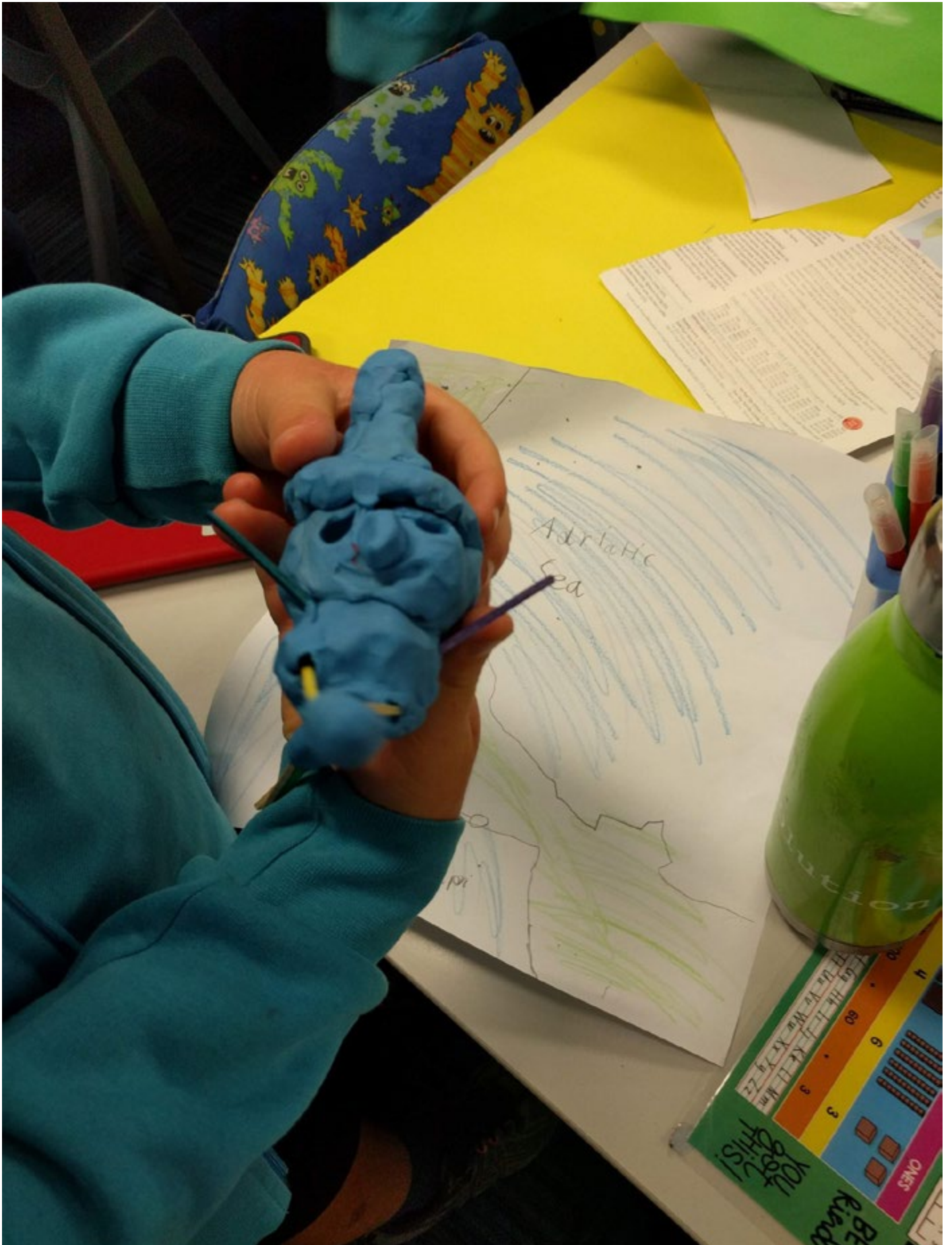
CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING

The key learning goal was to:

Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts. (ACELT1613)

Before we began our sessions together, the students completed a baseline brainstorm task. This involved them, after listening to me read a text, making

connections between the text and themselves, the world and other texts. I then gave the students feedback on their responses and they set goals of the types of connections they hoped to make next time we repeated this task. At this point there were many students who were unable to make any connections. It appeared that they didn't understand what these 'connections' really meant.



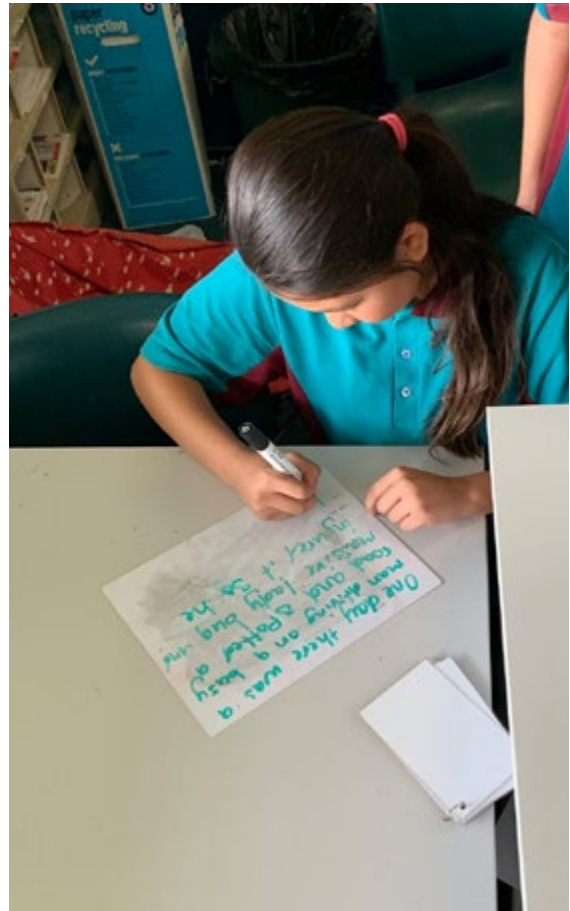
THE LEARNING PROCESS

Class teacher Sophie Perkins thought the class could benefit from focusing on three of the five habits of mind; imaginative, disciplined and persistent. This class were prone to giving up easily when faced with a difficult task and found it challenging to be disciplined and improve on their work. They also found it difficult to make deep connections between their own lives and experiences and those of the people around them.

Each session followed a similar format which established a secure routine. Warm ups at the start of the session were an essential tool and allowed the students to practice the creative habits of mind in a variety of challenging, fun and physical ways.

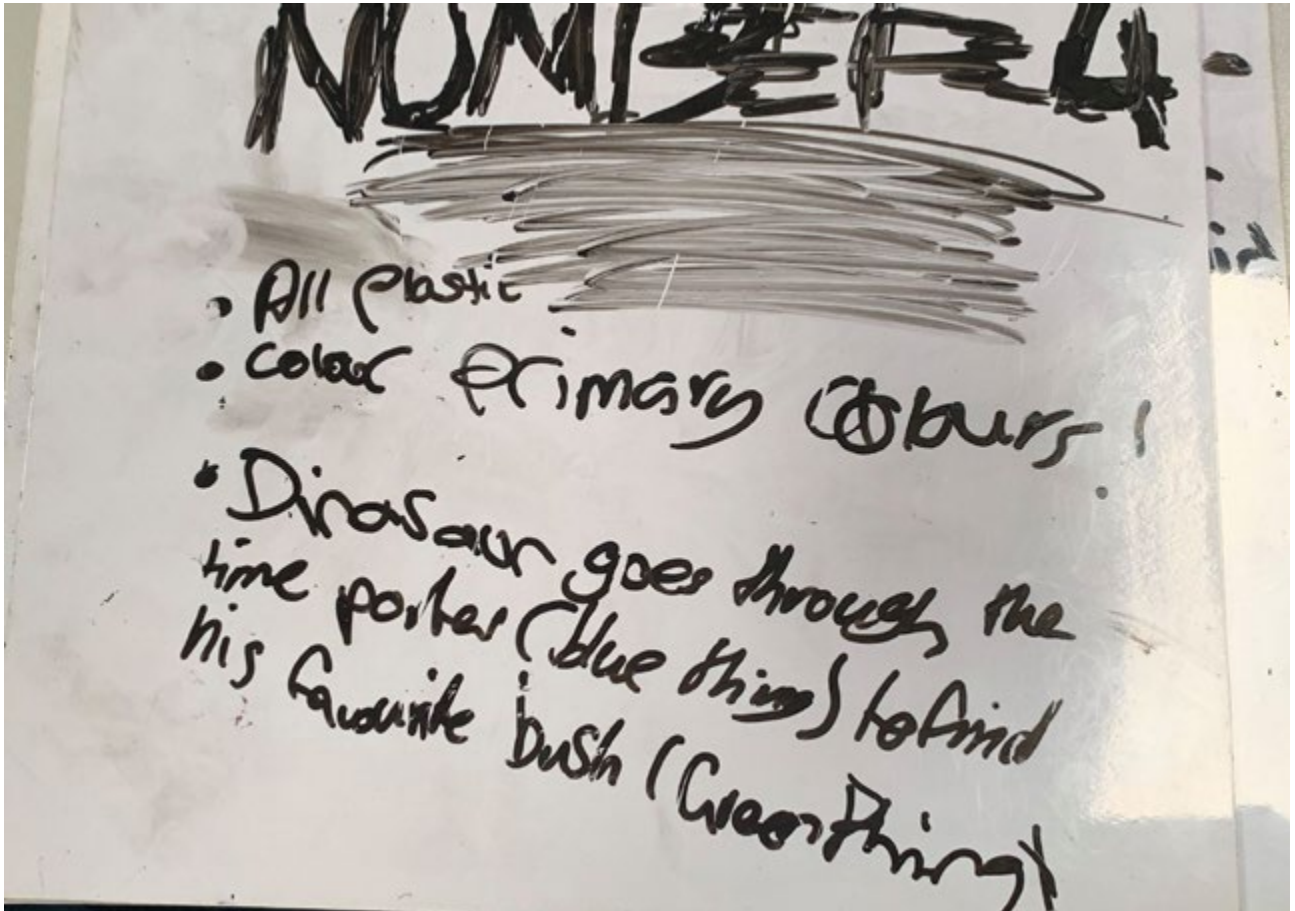
We began our term's work with a session dedicated to establishing what the Five Creative Habits of Mind are and created our own common language about the habits. We called them The Five Creative Super Powers and made a super-hero shield to show how well we currently used them. Many of the class confused discipline with punishment and were not able to describe a time when they had been persistent. They thought that because they liked working in a group it meant that they were experts at collaboration and that being imaginative meant that they were good at telling stories and drawing. The workshops aimed to challenge these assumptions over the course of the term. For example, we played a balloon game that required collaboration, persistence and discipline. The game was difficult, and we could not complete it. This experience of failure provided a meaningful opportunity to reflect on what being disciplined and persistent requires and the balloon game became a useful reflection tool.

Each student was given a random object and was asked to find one other person that they could connect their object to. Then find another pair and create a story theme that connects the four objects. Then share the theme. The class found this challenging at first. They did not trust their intuition and were not confident that what they had done was 'good enough.' Asking them to write their themes on whiteboards that could be easily erased, changed and adapted helped emphasize that the task was all about playing with possibilities.



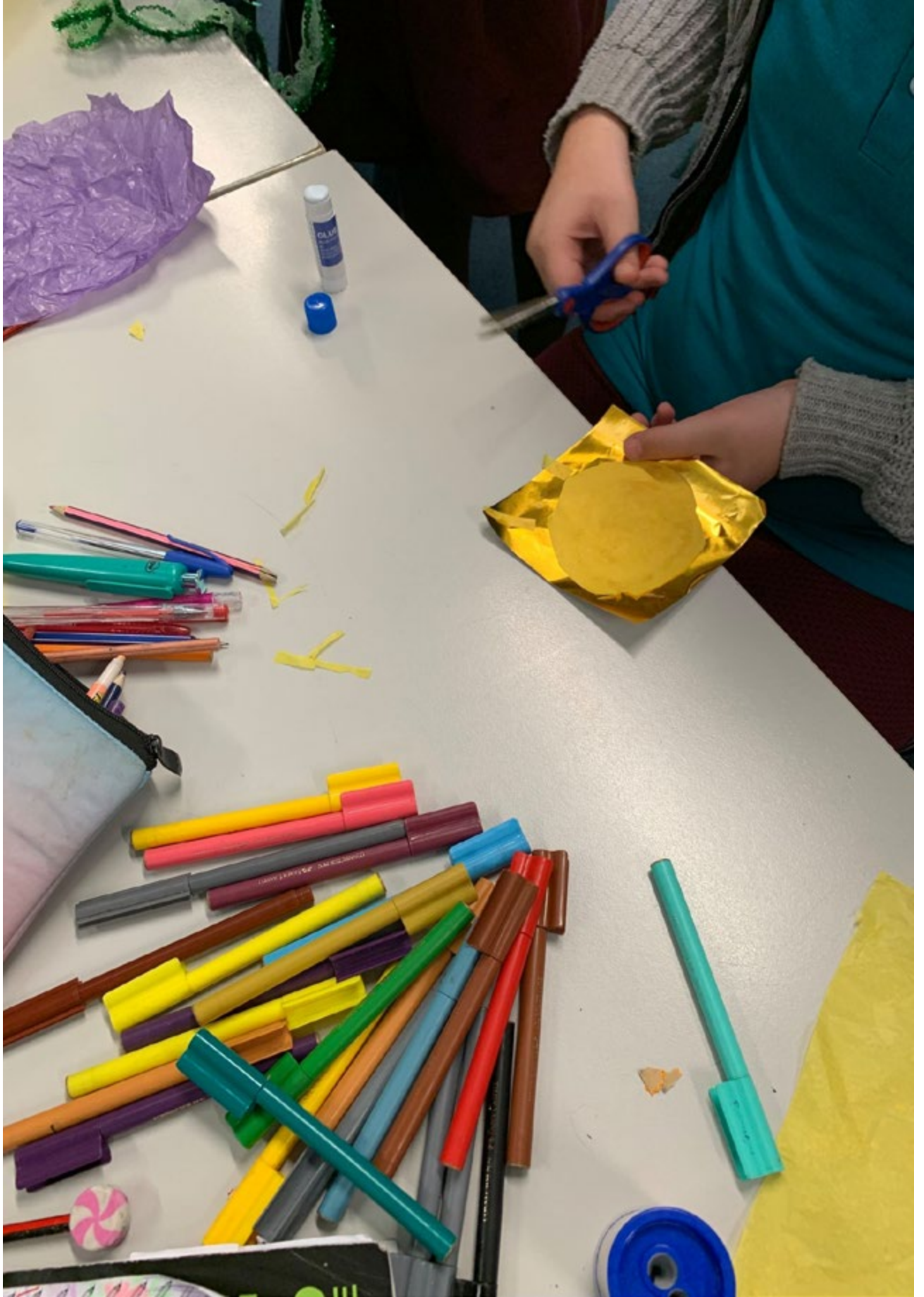
We explored and investigated a migration story and made connections between our own experiences and those of author Anh Do. This was a relevant theme as many students in the class come from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The students watched a video; The Little Refugee read out loud by a Vietnamese man, and then wondered how Anh Do felt at various stages during his journey from Vietnamese refugee to school captain in Australia. They wrote these feelings on Post-It-Notes and then worked together to sort and then group them into five categories: lonely, brave, uncertain, happy, proud. The students then worked collaboratively to create a mixed media drawing to communicate these feelings.



IMPACT OF LEARNING

There were opportunities to reflect critically on what happened during each session. It was important to identify which of the 'Five Creative Superpowers' we had practised. We used the same language as printed on the Creative Habits of Learning wheel poster e.g. Students said 'It was difficult to do the numbers game, but we stuck with it,' 'I used my intuition when I looked at the portrait.' Over time I noticed that the students found it easier to identify when they had practised being persistent, disciplined and imaginative. At the end of term, the students played the difficult balloon game again. It required collaboration, persistence and discipline. This time they were able to complete it!



I found that all kids improved in their ability to make connections to a text. The degree of improvement varied though even the weaker readers improved. Whether it was reducing their cognitive load, having these real hands on experiences they could refer to as a way to base their text level connections on I can't be certain but in some ways this is how it felt.

(Teacher, Sophie Perkins)

"We are doing group work pairing up with my friend. I sometimes have to work with girls (I don't usually work with girls). Creative schools expands our imagination." (Student)

"Other lessons are boring. I'm bored most of the time. Creative schools isn't boring. We get to draw and do games with different objects. We are learning new things." (Student)

"I'm making better connections. Using my imagination." (Student)

"It suits more people. We work together. Drawing makes me feel happy. Everyone is cooperating with each other. It helps us to make friends in the class." (Student)

"It makes you like school more. It makes things like reading easier. You don't have to do so much reading. We still do lots of writing in Creative Schools but it's different to other writing lessons." (Student)

"I've learned to cooperate with others. I've learned to be nicer to people." (Student)

"Because I like drawing and thinking. It helps me get my mind off bad stuff. Its fun doing art and drawing in other lessons. You make connections. You don't just do writing you get to do other stuff." (Student)

"It's helpful for people who like to do creative stuff. I enjoy it. The activities are great. I like to draw self-portraits. I like how there is team work and collaboration. You slowly improve and focus more." (Student)

"There is more activities. It's still doing work but it is fun for people who like to do activities. For the people who like poems and doing feelings and creative stuff its good for them." (Student)

"I've learned about how good the stuff you do is. It's about how hard you try and if you care about the work you do. I'm starting to do more work together with people. I'm starting to feel more positive. I usually can't wait for Friday to happen. But now I can't wait for school." (Student)

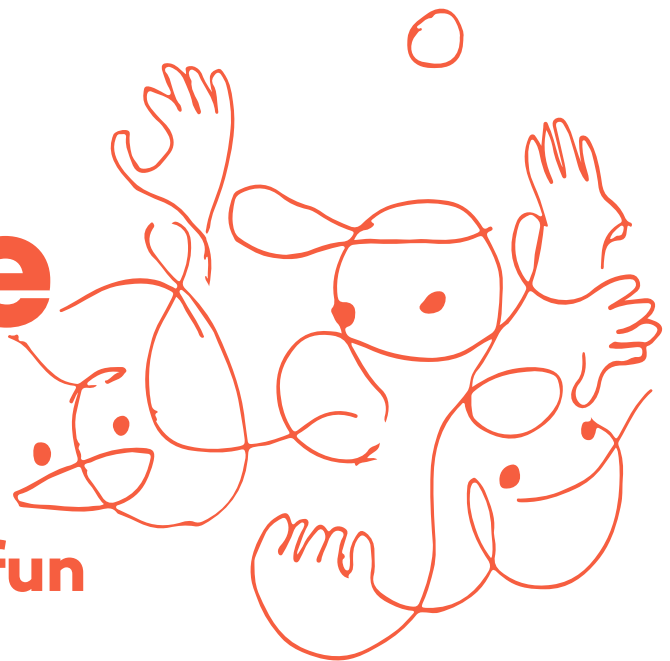




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For further information please contact:

Lamis Sabra/ Vanessa Bradley

learning@form.net.au • (08) 9385 2200 • form.net.au/creative-learning