



creative schools

HILLCREST
PRIMARY SCHOOL

CASE STUDY – TERM 2

creative schools

Visual Artist

Elizabeth Marruffo

Teachers

**Siobhan Duggan and
Linda Glendinning**

School

**Hillcrest
Primary School**

Year group

Year 3

The Creative Practitioner worked with two teachers in two Year 3 classes. The curriculum focus was the same for both classes.

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 and 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

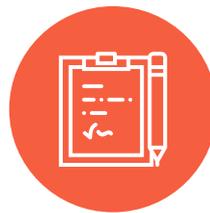
Observation and diagnosis of student engagement in the classroom.
Planning time for teachers and artists



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

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES

Food and Fibre production - Types of food and fibre produced in different environments, cultures or time periods, including the equipment used to produce or prepare them.

Technologies -Designing Develop and communicate ideas using labelled drawings and appropriate technical terms.

Technologies - Evaluating - Use criteria to evaluate design processes and solutions developed.

Technologies - collaborating and managing - Work independently, or collaboratively when required, to plan, safely create and communicate sequenced steps.

CROSS-CURRICULUM LINKS

ENGLISH

Literature - Language devices - Discuss the nature and effects of some language devices used to enhance meaning and shape the reader's reaction, including rhythm and onomatopoeia in poetry and prose.

Literature -Experimentation&adaptation -Create texts that adapt language features and patterns encountered in literary texts, for example characterization, rhyme, rhythm, mood, music, sound effects and dialogue.

Health and physical education - Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing - Behaviours that show empathy and respect for others. Circumstances that can influence the level of emotional response to situations.

CREATIVE HABITS:

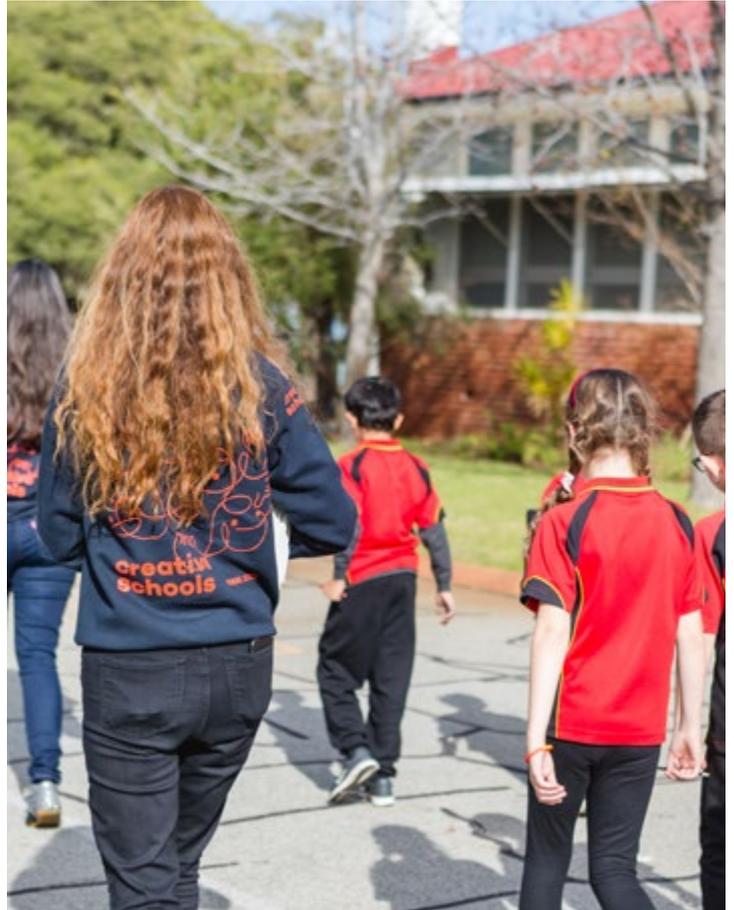
Disciplined, Imaginative, Persistent, Collaborative and Inquisitive.



LEARNING GOALS

How can the students have a deeper understanding of where food comes from, activate the Bush Tucker garden and develop a sense of agency and ownership of the space? How can the students hang on to and develop their drawing communication skills at this critical age (it is around 8 years of age that children decide if they can or cannot draw). How can we get better at sharing evidence of student learning?

Learning about where food and fibres come from, developing the 5 creative habits of mind and improving visual literacy and observational drawing will take place at, and revolve around the beautiful bush tucker garden the school has recently planted.



THE LEARNING PROCESS

We established a foundation of comics making as our primary method of communicating new learnings and processing information. This foundation was established through a series of comics and collaborative drawing exercises that everyone in the class participated in. Comics are a child centered medium that can clearly show evidence of learning as well as adapt to cover any chosen curriculum links, it was wonderful to see the groups clearly identify and help spell onomatopoeia when it came up in the 'how to use words in comics' part of the session and also clearly identify perspective changes and what this means, express different moods in the way text is written and convey complex emotions through deliberate and careful placement of features.

As a philosophical underpinning to help better respond to the 5 creative habits, we looked at wise and unwise responses to problems. These were demonstrated and elicited from the group for example; 'You have been asked to tidy your room', a wise response was 'put music on to make it fun', an unwise response was 'pretend you are asleep so you don't have to do it'. This was really fun and the children especially loved describing the unwise responses. It was good to have an awareness of how hesitant some of the kids were towards drawing images at this point.

We looked closely at the creative habits of mind poster and the children were asked to develop their own posters to communicate the habits using wise and unwise examples. They were split into 5 groups and each was assigned a habit. This was a useful way to establish what they are able to articulate about the habits at this stage, to access their visual communication skills and to see how they collaborate. Through this activity we were able to get to know most of the students and their particular personalities in order to make better decisions on how to move forward as a group in our aim of becoming self-managing learners. These posters were really useful to refer back to over the term – especially the colour linked to each habit. For example if they couldn't remember the word 'Inquisitive' they could say 'the red one' instead.

In our first session down in the garden we worked on developing imaginative drawing skills as well as 'crafting and improving' skills. Each group was assigned

a picture and information about a bush tucker plant that they had to go and identify. Once their food was located they were asked to design a comic character inspired by the plant. The students worked on their comic character development and they loved using paint pens and coloured paper for this. The groups brainstormed ideas together and then worked individually but with lots of chatter about ideas, possibilities, recommendations and physical play in response to the outdoor environment. They used their comic making skills and many were adding emotions and features to develop some incredibly charming characters. We were pleasantly surprised to see a few kids who were very distracted in our initial sessions allow themselves to be in the moment a lot more with their painting and drawing and were starting to become proud of what they had created. In the midst of the kids settling in and becoming engaged in their activity the class in the music room nearby came out with all their glockenspiels and percussion instruments and started making beautiful music on the lawn next to us. It was delightful – we had some beautiful music to accompany our drawing!

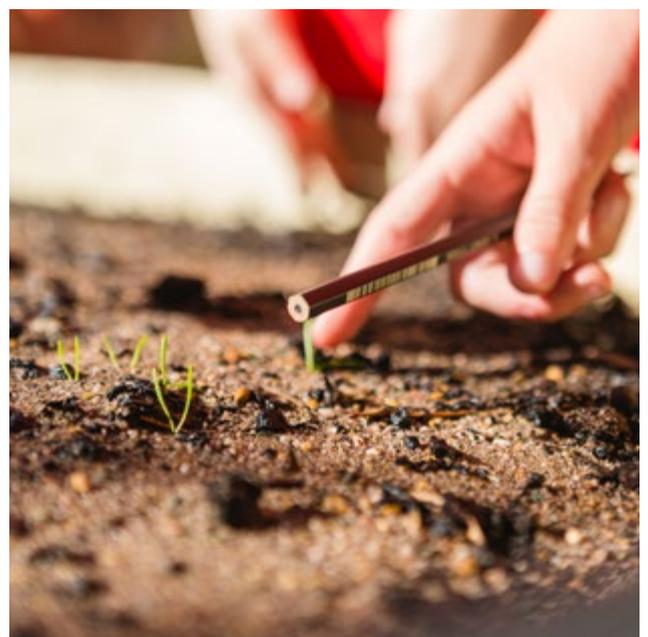
In one of the sessions we also looked at the book *Summer Bird: The Butterflies of Maria Merian* by author Margarita Engle; which is about the 13 year old scientist and artist Maria Merian who lived over 350 years ago and was one of the first to document life cycles of butterflies and other insects. We pursued the question 'what is knowledge?' Maybe it grows like a tree and how other people and grown-ups are not always right – the kids identified that it was Maria Merian's habit of inquisitiveness and constant questioning that led to her being able to prove everyone in her world wrong about where insects come from. After this they were extremely motivated to get down to the garden to take some clippings of their Bush Tucker foods and use their 'scientific eyes' to draw carefully.

As well as their scientific observations, in this session we focused on the challenging but important life skill of giving and receiving feedback. We had a lot of dramatic developments with this – there were even some tears at the end. These emotions are very, very real and we were happy there was time to reflect on this at the end and address that these emotions are valid and helpful in establishing a high functioning classroom. Validating

these emotions and addressing them in an open and mature way meant that a lot of trust could be established in the group and trust will help us in our future collaborations. In our goal of developing self-managing learners, getting into the habit of asking peers for feedback can alleviate a lot of the demands on a teacher and means students are able to use the rich resource of their peers in productive ways.

In an activity to further develop inquisitiveness, curiosity and collaborative skills the students were asked to find 3 treasures in the garden and then work together as a group to build a comic character out of the treasures. We had a lot to discuss regarding the 5 creative habits after this activity as they were in large groups and really had to work hard to work together. It has been good to practice having tricky and uncomfortable conversations with these groups and quite amazing that the kids take on honest observations and feedback really well as this is a really important life skill.

A group of students, who had previously been incredibly rowdy and inattentive in a previous session, were working well this time around and their pride and confidence in their efforts was clearly expressed by them. Seeing the hilarious and fun results of the other groups who listened to each other and took turns was very motivating for this easily distracted group to engage more and work so much better together as a team. The second time we did this activity the kids were looking forward to working together again and there was a huge improvement in groups that had really struggled previously.



IMPACT OF LEARNING

We paused our work together for this term with a brainstorming session. The children were asked to use their imagination and curiosity to brainstorm ideas for an end of Term 3 exhibition and activation of the bush tucker garden. We were able to collect a lot of clear (both written and image based) details from the students of their visions, materials and skills they want to use so that over the break we can establish the best strategy, timeline and source appropriate materials for the exhibition which will be an opportunity to really make their learning visible and continue the journey of feeling ownership of the garden.

of our surroundings. What was planned as a 15 minute introductory 'warm up' game turned into the focus for the entire session. The children loved this altered game of hide and seek, with nature connection elements built in. We listened to their needs and played the game for the remaining hour, finishing with a meditation, reflection and song.

The children's reflections in the following week, before the second session, highlighted for Lizzie and I just how connected they were to the space already. They really connected with the game and we noticed how their experience in the space made them light up. There was pure engagement. My reflections from the second session were "The student's passion for the space and for exploring is so evident and sometimes it interferes with the plans - but this is good modelling for the teacher and the students to go with the flow."

As the weeks continued, our use of the space continued, with a regular return to the game, listening to the student's passion while also guiding them through some pre planned experiences that used the

different senses. We explored texture, colour, size and shape through a treasure hunt focussed activity and asked them to classify the objects they found. We used found objects to make patterns and explored descriptive language; we made music with our bodies and natural materials to replicate a rainstorm in a body percussion orchestration. We even engaged digital literacy and recorded sounds in the environment to make our own 'sound books' using iPads. Throughout each session we followed the passion of the children as well as our overarching goal to connect with the space and explore the possibilities of nature connected pedagogy. Each session in the outdoor spaces provided links to what the class had been covering in doors or provided inspiration for upcoming content areas.

As the term was progressed Lizzie reflected that our sessions seem to be providing a sense of 'structured joy' and I further reflected that we seem to be 'carving out space in a crammed, busy schedule to make time for simple joy'. We were pleased with our new outcome and agreed that the social and emotional impact of this outcome for the students was incredibly important.

It was also helpful to return to our original term overview plan and see that we are in fact covering our initial objectives as well as the school wide vision statement.

- How can we engage in outdoor learning and nature pedagogy through the reactivation of the 'Top Area'?
- Term 2 providing opportunity for individual lessons in the outdoor space using existing spaces as learning areas.

We wondered together if we could re-focus on one of our other original goals 'Communication to wider school community, parents, colleagues and administration' and continue to advocate for and communicate about the benefits of taking learning outside and the importance of ownership of space. Highlighting the 'depth and complexity of authentic, child centred, play based learning' more of an intention with the use of documentation over the final 3 session of this term leading into our more project-oriented focus for next term.

It has been an incredibly enjoyable journey so far, one built around relationship building, experimentation and collaboration. When we end each session and reflect together Lizzie regularly speaks of the 'joy' that the sessions bring her and the children. I'm continuing to wonder if part of my role is to be a creative board to bounce ideas off and share joy. Lizzie often reflects that her perception of what she has to do within her classroom is text book based, test related and output-driven. She speaks about the fact that resources and programs increasingly purchased and used in schools, mandated as a whole-school approach, are rolled out across multiple classes/age groups in so many different settings are worksheet reliant. They dictate a direction for content and teaching style and make a teacher's creative role redundant, as ideas and direction don't comply with the 'lesson sequence'. This creative schools program seems to have been a ray of hope for an incredibly creative teacher like Lizzie. It supports her to still break out of the mould and reignite her passion and energy for creative ways of facilitating learning, to share a love of learning in a more holistic, natural way; responding to stimuli and enabling the students to have some ownership over their education process.

"It has been wonderful to hear my students using the language of the 5 creative habits appropriately, with increasing confidence and outside of the Creative School Project sessions. My students recently applied some of the comic making skills they have learned from Liz when making the 'fruit and vegetable superhero' props for our assembly" – Siobhan, Teacher.

"Creative Schools is awesome because it helps me get better at drawing. Liz is a great teacher. When I first started Creative Schools I thought we would just be drawing; but we are going out to look at things. It's kind of drawing and science mixed together. I don't really like science because sometimes it boring. But this kind of science is interesting." Student

"It's different because Liz teaches us strategies. Liz teaches us about being collaborative and being imaginative and persistent. Since I've been in Year 3 Creative School's has been very helpful for me." Student

"We get to come out in the garden and we get to be independent. We don't have teachers watching over us and staring over our shoulder ever second. I wish we could do learning in different spots. Find a comfy spot and sit down and do your work." Student

I'm learning teamwork we are working in groups and helping each other. How to interact with each other." Student

"Creative Schools is exciting because you don't know what you are going to do next. It's a good opportunity if you are into art but you don't get to do it at home because you have to do so much sport.

It's not teaching you something over and over again. Sometimes they teach you something three times and you already know it. Creative School isn't like that." Student

"In other lessons they tell you a specific things to do. In Creative Schools you don't get told simple things to do, you have to use your imagination. In other lessons you don't get to go outside. In Creative schools we go outside heaps. When you go outside it reboots you. It calms you down because you get to breathe fresh air. In art classes if you make a mistake you have to rip the page out and start again. But in Creative Schools if you make a mistake they encourage you to turn it into something else." Student

"I'm learning that if you make a mistake you don't have to think oh drat I need to start again. You can change it into something else. I've learnt you can use your imagination, like if I'm building LEGO I can also do a drawing about it." Student

"In Creative Schools all the kids get to learn different stuff. Kids who think they can't draw get to realise they are good at it and they realise they shouldn't be so hard on themselves. It's just really good it calms us all down. Drawing is calming. You don't think too much about what you have to draw there is a lot of looking in this kind of drawing." Student

"It's excellent because you get to do different things. You get to go outside and look at nature. Creative Schools is teaching us to work with different people. It's good." Student

"I'm learning to make nature into characters. I never knew this before. I'm doing this at home I'm making stick characters." Student

“I enjoy creative schools I think it’s about team work and being respectful to people around you. It’s about being imaginative and inquisitive. You have to be disciplined so that you have more fun. I’d like to make a comic. We’ve learnt about them but I want to make a real comic. I give it 9.5 out of ten. I would give it ten if we did different groups and go into a different area in the school. I want to go to the oval where it has apple trees and in the junior oval.”
Student

“Liz is always kind to everyone and she enjoys helping everyone. She’s a really good artist. I’ve seen how good she is at drawing at characters. I think she’s got her own way of doing things and it’s a very fun way. I like that her voice is soft so that she doesn’t hurt our ears.” Student

“It’s creative because we do pictures and look at the plants. We read the cards about the plants to find out about the plants personality so that we can draw a cartoon.” Student

“I have used the Habits of Learning in other lessons too, e.g. our HASS Cocoa production lessons.” (Siobhan, Teacher)

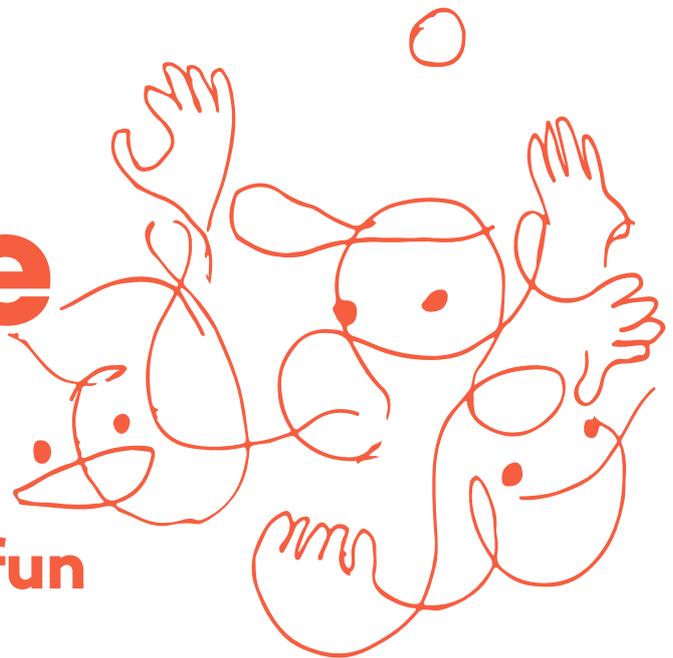
“We’ve been making characters and learnt to be imaginative and make your own things.” Student

“I’m struggling with the teacher-artist role balance myself. As art teacher I believe this is the future of education, but the transition from where we are now will be interesting.” (Siobhan, Teacher)

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