



creative schools

MOUNT LAWLEY
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CASE STUDY — TERM 2 & 3

TERM 2

creative schools

Creative Practitioner

Bernard Taylor

Teachers

Jacqueline Fitzpatrick

School

**Mount Lawley
Senior High School**

Year group

Year 7

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-minute 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 across two terms of delivery: Term 2 and 3 (over 16 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

ENGLISH

Language:

Analyse how point of view is generated in visual texts by means of choices, for example gaze, angle and social distance; Understand the way language evolves to reflect a changing world, particularly in response to the use of new technology for presenting texts and communicating.

Literature:

Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts: recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in narratives.

Literacy:

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, selecting aspects of subject matter and particular language, visual, and audio features to convey information and ideas: Edit for meaning by removing repetition, refining ideas, reordering sentences and adding or substituting words for impact.

CREATIVE HABITS:

Collaboration, Imagination, Persistence.

LEARNING PROCESS

This project aims to explore whether students would be able to synthesize information given about the Creative Habits and embody that knowledge in a material way in order to solve a complex creative/analytical problem. The term's topic relates to dystopian fiction, as such, the secondary questions within the project realm surround the students ability to concretely analyse and identify the elements of the genre; their ability to use language and situational context to communicate and evoke ideas consistent with the themes; their ability to plan, draft and deliver an imaginative and persuasive outcome; and their ability to analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings can be combined to create narratives.

In order to undertake this project the class will be split into two groups. The student's then self-organised, and made creative and logistical decisions needed to deliver two short films (a film created by each of the groups).



To complete the project successfully the groups will need to:

- Devise a unique story idea with characters and a setting that communicates ideas that are identifiably dystopian.
- Develop a script from the story idea.
- Create a storyboard which visualises the script and makes design requirements evident.
- Design background artwork as well as devise prop and costume needs.
- Act and film the script whilst continually making assessments about performances, costumes, lighting, camera work etc.
- Edit film footage and background artwork together along with music and sound FX.



THE ROLE THE CREATIVE HABITS WILL PLAY IN THIS PROJECT

This project has been devised to exploit the Creative Habits at every stage and to give the students the knowledge and ability to leverage the Habits as they move forward in their learning journey. Although all the Creative Habits will be engaged throughout this project, the core emphasis will be on the following: -

- Engaging the skill of 'discipline' in the process of 'reflecting critically', and by 'crafting and improving';
- Utilising the benefits of collaborative thought and exploration with peers and 'giving and receiving feedback'; and
- Being persistent when faced with uncertainty and by working through difficulties in a courageous and focussed manner.

QUOTES

“We have focused on Dystopian novels. Bernie came up with great group work ideas linked in to it. These kids now have a very good idea of dystopian fiction.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“The students are making their own dystopian movies. We divided them into two teams and created two production teams. Both groups come up with fantastic stories, created shot lists, did background research and established their production teams with scriptwriters, costumes, artist, director, etc. The directors are great, pulling everyone in, making sure everyone has a role.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“They really like him [Bernie the creative practitioner]. He has such a good way with the kids. All the kids want to be on his team. We swapped teams last week.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“It’s really hard for me to let the kids take the lead, but the kids came up with brilliant ideas. I had nothing to do with it. It’s going to look really good.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“It’s got kids bringing in things from home and I’m discovering things about the students I didn’t know. There are kids who are usually not really shining in English now really shining, e.g. one student, that has great art skills but is struggling with English. She is now becoming quite a leader.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“They are having so much fun and they are driving it, they are owning it, coming up with their own ideas.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“I’ve got an Aboriginal boy in the class who is really shy. He is now engaged for the first time, ever. He’s really coming out of his shell now, putting his hand up. He likes film.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“The other classes are very jealous and resentful. They see me be relaxed with the kids in the project and they say “why can’t I be like that with them”. I can be more relaxed in the creative learning lessons because there is another adult in the room.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“I am using a lot of the ideas, particularly group work ideas, in my other classes.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“The class feels quite proud, although I feel sorry for the other classes not having the opportunity. I would definitely transfer the ideas across to other classes.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“At the end of the year when we rewrite programs I will definitely build a lot of the ideas into the program for next year. We are so assessment driven in High School and the assessments are pre-set at the start of the year. So we can experiment this year and then build changes into the assessments for next year.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

“I’m loving it. This is how teaching used to be. This is why I went into teaching. Somewhere we have lost that – creating that passion and creativity with kids. We are so focused on that pointy end of assessment. This is how we should teach.” (Jacqui, Teacher)

"I've never done stuff like this before. I'm new here to the school. I'm learning to talk more confidently and work in teams. It's challenging like scripting and planning. Bernie is very fun and very creative. He has cool apps. He helps me to be more confident and to enjoy myself." Student

"It's the sort of stuff that I enjoy. I have a YouTube channel so it's what I'm interested in. Like filming and animation and learning new software. It's really enjoyable." Student

"It's more interesting than normal lessons. It's definitely much easier, you aren't writing stuff down all the time. You are discussing things with other people. Bernie helped us with a lot of information and he showed us how to do it and showed us a bunch of techniques." Student



TERM 3

creative schools

Creative Practitioner

Bernard Taylor

Teachers

Jacqueline Fitzpatrick

School

Mount Lawley

Senior High School

Year group

Year 7

CURRICULUM FOCUS

Geography: Environmental change and management.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

Throughout the term links formed to areas such as art and design; technologies, processes and production skills; and measurement and geometry. General capabilities that were informed existed in the spaces of critical and creative thinking and personal/social capability.

WHAT WE DID

Prior to the term beginning Jackie explained to me that her Year 7 English class had been studying film codes and had been examining the features of dystopian fiction. They had learned about narrative structure and character development and they were soon going to be required to write a film review as part of an assessment. The class had been very engaged with exploring the facets and attributes of the dystopian genre, and as such, it seemed that finding a way to immerse them even further into this type of exploration would keep their engagement very high as well as invite deep analysis and creativity. Jackie and I felt the most obvious way to continue forward and provoke great outcomes in line with this was to have the class write and produce their own films.

In order to ensure that all the students had a way to participate in the project we split the class into two groups and had each group start their own production. Whilst the groups were given guidance about what requirements were essential to the full the process, we sought to have each group self-organise and self-manage their individual productions as much as possible. This space of self-management was one of the most challenging and fruitful aspects of the project, as it was a new

experience for year 7's to be given such vast decision-making latitude and it required overcoming ambiguity, confusion, ego, and tension through persistence, resilience, cooperation and negotiation. The productions each required students to fulfil specific roles such as writer (or writing team), director, production manager, camera operators, costume and prop coordinators, actors, and background artists etc., and these were filled either by vote, by discussion and compromise, or by nomination.

The script development process in both production groups began as a large collaborative exercise with all members of the group openly discussing ideas and contributions to the story concept being selected democratically. When the stories were completed the writing group split away to complete the script process and the other group members began their individual tasks such as costume concepting and research, storyboarding and production artwork. The director in each group coordinated each of the individuals ensuring that each was aligned with the same overarching vision.

Once scripts were complete, actors assigned, costumes found, props located and camera operators nominated, each group began the shooting process. It had been decided much earlier in the decision-making process that these productions would be shot against green screens in order to allow for the diverse and fantastical locations to be shown on screen and to side-step the logistically challenging requirements of shooting on-location. Over the next several weeks we set up a green-screen backdrop in any available room we could find around the school and the actors acted the scripts, the directors directed productions, and the camera operators and production assistants carried out their tasks as required.

The task of bringing the curriculum alive was literally embodied within this project. Jackie's class were initially exploring dystopian fiction through the reading of a book, but with this project the exploration came off the page and into real-life both in front of the camera and behind it. The excitement and energy this project generated within the classroom was immense and the personal follow-on effects in some cases were close to profound.

This project was of course imbued with creativity,

imagination and intuition. It also required discipline in the development of techniques and craft. It was founded upon collaboration and feedback, exploration and inquisitiveness which was central to its development. Persistence became the key to completing the task. To my mind this project was a complete immersion in the Five Creative Habits of Learning and a fantastic exercise in which the students could grow through the experience.

As mentioned above, within this process the students were given complete agency to write the scripts, make decisions about structuring themselves and the production, and to effectively decide what the outcome of this project would eventually become. This latitude was a wholehearted activation of the student voice.

WHAT WAS THE IMPACT

Creative Practitioner

My experience with the Mount Lawley class this year was immensely fulfilling for me as an individual, as a creative practitioner, and as an educator. It was immediately evident to me how excited and engaged the students were when the program began, and this engagement endured right throughout the two terms. As the film project progressed the students began to develop in unanticipated ways, and Jackie relayed to me that creativity in the non-Creative Schools classes had started to sky rocket. I was told of sophisticated and innovative responses to class assignments that was well beyond anything previously seen, and it appeared that Creative Schools had imbued the students with agency and confidence to produce outcomes beyond the norm.

The outcome that most impacted upon me was seeing a previously disengaged Aboriginal boy get very involved in the project and surprise Jackie and his classmates with the level of his performance. The student was the only indigenous person in a very middle-class student group and he was living in a hostel in Perth due to his parents living in rural WA; as a result of this he no-doubt felt isolated from his peers. Jackie then told me that since participating in the project the student had opened up with her in a way that he hadn't don't before, and he started becoming very engaged in class.

Teacher

The project had a huge impact on my students. During the project they were highly engaged and very

enthusiastic about each of their weekly session times. One of the immediate positive changes was the collaboration and sense of team camaraderie each group developed and displayed. They enjoyed working and learning as a team and although there were times when they were out of their comfort zone they were able to problem solve with a maturity and humour that I hadn't quite fully seen in the students. It brought students together and allowed the quieter students to have more of a presence in the classroom.

It was wonderful to see some of my less able students 'step up and switch on' and to be acknowledged positively by both the practitioner and their peers. One of my students was a very disengaged Aboriginal student who lives in a hostel. Life is pretty tough for him and school is not his favourite place to be. The project encouraged him to really look forward to coming to English and to slowly come out of his shell and interact confidently with his peers by assisting with filming and acting in front of the camera. I feel we have a much better working relationship and he has definitely opened up more to me and is much more willing to seek me out for assistance.

QUOTES ABOUT THE PROGRAM

"There were many highlights. It was so rewarding to see some of my weaker students in a positive engaged manner, smiling and feeling part of a team that experienced success. Building their confidence to then transfer those skills into other areas of their English learning was so uplifting and rewarding. Those moments took me by complete surprise and made all the hard work completely worth it. This is why I went into teaching and it was so wonderful to be reminded of that." (Teacher)

"The kids really invested in the process by making their own films. They were active participants who were immersed and engaged in this complex, multi-faceted project." (Teacher)

"We let the students work through the ambiguity and difficulties in the process, dealing with personalities, egos, etc. the challenges of collaboration." (Teacher)

"I'm going to let go of the reigns and allow students to be more responsible for the choices they make in learning. My thinking has radically changed. It is all about the finished product in English. I've realised STOP. It's about their learning. That was quite wonderful for me." (Teacher)



STUDENT QUOTES

“I really loved being involved in the project. It was fun to work on a class project and see what we could achieve together. I’m really proud of what my class achieved”.

“I’m really interested in pursuing a career in the media and this gave me the opportunity to extend my media skills in a new way”.

“When I first heard what we were doing I did feel a little scared and worried. I am not a good artist or actor but once we got going it was so, so, so much fun. I don’t know why I was so worried about it”.

“I wish Bernie could come in every week and work with Mrs Fitz. They make a good team and helped us kids learn a lot of new things like using camera

and filming. I made a new friend. She was shy just like me. We worked on the costumes together and it was fun finding ways to create costumes”.

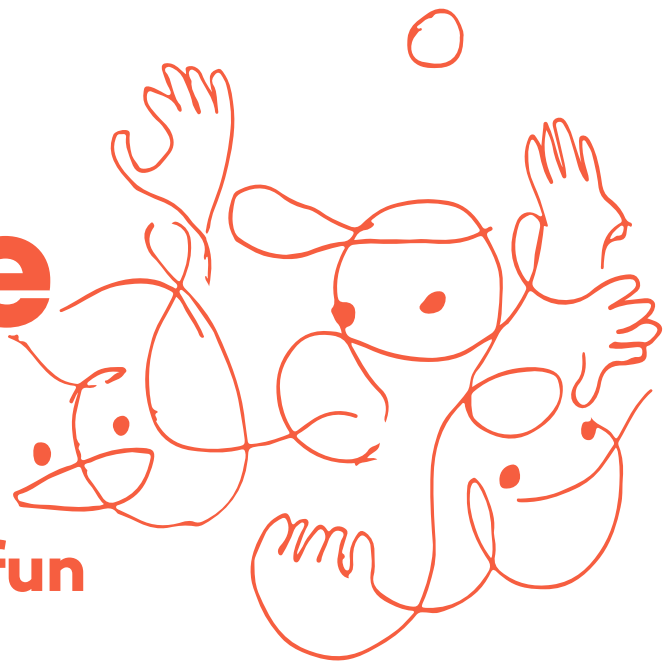
“My group worked well. It was a little tricky sometimes writing together I really loved writing the script”.

“I enjoyed being creative. I’m a creative guy. This was so much fun even though it was challenging controlling some group members. I liked being one of the leaders in my group. I would definitely do it again”.

FORM. creative learning

creative schools

deep learning, hard fun



For further information please contact:

Lamis Sabra/ Vanessa Bradley

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

The Creative Schools Program was initiated and is managed by FORM, provided by the Department of Education and is financially supported by the Western Australian Government.

FORM.
building a state of creativity



Department of
Education