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# The Signature Pedagogies Project: Final Report



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## Executive Summary

This report focuses on the work of creative practitioners, mainly artists, in a small number of English primary and secondary schools in 2011. It seeks to identify the distinctive ('signature') pedagogies that the artists helped to shape. Pedagogy is defined broadly: it refers to the shaping of the learning environment as a whole, in classroom settings, and more widely in the school and community.

The report constructs an analytical framework through which the different elements and emphases of arts-related signature pedagogies can be illuminated in detail. On this basis it presents eight case studies of creative practitioner pedagogy, highlighting the funds of knowledge from which they draw, as well as their affective dimensions. Throughout, it is concerned to explore the differences between arts-related signature pedagogies, and the 'default pedagogy' established in schools by a standards agenda that defines excellence in terms of progress against a limited set of measurable indicators.

It concludes that there is much that schools can learn and are learning from the pedagogies of creative practitioners, but that learning involves a deep encounter with the fundamental purposes and understandings of arts-related pedagogy, not only an assimilation of its surface techniques. Artists bring with them from their practice outside the school particular frames of reference and purposes. As they and teachers work together, they are able to create new practices.



## Introduction

This report is the latest in a succession of research and evaluation projects which have looked at the ways in which schools have responded to the creativity agenda developed within English education policy between 2002 and 2011. The work of government-funded organisations – first Creative Partnerships (CP) and then Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) – made available to schools resources for innovation and experiment. Though never lavish, these resources enabled some schools to make significant changes in curriculum and pedagogy – changes which were studied by members of the current team in previous reports (Thomson, Jones and Hall 2009; Thomson, Hall, Jones & Franks 2010). In the course of this research it became evident that central to the new practices developed by schools was the work and influence of ‘creative practitioners’, mostly artists, funded through CP and CCE to work alongside teachers, in classrooms and school-wide projects. Funding from CCE has allowed us in this report to explore more closely the role of creative practitioners, with a particular focus on how they bring the understandings and capabilities they have developed in an artistic domain to their work with pupils.

## Research Design

The research project used observation and interview to develop rich descriptions of creative practice. This is perhaps best described as ethnographic in intent because the time period available for observation, and in some cases, the period in which the creative practitioner was in the school, did not allow for very lengthy engagement. We would also say, however, that in several cases we had observed the creative practitioners at work before, and over several projects.

Observation was conducted in two ways: first through researcher visits in which detailed field notes were kept; secondly, by filming two days when creative practitioners were working with students. Filming allowed us to watch sessions repeatedly and was particularly good for capturing a range of non-verbal interactions which were more difficult to record in conventional field notes. It also allowed us to watch each others’ field visits. Creative practitioners were interviewed both formally and informally. Further interviews are planned for the second stage of this project, the construction of a website on which key elements of signature pedagogies will be illustrated and explained.

We selected schools on the basis of their involvement in the CCE-supported ‘Schools of Creativity’ network, assuming that in this way we would capture experiences of working with creative practitioners that were already embedded in the school. In all, twelve sites were observed, six primary and six secondary. The primary locations were all in the Midlands while the secondary were in and around London and the south of England. In primary schools we observed three storymakers, one storyteller, one dancer and one visual and movement artist. In the secondary schools, we observed work on radio, physical theatre, visual art, dance, media and creative activities such as problem-solving.

Drawing to an extent on our previous experience of researching creative practice, the research team developed a common analytic framework (see table 2) which was then used to develop descriptive case studies. Extracts from these case studies have been used in this report, in particular in the section on ‘Pedagogic Purposes’. The original data (field note, researcher photographs and films) were also thematised in order to build the key macro and micro points that we later present as Pedagogic Platforms



and Pedagogic Practices. These were generated by bringing our data themes into conversation with our previous research and the extant literatures. They provided us with a conceptual toolkit that enabled us to identify the specific characteristics of the pedagogies developed by creative practitioners, to suggest ways in which they differ from pedagogies of the mainstream, and to make claims for their educational value.

**Figure 1: Analytic Framework**

<p><b>Introductory activities</b> (entrance, session opener, planning)</p>	<p><i>Self presentation of artist</i></p>
<p><b>Resources</b> (provided and created)</p>	<p><i>Artefacts</i> <i>Cultural, intellectual resources</i> <i>Use of student work</i> <i>Use of artist's own work</i></p>
<p><b>Classroom discourse</b> (questions, responses, feedback, professional discourse, personal anecdote)</p>	<p><i>Professional and technical language</i> <i>Prompts, suggestions</i> <i>Unanswered questions</i> <i>Change to IRF patterns</i> <i>Self conscious use of affect</i></p>
<p><b>Flow</b> (rhythm, transitions, timing, lesson sequences over time)</p>	<p><i>Lesson shape</i> <i>Thinking time</i> <i>Taking a break</i> <i>Ongoing projects over days/weeks</i> <i>Pace</i> <i>Time for review</i></p>
<p><b>Use of space</b> (by students, by teachers)</p>	<p><i>Organisation of space</i> <i>Movement within the space</i> <i>Personal space</i> <i>Symbolic spaces</i></p>
<p><b>Behaviour management</b> (communication of rules, teacher stance, where the authority lies)</p>	<p><i>Authority of the discipline/endeavour</i> <i>Internalised codes of behaviour</i> <i>Explicit teaching of conduct</i> <i>Humour</i> <i>Public/private explanation of anti-social behaviours</i></p>
<p><b>Teaching methods</b> (direct instruction, coaching, modelling, experimentation)</p>	<p><i>Individualised/group/whole class teaching</i> <i>Skill development</i> <i>Use of environment, artefacts, music, movement</i> <i>Provocations</i></p>
<p><b>Framing</b> (disciplinary [Art, etc], self expression, vocational/technical)</p>	<p><i>Focus on the individual within a community, or part of a collective endeavour?</i> <i>Reference to the discipline specificity, traditions</i> <i>School subjects v professional practice</i> <i>Themes (eg making something from nothing, therapy)</i></p>

## Conceptual toolkit

We begin this report with a brief discussion of the conceptual toolkit we bring to the study. We have been developing these ideas through our previous studies, but progressed further with them during this investigation. This introductory section must be read as a set of cumulative understandings. It is unusual to begin a research report in this way, but we want the reader to approach the discussion of the research we did with these particular perspectives, concepts and language in mind.

## Signature Pedagogies

The project for which we successfully tendered was described as classroom ethnography. We understood this as research to investigate **pedagogies**. Pedagogy is more than teaching method, more than curriculum, more than assessment practice (Leach & Moon, 2008). It is all these things, but it is also how they are made into patterns of actions, activities and interactions (Schatzki, Cetina, & Savigny, 2001), by a particular teacher, with a particular group of students. The concept of pedagogy encompasses relationships, conversations, learning environments, rules, norms and culture within the wider social context (Facer, 2011; Moss & Petrie, 2002), and may extend beyond school to community and public settings (Ellsworth, 2005; Sandlin, Schultz, & Burdick, 2010). It takes in the ways in which what teachers and students do is framed and delimited within a specific site, a policy regime and the historical context (Alexander, 2008). Our approach to pedagogy eschews the more narrow focus on process that is usually associated with the use of the term in Britain, opting instead for the more capacious definitions used in European educational traditions (Alexander, 2000).

We called our project an investigation of the **signature pedagogies** of creative practitioners in schools. The idea of signature pedagogies comes from research which explored how differing disciplines in universities educated doctoral students (Golde, 2007; Guring, Chick, & Haynie, 2009; Shulman, 2005). The researchers found that there were some common pedagogical approaches across clusters of disciplines, but there were also distinctive practices, such as the field trip in geography and studio practice in architecture. We would add to these specific arts based examples – for example, the workshop in creative writing, the studio ‘crit’ session in contemporary art, the vocal warm-up in singing and so on. These distinctive practices are intended to do more than inculcate knowledge, they also set out deliberately to teach ‘habits of mind’, the ways of *thinking* about geography/architecture, *doing* geography/architecture and *being* a geographer/architect. They induct students into a ‘profession’ and its traditions, conventions and mores. We came to see, on the basis of our cumulative findings about creative practice, that there was something as distinctive about creative pedagogies as a handwritten signature.

Our project is of course not about higher education, and we have to acknowledge that we have taken a concept from one sector of education into the study of another, namely schools. However, there is considerable resonance, as we will explain in this report, between the notion of the education that happens in universities, and the ways in which the creative practitioners that we observed in this and previous projects actually work with children and young people. This distinctiveness is based not simply in the knowledge that is used and taught by creative practitioners, but also by the ways in which they embody professional norms, mores and conventions.

Signature pedagogies are both **epistemological** – that is they deal with things that we have to know and know how to do – and **ontological** – that is they are about the way we are in the world and the ways in

which we orient ourselves to being and making meaning in the world. Creative practitioners also have, in our experience, a particular **axiological** commitment – that is they value collaborative and cooperative ways of working. This too is integral to their pedagogical approaches. Each of these elements cannot be separated out in practice, even though we might write about them separately in order to advance our understandings. The epistemological/ontological/axiological combination becomes a kind of ‘indwelling’ (Polanyi, 1966), a tacit knowledge, which is conveyed as much through the presence of the practitioner and through the way that they orient themselves to questions and tasks, as it is about what they actually say and do. The combination of knowing, doing and being that are found in signature pedagogies is not separable into distinctive pieces which can be planned for, and learned/taught separately. Both epistemological and ontological learnings progress together, at the same time, and through one pedagogical practice.

In this report we adopt the UNESCO framework known as ‘the four pillars’ (Delors, 1996) because it addresses the combination of epistemology, ontology and axiology that we have observed. The four pillars capture, more than any other schema we have found, the domains of learning that occur in and through creative pedagogies. The four pillars are:

- learning to know – this refers to discipline-based and interdisciplinary intellectual resources used for making meaning
- learning to do - the dispositions and skills used to make knowing into practice
- learning to live together – building meaningful associations, networks and participatory practices
- learning to be – the development of new identities, embodiments, and horizons of possibility.

Section Three in this report uses our ethnographic cases to exemplify what these four pillars can look like in English schools.

### **Different types of engagement between artists and schools**

It is important to note that not all creative practitioners have the same kinds of engagement with schools. The schools where we worked were all accustomed to working with creative practitioners. We observed three artists in residence who were part of the permanent staffing complement. Two had been in their school for two to three years and were well known to the children and parents; the other had been in the school since the start of the academic year. The majority of creative practitioners that we observed were working on a project basis. We saw one practitioner who was in the school for only one session, but we observed him across several sites. In the secondary schools, we saw two companies at work with faculties which already had significant histories of engagement with professional artists, where the school staff were already what would in the USA be called artist-teachers and where students were engaged in practices not too far removed from professional work. Other projects worked with students who were less familiar with the particular creative practice on offer.

The differences in these engagements - of duration, intent and discipline – are important. It would be foolish for us to suggest that the same kind of signature pedagogies work identically across all age levels, across practice form, and across the kinds of projects we saw. There are obvious differences between what an artist in residence can do and someone who is on a fixed term project, and these differences also extend to the ways in which school staff are involved and what they have the opportunity to learn. Across our sample, staff in arts related disciplines and in ongoing engagements with creative practitioners displayed aspects of signature pedagogies themselves and were more likely to take these into their rest of

their everyday work. Staff involved in projects just had less opportunity to learn from creative practitioners and the practitioners often found themselves juggling process-product tensions as they worked to bring high quality end points (performance, exhibitions) in on time.

Nevertheless, across our sample we do feel able to identify some themes which are common enough to warrant being called a signature.

## Pedagogic platform

We identified several elements of what we are calling a pedagogic platform – the foundations from which signature pedagogies were built. We address them through discussions of ‘non-places’ and sociality; and creative pedagogies as a meeting place. The elements of the platform are brought together in Figure 2.

## Non-places and Sociality

We bring a particular approach to the study of schooling. We take an institutional perspective, that is, we approach our research as a study of school-*ing*, not of individual schools. While there is significant and important distinctiveness in children, teachers and schools, there are also ways of knowing, being and doing which are shared across all of them. Some of these ways of being, doing and knowing are the result of dominant policy framings and some are the result of tradition, of the history of schooling over many policy regimes and agendas. We therefore think about schooling as a ‘space’ in which there are tensions, challenges and opportunities, taken for granted practices and innovations, competing ideas, needs and desires.

We can easily identify the long legacy of industrial age education in which children are sorted by age and ability in distinct classes and groups, their education happens in blocks of time and egg-crate classrooms where they progress (or not) through a curriculum organised in linear stages and discrete subject domains. This arrangement is now under some duress from, for example:

- the convergence of information and communication technologies which make educational opportunities available across time/space boundaries. The school is no longer the sole source of learning, even if the institution still remains dominant
- increasing difference in school populations due to mass migrations and identity politics. It is increasingly difficult to assume that all children are the same and should be taught the same things in the same way, even though there is also a pressing need for schooling to support the growth of peaceful communities, co-operative work practices and a citizenry respectful of each other.

We do not have space to elaborate all of the challenges facing schooling (but see for example Alexander, 2009; Facer, 2011; Raffo et al., 2009; Thomas & Seely Brown, 2011) but we do want to point to a particular tension at the heart of the creative practices we observed.

Contemporary English schooling does have a signature pedagogy. We think here of ‘the lesson’, with its opening and closing plenaries and the middle period of direct instruction followed by individual or small group practice. In England the default lesson should begin with an outline of a curriculum objective; students are expected to understand how this objective will assist them to achieve a specified level of attainment set out in a curriculum framework. Teachers therefore plan lessons around particular objectives, and exercises and tests are designed in order to determine what level they have achieved. We have called this a **default pedagogy** in a previous research report (Thomson, Jones, & Hall, 2009) and

described it in some detail in a paper which told the story of one day in a school in which the default lesson was the dominant experience on offer (Thomson, Hall, & Jones, 2010).

We know that the default is just that. It is not necessarily exactly what happens. It is a 'fall back' model which is regularly and systematically overridden in various ways by individual teachers, and by schools seeking to address what they understand to be its deficiencies and what they have decided are the tensions and challenges they want to resolve. The Creative Partnerships [CP] programme was an institutional initiative which set out to disrupt the default. It was not the only one on offer at the time - we can think for example of the Enquiring Minds curriculum development project, eco-schools, forest schools, Philosophy for Children movement, Italian and Danish approaches to early childhood education, many of which were also taken up by schools engaged in CP.<sup>1</sup> CP was however unique among these 'opening-up' interventions, because it was the only programme which brought a substantive new workforce of adults, with very different ways of being, doing and knowing, into schools.

There is a significant body of research which addresses the default pedagogy and its effects, not only in England but also elsewhere (e.g. Apple, 2001; Baker, 2005; Ball, 2008; Blackmore & Sachs, 2007; Gewirtz, 2002; Gillbourn & Youdell, 2000; Gleeson & Husbands, 2001; Mahony & Hextall, 2000). We want here to connect this body of research to two important theoretical ideas.

The first is the notion of a **non-place** (Auge, 1995) – a locale in which people are institutionally stripped of their humanity. A non-place is an airport where people are merely passengers identifiable by their flight number and boarding pass. Supermarkets are also non-places - people are merely shoppers whose weekly preferences can be tabulated, anticipated and tempted. In modern hospitals people are more often than not simply illnesses with case notes, waiting times and a place on a triage list. Michael Fielding (2006) has argued that as schools operate in more instrumental and audit-driven ways, then they move further away from what he calls person-centred education (see Power, 1997; Strathern, 2000 for the general case). Nell Noddings (1986; 1992) has argued this case too: her way of expressing this is to say that schools need to adopt an 'authentic ethic of care', a way of educating which is routinely undermined, she suggests, by the everyday practices of setting, streaming, testing, profiling and the like. The notion of a non-place then is a way of describing a de-humanising trend. It is one in which the sociality of a place – let us now say a school - is eroded through processes which make people in them less important than data about them. The default pedagogy promotes the non-place tendency – children and young people come to be seen primarily as outcomes and levels, a curriculum is something to be delivered in order to produce this data, and teacher-student and student-student relationships are merely a means to league-tabled ends.

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<sup>1</sup> The work of the Forest School movement can be accessed at [www.forestschoools.com](http://www.forestschoools.com); for eco-schools, see [www.eco-schools.org.uk](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk); for Philosophy for Children, see [www.sapere.org.uk](http://www.sapere.org.uk). International developments in early years curriculum and pedagogy, including in Italy and Denmark, are well summarised in OECD (2004). The work of Enquiring Minds is described at [www.enquiringminds.org.uk](http://www.enquiringminds.org.uk) and reflexively discussed by Morgan (2011).

The notion of **sociality** is the second concept that is important. By sociality we mean the ways in which people live together and find a place in a community. An institution which has sociality at its heart, and as its modus operandi, is the polar opposite of a non-place. Wexler, Crichlow, Kern and Martusewicz (1992) aptly sum up the consequences of de-personalised education for young people and pinpoint the value of institutional sociality. We quote them at some length because they articulate a fundamental finding that arises in the vast majority of CP research and evaluation reports.

The main thing about schools is that they are one of the few public spaces in which people are engaged with each other in the interaction work of making meaning. These are places for making the CORE meaning, of self or identity among young people.

In their own words, students are trying to 'become somebody'. They want to be somebody, a real and presentable self, anchored in the verifying eyes of friends whom they come to school to meet. While they are aware of a life after education, in the occupational world of work, and in varying degrees acknowledge interest and attention to the learning of school subjects, their central and defining activity in school is to establish at least the image of an identity. 'Becoming somebody' is action in the public sphere....(Wexler et al., 1992, p. 155)

The quest to resist dehumanizing trends within schooling, and a belief in the value of 'becoming somebody' was strong among creative practitioners and many of the teachers who worked with them. This was manifest in commitments to giving students a say in what happened in the name of creative practice, and to building the kind of school ethos in which sociality was central (see Bragg, 2010; Bragg & Manchester, 2011; Bragg, Manchester, & Faulkner, 2009). The concept of 'becoming somebody' also sits well with other underpinning aspects of the creative pedagogies we saw in this and other projects.

Teachers and creative practitioners alike very often referred to the ways in which CP supported children and young people to gain 'confidence'. We suggest that what they are trying to describe was more than this. We would argue that CP had the capacity to provide particular affordances – events, activities, associations, conversations, processes of making meaning – which allowed children and young people to choose to act in ways which allowed them to gain a new embodied understanding of who they were, what they could do now, and what they might do in the future. This kind of learning is profoundly social and highly dependent on the ways in which creative practitioners and teachers come together to produce temporary and fragile space/times within school where it is possible to be/do/know/live together differently. This is 'becoming somebody' work in theory and practice. Much of this report provides evidence about how such space/times and practices functioned.

### **Creative pedagogies as a meeting place**

We can think of Creative Partnerships as an intervention which at its best enabled the development of a life-world (Habermas, 1987). 'Life world' is a sociological term ascribed to a shared everyday sphere of practices, routines, beliefs, values, structures of communication and action, identity formation and so on. A life world can have an institutional base but it can also refer to the broader private/public spheres of activity. The idea of a 'life world' is epistemological, ontological and axiological and is thus one which chimes with the approach we have taken in this research. It allows us to think about the instrumental rationality of schooling and a life-world of creative practice and what happens when they meet, merge and disrupt each other.

In this meeting, default pedagogies were directly challenged. A set of hybrid pedagogies were developed inside this temporary 'third space' (Soja, 1999). Where this meeting occurred did make a difference. In schools where CP was being introduced, a temporary space/time was created in the timetable – a special day, week, or project. While they existed, these time/spaces had relative autonomy from the ways in which the rest of the school operated and those in them were relatively free to experiment with new ways of talking, teaching, learning and assessing. New connections were also established with the parent and wider community. These experiences however were variously able to be transferred back into the school once the time/space had closed down. Schools where creative practices were more embedded found more permanent space/times – within and between some subject areas, across a year level, in regular extra-curricular activities where both teachers and creative practitioners worked in ways profoundly different from the default. Much less often, the majority of classes and times were transformed. In such locations, creative practitioners were used as artists in residence and were integral to the school programme. This research examines creative practitioners who worked in embedded and in transformed sites (see Faultley, Hatcher, & Millard, 2011; Thomson et al., 2009).

The notion of **hybridity** is also important to this study. Creative practitioners generally did not do in schools what they did in their own creative practice. They all 'taught' - that is they had thought about and developed, through experience and in dialogues with teachers, ways to make important aspects of their creative practice pedagogical. These practices were not the same as those which occurred routinely in classrooms. Some creative practitioners of course were more teacher-like, just as some teachers were more like creative practitioners in their pedagogical repertoires. Nevertheless, what we have observed is that in the space/time of creative pedagogies something happened that was different from what happened in either an arts or conventional classroom space/time. A variety of blends and mixes occurred, depending on the age of children, the degree of institutional 'readiness', the creative practice and practitioner, the teacher and the children and young people themselves. (See Galton 2008 for a comparable discussion.)

We think of the sites which we observed as being more **permeable** (Dyson, 1997) than most schools. They were willing and more able to let the outside world in through information and communication technologies, through creative practitioners, through community and family partnerships, and through the curriculum. This stands in contrast to the default school position of locked gates and doors and net-nannied computer rooms. These more permeable schools also often modified their physical learning environments by knocking down walls, building outside spaces, changing appearances of rooms and corridors. They were also marked by more **mobility** – students and teachers moved around the classroom, they went out of the classroom and out of the school more, students were trusted to work in groups in non supervised places, to use store cupboards, to leave lessons routinely if what they were doing required them to go somewhere else. Again, this is in stark contrast to the default school model where movement is kept to a minimum. Permeability, modification of learning environments and mobility also enhanced the sociality of the institution since it provided more public spaces within which children and adults could come together in different ways. There was also considerable **time-flexibility**. Not only were large blocks of time carved out of the regular timetable, but very often there was no definite end point. While a project did have a beginning and an end, a 'session', as opposed to a lesson, took as long as it took.

We want now to point to five important phenomena that recur throughout the findings that we report later. These are essential components of the hybrid signature pedagogies we researched. They are: the



approach to inclusion, the importance of choice and agency, the challenge of scale and ambition, the role of the absurd and the carnivalesque, and the lived experience of the present.

(1) the approach to **inclusion**

One of the most notable things that we observed in this project, and that we had seen in previous CP research, was that creative practitioners had a different approach to inclusion. Rather than see that some children had special needs that had to be taken into account and therefore that teaching approaches had to be adjusted for them in some way (usually via reduction of difficulty), creative practitioners began with the view that all children and young people were capable of having ideas, making meanings, and participating (cf. the argument made by Rancière, 2004 about assuming universal capability, not incapability, as the starting point). If they saw that this was not happening, then they generally encouraged and persisted, rather than change what they were doing. Because the pedagogies which they used were open-ended and because they made explicit that there would be a range of ways in which children could participate, we often recorded practitioners explaining that: nothing was either right or wrong; that there was no one way better than another; that doing the very best that you could was all that was required. This invitation offered every student the opportunity to act in ways that felt comfortable. The high expectations of practitioners were usually met, and it was often to the surprise of teachers who commented on the ways in which creative pedagogies allowed students who appeared to struggle in other aspects of school to do surprising things.

(2) the importance of **choice and agency**

The vast majority of the activities that we observed offered students opportunities to make meaningful choices. There were some important exceptions to this which related to particular disciplines practised at a more expert level (see our case study of dance for example). However, many creative practitioners worked on an improvisational basis which required students to contribute ideas. They negotiated activities. This was a direct 'take' from their creative practices, where a multitude of ideas were generated before one or a small number were chosen to develop further. These pedagogies often offered students real choices not only about what they did individually, but also what a group or the whole class might do. Some of these activities have been documented in CP reports as student 'voice'. Many creative practitioners, however, tended to use a term with a stronger inflection – 'empowerment' – imported into the permeable school from the community arts sector. Empowerment connoted the practitioners' view that arts practice was a way of developing students' sense of their own capability and agency, of their ability to resist manipulation and make distinctive, autonomous choices about means and purposes.

(3) the challenge of **scale and ambition**

Creative practices were often marked by their boldness. Students were encouraged to work on big projects, with imposing objects and difficult materials, for longer periods of time, with highly regarded professional artists, in grand performance and exhibition spaces, for audiences with sophisticated cultural experiences. Our accumulated research data contains repeated references by students to their sense of accomplishment derived from achieving something that at the outset of a project they had thought beyond their reach. The importance of being enabled to think big, to be writ large, and to be supported to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve this, was the foundation for building new notions of what-I-can-do and who-I-might-be. Achieving something initially beyond their reach opened up new horizons of possibility for significant numbers of children and young people. It is important to note also that the sociality that we referred to earlier was not achieved at the expense of high standards of work and the acquisition of skills and knowledge. On the contrary, sociality was integral to ambitious work.

#### (4) the role of the **absurd and carnivalesque**

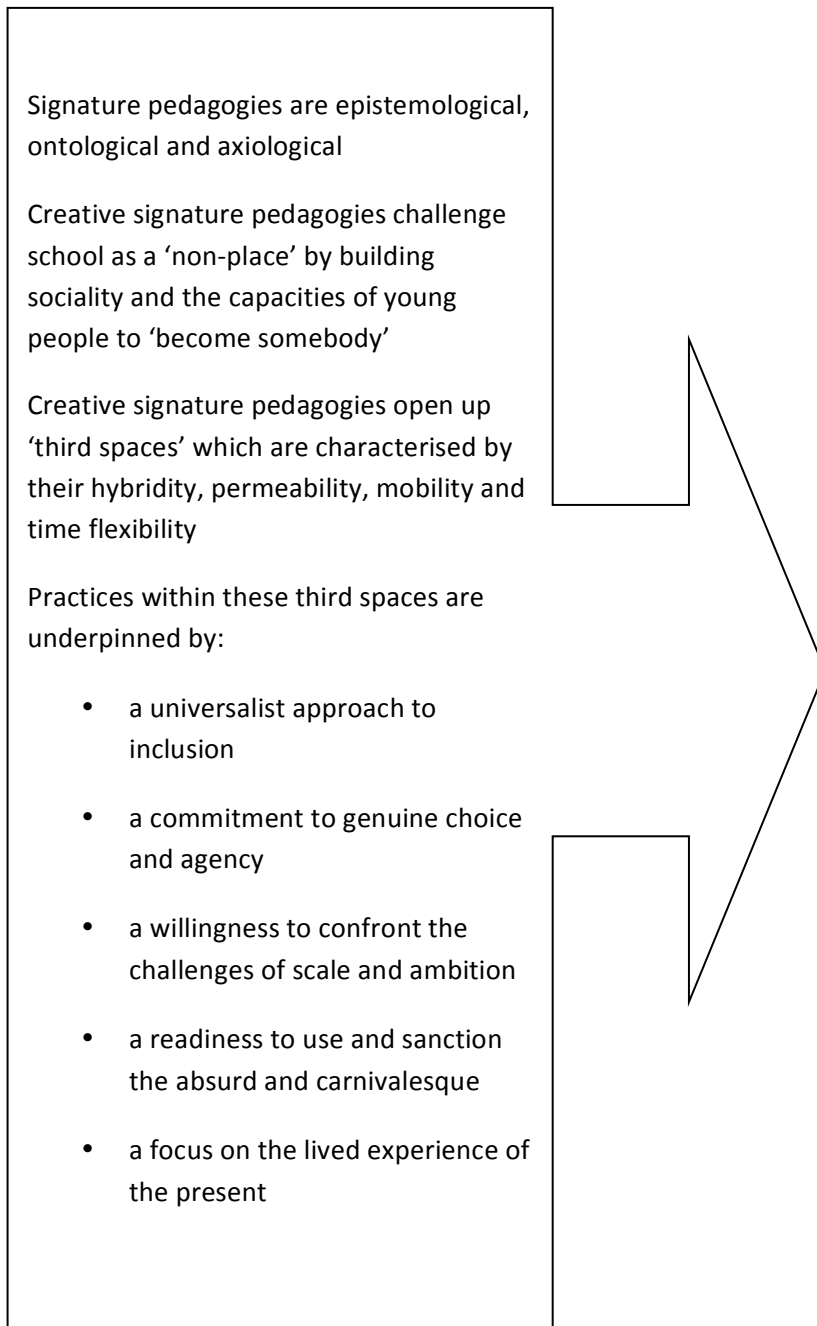
In our research, we often found ourselves observing and experiencing events that could be seen as odd and eccentric. Creative practitioners quite often entered school space dressed and behaving differently. They were quite often 'larger than life' and brought with their very presence a light-hearted disruption to the generally conservative school environs. A lot of creative practice was accompanied by much laughter, jokes, play and satire. While this might seem more 'normal' in early childhood settings, it often sat at odds with the serious tone taken in higher levels of education, where play is intended to be confined to 'non-learning' time. However, we suggest that the kinds of play that we observed were profoundly serious in their intent and effect. Tinkering, experimenting, generating and trying out ideas with humour, disruptive intent, questioning and gentle mocking can accompany learning every bit as meaningful as that acquired through quiet contemplation (Bruner, Jolly, & Sylva, 1976; Sutton-Smith, 1997; Winnicott, 1989). Play is part of many forms of artistic practice - theatre for example - where it is understood to be part of the creative process, a medium for exploring taken-for-granted assumptions, and for communicating ideas (Izzo, 1997; Turner, 1982). 'Serious fun' (Fair go team, in press) is a means of engaging students both intellectually and emotionally, and particularly in challenging tasks which require patience, practice and investment of personal as well as school time. We observed these made pleasurable at the same time as they extended students' repertoires of knowledge and skills.

#### (5) the **lived experience of the present.**

One of the characteristics of default pedagogies is that they are simultaneously focused on both the past - what you learnt yesterday, last term, last year - and the future - learning you need to achieve this level, pass the test, reach the next year level, get a job. While these are no doubt very important, they do tend to ignore the value of the present. Much of what we have observed in creative pedagogies had a profound emphasis on the here-and-now being worthwhile in and of itself. Raymond Williams (1973; 1977: 128-132) wrote of this phenomenon in relation to literature and to forms of rural life. He sought to understand how it was possible to immerse oneself in a book or activity and be there, fully focused on and living in the moment. For Williams this was a way of describing the moment before meanings and possibilities are closed down. In the present, ideas are being formed, not finished, events are experienced, not remembered. Williams called this 'the structure of feeling'. This idea has been taken up in contemporary work on emotions in education (e.g. Boler, 1999; Zembylas, 2002). We can find no better term to describe the combination of affect and cognitive attention, the sheer exhilaration, delight and joy that students often displayed during their encounters with creative pedagogies.

We summarise the pedagogic platform in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Pedagogic Platform**



## Pedagogic purposes

In this section of the report we apply the ‘four pillars’ framework to the data we collected and offer concrete examples of what each pillar looks like in creative pedagogic practice in schools. The four pillars are, of course, interconnected at profound levels: what you know and do is constitutive of who you are and how you live with others. We have, nevertheless, found it useful to separate out the different pillars in our analysis for the purposes of trying to understand and describe the building blocks that combine to create pedagogies which we consider to be distinctive and valuable.

The Delors Report points out that ‘formal education systems tend to emphasise the acquisition of knowledge to the detriment of other types of learning’; the report’s main argument is that education should be re-conceived in a ‘more encompassing fashion’ and that this conception should guide future educational reforms and policy (UNESCO, 1996:37). In this section of our own report, we present extracts from our case studies interpreted to identify our understanding of each pillar, recognising, of course, that the same teaching episode could also be interpreted from other perspectives. Our aim here, though, is to try to specify some of the particular ways that learning to know, do, be and live together were manifested in the practice we observed.

## Learning to know

In the Delors Report ‘learning to know’ is defined as ‘combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects’ (p37); it involves learning to learn and it offers a ‘passport to lifelong education’ and ‘foundations’ on which to build (p21). It is therefore about both breadth and specialisation and has quite a strong orientation towards the future. It is more about the mastery of learning tools than the acquisition of bodies of knowledge; it is about stimulating intellectual curiosity, sharpening critical faculties and the capacity to reason, developing concentration and memory. Underpinning these capacities is ‘the pleasure that can be derived from understanding knowledge and discovery’ (<http://www.unesco.org/delors/ltoknow.htm>).

### ***CASE STUDY 1: SPENCER COMPREHENSIVE***

Spencer is a mixed 11-18 comprehensive school. The school, rated outstanding by Ofsted, has been a specialist Visual Arts College since 2002. The Head of Art & Design has been at the school for three decades, and has been a leading member of the National Society for Education in Art and Design. There is a purpose-built art gallery, open to the public. The departmental team has 6 members, as well as an Artist in Residence, who works in the school and with feeder primaries. The space available to the Department is extensive: 5 interlinked studios, a darkroom, a kiln, a computer suite.

The department describes its working principles in these terms:

At Spencer School we believe that the visual arts offer the opportunity for students to complete a synthesis of experience through the elements of perception, thought and feeling. This illumination of experience is basic to the education process enriching both other areas of the curriculum and students’ social skills. We feel that through understanding, creating, making and evaluation, the student acquires more highly-developed discrimination and judgement. We seek to broaden the students’ background knowledge and appreciation of art in a variety of genres and styles from different cultures and times, believing that this broadens their appreciation and understanding of other cultures, artistically, socially and historically. This informs and enables the development of their own creative practice. These opportunities do not just apply to students at school, but to the whole realm of life-long learning and to the broad spectrum of groups within Spencer’s community, that is, our partner schools, parents, staff, community groups, local artists, local business and industry. We are keen to ensure that these opportunities are available to all and can become reality. (School website).

Our observations tended to confirm this self-description. The Department was organised as a working environment, with an explicit orientation towards initiating students into a community of practice, with clear values, purposes and norms of behaviour. Traditions of artistic practice, as the above statement suggests, provided central reference points for this practice, whose pedagogic features we will now go on to analyse.

The organisation of space and resources provided the clearest indication that learning and teaching were informed by disciplinary fine art and design traditions. The department's inter-connected studios were at once spaces of work, spaces of curation, and spaces of learning. The workspace of the artist in residence, whose focus was ceramics, was at the centre of the studio 'complex', which accommodated work in several different media, conducted at the same time. Space was given to exhibits – a wall of sculpted heads; a cabinet of curiosities. This visual density, and the proliferation of objects and artefacts that comprised it, was in striking contrast, in terms of semiotic resource, to the rooms of other subject departments, adjacent to the studio, whose bareness was evident. The overall effect of 'studio-ness' was mitigated, however, by other artefacts – posters and information sheets setting out curricular and assessment requirements. The organisation of time likewise emulated that of studio practice: tasks, particularly those of older students, did not seem time-limited, though obviously the timeframe of coursework and final examinations was a prominent point of reference – an instrumental rationality that the disciplinary world could not exclude.

In this context, particular teaching methods had become embedded. There was little front-of-class teaching. Teachers worked alongside students, seeking to help them resolve technical or aesthetic problems: teacher comments tended to be appreciative – 'that looks interesting' rather than didactic; evaluative language of a stronger type tended not to be used. Teachers made reference to the work of artists working in the same medium or with similar ideas to the students, thus positioning students as artists working in an established domain. It seemed plain that the artist in residence was not an exceptional presence in the Department, but rather someone who brought specialist skills that could complement those already in the possession of teachers. During the period in which we observed classes, we saw students working individually, rather than in groups. Older students worked independently, on what were clearly long-term projects (textiles, sculpture) without a high level of teacher intervention. Students were encouraged to explain, and to reflect on, their work. 'Off-task' talk was tolerated, though not, so far as we could see, participated in by teachers, who needed to tread a line between insisting on application, and closing down discussions that might have had productive outcomes. Overall, this kind of organisation of learning was something consciously worked for by the Department, especially in the lower years of the school.

The language of the Spencer website echoes the terms of the Delors definition of 'learning to know', with its emphasis on breadth of knowledge and understanding, and the development of discrimination and appreciation as a basis for lifelong learning. The (re)creation of school workspace as studio was accompanied by a disciplinary discourse that encouraged students to locate themselves in terms of artistic traditions. These were understood, to an extent, in global terms, though the dominant emphasis, certainly as far as fine art was concerned, was Western. Visits to Paris, Venice and Barcelona worked to reinforce this emphasis. Teachers sought 'real world' settings for the students' art practice: textile work, arising from a visit to a local gallery, formed the basis of an exhibition of Year 10 students' own artefacts at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford.

Spencer therefore provided an unusually clear example of a long-term project of art education, very strongly rooted in the school's identity, in the disciplinary resources of a well-defined artistic tradition, and possessing high status. It could be said to make an ontological offer to students: art not only as a subject, but artistic practice as a habitus that students might want to adopt, in toto. In terms of creative practice, this is both wider and more circumscribed than models of creativity that are made available in other school contexts: wider, because it opens the possibility of creative practice as the basis of a career, narrower because creativity has necessarily become specialised.



**Figure 3: Spencer Comprehensive**

### ***CASE STUDY 2: TUNDE THE STORYTELLER***

Tunde was observed leading three single sessions in two inner city primary schools in the Midlands. Two of the sessions were linked to World Book Day celebrations in a suburban school, with children from years 3 and 4, then 5 and 6; the other was with a year 2/3 class in an inner city school. Tunde was well known locally, having worked for many years in the city as a storyteller but also as a teacher and teacher trainer. On his publicity and follow-up materials, Tunde describes himself as an author, storyteller and illustrator who works with 'education, business and individuals' to 'reveal inner resources to exceed expectations'.

The three sessions differed somewhat in their focus, in part related to the age of the children and in part related to the brief from the school. The session in the second school was what Tunde called a 'seeing success workshop' which was intended to equip participants with some strategies for combating anxieties, stress and lack of confidence. The telling of an Anansi story was central to the first two sessions, but it also featured in the third session, and the strategies taught in the third sessions were also part of the first two sessions. So despite the differences of emphasis, the three sessions were similar in both content and the style of teaching.

The sessions were framed as performances, with props visibly in place, music and hints of what was to come. They moved very quickly to the personal: who the artist was, and what he had produced.

T: My Dad said Anansi should have a hat and an earring. Here's a picture of Anansi.

Takes a laminated sheet – the illustration of Anansi from his book.

T: You're going to find out a little about me. Who do you think this is?

It's an old photo of T's father, enlarged. Child guesses immediately.

T : My father's name was Nunde.

Children smile. They see the connection.

T makes it: Nunde, Tunde, they're nearly the same. My father was a carver storyteller. There have been carver storytellers for hundreds of years. He was from Jamaica.

[Doesn't explain what a carver storyteller is]. (Observer's fieldnotes)

Tunde's body language, as well as his words, made it clear that he was pleased to be there; he had got something serious to say and something to be proud of. The children immediately recognised and

responded to the form, listening carefully and joining in occasionally. A notable feature of his talk was the self-conscious use of story language ('the man who was a spider, the spider who was a man'), verse and rhyme, which combined with his sense of timing and control of the rhythms of the occasion to create a well orchestrated performance. Repetition was a feature of the storytelling, but the emphasis on 'doing your best' and 'practising' became refrains regularly echoed within and across all three sessions. This contributed a stylized element to the pedagogic performance and created a context in which the didactic theme of the lesson – believing in yourself and not giving up - could be revisited and rehearsed. The children in the audience received the repetition in the spirit of a refrain or a theme; they took pleasure in recognising the words and felt free to join in, often mouthing the words under their breath to themselves. This marked out the artist's use of repetition from the more everyday uses of repetition which were routinely observable in the teachers' talk: the repetition of instructions, of warnings, of phrases to convey approval or mild concern. Later in the sessions, repetitions were used in mantra-like ways, during the modelling of self help exercises:

T shows children how to breathe in deeply through the nose

T: Down to your tummy, up and out through your nose. [Repeats six times]. Hand on tummy to feel the movement.

Children do this conscientiously.

At the heart of all three of Tunde's sessions was the weaving together of cultural artefacts, artistic performance and therapeutic messages mediated through the person of the artist. The balance was different, depending on whether the school had commissioned a storytelling session or a 'seeing success' workshop, but the autobiographical information the artist shared with the children was the thread that linked apparently disparate elements. The narrative of the artist's life was interwoven with traditional Anansi folk stories, examples of carvings by his father and by anonymous mask makers, recorded music and puppetry. Tunde also showed his own carving, and the book he had written and illustrated; he sang songs he had composed, accompanying himself on the guitar. He dropped in particular personal details, and explicitly articulated ideas and events that were important in his own life. Some of the objects he showed had the feel of treasured family heirlooms.

He talked about difficulties he had overcome, for example, feeling fearful and anxious. His deep seriousness and manifest pride were accompanied by a strong articulation of enjoyment and a playfulness that was reflected in the subject matter and the performance of the story and songs, but also in the therapeutic practices that were being suggested. Tunde's 'personal power' technique involved the children in closing their eyes and imagining a star inside their bodies, making it shine and glow and listening to it sparkle; others involved visualizing a worry and shrinking it into non-existence, or using a wrecking ball to demolish a wall of anxiety. The movement between the story and the technique being taught was seamless:

Shows picture of Anansi looking up in fear.

T: He could be using 'Personal Power'. ..Close your eyes. Imagine there's a star in the middle of your tummy. Give it a colour. It's tiny. It's getting bigger. And bigger. Brighter. And brighter.

Making a loud sparkling sound. It makes you feel really confident.

I'll be able to tell if you feel confident. You'll be sitting up really straight.

You're on a 5. Turn it up to a 7. Up to a 9.

I shouldn't do this, but at [B R] Junior School, let's go up to a 10!

Talk about confident! (marvelling)

Children sit very straight, eyes closed, smiling.

T: Use that to feel confident. Try doing that. I call it Personal Power. Anansi does that. It's giving yourself power right inside.

The children's reception of this intersection of the imaginative into the everyday was most evident when Cuthbert the puppet was introduced. Tunde explained, as he extricated Cuthbert from the suitcase,

He's younger than you. He feels nervous. He's 4. He came to my nursery.

(To puppet) Are you sure you're ready to see them?

(To class) He might feel nervous.

One boy asked anxiously, as this was happening: 'Is it real?' to which Tunde replied, 'Yes, it's a real puppet.' As the puppet started to speak, his friend whispered 'He's talking!' The boy was intrigued, animated and



clearly puzzling about the distinctions between fact and fiction. At the end of the lesson he checked again: 'You said it was a real puppet...?'

The intensity of this engagement in an imaginative space created by the folk story, the family artefacts, Tunde's performance and carefully honed pedagogic style, allowed the children to link their knowledge of their own everyday lives with events and ideas that were very distant from them. With the older children, Tunde extended the knowledge content, using a variety of resources to move on from the Anansi story to a narrative from the history of the Maroons, communities of runaway slaves who lived in the mountains of Jamaica.

The coherence of the sessions was drawn from two important factors, namely that the content was focalized through the person of the artist/teacher and the fact that the theme of the sessions remained constant – they were all fundamentally about overcoming fear, quietly building self-confidence, respecting and retelling the stories from your personal and collective past. In this context, connections could be developed analogically or intuitively, questions could remain unanswered, symbolic resources could be valued and emotions were validated. The performance aspects of the lessons might, superficially, have appeared to render the children relatively passive but, in fact, there was abundant evidence that the children were actively listening and making their own sense of the information that was being conveyed. Through the layering of autobiographical information, folk and family tales, as well as through the direct teaching of visualization and breathing techniques, the artist offered the children resources to use in managing their own imaginative and emotional lives in the present and in the future.

## Learning to do

'Learning to do' relates to formal and informal, social and work experiences; it is defined broadly as acquiring 'the competence to deal with many situations and work in teams' (p37). The Delors Report considers it to be 'closely associated with occupational training' but the emphasis is also on developing competence, through personal commitment and individual initiative (<http://www.unesco.org/delors>). It is therefore fundamentally about the individual's skills and dispositions and engagement with the social and economic.

### **CASE STUDY 3: BADGER GROVE DANCE COMPANY**

Badger Grove is a rural community school in an impoverished area of south east England. The school has developed a longstanding (5 year) relationship with a contemporary dance company consisting of two early career dancers who perform, tour and teach in higher education. The professional dancers, Ali and Connie, worked with a group of 21 students aged 12-18 in an intensive fashion both in and out of school over 5 months to create a performance. Ali is the daughter of the school's dance teacher, Jean, who has worked in the community for 30 years.

Ali and Connie devised and led the activities, although teachers were also present at the observed sessions. The dancers (and at times their musician) worked intensively at school for about 10 days, working long sessions and at weekends. Activity typically included an extensive warm-up and then a mixture of student led choreography and group improvisation as the troupe planned and developed sequences for the performance. These were gradually given a story. Sometimes Ali and Connie had prepared sequences for students to learn; at other times the sequences were developed jointly through experimentation. The troupe then rehearsed under the direction of Jean over a 3 month period, meeting once a week to practise and hone the performance, which took place over several evenings at the school. The focus of this case study is on the professional dancer-led sessions.

Norms of behaviour relating to the body were notable. At the beginning and end of each session, the mixed sex dance troupe got changed in each other's company. During the session there were breaks where some students sprayed themselves with deodorants and fidgeted, rearranging bits of clothing. There was lots of informal chat between students and adult-led talk about food, when, what's for lunch, energy food etc. The lunch break occasioned not only eating but much talk about which food is better for this and that, what individual tastes were and so on. We did not observe formal directions about clothing - although as the project progressed, costumes were talked about and specific types of shoes were requested for the following day. Students were not regulated about going off to the toilet and small knocks, cuts and bruises were all dealt with on the side so as not to inconvenience the action and flow of the activity.

The body of the dance teacher was central to the process. She modelled movements and sequences, joined in with small groups and demonstrated her physicality in the warm ups and throughout the days. Her virtuosity, as she performed sequences for others, her flexibility and quality of movement were clearly something for the students to admire and to imitate.

At times, the musical movement led to a peculiar personal kind of language enactment: as Ali and Connie moved through sequences they sometimes made expressive noises – sounds going higher or lower to express moving up or down, or extending noises to suggest elongating a movement or sequence. These noises were accompanied by the continuous counting out loud that is a feature of dance. Neither of these conventions was explained or made explicit to the students. Counting was clearly a key aide-memoire as students learned extended and complex physical sequences. The students rarely drew attention to the difficulty of memorising; they seemed to have internalised the learning in their bodies rather than in the mind, as in other kinds of rote learning more common in school.

Sometimes teaching was simply the dancer performing actions to be followed; at other times the professionals criticised, encouraged and admonished, drawing attention to arms, necks or spines. They also prodded, poked and pushed, sometimes pulling and moving the students as if they were dolls, sometimes checking that the students could feel and understand the more perfect action, but often operating without words, assuming that the learning would be derived from the act of being moved or pushed.

It was striking how little attention the professional dancers gave to individual students. In contrast to school norms, the professionals rarely drew attention to individuals and there were never interactions where the students were asked for feedback, or where Ali or Connie identified individual responses or used students' explanations to recap and redefine the activity going on. The sense was that the performance of the whole groups was at stake, so praise was directed at the troupe as an ensemble rather than used to signal individual prowess.

The most frequently used phrases were 'Can you see?' or 'Get it?' There was a highly developed sense of when 'it', the movement sequence, was 'got' and this was often conveyed through nods, smiles and tacitly, by the decision to move on. In this sense the usual language of approval and reinforcement that accompanies progression in the classroom was subsumed into another level of discourse. Several times, students asked Ali or Connie to demonstrate moves more than once, but even then 'getting it' and moving on was primarily a tacit process.

More extended talk tended to belong to several types. There was much bio-technical language, 'turn the pelvis out', 'feel it through your neck' 'lift your shoulders'. Anatomical reference was directed towards making the students aware of how bits of the body connected to others and through this to improve performance. Sometimes this became more self-consciously arty: 'character is everything', 'how many parts of the body can you open to the floor', 'which parts of your body are opening, which are contracting'. At other times the language drew attention to what the student would be feeling or experience as a consequence of the actions: 'This works I think, try it'. The dancers used a number of film and TV references (*24*, *Black Swan*, *Grease*) which they assumed the troupe knew, but also extensive analogies geared at helping the students imagine their movements as being representative of other real-world experiences: 'like a tribe', 'it's like we hear something coming', 'I think it's like being caught in a spotlight', 'like we are about to run somewhere', 'think about playing sports'. This regular use of analogy created a linguistic sense of connection and possibility.

The emphasis in the Badger Grove project was on learning from professionals who applied the implicit and explicit norms and conventions about behaving as dancers to the classroom. This modality offered learning opportunities different to those usually on offer to students, even for those who took Dance as a specialist subject at school. Specifically, it offered students the chance to experience professional norms of the dancers' world: the ways of behaving and talking in the work situation, as well as some experience of what is required to do the job. The attention to body-culture (maintenance, diet, etc) was validated by the professionals; normal conventions about teacher-student and student-student boundaries were set aside in this new regime. The low-level sensualising talk that would usually accompany the level of physical intimacy in the project was suspended. The framing of the sessions as professional practice also meant that the conventional school boundaries of touch and distance were set aside. Authority was invested in and underwritten by the professional knowledge, reputation and manifest expertise of the dancers.

The project spanned school-time and leisure-time; it required personal commitment and a degree of initiative from the students beyond simply turning up for lessons. It was closely focussed on developing competence within a team/ troupe. Within the team, practical session-management was achieved collegially and in an adult fashion; sessions were informal and friendly, marked by what Lissa Soep describes as 'collegial pedagogy' which created a kind of buy-in from students that was different to their approach to more everyday school activities (Soep & Chavez, 2010). The language of instruction was often elliptical, contingent and exploratory; it was sometimes marked by an unfamiliar 'artiness' or unfinished thoughts that moved from the verbal to the non-verbal. The students responded to this positively, seeming to see it as part of adopting the identities and discourse of the 'real' dancers they were keen to become. They understood that teaching and learning was different in the context of the ensemble: one student, for example, described the process of 'being taught by the body'. The professionals' approach was to initiate students into making judgements about the quality of performance by appealing to an unstated sense of common experience which operated below the level of the explicit.

The Badger Grove project aimed to support the development of a different kind of aesthetic capability though working alongside professionals. Not only was it envisaged that the experience of being with a professional could offer a different kind of adult-expert role model, but that the professionals might be better placed than teachers to enable the student themselves to produce creative work – to learn to do - to a different quality and standard.

#### ***CASE STUDY 4: ST HILDA'S SCHOOL***

St Hilda's is a single sex (girls), voluntary aided school in West London of about 800 set in an affluent area but with a large ethnically diverse and socially mixed catchment. Its web strap line is 'Excellence in a Christian Context'. Examination results are good, the school is well regarded and performs well according to conventional indicators. The atmosphere is calm and well ordered. Pupils appear well behaved and compliant, they speak with outsiders fluently and with ease. A high percentage go to further education with many students being the first generation to do so. The buildings are set around an old grammar school with bricks, plaques and parquet. There are good modern facilities surrounded by fields. It seems well maintained, comfortable and pleasant.

The Creative Olympics is a large scale, ambitious and complicated project, now is its fourth year. At the beginning of the school year, 'Creative Leaders' are selected from each class in Years 7-9. This is a mixed process with students volunteering, some being volunteered and some being elected. The Creative Leader met with 16 artists (currently students at the Slade or Westminster) about 3 times over the year. The young people worked with the artist to design and develop creative activities, one for each of 16 subject areas

around a general theme – The Tree of Life – over 2/3 afternoon sessions. As the year progressed Heads of subjects joined the mini development teams to tease out logistical issues. In addition some 6<sup>th</sup> formers joined these development teams towards the end of the summer term. Each team (subject area) developed a 2 hour session comprising a creative challenge – for instance the PE department session comprised an activity to build a device to carry a gallon of water between two buckets, a logic problem of undoing a padlock on a rope with knots in it and a quiz. The Food Technology challenge was to make, bake and ice species of animals and hang them from a Tree made by the artist.

On the day of the Creative Olympics, Years 7-9 (in non-uniform), plus a few year 10/11 who were not on work experience/had finished their GCSEs and Year 12s acting as ‘senior helpers’, were all organised in mixed age teams. Students then selected from the menu of creative activities on offer and participated in two activities in the morning. Within each creative activity, the students worked in their school houses. They completed the creative activity and were judged by the Creative Leaders (plus assorted 6<sup>th</sup> formers and other teaching staff) against six creative attributes, including imagination, communication and working in teams. Leaders gave out coloured cards to each groups deemed to demonstrate these attributes. In the afternoon all the cards achieved by each House were weighed and ordered in a raucous and emotional assembly leading to the identification of winning houses (one per attribute - and the one deemed most creative across the whole school). Celebratory dancing concluded an exciting, lively and energetic day.

The Creative Olympics project included different kinds of experiences. There were planning sessions between artists, teacher and students; the activity on the day and the experience of the day itself. These involved different logistical requirements, different understandings of creative activities and different sets of relationships. The project was large, expensive and high profile. The event generated an air of expectation, even in the planning and development sessions. This and its sense of itself - mythologised by staff and students who had participated in previous years - contributed to its specialness.

Many of its core notions – the attributes of creativity and how to evaluate them, the nature of a creative challenge – remained unexplored through the process of the project. The artists were inexperienced educators and were often diffident with the other constituencies, and the planning tended to be dominated by the teachers who had clearer ideas about what would work. In many senses, though, the project was highly successful. The degree of participation and involvement was intense and on the day itself there was a real sense of pleasure and investment by all concerned. It was very much a project about ‘learning to do’: it involved planning and preparing, consulting and negotiating, executing a plan, evaluating and celebrating its successes. Competitive team work was one of the organising principles. Students of different ages adopted roles as leaders, judges, helpers, consultants and participants. The parallels with work outside school were easy to draw.

But the project also had features which intensified and reframed the nature and impact of the learning. Its ambition and self-defined specialness, in themselves, constructed the project activities as different from the norm. (The project exemplified both the scale and ambition and the creation of a temporary ‘third space’ that we discussed as integral elements of the Pedagogic Platform) The confidence of the school to work to scale was an obvious assertion of trust in the whole school population. An important distinguishing feature of the project was the idea of participating in a large event, rather than the interaction between student and artist /teacher at the transactional level. The whole staff had to be involved; the timetable was rebuilt for the day. In some senses, therefore, what characterised the pedagogy of the project was really a high degree of organisational and logistical planning, procurement, maintaining and implementation. The project therefore offers an example of the value of structural and systematic interventions: creative teaching and learning is not limited to local transactions.

The other key feature at work was what can best be described as carnival. St Hilda's generally had a strong ethos of order and calm; the Creative Olympics project deliberately played with the idea of misrule, of noise, of bodies being out of place across the day, of different kinds of groupings, of open competition and of different kinds of power relations between Creative Leaders, artists and teachers. The final assembly was notable for how the staff worked the crowd, deliberately playing with their conventional power roles, dancing and encouraging screaming, as a way of sanctioning disorder where it was conventionally suppressed and controlled.

In some ways there was nothing special about the work of the artists, they were a bit different, slightly more bohemian than the staff, younger and a more diverse but it was not at this level that the transactions had their greatest effect. In the activities the students were motivated, happy and compliant. They did not engage with especially deep reflections about the Tree of Life; in fact there was little evidence of how this theme worked, incrementally or otherwise, across activities and it was even more difficult to see how the learning of creative attributes worked at an individual level. However, when the lens was turned to a wider view, the project really came into its own. There was a great sense of trust, of community and belonging and above all of fun, of pleasure in each others' company, delight in achievement and in doing things together.

### **Learning to live together**

The Delors Report puts greater emphasis on learning to live together than the other three pillars of education, proposing that it is the 'foundation of education' (p21) upon which the three other pillars stand. The means of learning to live together are identified as 'developing an understanding of others and their history, traditions and spiritual values' and appreciating interdependence in order to create 'a new spirit' that leads to common projects and the peaceful and intelligent management of conflict (p37). It recommends that education should adopt a two-pronged approach: 'From early childhood, it should focus on the discovery of other people... In the second stage of education and in lifelong education, it should encourage involvement in common projects' (<http://www.unesco.org/delors>). The emphases in the first stage are on teaching about human diversity, respecting pluralism, recognising the rights of others, encouraging empathy, debate, curiosity and healthy criticism. The second, project, prong involves 'unaccustomed forms of action' that enable people to 'transcend the routines of their personal lives and attach value to what they have in common' and so build solidarity and friendship.

#### ***CASE STUDY 5: THE STORY LADY***

Marianna worked in Larwood, an inner city primary school in the West Midlands, on a project basis. Her theatre company had tendered for a contract about working with local narratives, part of a series of linked activities designed to build connections with the parent community and to disrupt deficit discourses about the neighbourhood. Marianna's company specialises in scripts and performances that are developed from interviews with people whose stories are often not heard and valued.

The project at Larwood was designed for one Year 5 class to work with four volunteer members of the non-teaching staff. The class was divided into four groups of seven or eight children; each group interviewed one staff member and then worked with Marianna to develop the interview into a narrative which was then performed to the class, parents and the staff member and their invited guests. Larwood had deliberately sought to increase the number of local people it employed, so there were many people to choose from. The school cook, a higher level teaching assistant, a teaching assistant and a clerical assistant became the subjects of the project, which was designed to run over a two-month period:

- (1) Introductory session in which Story Lady was introduced and the project outlined

- (2) Introductory session for volunteer staff
- (3) Teaching about interviews (whole class)
- (4) Four groups of children interview one adult each
- (5) Groups of children work with Marianna to turn the interview into stories
- (6) One day workshop to develop the story into a performance piece which is then shown to classmates, the subject of the story and their invited guests, parents and other school staff. In total there were four days of workshops and four performances.
- (7) Texts printed and turned into 'Larwood Readers'.

The project began when the children arrived at school to find leaves and foot prints scattered along the central corridor. Marianna's arrival as Story Lady was heralded by singing outside the classroom door. When the door was opened, they saw Story Lady, dressed in bright green and holding a bulging bag. She was larger than life and eccentrically dressed. The children were then invited to follow her and her trail of green footsteps and leaves to the library where they sat in a circle and. Story Lady read them the story of Gelert, a brave dog who fights off a marauding wolf attempting to steal his master's baby. Despite risks to his own life, Gelert prevails and keeps the baby safe. Tragically, when the master returns, he leaps to the wrong conclusion and kills the faithful hound. He then realises his mistake and his debt to his courageous dog.

The talk that followed focused on re-imagining the legend and discussing the courage of ordinary people and animals. The next stage was to prepare the children to interview staff about their own stories of courage. Marianna worked through how to deal respectfully and sensitively with information that could be distressing or hurtful if presented in the wrong way. The discussion about truth, representation, ethics and emotions was not dissimilar in content to those held by researchers although it was couched in terms that children understood and was based in children's experiences of playground and neighbourhood gossip. Children were asked continually to consider how they would feel if this was their story that was being recounted by someone else.

Each performance was shared by Story Lady and the group of children who had conducted the particular interview and written and edited the story. Children acted out some parts of the story – for example, Michael's birth (see below) consisted of two children acting as mother and father, a doctor, nurse and a doll-baby. These scenes were cooperatively developed and rehearsed during the day of the afternoon performance. During these performances various aspects of stage-craft were learnt – how to project the voice, how to stand and move so that the audience gets the best view, how to represent an event simply and economically in a few words and gestures, how to present emotions in ways that ring true.

The stories that were produced all focused on parents and children – a child with a heart defect who ultimately died as a very young adult, a child with learning difficulties, a child who went to university in another city, and the reunion of one child with an illegitimate sibling. One of these stories is reproduced in full in Figure 2.

#### **Figure 4: Shirley's Story**

*Once upon a time .....twenty eight years ago to a couple named Shirley and Peter a son was born, who they named Michael. Followed two years and three months later, by a beautiful daughter called Kylie. Both had fair hair and blue eyes. Neither of them was very tall. They settled down happily to a family life living in a semi-detached house in a suburb of Birmingham. It had a garden at the front and a garden at the back. They lived in a friendly area - their next door neighbour had become a very good friend. It was a good environment to bring up children as it was clean and felt safe.*

*Shirley felt happy and content. She had a family who she says were 'funny friendly and kind'. Shirley chose not to go to work while her children were growing up and instead she stayed at home to look after them. Her husband, Gary, went to work every day.*



*It was hard sometimes. (You know how it is running a family)*

*Shirley often went to the playground or a playgroup with the children. Sometimes they visited relatives. Her mother came to see them every Tuesday and Thursday which was a huge help to Shirley- it meant she could get on with her chores.*

*Everything was going smoothly and calmly before Michael reached the age of two and a half... And this is where our story really begins.....*

*When Michael was about two and half years old Shirley and Peter both started to notice things. Something was going wrong with Michael. Something wasn't quite right with how he was developing. They felt that Michael was 'different'. He had been quite slow to start walking and had only really begun to do it at the age of sixteen months. And he still wasn't saying any words at all. They were getting a bit worried. Prior to this, Michael had often suffered from ear infections. These made him very poorly and he would sometimes wake up screaming in the night. Had these infections been anything to do with what was to follow?*

*They were concerned about Michael so they took him to see the doctor. They wanted someone to reassure them. It was spring time, and the doctor saw Michael and tested his ears. Then he told Shirley to take him to what they called a 'development centre' for tests. They had to go every day for two weeks. They did lots of different tests on him - to find out what was wrong. After that, a Psychologist visited them at home and told Shirley and Peter that Michael was two years behind his learning and that's why he wasn't even trying to talk or walk. They were very upset, nobody could tell them why or how it happened. And it was all so unknown. The doctor suggested that Michael should go to a 'Special School' where children go if they have different needs to other children their age.*

*Shirley wasn't sure he needed to do that.*

*They looked round the school and it was a lovely place, so they decided to send Michael there after all. Shirley worried at first he would not fit in - because you couldn't tell just by looking at him, that anything was wrong. But he settled down at the school. He went everyday in a taxi. And there were no problems, apart from his learning.*

*But sometimes Michael used to come home and get into tempers. Sometimes he got so angry that he would throw his shoes at Shirley. Sometimes he hit her and made her cry.*

*Shirley's husband Peter was at work, so she was on her own with the children and it was hard. Sometimes when they were at the supermarket Michael would lose his temper. Everyone would look and stare. (you know how people do)*

*Shirley could tell they were thinking 'What a naughty child' or 'Keep your child under control'. She got upset and - though she didn't mean to - she sometimes took it out on her husband Peter when he came home from work.*

*Over the years Michael had even more tests and when he was fifteen he was diagnosed with a type of Autism.*

*Now Michael is twenty eight and grown up and his mum Shirley says "he has a lovely nature and a good sense of humour." This has helped ease Shirley and Peter's fears and worries. They have learned that there is light at the end of every tunnel and they believe things have happened for a reason.*

*Michael continues to live at home with his family. He has a number of interests, including going to watch Aston Villa with his Dad and seeing shows with Shirley. The whole family share days out and celebrations. They often laugh together and have many stories.*

*Shirley feels that she is more positive now. A positive has come out of a negative. She has learned patience and acceptance from this experience. Shirley proudly says, "I'm glad I've had him".*

The Larwood story-making project developed both strands of UNESCO's two pronged approach, encouraging 'discovery' about people in the immediate community through engagement in a collaborative creative project. A number of important literacy processes were explicitly covered: devising interview questions, conducting an interview, transcribing key pieces of text, composing and editing a narrative that was not only to be performed but also had to stand alone as a printed text after the event. Writing the stories required attention to the narratives at the level of syntax, rhythm, word selection, plot development, setting, character development and dialogue. Children also had to work together in small groups for protracted periods of time, far longer than the usual lesson length. They also had to meet a timeline and produce a real text for a real audience, many of whom were not dispassionate observers but were intimately involved in the events being narrated.



The notion of 'texts of our lives' is a very helpful description of this kind of literacy practice. Bob Fecho (2011) in his explication of the dialogical writing classroom, begins from the claim that in school many students are given assignments and exercises which have no connection with their own lives. They do these dutifully, reluctantly or not at all, and the learning that results is valuable only in terms of test results. Fecho argues for classrooms which not only allow students to gain the skills and scores which count but which also 'create opportunities for students to use writing to explore who they are becoming and how they relate to the larger culture around them' through the provision of 'systematic and intentional means for reflection and action' which offer 'a means for making sense of their lives' (pp4-5). Such a classroom sees the lives of students and their families and communities as valued, key classroom multimodal texts from which to build and extend learning. This is not the same as an experiential curriculum but is rather, as Fecho puts it, an extended ongoing conversation which brings together the intersections of the personal and academic in ways that help children and young people – and their teachers - build understandings of themselves and their worlds (pp. 7-9).

This was what was on offer to children in the story-making project. They were confronted with the responsibilities of representation by being provided with an opportunity where they could allow people to represent themselves, rather than simply being spoken about. However, these were not any people, but people about who were like them, and who they saw everyday in particular kinds of roles. They were presented as people with lives, and lives in which they acted courageously. Shirley's story is not simply one in which a parent lives with and through a child who is 'different'. It is also about the interactions that Shirley had with the medical and school system. The narrative hints at her persistence in pursuing a diagnosis but shies away from a romantic portrayal of heroic struggle. We also see the ways in which these kinds of tensions are played out in families, something with which children are very familiar.

#### ***CASE STUDY 6: STANLEY, THE VISUAL ARTIST***

The project took place on Fridays roughly once a month, in the nursery of a primary school in a socially mixed area of London. The school has beautiful new buildings; the head teacher is a long time enthusiast and leader of creativity activities and committed to forms of progressive education. The project was managed by a creative agent who works across two neighbouring primary schools. The artist, Stanley, worked in both schools.

The project involved working with parents and their children. Stanley ran morning and afternoon sessions. In each of the three observed sessions, Stanley had between two and five parents working with him; at the meeting which concluded the project there were 12 parents, all of whom had been involved at least once over its duration. About a dozen of the 73 children in the nursery participated in the project. The nursery teacher and one of the teaching assistants or nursery nurses were involved with each session.

Each session opened with Stanley reviewing the previous week, going through images on his laptop and encouraging the parents to comment on the children's learning and their progress. This broad invitation tended to result in murmurs of assent and shared moments of recognition rather than sustained discussion. Stanley then invited the parents to go outside and begin to arrange the materials he has brought with him into some sort of order. The materials consist of a huge number cardboard boxes, tubes, grips, plastic sheets, felt tips, rubber bands, ties, tape and other kinds of 'safe' found materials in relatively good condition. He also brought three digital cameras for use by children and adults, as well as his own camera which he used for documenting the day.

The materials were arranged in the playground according to type. The staff marked off the playground with chairs. When the parents judged the play area to be ready, the staff brought out the selected children - those whose parents have come along that day - and 40 minutes to an hour of intense play ensued.

The purpose of the activity was for the children to make structures and then engage in imaginative play. Stanley encouraged the parents and the children to engage with the tactile, 'felt' qualities of the play: he was interested in the use, experimentation and manipulation of materials and, the structures that were built. Most of the play involved single children engaging with their parents. The staff made notes about the children's learning, particularly their language use and the points where tactile and experimental play moved into narrative.

About ten minutes from the end of the session, Stanley encouraged the children and parents to visit each edifice and ask the child to describe what it was and what it meant. When the session had come to its natural end, the constructions were dismantled and the materials were re-sorted for use next time. The adults then sat in a small group and discussed what had happened. Stanley encouraged each parent to reflect on his or her own child's play and the other parents to join in the discussion. The parents were keen to participate, to get validation of their own child's play and also to find a way of supporting other children's achievements. Stanley then put photographs of the session onto the computer in preparation for next time.

It was, of course, the parents who were the object of intervention in this project, although the children obviously benefited from the activities both directly (in sessions) and indirectly at home, where parents reported feeling more confident about playing with them. They talked, for example, about how children wanted to play with cornflakes packets and pasta at home and how the sessions had created a demand for the quality of play that Stanley was advocating. The head teacher believed that the school had a community role that extended beyond involving parents in school-related learning; he was interested in helping parents – and his own staff – think about children's education in the round. The project he established through employing Stanley was about bringing different groups together to share perspectives and develop ways of talking and thinking about children's learning. This helped all concerned: the parents, the children, the teachers and the reputation of the school.

Through the encouragement of parents to work alongside one another, the school offered itself as a mediator of informal talk about their child's learning. The standard playground set of relationships became slightly more formalised and although Stanley did not explicitly address the parents as learners – that is as those learning to be parents – but as artists or play workers, he was, in effect offering a kind of parent education to this constituency. (For a comparison with other schools, and an overview of 'creative' work with parents, see Safford and O'Sullivan, 2008). The parents said they appreciated Stanley and had enjoyed learning about learning through the project, which had brought them together as fellow 'students' yet in a parental role that allowed them a natural and obvious way of being at school. The school felt that through the project they had found more positive and constructive ways of engaging parents than other tried and tested methods.

Stanley rarely gave direct instructions, although he clearly ran each session. His talk was characteristically marked by praise ('wow!'), warnings ('be careful') and the reinforcing, elaborating and extending of ideas. He was very physically active, sitting with children and parents making, tying up, taping, etc. During these kinds of actions he spoke almost exclusively to the children rather than the parents (though in a way he was addressing both) and his talk with the children emphasised possibility: 'shall we..., let's try..., how about...?' In the adult group with parents at the beginning and end of sessions, he maintained a positive tone. As an artist engaged in the construction activities, Stanley inhabited a teacher but-not-teacher role, supporting and embodying certain values, drawing parents into new ways of talking about their children in professional contexts.

Stanley managed the de-briefing sessions so that all participating parents could equally and fairly praise the achievements of everybody there. He set the tone for this but parents seemed to self-regulate so

there was never any situation where Stanley had to intervene or lay down any protocols. He offered a vocabulary and a way of evaluating children's progress in line with the values of the project, achieving this by two means. First, he used the ritual of going through images of the preceding session as a way of teaching how to look, pointing out features of the play, such as the size or scale of the edifice and the child's achievement. Secondly, he was entirely positive in his comments. He avoided moments of conflict and tension allowing his interpersonal skills, his enthusiasms and his kindness to predominate. This was a set of values everybody wanted to identify with and the parents seemed to join in on that basis – as equals in a collective enterprise. The sense that this was a special and additional activity involving new and different members of staff (Stanley) and the extra play materials, added to the positive feel, and Stanley's way of constructing the activities as neutral, appealing to a vision of play that transcended the immediacy of its context, allowed all stakeholders in this community-making process to find a place for themselves and their families. In several senses, then, this was a project based on learning to live together through 'discovering' other people and creating a 'new spirit' through engagement in unaccustomed forms of action.

## **Learning to be**

The fourth pillar, 'learning to be', is about 'every person's complete development - mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic appreciation and spirituality' (<http://www.unesco.org/delors/fourpil>). It is concerned with self-knowledge, independence, judgement, personal responsibility, developing personality and using talents. This means that education 'must not disregard any aspect of a person's potential: memory, reasoning, aesthetic sense, physical capacities and communication skills' (p37).

### ***CASE STUDY 7: JIM, STORYMAKER IN RESIDENCE***

Jim works on a permanent part-time basis in Bluebell Lane Nursery in the West Midlands. At the time of the observations he was working two days a week and had been at Bluebell Lane for three years, so was well known to the staff, parents and children. He typically worked with one group of between ten and fourteen 4 year olds for a morning a week for a term. He arrived early in the day to prepare what he was doing, and would then work with the children from mid-morning to lunch time. He recorded each story-making session and another creative practitioner took pictures. Jim then used the afternoon to produce a record of the story which was available as a laminated text by hometime. Parents were able to look at it and it could be used from the next day as part of the school library resources.

Bluebell Lane Nursery is situated on one corner of an area which houses some of the wealthiest people in the Midlands. During the observation period Jim decided to take the children to places in their local communities where they would not normally be able to go. He used the unfamiliar environment to provoke ideas about who used the places and what went on. The places he chose included an exclusive gated Art Deco estate, a fifteen storey student accommodation block and the Edgbaston Cricket Grounds.

Jim negotiated access to the gated estate with the caretaker. The estate consists of three storey apartment blocks situated in park like gardens; each apartment block is decorated with an Easter Island like head with different expressions – laughing, crying, being angry, anxious, surprised. One head is poking its tongue out.

Jim asks the children to observe each head and to mimic the expressions. He and the children and accompanying staff run from block to block, stopping only to pull the appropriate face. Then we all sit down in a circle on the grass and Jim asks the children what they can see in the garden. One of the children says he has seen a monkey. He then asks why the house might be feeling this way – sad, angry, cheeky. He then suggests that maybe the monkey might have something to do with this

feeling.... And the story begins. As the children offer ideas, Jim decides to laugh and laugh as if he is unable to stop. The children begin to laugh as well and soon everyone is giggling without really knowing why.

I have seen Jim do this on other occasions. In a subsequent session in student apartments, the highest building in Edgbaston, crammed into the top of the stair well, he pretended to be bitten by a bat –one of the children claimed they had seen it flying past. As he continued to mime being bitten, then children giggled and then all piled on top of him, in an affectionate display of collective mimed biting. (Observer's fieldnotes)

As a story-maker, Jim did not arrive with a predetermined text, but made the story through his interactions with the group. He mobilised drama tools – improvisation and performance – in combination with writing composition competencies – developing character, plot and context – in order to lead the group through a creative process, creating a context in which the children learned how to put their individual imaginings, understandings, experiences and interests into a collaborative authoring process. There was an important in-the-moment-ness of much of what Jim did which contrasted with the orientation towards the future that characterises so many aspects of school life (doing something now because it will lead to something later on... eating in this way/ taking exercise so that you don't become...) thereby rendering the immediate pleasures and satisfactions less important than longer term purposes. This is what Raymond Williams' talked of as the 'structure of feeling' (see Pedagogic Platform), a presentism offered through art forms: "...meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt, and the relations... characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and inter-relating continuity" (Williams, 1977: 132). It is this newness, Williams suggested, which makes activities meaningful on an affective as well as an intellectual level.

This in-the-moment-ness was often about with the sheer pleasure of being silly, as in the uncontrolled giggling or running around pulling faces at the buildings. It incorporated other, more informal kinds of physical play, as in the biting bats game. But this was not anarchy, nor was it all that happened. Jim had created an environment in which it was not only acceptable but good to do these things, as long as no one got hurt, physically or emotionally. This is safe silliness which creates affection, emotional bonds between children and between children and adults.

#### ***CASE STUDY 8: IONA, ENVIRONMENTAL ARTIST***

The allotment project took place during the summer term of 2011 with a year 6 (aged 10 and 11) class in an inner city primary school in the Midlands of England. The relatively new, low-rise, school building sits beneath a tower block of flats in an area of the city formerly known for textile manufacturing. Disused factory buildings are a prominent feature of the local landscape. The project was led by a single artist, Iona, well known for her work elsewhere in the same school and with other schools in the locality, but new to the particular class. This was a one-off project which took place through three separate meetings: the first in the classroom, the second in the hall of the local Quaker Meeting House and the third on the artist's allotment. The artist also returned to the school to support the teacher while the class were engaged in creative work reflecting on the allotment visit. The project was not, however, primarily related to producing art works: the focus was on creativity and well-being more generally, in a period when trips out felt more manageable after the stresses of tests that had taken place earlier in the month and before the children moved on to secondary school.

The first session was based round a PowerPoint presentation which Iona had put together from her personal photographs, the first of which showed her dressed as a flower fairy pushing a litter cart. The

focus of Iona's talk was her personal experience, interests and beliefs and the art works and performances she had devised. She encouraged the children to identify with her emotions and guess what she was thinking. As the session progressed, the themes running through Iona's talk emerged more clearly. The flower fairy symbol neatly introduced a recurrent focus on the natural world and also served to signify Iona's interest in transformation through peaceful protest, creative arts and community action. The pace of these exchanges was brisk but unhurried. Iona's tone was friendly, matter-of-fact and inclusive. ('I can't wait for you to come and see my allotment! I'm going to let it be a surprise to you when you come, but [putting up a photo of a pear tree] look at these pears!') She addressed the children in a generally adult-to-adult manner, dropping in personal details and listening carefully to any points the children cared to make. She conveyed both deep seriousness about her work and the sense of joy and fulfilment she derives from it.

Iona made no attempt to shield the children from the painful side of life, though the framing was always positive, personal and art related. She used examples of problems, setbacks and false starts from her personal history to illustrate the importance of her message about perseverance and self belief. The other over-arching message of this first session was about everyday creativity: that, with effort and imagination, something could be made from virtually nothing - 'you can use something that you would throw away and make it permanent'. These were to be the themes for Iona's next two sessions with the class.

Before the class visit to the allotment, there was a session focussed on self expression through the arts. This pre-figured the allotment visit in several important ways. It happened off site in The Friends' Meeting House, a community space that was unfamiliar to the children. As before, the resources for the session were idiosyncratic and provided by Iona but, as with the allotment session, the main teaching method was the facilitation of independent activity. The focus was on producing representations of stress, and then of contentment, through the production of collages. The materials for making the collages were stored in what Iona referred to as her 'Tinker's Box'. The Tinker's Box comprised about 30 small crates full of beads, the hooked lids of shower gel containers, cones, feathers, drinking straws and other, mainly plastic, objects derived from domestic or packaging sources. The children assembled - and later dismantled - the collages on large circles or squares of coloured card. They worked individually in a self-chosen space on the hall floor, having selected their own collection of materials from the Tinker's Box. Once they were satisfied with their collage, they were encouraged to write about it, in prose or in poetry.

The patterns of Iona's language use were similar in many ways to those of the first session, but the focus of this second meeting was on the children's experiences and creativity, so she offered no anecdotes or sustained personal references. The emphasis of the session was on exploring, creating images, interpreting symbols, finding language that captured emotions. Instructions were couched gently, as invitations. Most of Iona's time in the session was spent crouching on the floor in private conversation with individual children, listening to their points about their work. This was in contrast to the teacher, who was also circulating and showing obvious appreciation for the art work, but offering semi-public suggestions and prompting certain interpretations. Photography was used as part of the recognition of each child's efforts ('Can I take a picture of that?' The child nods and smiles and, when it's taken, they both look at the image together). The use of photographs also served to develop the theme - introduced in the first session - of making something from nothing and, in doing so, creating something that persists.

The session was designed to appeal to different senses and to offer multiple modes of expression. The focus was on the self, rather than on Iona as an artist and personality. This paved the way for the third session, the allotment visit, which Iona had planned as a multi-sensory experience to be explored multimodally.

The allotment is a triple plot, surrounded by high hedges, near the top of a hill overlooking the predominantly working class area of the city where Iona lives. Grassy lanes run between the hedges demarcating the plots, and entry to Iona's allotment is through a privet arch and a high wooden gate. Three buildings sit on the plot. The 'huckleberry shed', a cooking area with a camping stove, shelf units and a brightly decorated awning, butts on to a 'reflection room', a wooden shed with sofas and soft furnishings. Between the two, a curtained area offers some privacy to the rudimentary toilet facilities. Near the top of the plot, at the crown of the hill, sits 'The Sky Palace', a large dark blue structure made of reclaimed glass

windows and doors with a lean-to on one end. The allotment is loosely divided into areas. There is a large raised bed, a picnic table with benches, a hammock under some trees, a wild brambly stretch along the back end, a flat grass and dirt sitting space and a fire pit. The whole plot is decorated with found, reclaimed objects: a bath tub pond, a pillar of car tyres decorated with CDs, pitted metal advertising shop signs, a wash basin on its side, shoes with plants growing in them, plastic barrels. A wooden ladder set against the huckleberry shed gives access to its gently pitched roof, which is partially covered with bedspreads. Tools - wheelbarrows, forks and trowels - and containers of varying sorts are arranged around the plot.

One child, coming up the lane and through the gate into the allotment, commented that it was like being on *I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here*, a reference that captured some of the strangeness of the environment for the children. Iona, who had been waiting for her visitors, welcomed them to 'my land'. She took enormous pride in the allotment and assumed that they would be bowled over by what they saw. Most of the session's activities were conceptualised as 'jobs'. They included: cutting up vegetables to make soup over the fire for lunch; sorting bulbs that had been retrieved from a public park; barrowing bricks from the bottom of the hill; transplanting marigold seedlings; painting a plastic barrel; winding in the hose pipe; decorating bird-scarers made from CDs. There were also leisure and craft activities: modelling with clay on the picnic table; playing darts in the Sky Palace; music making, with the xylophone and a ringing bowl on the roof of the huckleberry shed; sleeping or swinging in the hammock; taking photos and video with the school's cameras. And there were other allotment holders to meet: Jack, 'the Elder', who kept chickens, and Robbo, Iona's friend, who had a pigeon loft on his plot.

Iona modelled how she did the jobs and the leisure activities. She showed the children how she sat on the shed roof, watching the sun rise and making her bowl ring. She told them how she'd been feeling ill the previous weekend, so had sat in The Sky Palace, resting and thinking. She mentioned that her nieces were planning a sleepover in the Palace. She showed them how to tend the fire, chop the vegetables, prepare the barrel for painting with masking tape, distinguish between hyacinth, daffodil and tulip bulbs, and handle the seedlings gently. The children responded warmly to what was being offered. In the open discussion sessions they elicited from Robbo that he spent about seven hours a day on the allotment, that Iona's family spent time there helping her and relaxing and they probed the relationship between the plot and Iona's art. At the close of the session, the children asked some very practical questions which suggest their different experiences of the artist's and the teacher's pedagogies. They asked their teacher:

Boy: Are we going to write a recount of this?

Girl (generally, before the teacher could respond): A diary, probably.

The questions to Iona were:

Boy: Can I come again?

I: That would be lovely. But you're in year 6 now.

Girl: I'll visit school every time they come on a trip here [i.e. return from secondary school]

Girl: Who will take over the allotment?

I: I don't know. I've no plans to leave.

Boy: Can I? Can I take over the allotment?

Iona's project was very much about 'learning to be': it moved from a focus on the identity of the artist, to creative activities at The Friends' Meeting House, a place that prepared the children for ways of doing and being in the unfamiliar territory of the allotment. The boy's questions, quoted at the end of the case study above, indicate how literally some children understood the ways in which Iona was seeking to embody alternative ways of being and thinking. The children both enjoyed and appreciated the experiences offered on the project. In the final discussion, one boy said he felt 'Inspired. You inspired me.'

I: Oh, that's lovely. What have I inspired you to do?

Boy: Art. To make art.

I: Thank you, that's very generous of you.



Girl (with hand up): You've kind of inspired me as well. Because you've made all these things and you haven't gave up. But the thing is, you haven't bought a lot of things. You've made it from scrap. And it looks - not new, but definitely not old.



**Figure 5: The Allotment Project**

The experience of the project was of immersion in Iona's world and logic. The class were explicitly encouraged to be interested in Iona's personal 'obsessions' and to appreciate the things that she loved. Within the initial classroom based group experience, there was both metaphorical and physical space to be yourself. The children sat in their normal places in a darkened room with their chairs turned towards the whiteboard. They were free to guess, interpret and comment, to make their own links, if they wished to. There was no pressure to contribute and no sense in which a point could be deemed wrong or irrelevant. The PowerPoint images and commentary were unpredictable and the session meandered, but it was obviously going somewhere: not to a single, pre-determined goal, but towards the development of individual understandings of what might make someone want to live the kind of life that was being described. The major resource in the lesson was the artist herself and her willingness to lay herself open to scrutiny.

In all the sessions, Iona used the word 'flow' in the sense that Csikszentmihalyi (1990) might, in relation to creative energies and performance, work going well and people getting along well together. The flow of her own presentation seemed to be guided by an imagistic logic of analogy: pictures of work in the psychiatric hospital prompted memories of how much she had disliked school; the memory of a dying boy was followed by comments about mazes, patterns in nature, her pleasure in getting her smartly manicured hands dirty and, from there, to some before and after shots of the back garden of the terraced house where she lives. The children respected this. They were interested and intrigued. They left the

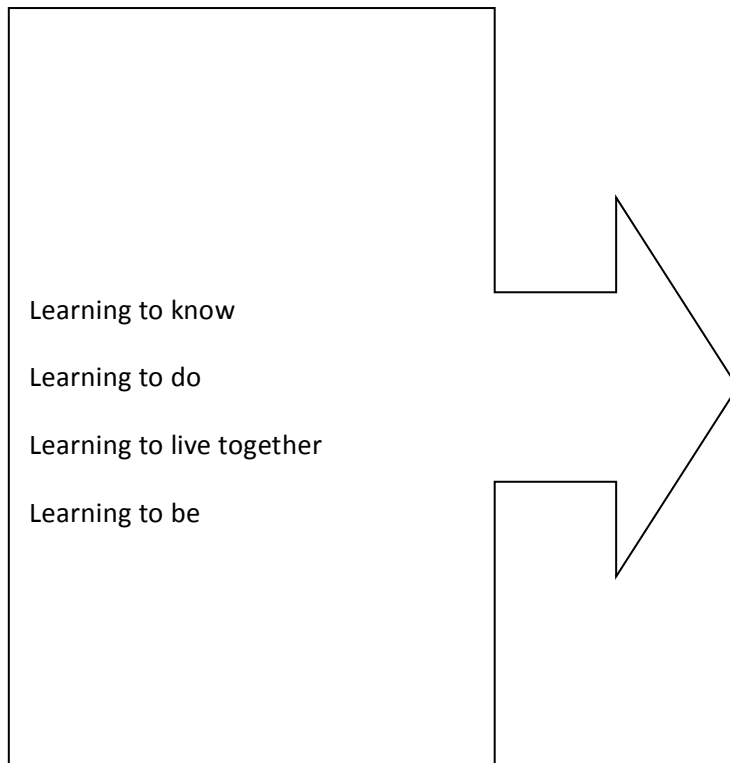


session talking excitedly about the allotment visit, though it seemed likely that most of them had an, at best, hazy idea about what an allotment was.

In some senses, the framing of the second session might seem to have been that of a conventional art lesson. Yet there was minimal attention to the technical means - the materials or the skills - by which the artwork was to be realised. The art activity was primarily about self exploration: recognising how feelings of stress or relaxation are experienced physically, recognising personal patterns and triggers, finding symbols to express abstractions that are inchoate yet were very real to the children. The clean, shiny, everyday objects they used to create their collages carried no cultural weight or obvious value. The children enjoyed sorting and handling them and no one appeared to feel excluded from the activity or less able than their peers to produce a meaningful piece of work. Similarly, the movement from art to writing was a fluid one; the choice of poetry or prose was up to the individual. Each of the activities was accompanied by music which Iona had chosen to create particular moods and the session started with dancing.

In terms of the themes that she identified in her talk, the third session built on what had gone before. The pleasures and rewards of hard work and effort were highlighted alongside the importance of relaxation and taking time to appreciate the environment. Alongside examples of life's difficulties and challenges, there was an emphasis on the abundance of nature; the importance of self expression; the possibility of using your ingenuity and creativity to make something out of nothing. But there was more that was alien to the children in the environment of the allotment: more dirt, more emphasis on reusing stuff that others had classed as rubbish, no sanitation. The pedagogical sequence was carefully crafted, moving from the classroom to the allotment, from school to recycled materials, from considering artist-produced work to creating works of art in the context of everyday activities. Iona's role was as mediator and guide rather than instructor. The emphasis was on the agency and life choices of the students in the group. Her focus was not on providing a role model for the children but on showing alternative ways in which a creative, fulfilled life could be lived.

**Figure 6: Pedagogic Purposes**



## A repertoire of pedagogic practices

In this section of the report, we attempt to distil out some of the particular repertoire of pedagogic practices that our analysis leads us to consider distinctive to the creative practitioners' teaching. Whilst we do not want to claim that these practices are in any way exclusive to creative pedagogies, we consider them to be part of a repertoire of expert professional practice in this area, and therefore constitutive of its signature pedagogy.

It is important to understand that no single project contained every one of these practices: the platform and purposes underpinned a *selection* from the repertoire. The blend was dependent on the stage of the project, the children, the art form, and the nature of the task involved. Particular combinations of practices were variously paced and sequenced, often in an improvised or negotiated process which was highly responsive to events and participants' expressions of need and interest. This level of responsiveness required highly sophisticated 'reading' by the creative practitioners, who had to maintain an eye on the end point and themselves as a key 'presence', as well as the immediate activities.

- 1. Provocation.** A provocation is an object, image, sound, person, event or action which is deliberately ambiguous, unexpected, strange, out of place, open and contingent. It does not arrive with a predetermined interpretation. It is intended to act as a stimulus to meaning making, a trigger for individual and collectives to draw on their own knowledges and experiences in order to provide a meaningful response to what is on offer. It provides a platform for thinking of ideas and possibilities. What the provocation wants from participants is that they give it narrative substance, an explanation, a rationale, a legitimate place in their location.

The story-makers in our sample regularly used provocations. Jim, for example, had previously dressed as a dinosaur which then travelled around the country sending the children letters from a range of unfamiliar places. Marianna sang outside the classroom door. Mike often used an object which he brought into the class. The following extract from our field notes describes one occasion when he chose this method of starting work:

*Mike asks the children to sit down in their circle and he sits in a chair he has situated behind him. He produces a folded white handkerchief from his pocket, swirls it in the air to release it and then pulls it along the bias to form a long strip. He then ties a knot in the middle. He pauses to look at the children who are watching silently, expectantly. Mike then lifts the handkerchief with two hands, holding each side of the knot so that he forms a shape that could be taken as a head and legs. He begins to move the legs around, and the handkerchief becomes a creature which can walk, hop, limp and jump. He introduces small noises as the creature moves. Sometimes it is appealing, at others funny, at one point it transforms into something menacing. After a few minutes the children are also moving, craning forward, some reaching out their hands, some moving their hands to manipulate an imaginary handkerchief creature of their own. They clearly want to do this themselves.*

At Delius High School, a theatre company began their project about urban change by putting up a hut in one corner of a playground. It served both as a workspace for the company, who recorded work in progress on the inside walls of the hut and as a bridgehead from which, over a period of several days, they could engage with students. The process at Delius could be understood in terms of intervention. This was the case both actually (the company's involvement was time-limited) and figuratively – 'Sober Senses' presented themselves as a team of surveyors and

builders (or demolition people), taking the measure of school buildings that, like the estate nearby, were scheduled for demolition. In one sense, they were outsiders, coming to provoke, amuse, engage, rather than a resource fully integrated into the school's organisation of teaching and learning. In another, they were one part of a flow of artistic practices – different sets of practitioners, different art forms - through the school.

2. **Use of artefacts.** We noted a preference for the use of found, rather than commercially produced, objects (in Stanley's and Iona's work, for example); the treasuring, display and curation of everyday objects imbued with great personal or cultural significance (in Tunde's work); the creation of new, special, everyday resources (the storybooks of the Larwood community lives created in Marianna's project; the children's tales that Jim produced as school library books). Photographs functioned both as a record and reminder of the work and as artefacts in their own right, recognising and reifying otherwise transitory experiences and creations.
3. **Moving out of the classroom.** The artists were much more likely to move beyond traditional classrooms. They used studio spaces (for example at Spencer Comprehensive), but the work often moved into available spaces in the local community (for example, Jim's use of the public areas in the tower block and the gated estate; Iona's allotment project). The artists recognised the importance of particular local places and found different ways of populating the spaces. The Delius theatre group, for example, ended their play in a choreographed sequence that garlanded a disused building in bunting and surrounded it by actors in movement. To rehearse this scene, students were bussed across the city, from south to north of the river to an unknown and somewhat 'enchanted' space (an early nineteenth century Gin Mill, now part of a film studio complex) near the Olympic site in east London.
4. **Making an occasion.** Performances and exhibitions are central to the processes, but the readiness to create special events, celebrate and appreciate was a feature of most of the teaching we observed. The vision was often large-scale and whole-school, for example at Spencer, Delius, Larwood and Rowan, where Mike worked. The dance project at Badger Wood was ambitious. St Hilda's was prepared to 'think big' in organising the whole school engagement in its Creative Olympics. The performance in which Delius students were involved took over the entire outdoor space of a three storey Victorian school. Combined with the commitment to the quotidian and the local and the readiness to work at scale, creating occasions helped make the ordinary special and validated the creativity in everyday life.
5. **Use of 'the texts of our lives'.** There was a continued and appreciative interest in: community stories and funds of knowledge; porous borders between school and home knowledges; a readiness to translate and re-imagine events, stories, characters in familiar settings (in the work of the story teller and storymakers, for example, but also in Iona's and Stanley's work). This validated and included students and their families in ways not generally found in mainstream curriculum approaches
6. **The self as a teaching resource.** The artists tended to speak openly about their personal lives; they assumed that students were interested in their identity as artists and they shared information about their own experiences. Some self consciously presented themselves as role

models (Tunde, for example). Because of the difference in their role, the artists seemed more open and less defensive in this respect than most teachers. They were less risk averse, more inclined to touch students and less concerned about school rules and safety regulations. This contributed to the sense that things were more free and open in artist led sessions.

- 7. Costume.** The artists tended to dress less formally than the teachers did; the costume requirements for their roles in school were different to the expectations about teachers' clothing. This had some symbolic impact on the teaching context. Specialist clothing was an important aspect of some dance and drama work, and dressing up in character costumes signified expanded or new teaching roles. Marianna, the Story Lady, for example, wore a costume which had been carefully constructed to be an exaggerated, almost comic book representation. When working as Story Lady, Marianna was in character, but she did not wear the costume or call herself Story Lady when she was working with the children to conduct interviews, construct stories or develop and rehearse the performance. In this way, Marianna demonstrated to the children the difference between front and back stage work, using costume to enable her to move between roles (for instance, to discuss the stories as texts to be interpreted responsibly).
- 8. Use of the body.** There was more movement, greater use of the body to make meaning, more attention to the development of physical skills, gesture, mime – and a greater sense of the need to coordinate with other people's bodies in shared endeavours. This was particularly obvious in the dance and drama projects: at Delius, Sober Senses exhorted students to 'explore' what the body can do to communicate meaning; and physical involvement was also, for example, a feature of Jim's and Mark's story-making and Tunde's story-telling.
- 9. Different classroom discourse patterns.** The patterns of classroom talk differed from traditional teacher/student exchanges. The tone and style of the talk, as noted above, differed from conventional teacher-talk in that it was often highly personal and anecdotal. Unlike teachers, the artists did not explicitly identify the learning objectives they had in mind for the group. There were clear, often moral, messages in their talk, but they were delivered more as warnings or beliefs than as lessons. The underpinning logic of the artists' talk was not generally the school logic of cause and effect (hard work bringing reward; misdemeanours bringing punishment); it tended to be a looser logic of going with the flow, trying hard and trusting that things will probably turn out right if you approach them cheerfully and with good intentions. The most marked distinctions between teacher and artist talk related to the work the students were engaged in producing: teachers were more oriented towards judging quality and artists were more concerned about the inherent meanings of the piece. Some of the artists spoke to students at considerable length. Iona for example showed the class 106 slides in her first session (and the children enjoyed listening to her). The artists asked and answered fewer questions. They used a lot of analogies, but explained less than teachers typically do. They tended to avoid giving feedback, other than in situations where praise could be offered. They encouraged guessing and welcomed suggestions, other than in the strongly professionally framed sessions (see below).
- 10. The creation of a rich narrative environment.** The artists' own uses of analogy, anecdote and personal history, combined with a freeing up of the classroom atmosphere, a widely shared

interest in local and community stories, and a readiness to improvise and use drama tools, supported the creation of rich narrative environments in many of the classrooms. This seemed to expand the 'horizons of possibilities' for the students (Langer, 1991).

**11. The use of professional norms.** Sober Senses, the theatre company working at Delius School, ran workshops, initially within drama lessons, around some of the main affordances of physical theatre – awareness of space, of precision of timing, and of ensemble work: 'we're exploring what the body can do'. The discourse and the practice of ensemble were the main elements of dramatic 'discipline' that the company introduced to the classroom, and along with these came an emphasis on the transformation they required in the behaviour of students: 'we're a company now. You're NO LONGER students'. The point was elaborated to stress, again, the specific, distinctive qualities of performance: 'this is what we do it rehearsal ... this is physical theatre'. There was no sense of negotiation in these utterances.

This insistence on establishing professional 'not school' norms was also very clear in the Badger Grove dance project, and observable in the Blair College media project. The professionals' general talk with the students was informal and focussed on the inter-personal, but a large proportion of the exchanges were concerned with solving the practical problems and challenges of the work at hand. This highlighted the expertise of the professionals, which was also evident in the ways they made judgments and applied standards from their field. Sometimes these judgments and standards were made explicit, at other times they were not. Quite often, the students had to strain to comprehend the implicit and the tacit. At Badger Grove this desire seemed to be deliberately built into the project: initiating and behaving like the professional was how much of the learning seemed to take place.

In these professionally oriented projects, the students were made aware that the everyday practices were specific to the area they were working in. The models of teaching and learning contrasted with models on offer in their schools. Students frequently made reference to the specialness of these situations; despite the absence of teacher-facilitated reflection on the differences, the students developed their own comparative framing of the pedagogical differences.

**12. Alignment with disciplinary expectations.** At Spencer Comprehensive, the framing of the creative arts practice was very strongly through the discipline of Fine Art. Students worked autonomously, alongside their teachers and the artist in residence. The language was about self-expression, form, technical and aesthetic problems. Some aspects of the pedagogy were analogous to the professionally framed sessions: the focus on individual skill development, for example, and on spending the time necessary to get the task done properly, rather than fitting the tasks to the allotted time. The 'rules of the game' were laid down through modelling, the organisation of space and – more explicitly than in the case of the professional norms – through direct instruction in the lower years of the school. Within this disciplinary framing, and in contrast with the professionally oriented sessions, the traditions of fine art were a frequent point of reference as the students learned about and looked at work from different periods and different artistic movements. The study of art and the development of aesthetic responses were central to the identity of the school, and through the school's practices they were made available to individual students as part of their own identities. At Delius, though without specific reference to traditions of theatre and performance art, aspects of the discipline were clear, notably

encouragement of awareness of space, and of the movements and being of other performers within it.

**13. The valorisation of collective endeavour.** Because of the predominating attitude towards inclusion, plus the fact that the teaching was generally intended to bring people together into a shared endeavour, the emphasis was on sociality. Whole class teaching and direct instruction were commonplace. The emphasis was on involvement, collective creation and sharing rather than on individuation and competition: 'we're a company now, you're no longer students' (Delius). Even where the work was individualised, as at Spencer, the collective endeavour was to construct a studio environment where art practice flourished. There was a weaker sense of the hierarchy of achievement than there is in many other lessons and a stronger sense of collective accomplishment.

**14. Managing behaviour differently.** Creative practitioners tended to rely on students' commitment to the collective endeavour, the professional or disciplinary norms, the virtuosity of the artist's display of expertise, the use of praise and careful listening. Because the artists were actively seeking not to individuate or exclude, and because their frames of reference did not tend to include school rules interpreted at the classroom level, their behaviour management techniques were different to teachers'. Generally, they worked extremely successfully and students seemed to feel both respected and respectful. Occasionally, the artists had to call upon the teachers' expertise in behaviour management if the norms they had established were disrupted.

**15. The use of routine.** The artists used routines to create atmosphere and a way of being in the class, to reinforce norms of their discipline (rehearsal, warm-up, etc) and to produce the group performing as one responsive voice and one networked body. Their routines were distinctively different to everyday classroom routines (see, for example, the routine of getting changed in the Badger Grove dance group, which was based on professional norms). The following extract from our field notes illustrates a different kind of routine, which is nevertheless distinctively related to creative pedagogy:

*Mike collects the children from their classroom and walks them to the drama room where they always work. They are a mixed age group of children, from five to seven years old and the twenty five or so of them are accompanied by a teacher and two teaching assistants. Once into the drama room Mike clears the central space and then asks the children and staff to form a standing circle. Every session begins in this way. Mike begins with a 'zip' where a zip and gesture is passed around the circle, first one way and then the other. This is followed by some imaginary zip tossing around the circle and then some chanting, often accompanied by rhythmic clapping.*

*Mike: **DO** you want a cup of tea?*

*Children: **YES**, I want a cup of tea.*

*Mike: **WOULD** you like a cup of tea?*

*Children: **YES** I'd like a cup of tea*

*Mike: **UH** uh uh uh uh uh uh*

*Children: **UH** uh uh uh uh uh uh*

*This is a well-established routine and is used with variations throughout the session as means of focusing children's energy and attention and transitioning from one activity to another. This is how the activity works for Mike. The rhythmic nature of the activity in the circle is important, as are the nonsensical words that are used. The circle is fun and in the moment. There is no embarrassment in saying or doing ridiculous things, as*



*everyone is doing them. The circle requires concentration and engages the whole body. The pleasure of the activity is in being part of a whole. It also positions Mike as leading activities without him resorting to any direct didactic instruction and it brings the group to order without any need for overt disciplinary intervention. It is the combination of routine collective fun, mind and body that makes repeating this activity not simply bearable, but also positively anticipated.*

**16. Flexibility in pacing.** Characteristically, the teaching we observed was brisk in terms of pace while feeling unhurried. This is in marked contrast to lessons where pace is explicitly related to a sense of urgency about time running out. In England, the orthodoxy of 'good lessons' (e.g. for inspection purposes) is that they are segmented, with 'starters' and plenaries and smoothly managed transitions between activities that encourage students to be attentive and do not allow them time to get bored. The underpinning metaphors here are economic – spending and investing time wisely to maximise its efficient use.

In the artists' sessions, events took time; time did not tend to dictate the event. In contrast to lessons where tasks might be cut short by the bell, or teachers create obvious time-filling activities because they have misjudged how long a task will take, the artists demonstrated a very strong commitment to the work that was being created – the dance, the artwork, the story, etc. This in turn led the students to invest more seriously in the work. This was an important element of the modelling the artists provided (an example of which would be the children who explained to Iona how she had inspired them through her commitment to her artwork). On the whole, **rhythm** and **flow** were highlighted rather than speed. Either explicitly within the session, or in conversation afterwards, the artists identified the fact that they considered rhythm and flow to be important contributory factors to the quality of the work being produced, in line with ideas proposed by Csikszentmihalyi (1990) and Gardner (1996). This emphasis oriented the artists towards the present time of the activity, rather than to the future. Changes of direction in the session tended to be driven by the practitioner's reading of the energy level of the class rather than a time-sensitive plan prepared in advance.

**17. The use of open-ended challenge.** In contrast to lessons with pre-specified learning outcomes, the matter of what exactly would be learned in the artists' sessions tended to be quite open (in Tunde's or Jim's sessions, for example). The trajectory of the lesson was not so much about following a road map as journeying together and seeing where the group arrived (the dance, story-making and allotment projects had this quality in common). At the start of the creative practitioners' sessions, the challenge was often presented as being just out of reach but probably attainable through collective hard work. This gave sessions a feel that was distinctly different to lessons where the learning outcomes are chosen and asserted by the teacher in advance. The artists' sessions celebrated challenges met through hard work, in contrast to lessons where failure to achieve the required learning becomes the main marker of distinction.

Also, it was observable across all of the sessions that the practitioners were at pains to stress to the students that there was no definitive right or wrong answer to artistic problems. The emphasis was on whether the work looked and/or felt right to the student in the context of what else was happening in the class. So standards were apparent and applied, but individuals were expected to develop their own skills of discrimination and judgement. There was therefore a stronger orientation towards intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation and evaluation in the artists' sessions.

**18. Building commitment to the community.** As well as building sociality within the group, the artists were all very positively oriented towards the schools' wider communities. Their artistic practices (e.g. Story Lady, Stanley, Iona, Tunde) were about the remarkable nature of everyday life, rather than the exotic or esoteric. For each of them, the notion of creativity itself offered a 'way in' to new connections with the community, bringing the worlds of school and home into closer contact with one another. The performances and occasions created new opportunities for parents and member of the wider community to build new and different connections with the school.

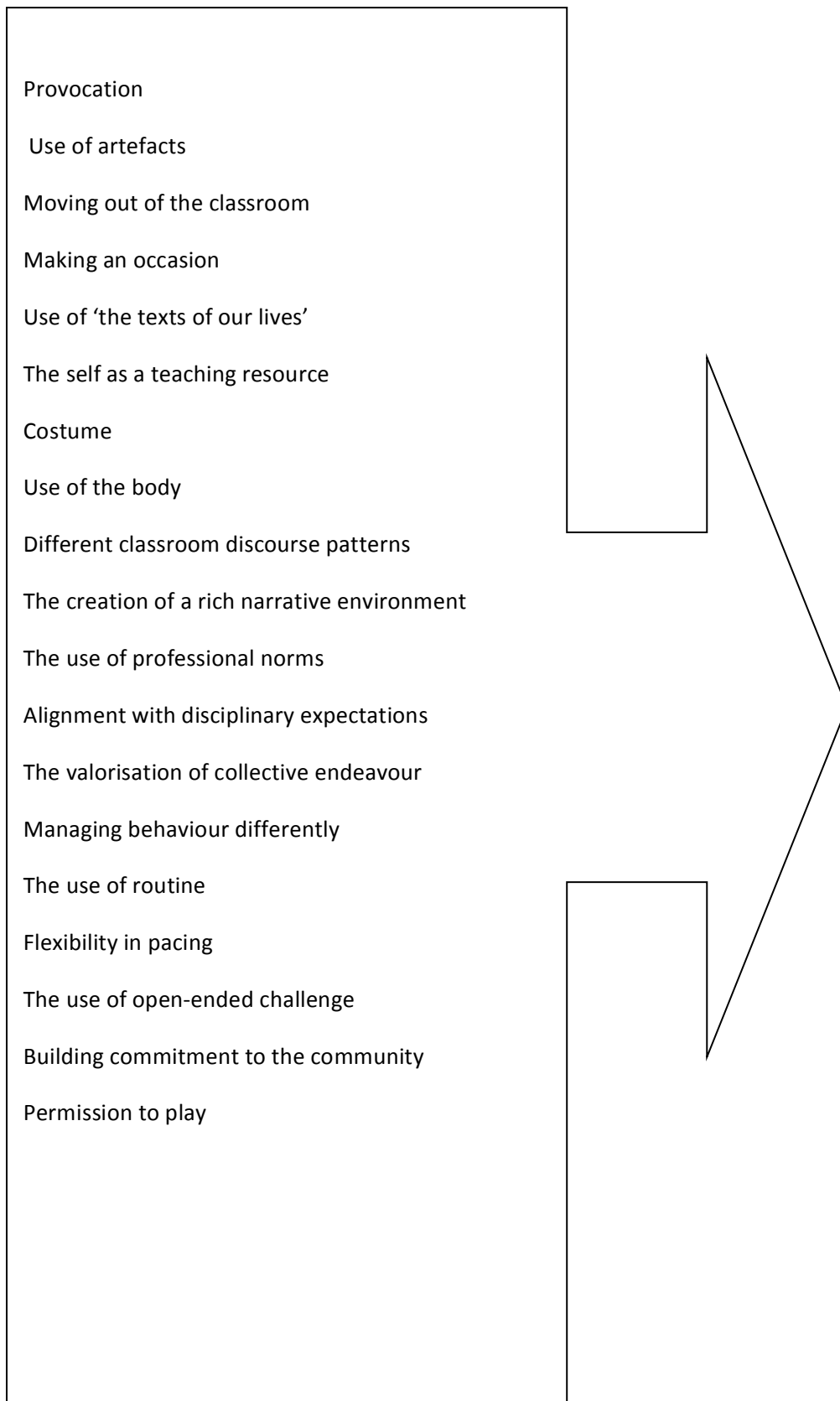
This philosophy, combined with the collectivist approach they adopted and the emphasis on the agency and creativity of each individual, sometimes resulted in a 'campaigning' edge to their teaching. Whilst the political dimensions of topics did not tend to be explored, the artists talked about their beliefs and the impact of their work and in doing so suggested alternative modes of dissent and critique (examples include Iona's stance on environmental issues, Sober Senses' critique of the urban landscape of London).

**19. Permission to play.** Several of the artists used silliness, eccentricity and 'larger than life-ness' to gently disrupt taken for granted ways of school thinking and doing. Silliness sometimes had obvious links to direct and school-sanctioned learning: for example, Mike encouraged the children to 'speak like bees' starting every word with zzzz..., which not only took concentration but was also absurdly amusing to everyone involved. This was part of his continual word play, his appreciation of children's sense of humour; he taught the children a new word each session that they then needed to use appropriately throughout – 'loquacious', for example, became incorporated into handkerchief characterisation and plot development. Marianna created a hyper-real, eccentric character for Story Lady which deliberately invited connections between the fictitious and theatrical and everyday reality – themes that were central to the artistic project she set up with the children.

At St Hilda's, the carnivalesque was managed and sanctioned by the school for one day in the year: the adults, along with the teenagers, had a chance to enjoy getting competitive, over-excited and letting off steam together. At Delius, the challenge came from outside the school. A quickly devised event, designed to draw students into involvement with the Sober Senses company, took the performers onto the flat roofs of the school, and onto its many ledges and walkways. Space was being taken over: the protests of one teacher, who felt her lesson was disrupted by performers' faces at her upstairs window, were relished. The surrealist discourse of the piece – in which units of measurement were collapsed into nonsense – seemed also to challenge aspects of educational rationality: 'Hold on, hold on. I was a bit off. It was 37 light years and 2 months!' In these ways, the company played with the notion of their difference from school knowledge – theatre, and by implication creativity, was something not entirely at one with established forms of learning.

We illustrate this repertoire in Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Pedagogic Practices**



## Conclusion

There are clearly overlaps between what teachers and artists do in schools. Indeed some teachers are artists and some artists are teachers. During the life of this project we were often asked if there are things that artists can do that teachers can't. The answer must, in part, be in the affirmative. There are clearly issues of training involved: a young dancer has trained for most of her/his life on their art form and a head teacher has by definition spent a long time developing her/his pedagogic expertise. The two are not interchangeable.

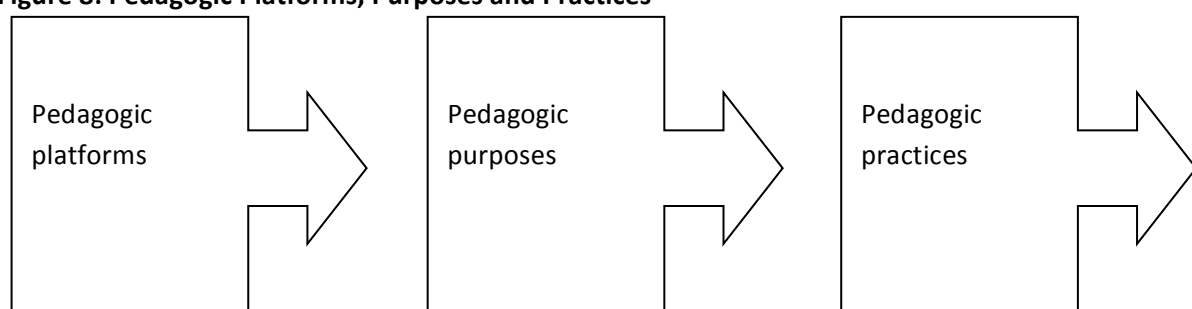
However, we think that trying to answer this kind of question is not a helpful way to proceed, beyond the obvious utility of considering what teachers might learn from engagement with artists. Some teachers could clearly benefit from learning new techniques and gaining new intellectual insights into the arts. Indeed many teachers that we saw had acquired some of the repertoire of pedagogic practices that we have detailed. We have no doubt, and we have evidence in our combined project data, that when this occurred students and teachers alike benefited. The unremitting default pedagogy was productively interrupted. In addition, some artists could clearly benefit from learning more about new pedagogic approaches and gaining new intellectual insights into education and young people.

Our experience and research suggest that the differences between artists and teachers stem from their positioning and the expectations and roles associated with this. Teachers, because of their position within the institutional context of school, work in a complex frame of national policy, public expectations and local institutional interpretations of policy and educational purposes. They have ongoing responsibilities for ensuring that children meet mandated curriculum outcomes. This, as a considerable body of research suggests, frames what it is that they are able to do. What they are **able** to do may in fact exceed what it is **possible** to do within their particular context. While it is easy to suggest, for example, that the teachers might adopt a universalist approach to inclusion, as we have suggested that the artists we saw did, it is difficult to see how this might happen in a context where national and international policy frames inclusion quite differently.

Artists however arrive in schools as visitors, even if they work as artists in residence, their position is as an institutional 'other'. They bring with them frames of reference and purposes from their life worlds, and as they and teachers work together they create more and less stable time/spaces where their frames and purposes produce new practices. It is for this reason that we suggest that there will always be a role for artists to play in schools, as the two positions are not the same, not interchangeable.

The naive question of whether teachers and artists can do the same thing works at the level of pedagogic practice. We suggest that it is not simply a question of practice, but also one of framing and purpose. It is here that we bring the three elements of our diagram together.

**Figure 8: Pedagogic Platforms, Purposes and Practices**



These three elements are components of any pedagogy. Signature creative pedagogies derive from the combination of platform, purposes and practices that we have outlined in this report. There are certainly other practices, and possibly platforms, that can be added in. Any one of the elements that we have described is not necessarily distinctive to creative practice and what artists or teachers do. But, we suggest, it is the particular combinations of the three which constitutes the signature. The best creative practices that we saw in this and other projects combined all of the elements of the platforms and purposes we have outlined, in combination with a repertoire of the practices.

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