UNDISCIPLINING ARTS EDUCATION: TOWARDS ARTS INTEGRATION

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ABSTRACT

The arts, inclusive of the disciplines of dance, drama, music and visual arts have been included within the formal New Zealand school curriculum for over seventeen years. These disciplines have valuable intrinsic aesthetic and educational value and the rationale for including arts disciplines in formal education is well articulated. (Abbs, 1987; Bamford, 2006; Eisner, 1998). Current research (Buck, 2003; Fraser, Aitken & Whyte, 2013; McDonald & Melchior, 2007; Snook, 2012) reveals however, that the teaching of the arts in New Zealand schools remains sporadic with a government focus on literacy and numeracy. We propose that the arts may be valued for their instrumental roles in enhancing teaching and learning across other disciplines in the New Zealand curriculum. Our research is directed by the question: how can the disciplines of dance, drama, music and visual arts better support teaching and learning in the New Zealand curriculum? This article argues that through an introduction of an arts integration pedagogy into classrooms, teachers and students will achieve learning objectives across the entire curriculum, including the arts.

KEYWORDS

Arts education, students, learning, arts integration, teachers.

INTRODUCTION

While we would like attention to be given to each of the arts disciplines for their own intrinsic value, we believe that a strong argument for the arts in schools, lies in their ability to develop creative learning pathways through students engaging in the doing and making of art. Rather than advocating for more time for the arts, that history reveals is highly unlikely, we advocate for the use of an arts integration model. We argue that when students use the arts as a process to learn about a concept in another subject area, they engage in multiple ways of representing their own knowledge and personal experience. “The arts asks students to value their own experiences and culture” (GoetzZwin & Graham, 2005, p. 271), and through such a personal engagement, knowledge is built.

Our research is situated within the University of Auckland ‘Creative Thinking Project’. We are examining the introduction of an Arts Integration pedagogy into primary school classrooms over a three-year period. We are aware that when theory is taken into the classroom, it must be understood in the light of pragmatic classroom decisions, motivations and imperatives from a teacher’s perspective. The day to day teaching in classrooms is the priority. We are currently working in a small rural school in the north of New Zealand where we are supporting the teachers in their classroom implementation of arts integration. We have observed teachers implementing arts integration in many other classrooms and by way of illustrating the classroom reality of implementing curriculum change and the introduction of a new pedagogy, this article will describe a week’s delivery of arts

integration in a Melbourne classroom. This experience in a Melbourne school has informed the research journey that is currently playing out at Oturu school in Northland.

While arts integration can be viewed in a variety of ways, such as a school-wide interdisciplinary project, our studies, have focused upon "regular use of the arts as a tool for learning and representing knowledge within another subject" (Martin, 2016, p.3). If a generalist teacher is able to adapt her/his teaching pedagogy to include arts integration in the classroom, then such an approach may be sustainable. We acknowledge that there are many different definitions of arts integration, and some concern has been raised regarding arts activities offering only simplistic understandings of difficult concepts (Green-Gilbert & Koff, 2017). This is certainly a concern that needs to be addressed and we are currently working on the development of tasks that lead students to deeper learning.

As in many other western countries, New Zealand education has become aligned with developing students' skills and abilities and has "largely surrendered to a narrow and reductionist instrumentalism" (Codd, 2005, p. 194). Until recently in New Zealand, students were tested to National Standards in literacy and numeracy and this has resulted in teachers spending time in preparing students for the tests, and in turn, narrowing the curriculum. Berliner (2011) states,

> Curriculum narrowing reduces many students' chances of being thought talented in school and results in a restriction in the creative and enjoyable activities engaged in by teachers and students. The tests commonly used with narrower curricula also appear to restrict thinking skills (p. 287).

Where equity for all students was once a focus in New Zealand education, this appears to have been lost through neo-liberal policies that, "promote marketization, school self-management, local governance and strong centralized forms of control and accountability (Codd, 2010, P. 193). Historically New Zealand education has not subscribed to neo-liberal policies,

> on the contrary, it had been previously seen as a laboratory for the welfare state…… In a sense {it was] a model country to act as the bearer of a successful reform model, and as an example to other similarly placed countries as well as to the rich countries of the OECD (Dale, 2001, p. 498).

The changing face of education in New Zealand has seen a move away from arts education in schools, (Snook, 2012) despite a mandated arts curriculum that was introduced in 2000. The pressure of National Standards and the resultant focus on literacy and numeracy has combined with a lack of space and a nervousness to teach the arts, so that arts in schools have generally been relegated to extra-curricular performance activities such as a school musical (Snook, 2012). The arts are often at the margins of school life in terms of products or performances and are often used in school promotion. New Zealand educators, Fraser, Atkin & Whyte (2013) are concerned with the lack of process driven arts in classrooms and warn of the death of progressive education in New Zealand stating, "if we are really serious about improving learning for all students, we need research-based practice on what grows student learning" (p.2). Their publication 'Connecting curriculum, linking learning' cites Beane (2005) who argues,

> the work they [students] do should involve more making and doing, more building and creating and less of the deadening drudgery that too many of our curriculum arrangements call for (p.136)

While New Zealand education is currently under revision (2018), Australian education remains fixed in NAPLAN testing and reductionist measures. Similarities in curriculum design exist however, as do fluctuations in delivery of the arts curriculum (Bamford, 2006; Buck, 2003; Fraser, Atkin & Whyte, 2013; Snook, 2012). If New Zealand education is to maximise the delivery of a quality arts education for all learners as set out in UNESCO's Seoul Agenda (2010), then it is important to acknowledge that although arts education appears to be valued in the curriculum, "relatively few teachers, fewer schools and even fewer governments are actually willing to realise the potential of arts education" (Buck & Snook, 2017, p.219).

Teacher accountability to meet pre-determined standards and objectives has seen students missing out on any sense of individualized curriculum of special interests or needs. Quality teaching responds to learning models where "all students have a strong sense of involvement" (Meiers, 2003, p.27). In order to reach all students, we suggest an arts integration pedagogy where students not only learn through actively 'doing', they also have opportunities to work cooperatively, to problem solve and to engage creatively.

WHY ARTS INTEGRATION?

During the late 19th and early 20th century, positivism provided a philosophical ground for behaviourism where every observable effect had a cause, and it was assumed that "science itself was the only way to procure reliable knowledge" (Efland, 2002, p.5). Such philosophies extended into education and with a history dating back to Plato, it is not surprising that there remains a general lack of understanding about the complex role and value of arts education when dominant popularist views of the arts as performative entertainment dominate within education contexts. Furthermore, there is little understanding of "the substantive role the arts can play in cognitive development" (Efland, 2002, p. 7).

It has been some time since Howard Gardner introduced the concept of Multiple Intelligences (1983), and going back even further in time to Dewey (1920), arts educators have long understood the arts as a way of knowing (Dewey, 1920; Eisner, 2002; Gardner, 1999; Greene, 1991). Our study proposes that the process of arts integration is an inclusive method of teaching students that encompasses diverse learning needs. Gardner (1983) originally listed seven different intelligences, but it is important to remember that nobody functions with only one type of intelligence, and to date "we do not have psychometric techniques that directly access an individual's capacity for a particular intelligence" (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider and Gardner, 2011, p. 487). As all teachers are aware, students are far more complex than their intelligence alone. Personality, context, nature, nurture, history and emotion all play an ever-changing role in their development. Arts integration engages different types of intelligence and goes beyond that to encourage students to work cooperatively with others in order to enhance their learning.

Efland, (2002) proposes Vygotskian notions that have implications for learning in the arts. "First, like all learning, the study of art should not be studied in isolation, but seen in relation to its social context"

(p. 49). Arts integration supports Efland's (2002) theory of negotiations between two or more people as a process for learning, and we emphasise that arts integration allows this theory to apply to all learning in every subject. Perkins contends in Mueller (2001) that "we learn from each other, in many instances better and more deeply than from the text" (p.5).

Since Gardner's (1983) theory on multiple intelligences emerged in the eighties, schools have become aware of the need to cater for more than the verbal-linguistic and logical mathematical intelligences in learning. The current focus on these two areas however, has shifted pedagogical approaches in teaching back to more conventional methods.

Sankey, Birch and Gardiner (2010) emphasise that learning modalities do not operate in isolation, but within a continuum that blends and responds to the environment and instructional stimuli. Offering an arts integration approach to teaching and learning opens up opportunities for all students, possibly closing gaps between the high achieving students and the rest of the class. Sankey, Birch & Gardiner (2010) state, "students engaged in learning that incorporates multi-modal designs, on average, outperform students who learn using traditional approaches with single modes" (p. 854). The high achievers are prompted to think beyond text bound curriculum, exploring and critically reflecting upon appropriate solutions. Similarly, students struggling in literacy, numeracy or science may better respond to experiential, open-ended learning tasks that draw upon different means for expressing knowledge.

We theorise that an arts integration pedagogy engages different intelligences in each given task, depending on the subject matter being taught. We would suggest that such an approach should suit all learners equally well. The emphasis is on the process of learning and not bound by limiting rules. It is possible to have a different answer to the next person, yet still be 'right' in an arts integration classroom. General principles of development mean that students develop at different rates which can cause problems for some students in a conventional classroom. Conversely, stimulating environments, such as an arts integration classroom, can offer all students an opportunity to grow and develop (Woolfolk, 2014). The arts are also trans-disciplinary and transferable from one field to another. Root-Bernstein (2003) posits the phenomenon of synosia (To know and feel simultaneously). He explains, "a person experiences a sensation in one of the five senses when another of the senses is stimulated" (p.65).

ENJOYMENT IN LEARNING EQUALS INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Back in 1951 Theo Dalton stated that a good classroom is, "characterized by a relaxed atmosphere, by evidences of wholesome and purposeful activities, by displays of children's work and the best use of available facilities" (p. 429). Little has changed for students and teachers. Achieving satisfaction and enjoyment requires a relaxed atmosphere, which in turn encourages student engagement, leading to personal success. Gorard and See's (2011) study on enhancing enjoyment in schools stresses the importance of enjoyment in promoting student engagement for all students. A Canadian study by Martin (2017) that examined the effects of arts integration and socially empowered learning in primary classrooms, discovered that in general classroom situations, only 37% of students were intellectually engaged: "Students are not connecting with their work, and that attendance is not synonymous with intellectual engagement" (p.2). It would appear that curriculum narrowing has taken away the enjoyment factor for many students, and arguably lessened engagement. We believe that this can be turned around through the implementation of an arts integration pedagogy.

As teachers, the present researchers attest to the view that pressure does not result in a relaxed teaching experience, that could result in a less than relaxed learning experience for students. While there has been pressure to focus on literacy and numeracy, teachers are also asked to account for their teaching outcomes, mark and report on student achievement and create individual student profiles, adding to a general feeling of too much to do in too little time. This does not equate with creative teaching, which within a classroom context is necessary for engagement and motivation (Lesser, 2008). Fostering creativity, and by association, having fun in the classroom is too often regarded as something for after the 'important' work has been completed; perhaps as a reward for working hard, or perhaps there is no time at all for fun or flexibility. The fun we are subscribing to is related to enjoyment through learning; which fosters a happiness to be engaged, to be present. It is fun with a serious purpose. DeMoss and Morris (2002) examined the meaning of fun when applied to arts integration experiences. They concluded that amongst students there was, "a common appreciation for active learning, learning in which they could participate. They retained language about learning and understanding, but they readily admitted that they liked this work more than what they experienced in traditional units" (p. 15). As with DeMoss and Morris the present authors posit that fostering a joy for learning and better achievement has strong associations with teachers providing creative or 'fun' learning experiences and a happy classroom. When students in de Souza Fleith's (2000) research were asked for their definitions of creativity in their classroom, they discussed their school work and also emphasized that it was about having 'fun' in the classroom; "arts activities were associated with creativity" (p.151).

Catering for creativity in the classroom through fun and engagement allows each student to find their own voice. GoetzZwirn & Graham (2012) bemoan the fact that schools are obsessed with testing where schools become dull and depressing places:

> Personal exploration and interests are forgotten, craft and artistry are forsaken, as test preparation dominates classrooms. Students who are different become strangers and problems for schools that are designed to teach everyone the same (p.269).

In a closing speech at an invitational meeting for education, Robinson (2000) cites Archbishop Temple, "Our job in education is to teach children to feel together and to think for themselves rather than think together and feel alone" (p.33).

METHODOLOGY

The research question driving this research is 'How does an experienced generalist teacher implement an arts integration pedagogy within her classroom and what meanings do teachers hold of arts integration? For the present authors, a constructivist theory is central to gaining perspectives on learning and therefore it is through a constructivist framework that we have begun to investigate the shaping of a different teaching pedagogy in schools from the conventional approaches of the past. A constructivist approach does not dictate how to teach and learn in classrooms but allows us to look at questions relating to the 'undisciplining' of arts education. Constructivism supports our efforts to examine the pedagogical implications of offering an arts integrated pedagogy in schools. According to Fosnot (2005) constructivism allows the researcher to gain new insights through,

> a theory that describes knowledge not as truths to be transmitted or discovered, but as emergent, developmental, non-objective, viable constructed explanations by humans engaged in meaning-making in cultural and social communities of discourse (p.i).

As we gather information on how well arts integration engages student learning, the theoretical perspective stemming from constructivism allows us to interpret meaning from collected data. Constructivism is particularly suited to probing and understanding social phenomena as,

> from the interpretive perspective, the serendipitous and intuitive are not liabilities, but opportunities in the effort to understand human phenomena. This perspective assumes that, while producing accurate information, research processes and products can also be artistic (Rodwell, 1998, p.16).

There appear to be similarities between a constructivist theory and the arts integration process of learning. Both are concerned with communication and interpretation of meaning. Our research is concerned with identifying how teachers implemented an arts integration pedagogy into their classroom teaching and by association, what meanings do teachers hold of arts integration?

This research focuses on many different classrooms. All of our endeavours are in the early stages. In the present article we have chosen to document a week's observations in a Melbourne school that may provide "depth, detail and individual meaning" (Patton, p.17). Of great relevance to classroom teachers is the validity of their individual meanings. Again, we as researchers and experienced teachers 100% respect that a classroom is the teachers' place of work, where they are 'the' expert in teaching children. As such, understanding an individual's construction of meaning is paramount. Following our observations of the delivery of an arts integrated pedagogy in Melbourne, Australia, we conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with one primary school teacher and her students. Classroom reflection times followed each practical activity allowing the researchers to gather information regarding student perceptions of the success or otherwise of each activity at a personal level. Students not only related to what they had learned but were able to verbalise how they believed that they had learned through arts integration. This information has been coded and analysed in order to develop an understanding of meaning.

Eisner (2002) supports the arts delivery through a constructivist pedagogy employed in schools where knowledge is built and rebuilt, and through this process learners make sense of the world. He states, "The greater the pressure on schools to standardize, the greater the need for the arts" (p.8). Rather than learn for a test where there is little room for imagination or personal investigation, students engaged in the arts learn through 'doing' and 'making' and not only build on what they already know, but develop confidence and self-esteem through success and enjoyment. "Meaning and understanding are amplified through art, and opportunities for individual expression, make learning personally relevant" (Goetz Zwirn & Graham, 2005, p. 267).

OVERVIEW OF ARTS INTEGRATION

Research provides different arts integration programmes and possibilities (Buck & Snook, 2017; Werner, 2001; Wilkinson, 2010). Buck & Snook (2017) listed the following perceived outcomes from implementing an arts integrated curriculum:

* Success within an ‘arts across the curriculum’ pedagogy does not rely on performance or product outcomes.

* It emphasizes an experiential pedagogy whereby students learn by ‘doing’.

* When engaged in an enjoyable process, students are more likely to retain learning.

* An ‘arts across the curriculum’ pedagogy accepts strengths and biases in teaching specific arts disciplines, but encourages involvement of all the arts.

* An ‘arts across the curriculum’ pedagogy offers opportunities to assess learning objectives in all curriculum areas covered in a project (p. 21).

Australian and New Zealand schools have learning objectives in all subject areas including the arts.

One-off projects or artists in the classroom offer stimulating opportunities and experiences but are intermittent. We believe that the most important people in our research are the classroom teachers as they are the key to an ongoing implementation of arts integration.

We fully concur with Haberman (1992) who stated, “Classroom teachers by controlling their teaching behavior, still retain the most powerful influence on students’ learning and can serve as curriculum leaders” (p.11). Research (Buck & Snook, 2017) has indicated that teachers are unsure of what and how to teach when using an arts integration model so we sought to observe a teacher who was willing to spend a week teaching through an arts integrated pedagogy. Lesson plans were prepared and adapted though ongoing conversations between the teacher and the researcher.

OBSERVATION OF ARTS INTEGRATION IN A MELBOURNE CLASSROOM

A class of primary school children from an independent, non-sectarian and non-denominational primary school in Melbourne provided a case study for five days of observation and interviews. The 18 children were aged eight, nine and ten years of age, and although this was not a designated ‘special needs’ school, many of the students in this classroom had varying degrees of learning and behavioral difficulties. The teacher was accustomed to teaching creatively, but had not been specifically using an arts integration pedagogy. She was prepared to adjust her teaching to trial a series of arts integrated lessons with her students. We began by developing a series of arts integrated lesson plans for the teacher to work with. The lessons were sent backwards and forwards (Australia and New Zealand) between the teacher and the researchers adjusting the lessons according to teacher comfort, interest and the students’ capabilities.

The lead researcher flew to Melbourne and met with the teacher and fine-tuned lessons. On the first morning, students were asked by their teacher to use a movement sequence to introduce themselves to the researcher. The movement was to describe who they were, what they liked doing and how they might have been feeling. Although the students were given clear instructions with the teacher modelling expectations, and a few minutes to prepare their movement sequence, most students reverted to Auslan sign language, something that they were familiar with. These students were used to moving and using their bodies to communicate, but this exercise was different and therefore they struggled to understand the expectations of the task. Following the lesson, the teacher commented

that the students were over-excited by the fact that a researcher from another country was observing them and the fact that the furniture had been re-arranged had caused more excitement, and in turn, a lack of concentration. As the teacher worked through the different activities during the week, successful outcomes were achieved, but each activity took a great deal longer than the researcher expected.

As within every school many diverse and competing activities were evident. Because this school runs a small farm there are many duties that are the responsibility of the students. Moreover, other people would come into the room to announce "The horses have arrived" as an example. This meant that designated students had to leave to deal with the horses. At the time the research was being undertaken, school musical rehearsals were in full swing, so other teachers would come and take particular students whenever they were required. The musical took priority over everything else. On one occasion, the whole class spent the entire day at a Musical rehearsal. The other reasons that made the arts integration activities so time consuming related to the individual needs of the students. The teacher would intuitively choose which child needed particular attention at any point in time, and deal with each situation accordingly.

Irrespective of the usual daily interruptions, by the end of the week, the students gained experience of learning within an arts integrated activity and the final lesson is documented here to provide an understanding of what the lesson contained and how an arts integrated process was achieved.

A LESSON: WHAT DOES ARTS INTEGRATION LOOK LIKE?

One lesson was about the migration of the Arctic Tern who flies from the north to the south pole and returns each year. Migration was the main theme that incorporated the arts along with aspects of geography and physics. On the first day, the teacher set up the lesson by introducing a globe of the world. She provided contextual information about the Arctic Tern, migration and the south and the north pole with much questioning and discussion from the students. She then set up a flocking activity outside of the classroom. To begin with she attempted to get the students into a 'V' formation and have them walk slowly in formation. This was unsuccessful as several students chose to misbehave. The teacher took the activity back to a point where all students stood still. When she touched someone, they moved their upper body slightly and had to sense where the movement was coming from. This was successful in calming the students and bringing their attention back to the task.

Once again, the flock of students began moving in their 'V' formation. When individual students were being silly, the teacher intuitively introduced the idea of role playing a crow who would catch anyone who left the formation. To begin with, this encouraged a lot of screeching and running. As the group started breaking up, small groups started forming of their own accord. The teacher encouraged this to continue, with herself and the student teacher as the crows monitoring the flocks of birds. The flocks began to understand how to use their peripheral vision to change the direction of the flock while still maintaining a 'V' formation. When some of the students felt threatened by the crows, they began to break away and return to the larger group. This activity went on for some time until everyone was working with an understanding of flocking.

On return to the classroom, a circle reflection was held where the students were asked why birds fly in formations, and how it felt to fly with a flock of other birds. The students made some interesting observations. One student stated,

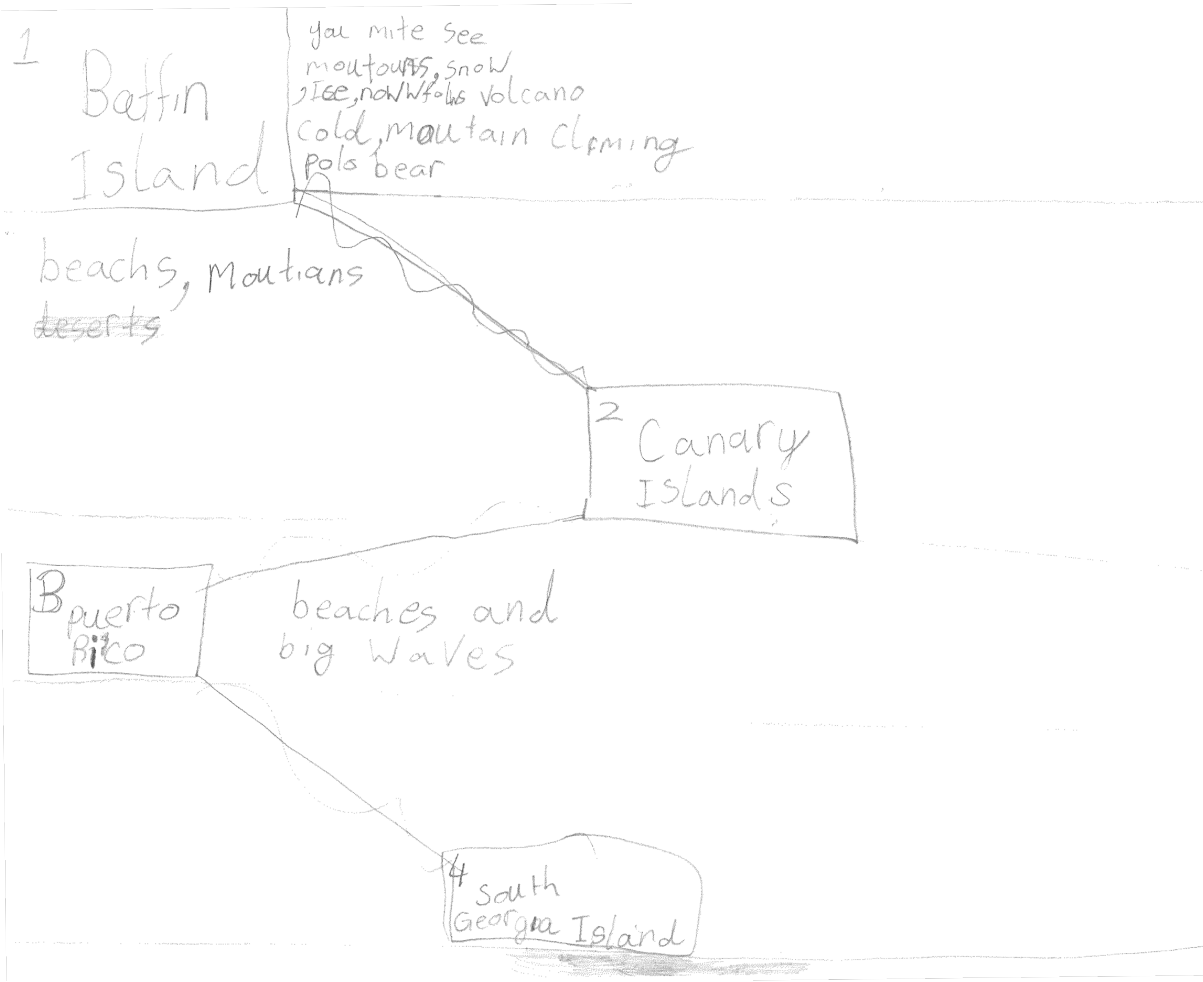
> I felt best when I was in a big flock and I made a plan [while flying around] to take it easy as I was part of a big flock and I had an army of my own, so it would be harder to find a gap when you were being threatened.

Another student felt safer in a small flock because it was easier to stay in formation, while another girl was scared in a small flock, but started to realise that she just needed to calm down and that way she could just stay with the flock. Everyone wanted to speak. Eventually the conversation turned to the aerodynamics of the slipstream that the formation had created. The students realized that their formation was creating a slip stream that allowed them to fly faster and follow each other's pathway where there was the least air resistance.

The second half of this activity took place the following day. Students were warmed up and the teacher recapped migration routes and the north and south poles. Students were broken into four different flocks, each allocated with a different colour. Pages with numbers and colour-coded names of countries had been placed around the school grounds. Each group needed to fly around the school picking up the country names as they found them. When they arrived back with all four countries, they looked on a globe of the world and traced their migration route. They then used computers to research information about each of the four countries. One of the boys with profound learning difficulties found a country on a computer, and for him, that was a huge success. Once they had found the countries the students were required to draw some features of each country on a piece of paper.

During the reflection time, students spoke of the difficulties they encountered as they found it quite a difficult task to find the countries, as they had thought it would be easy. When they arrived back, the numbers on the pages helped them to trace the migration route and they were able to work out whether they had flown from south to north or north to south. Students documented what they saw. When it came to what they saw on the way, the students were very imaginative.

> I saw candle making in Japan and in Papua New Guinea I saw a monster and ate a vegemite sandwich.
>
> In Baffin Island, there was a tiny bit of grass. It was cold there and there were some people living there.



Appendix One: Documentation from the Orange Group.

Our first destination was in Kurgastan next to China, lots of forests and elephants. They have lots of snow. Then from there we went to Sri Lanka, to Madagasca and lots of tropic stuff. Then we went to Herd Island which is very tiny.

Appendix 2: Documentation from the Red Group.

Further discussion took place about animals who migrate every year and the question was posed: are there humans who have to migrate every year? A long list of occupations was collated, with pilots, actors, photographers and journalists as examples. The reflection finished with a discussion about ambassadors and doctors without borders.

Overall the students had engaged enthusiastically over the two sessions and in doing so had not only learned about the topics covered, but had worked cooperatively and creatively. The students were interviewed following the activity and one student aged 9 stated,

> I learned how far birds fly and how cool it is that they know where to go without maps and things, and that's pretty cool. I started at Pigeon Island and Arctic Terns fly from the top to the bottom of the world once or twice a year. I think that by finding the places it was like you were going around the world. It was moving around.

The week of observations revealed that although the students had engaged enthusiastically in the activities, the teacher had felt more exhausted than usual at the end of each day. It may seem that the children didn't actually 'dance' as in a conventional understanding of dance. Our research accepts all movement as dance providing there is an aspect of creativity stemming from the students themselves. There may be times when student dance making in response to a task, results in something that could be performed for an audience. This is however, never the focus of arts integration. The flocking, while simple, allowed students to move their bodies and experience learning

in a different manner. The flocking activity allowed students to bring the group with them by changing direction, so that decisions made were group decisions. The enthusiasm that resulted, allowed a stimulated classroom discussion, beyond the teacher's expectations of her students.

Students also engaged in spelling by creating a different movement for each letter of their word and then performing while speaking aloud. Maths activities also engaged the students in movement. Students moved around the room holding onto numbered cards, and according to instructions given the students would join with another person to create a movement sequence accordingly. For example, a simple adding activity required a pair to create the number of movements on partner A's card. They would then make a plus sign, add partner B's number of movements, create an equals sign and then create a movement sequence that contained the correct number of counts. Fractions, division and multiplication, syllables and verbs were all taught through movement with variations according to the requirements of the task. One of the activities required the students to engage in visual art, music and dance. The teacher had asked that a lesson was created regarding introduced animals in Australia. The children were given a card with a picture of an animal or bird with supporting information. Each student summarized what was on their card for the larger group. A general discussion about introduced animal species in Australia followed. The class was then divided into small groups. Each group chose one animal to focus on. They then wrote their own lyrics to a popular tune such as the Australian favourites, 'Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree' or 'Give me a home amongst the gum trees'. Students were asked to ensure that they got their message across. Once the group had learned their song, they then created movements that supported it. Each group presented their song and dance to the larger group, while at the same time learning valuable lessons about introduced animal species.

At the end of the week students happily engaged in short interviews of 10 minutes. After transcribing the interviews, it was clear that each student expressed an understanding of the learning that had emerged from the activities. The analysis of the transcripts revealed an insight into the inclusion of arts activities and how they helped teach and learn ideas about migration and the other topics that had been covered.

The school does engage in a 'learning by doing' philosophy, as evidenced by the farm animals, gardens and focus on the school musical. This may have assisted in their understanding of how the arts activities assisted in teaching and learning, but without exception, all of the students conveyed an understanding and appreciation for the week of learning through arts integration. A one-hour interview with the teacher revealed findings that were surprising to the teacher herself, especially regarding the level of participation and learning outcomes.

> There were children who participated who would not normally participate in that style of lesson, or if they did, they wouldn't appear to get anything out of it, and they definitely did. I also have kids who do not generally learn well in a general classroom, and I could see that they benefitted from something like this. For example, the child who is never very confident with maths and will never put her hand up to answer anything, and barely recognizes numbers, during the activities she gave some really good answers. She really enjoyed it so that was a big surprise for me. Some of the boys who I thought would have a bit of a laugh and not pay attention, they did, and they really enjoyed it, especially those boys doing the really hard spelling words. A couple of those boys are low spellers and I wanted to see

> what would happen if I gave them a hard word to test them out. One of those boys skipped only one letter of the word, and normally he wouldn't make connections to get many of those letters at all. He's still learning the first 100 words in English and he's in late year 3 work. He is working at a very basic level and I gave him a hard word, eighty. He got everything but the g I think. In time, he got the g. One of those boys was average and one was an advanced speller. I had tested the advanced speller last week, and he didn't know those words then. They were turned into movement and he quickly and effectively picked up the word subtle. They all participated and they all gave answers, even our kids who don't normally talk. I got them to say things and they did and they did know what was going on and they did respond well. They all seemed to think we were having a week of playing I think. Just playing games but they were getting something out of it. I know that some of the boys talked about wanting extending in some areas mathematically and I guess those things need to be worked on as to how you would extend them, but for the kids who've been the main problems, it was good to try a new approach for them. For those who are used to getting everything at once, straight away, maybe they've worked in a different way and worked a bit harder because it was different for them. They all enjoyed it, that's main thing.

This feedback from the teacher was a valuable reflection on the implementation of an arts integration pedagogy. While a researcher can observe all children happily engaged in an activity, teachers know their individual students and in this case, the special needs within this classroom. The teacher's comments highlighted the importance of the teacher providing the arts integration rather than a visiting artist.

FINDINGS

Several points emerged from our observations. These include:

- Students worked cooperatively to experience individual success.
- Students experiences were different within a group.
- While the lessons were more difficult to deliver and grasp, the teacher and students enjoyed learning and teaching.

Overall however we observed that this was a typical busy classroom full of complex interactions. Not everything works when we teach, and not all activities observed over the week were successful. Yet, there were many examples of individual success where students had clearly extended their learning. A child with a profound learning difficulties found a country on a computer, which was a huge personal achievement. A child who barely recognises numbers, gave some good answers to maths problems, a student with a low spelling ability made connections and was able to recall all but one letter of a difficult word. All activities were conducted within pairs or a group, yet the outcomes for individuals appeared to be considerable, especially considering the short time that the students had been working through arts integration. It appeared that students were prepared to take risks in their learning when working in this arts integration manner, they felt that they were having fun, and engaged wholeheartedly in the process. Siedel (2000) sums up this experience,

> Quality arts programs are designed to guide cognitive development in a loving way that fuses the intellectual with the spiritual – "the combustion of human spirit and cognitive discipline" – and urges the stdents forward in their search for truth (p. 30).

During the reflection periods after each activity, students were enthusiastic to share their thoughts and experiences. The discussion around flocking was a good example of how different students experienced this activity in different ways. Some students attempted to push the boundaries and required the teacher in role as a crow to bring them back to the task. Others felt safe within a large flock and there were those who formed breakaway flocks where they expressed their individuality. There was no requiement for right or wrong answers within the process or the reflection which allowed expressions of individual creativity. A study by Gokhale (1995) examined how collaborative learning enhances critical thinking. The outcomes included a development of understanding through a more relaxed atmosphere that, "makes problem-solving easy. It was fun" (p.5).

Both the teacher and the students conveyed some nervousness to begin with during the week of arts integration lessons. The students' nervousness at the start saw them revert to what they knew when they were asked to express themselves creatively through movement, and they instead provided instead Auslan Sign language. The teacher commented that they had been very excited about a visitor in the room which may have contributed to their nervousness. The teacher herself expressed a nervousness regarding compliance with a lesson plan. She stated,

> I think for me as a teacher, I've never gone very well with other people's lesson plans. I take what I can from them, have a glance over them and go, yep, yep, I see that, that works well, and then just run my own lesson. I was a bit nervous knowing that you were going to be there and would be wondering what you were thinking, what is she doing, that is not exactly as we planned.

This teacher considered herself a creative teacher. She has a background as a dance teacher, is an author, and has engaged in community drama and dance activities for most of her life. Despite this, she was concerned with 'getting it right' in this instance. She could see however, that lesson plans and detail were important to many teachers. She stated,

> I can see that some teachers really do need that, and I'm working with one at the moment. The student teacher really needs a list written out and she'd benefit from absolute detail. I've asked her to be more creative, and she freaks out, so it's good to have lesson plans.

Lesson plans would assist teachers in knowing 'what' to do in an arts integrated lesson and professional development could assist teachers in knowing the 'how' to teach an arts integrated lesson. When developing a professional development programme there are multiple factors to consider, such as the teacher's knowledge, experience, the context of the classroom, of the wider school community and beyond that, the society in which the school is situated. According to Timperley, (2008) "It is important to set up conditions that are responsive to the ways in which teachers learn" (p. 6). This may seem an obvious statement and yet each teacher is different, catering for differences within different contexts is a complex problem.

Another factor that emerged during the week of arts integration activities was the amount of time that it took to set up and deliver each activity. The teacher was more tired than usual at the end of

each day. This was possibly because the approach was new and each step required a deliberate action, rather than allowing an intuitive teaching pedagogical approach to flow. There were often cards to make, or county names to colour code, number and distribute around the school buildings. All of these actions required extra work, but once they had been created, could be used again in another lesson.

DISCUSSION

Observing one teacher in one classroom provided opportunities to gain rich insights concerning classroom realities and teacher concerns. A clear finding from this small case study was that in implementing an arts integration programme, teachers would need professional development. In our Melbourne case study, we found that despite the teacher having arts qualifications and experience, understanding the what and how of arts integration was a challenge. Again, this case study reiterates the importance of fully appreciating the teachers' context and learning journey. Before embarking on a professional development programme, it would seem wise to establish a context in which teachers are ready to embark on a new journey. Shulman and Shulman (2004) discuss the difficulties in establishing a community of learners [teacher development],

> Our particular challenge was to create a teacher education experience that would prepare teachers to create, sustain and educate in a 'community of learners'…the work was quite daunting, and we were reminded constantly of how enormously different from one another were the teachers with whom we worked, and especially how much they varied in the ease or difficulty with which these novel ideas were accepted and applied in their work (p.257).

When providing professional development for teachers in arts integration, the problems of teacher learning are exaggerated, as rather than learn about a new topic, teachers are being asked to change their well-established teaching pedagogies. Shulman and Shulman (2007) established that in order to learn, teachers need to be "ready, willing, able, reflective and communal" (p.259) and beyond that, "the features of accomplished teacher development, and thus of teacher learning are: Vision, Motivation, Understanding, Practice, Reflection and Community" (p.259).

Teaching may sometimes look easy to an outsider, but it is a complex activity that requires moment by moment decisions. Teachers may spend many years building a confident base from where their personal pedagogy is formed. While this article contends that an arts integration pedagogy encourages a high level of student engagement and personal achievement, there may be some resistance from teachers when it comes to implementation. A teacher may assert that what they are already doing is working successfully, so why change it? Why indeed? Perhaps the question to be asked here is, what impact would a change in my pedagogical approach have on student outcomes? "Further, success needs to be defined not in terms of teacher mastery of new strategies but in terms of the impact that changed practice has on valued outcomes" (Timperley, 2008, p. 8). If a teacher then takes the next step in deciding to trial an arts integration pedagogy, then professional development would arguably be essential. Such a large change in a pedagogical approach to teaching would require support, from principals, colleagues, students, parents and above all, teachers would require support from specifically developed, professional development programmes.

Alongside the many examples of arts integrated classrooms that have been documented through qualitative research methods, Martin (2017) has documented the findings of a research study in Canada where data was gathered through a quantitative process that included psychometric testing.

To date there is limited empirical research measuring the effects of arts in education. Martin's (2017) research appears to be a rare academic study that measures the outcomes of arts integration through quantitative research. Her concern for a decline in student engagement in Canadian schools, led to the introduction of "three different pedagogical approaches believed to increase student engagement in the middle years" (p.2). One of these approaches was titled Arts Integrated Collective Creation (AICC). Of the major findings, Martin (2017) states,

> Findings advance the theory of socially empowered learning in identifying an instructional approach that effectively increases intellectual engagement: Educational Arts Integrated Social Enterprise (EASE) (p.3).

It can be assumed that where disengaged students become engaged through arts integration, then those students who are already engaged in learning will achieve at even higher levels than they had in the past. Evidence to date suggests that all students benefit from an arts integrated curriculum (O'Ryan & Tishman, 2017; Fleming, Koff & Warner, 2001; Merrell & Tymms, 2010; Fraser, Aitken & Whyte, 2013).

CONCLUSION

Despite the obvious obstacles involved in undisciplining the arts, and employing an arts integration pedagogy, the advantages of such an approach may be weighted up alongside the difficulties. There is considerable research (Clapp. Ross, Tishman, 2017; Gardner & Boix-Mansilla, 1994; Clapp, Ross, O'Ryan & Tishman, 2017; Fleming, Koff & Warner, 2001; Merrell & Tymms, 2010; Fraser, Aitken & Whyte, 2013; McDonald & Melchoir, 2008; Werner, 2001) that documents the successful integration of the arts in a school curriculum. Koff & Warner (2001) state,

> Integrated teaching deepens education by allowing students to enter each project with their strengths, to build up their learning weaknesses within a safe environment, and to explore ideas in their natural context so that the ideas are connected, thus creating greater possibilities for the retention of the concepts (p.143).

What we are proposing is not intended to completely replace tried and true pedagogical approaches to teaching. Research (Buck & Snook, 2017; Fleming, Merrell & Tymms, 2010; Martin, 2017) suggests however, that an arts integrated pedagogy could assist in developing student confidence and creativity and develop leadership skills through collaboration and problem-solving activities. Where arts integration is employed alongside conventional teaching methods, students will happily engage in their learning, increasing their personal academic outcomes.

The journey ahead however is a difficult one that may be prone to falter at different points along the way. The first step would be to create a sustainable culture where teachers feel "ready, willing, able, reflective and communal" (Shulman and Shulman, 2007, p. 259) to make change. When establishing sustainable change, all parties must share a common understanding of the goals of arts integration and how they might be achieved. It is important to look at the broad objectives of arts integration to establish a shared set of values. Marshall, Coleman and Reason (2011) discuss establishing sustainability in leadership and have created a series of points that relate to their specific projects. Their points however, have relevance to an implementation of an arts pedagogy in schools.

1. Create an enabling environment
2. Define objectives and plan how best to attain them
3. Build alliances
4. Check in with opponents – share concerns and investigate their understandings
5. Begin to deliver (Research, developing products)
6. Publicise products
7. Continuously monitor progress (p. 161)

While an arts integration programme may not have opponents in terms of an organization, there will be those who do not share the enthusiasm of others and for any number of reasons, may be averse to arts integration. It is as important to acknowledge and understand different points of view as it is to encourage and support those on the arts integration journey. Keeping the project in the public eye will assist in developing an understanding and in turn bring support to those of the arts integration journey.

Despite the limits of the size of this study, the findings support other research conducted (Buck & Snook, 2017; Buck & Snook, 2016; Snook & Buck, 2014). This Melbourne school observation provided more evidence of the challenges and benefits of arts integration in classrooms and has provided more detail that is shaping our ongoing research. We have taken our learnings from Melbourne and begun to work with teachers and school administrators in Oturu school in the far north of New Zealand. Here all teachers are learning to implement arts integration within their classrooms. In our research journey we hope to report on further challenges and successes as observed by teachers, Principals, administrative staff and students at Oturu School.

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