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**GLOBAL INSIGHTS**

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04/18

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# KEVIN J RUTH

Chief Executive, ECIS

We are pleased to share this issue on the language and design of learning. It is humbling to read such quality work, and be mesmerised by what those in our community are undertaking and accomplishing every day with young people.

Creating a teacher appraisal system that fosters and promotes professional growth whilst meeting the demands we often encounter from local cultures is a great example of how we are called to design "on purpose." Fundamentally, we must engage in questions around what we value, and look to integrate that with system requirements that may be beyond our sphere of influence. I take off my figurative hat to Lorna Page and other professionals who are deeply ensconced in the work of 'learning experience design' for those charged with the awesome responsibility of educating the next generation of learners and leaders.

At the heart of many of the articles contained in this issue is the notion of engagement, a necessary element for design, whether that design is centred on an engineering course, multilingual programming and associated opportunities, or even dealing with the stress that comes with assessment. On that note, we are thrilled and honoured to include a student article that, within the context of stress, upholds the time-tested value of relationships as a key value in our school communities. Including student voice in Global Insights is something toward which we should strive regularly.

Lastly, a word about language. How we design our learning around multiple languages speaks volumes about what we value. We are prompted to consider whether we are planning (and performing) adequately when it comes to language(s) in our schools, inasmuch as we tout our own internationalism. How are we living into that? How might we do even better? What do our curricular choices around languages suggest about us, as schools and communities?

A key role for us is to question why we do things, and to consider how we might create even more impact for our students and their families through our actions. Design should have that kind of effect, and it should compel us to view ourselves (whether teachers or leaders) as 'designers of learning experiences,' whether for students or for our colleagues.

Toward better things, always.

Kevin J Ruth

Commission on
International Education

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*Simon Head, Director, International School of Düsseldorf*

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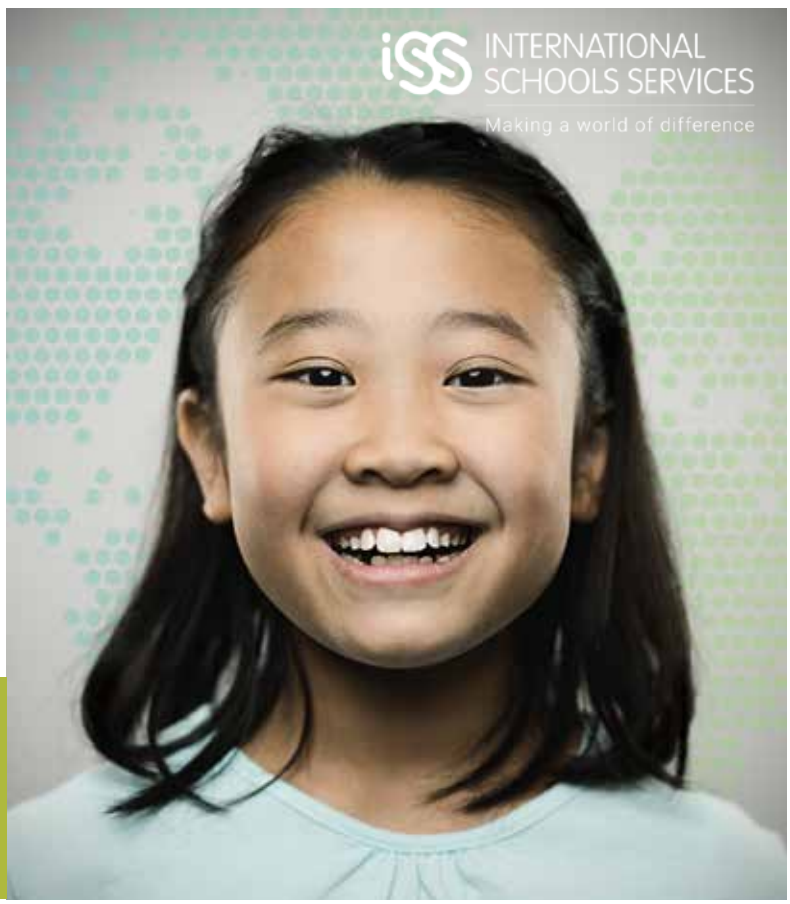

# TO COMPLY OR NOT TO COMPLY

## (IS THAT THE QUESTION?)

# How one school changed the language and design of its appraisal context in order to foster meaningful professional growth.

**Dr Lorna Page** | Teacher of English
International School of Stavanger

Nestled between the snow-capped mountains and the splendid beauty of Norway's fjords sits an international school with a difference. An international school that has sought to question traditional models of teacher appraisal. Models that often to seek to grade and judge a teacher's classroom practice through a series of empty exercises of compliance and tick-boxes (Calvert, 2016). Tick-boxes that encourage pigeonholing of formulaic practices in lame attempts to identify what is good teaching and good teaching practices. Practices that on the surface appear to work, but scratch deeper are doing little to grow a teacher's knowledge, craft, or their sense of professionalism and development as expert practitioners.

The school realised that if teachers were to feel empowered, enthused and motivated by their appraisal system, change had to happen. But how do you foster teachers' learning growth in a tick-box system of accountability? This was the question that an action research project at the International School of Stavanger sought to investigate and reimagine. Ultimately, their aim was to integrate a new system of teacher appraisal. A system that met the demands of accountability, but also developed teachers' practice in a meaningful learning growth capacity.

It all began in the spring of 2016 when Director of the school, Gareth Jones was leading a meeting as part of the school's regular review cycle. *"I asked the question to myself and principals: given the amount of time, energy and effort that you have exerted, using any of professional appraisal processes that you have used over the years, do you think you have ever had a really significant positive impact on professional growth, that in turn, has had a significant impact on student learning? After an initial silence, a few scrambled examples, it was realised that we were slow learners, but learners nonetheless, and we knew that our approach had to change".* Mr. Jones and his team took decisive action. Having identified that the school's current appraisal model did not promote growth, it sought to create something that was fit for purpose. But how does a school create an appraisal process that fosters and promotes professional growth, whilst at the same time meets legislative teaching requirements?

To begin, the school needed to capture its teachers' voices. Did its teachers agree that the current model was not fit for purpose? Identifying what teachers wanted from an appraisal system that would make them feel valued, motivated and trusted as professional practitioners was the keystone to action.

The school's seventy-one teachers were invited to complete a confidential questionnaire that sought to identify and survey their opinions. Questions included their experiences of the current appraisal model; their views on professional development; and their ideas for change. As responses come through, it became clear to the action research team that their hunches were correct: teachers wanted change.

The questionnaire, and subsequent follow up intereviews, provided a much needed, confidential

space for teachers to offer honest, open feedback. They were clear in their voices reporting such issues with the then appraisal system as, 'it feels more as it is being done to tick a box, than as part of a shared, continuing professional development process'; 'it does not inspire or push me to do anything differently'; 'it seems somewhat like a formality'.

Equally, teachers were clear in the direction of change they thought appropriate: 'find ways to build the confidence of all teachers and a sense of team membership and support between colleagues'; 'work in a way that creates trust, confidence and inspires teachers to work on areas that they wish to improve or develop'; 'there are always things we can do better and learn from one another'. The overarching voice was one of collaboration. A desire to work with, share and learn from one other as professionals. This all sounded wonderful in theory – a system that saw teachers working, learning and growing collaboratively, but how could the school's appraisal system support a system of collaboration whilst maintaining the legislative demands of accountability? Now that was the question.

A shift in thinking had to take place. By removing the focus from a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, the team drilled down to identify the components of each system. The 'a-ha moment' came when they separated them into two distinct areas: Professional Learning Growth and Accountability. After much time, many meetings, consultations with The Common Ground Collaborative (Thecgcproject.org., 2018), and further reading, a new model emerged. With it, a reinvented system of

***"Teachers, like children, choose from whom they will learn."***

appraisal that kept learning at its core, but empowered teachers and administrators to take action and grow professionally in a context that held both meaning and focus.

The new model gave teachers the independence, the capacity to act purposefully, and the opportunity to select activities that met their learning needs. In the same way as we personalise learning for pupils, the International School of Stavanger was now personalising learning for their teachers. In doing so, it removed the practice of teachers conforming to a tick-box formulaic approach to appraisal.

The model required teachers to select a minimum of one Growth activity to complete annually from a choice of five:

1. Peer Observation
2. Mentoring
3. Lesson Study
4. Action Research
5. Delivering Professional Development


A fundamental factor of the model was the requirement for teachers to work collaboratively, but more than that, for teachers to work with trusted colleagues. As Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2015, p.13) assert, '[teachers], like children, choose from whom they will learn'.


With each Growth area a set of guidelines was created to support and guide teachers through their choice. This was particularly important from Growth areas such as lesson study, where teachers must follow a distinct route to collaboratively plan, teach, observe and analyse the learning and teaching that has taken place in a research lesson (Maddern, 2012). As O'Leary states, 'One of the defining qualities of lesson study is that it is underpinned by an ethos of teacher collaboration and cooperation' (O'Leary, 2014, p.137); however, if not followed correctly, it risks becoming a team taught lesson void of research and meaningful growth gains.

Underpinning each activity was the requirement for teachers to critically reflect on their practice; for them to identify, through a shared narrative, the learning that had taken place. Furthermore, it allowed teachers to centre themselves through their mutual actions and beliefs (Brookfield, 2017). In schools, there is often an assumption that administrators and supervisors are in the best place to identify 'good teaching' and are able to provide a teacher with valued, specific,

***"A fundamental factor of the model was the requirement for teachers to work collaboratively."***

developmental feedback and impactful learning gains. Such assumptions are misguided. The model created by the International School of Stavanger still allows for administers to provide comment, but its value is in putting teachers at the heart of targeted, specific, formative feedback. Furthermore, the model removes from the process any elements of fear that are most prevalent in more traditional models of teacher appraisal, such as formal lesson observation (Cullingford, 1999).

To meet the Accountability requirements, teachers were invited to formally share with their administrator,

through a professional discussion, what learning and growth they had achieved. Through this guided discussion, teachers evaluated their progress and set themselves growth targets. Again, teachers were being given opportunities to personalise their learning and professional growth. Furthermore, it allowed the administrator to check that professional and legal obligations had taken place in an environment that was conducive to teacher learning, not teacher monitoring. Principal of Early Childhood and Primary, Jill Raven said of the previous model: "*As a supervising principal it had become clear to me that when I entered a teacher´s classroom it was being viewed as evaluative and part of accountability - it did not support professional growth. As the supervising principal it did not matter my intention, it was the reality of the role that made it evaluative-always. Now, by stepping aside and making room for teachers to work collaboratively with colleagues on professional goals, the professional growth is authentic and meaningful.*"

Although the school's reinvented appraisal system remains in its infancy, the school is confident that its approach will foster a community of self-directed, curious, engaged teachers that can realise their professional learning goals. To comply, or not to comply is not the question. The question is: how can we grow as innovative, creative professionals that have learning at our core.

## About the author

**Dr Lorna Page** is a high school teacher, researcher and fellow of the Society of Education and Training. Her research work centres on teacher professionalism, specifically lesson observation, teacher education, policy and practice. Her PhD explored how teachers perceive, engage and experience being observed teaching. In a career spanning 20 years in education, Lorna's worked as a teacher educator, lecturer and specialist in BSL. She is also co-author of 'Reclaiming Lesson Observation: Supporting Excellence in Teacher Learning' (2016).

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# DESIGNED TO FLOAT YOUR BOAT

**Bill Tihen**
**Dan Patton**
**Paul Magnusson**
Leysin American School | Switzerland

When we designed our new middle school (grades 7 and 8) a few years ago, we included two sections of academic exploration. Academic exploration classes last only four or five weeks, with approximately 15 class meetings. The courses give students an opportunity to experience a new subject for a short period of time.

These classes are ungraded and students present their work instead of writing a final exam.

Two faculty members, Bill of our IT department and Dan, a biology teacher, have designed and taught several interesting academic exploration classes. In one, students built a garden in a terrarium controlled by robotics, combining Arduino technology with dirt and water. The culminating project was to leave the gardens "turned-on," without human intervention, during the school's spring break. When the students and faculty returned to school two weeks later, those gardens that were living were deemed a success. The robotics tending the dead gardens, or the gardens floating in a pool of water, understandably needed a bit more work.

Another course, Introduction to Engineering, invited students to form a company, develop a product, share their work on a GitHub website they made themselves, and present their products to an audience of potential investors (guest teachers and administrators) that came to their final day of class. Unique to this class was the introduction of the agile workflow, a way of working that encouraged self-regulation, collaboration, and autonomy from teacher directives.

Taking what they learned in these classes a step further, Bill and Dan teamed up in 2017-2018 to offer 3D Nautical Design. Although the students don't know the specific terms below and the course is only an introduction, it is fair to say that they now have some experience with:

- analytical geometry;
- 3-D coordinates;
- set theory operations;
- programming basics, including blocks, functions, and variables;
- iterative design exploring the physics of buoyancy, resistance, stability, maneuverability and tracking (the ability to go straight) in water,
- workflow;
- progress tracking;
- marketing; and
- public speaking.

*Sample Student logo for a design company*

Here's how the class was structured, over 15 class sessions:

Students, in groups of three or four, created boat design companies. They imagined and wrote down how the company was founded, what business mission it pursued, and then designed its logo. Next students were introduced to the class workflow and how progress was measured. They used a technique called a burndown chart, enabling them to see clearly if they were on pace to finish their project.

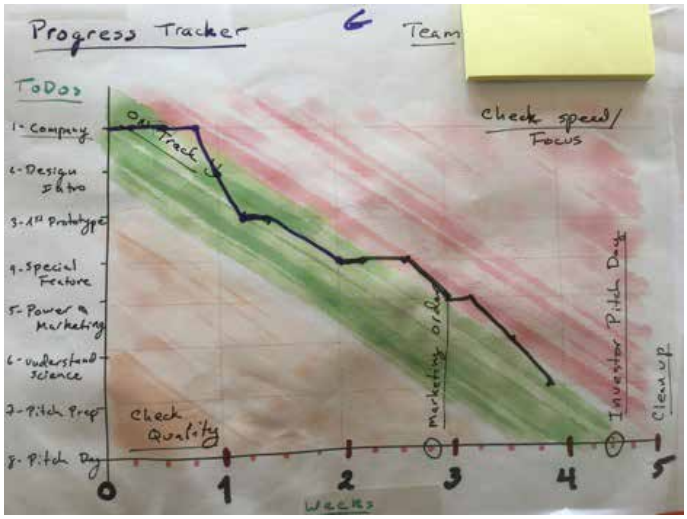
Students learned the basics of the design tools they needed to bring their company to life. Students used OpenSCAD and MakerBot software to design and print boats. They started with a hollow box, which makes a terrible boat, but is easy to design. Then they made small, iterative improvements to the boat using basic 3D geometric shapes, scaling, and set theory group differences. Each time the students changed their dimensions and printed a new boat, they ran tests in the testing pool, observing how the boat crossed the pool in calm and wavy water, with and without a crosswind.

The tests served as inputs for further modifications. Simulating boat companies through testing a variety of boat designs created many real life lessons. The students also ran into many real life problems. One of these problems occurred when printing larger boats. The MakerBot Replicator 2 tended to introduce some warp to the printed boat. The warp was an unplanned curve in the hall, which affected performance, as the students could see during testing. To solve this problem, the students began printing their boats vertically, with a flattened stern as a secure base. They removed the tendency of the printer to introduce warp, but some students were concerned, based on what they had learned from their research, that a flat stern increases drag in the water, due to the turbulence it creates. It was wonderful that the students wrestled with the trade off between technical compromises and an ideal design. Such is life.

After several iterations, students made a postcard with a photo on one side and their design skills and company information on the back. The postcard was handed to the audience on Investor Day, the last day of the class. Investors were teachers and administrators with play money they had been given to invest in their favorite boat companies. Each student group gave a short persuasive pitch, explaining why their company was a good investment.

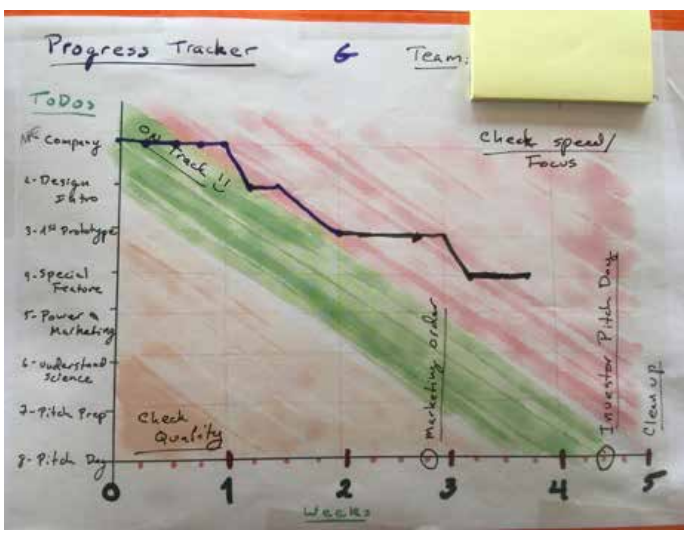
When the students finished their pitches, it was time for snacks and for the audience to invest their money. A final teachable moment presented itself. All student groups save one went right for the snacks. The savvy group stayed behind, taking up a position at the table where the investors were placing their money in envelopes, labeled with the different boat companies. “Thank you,” they said again and again, as their envelope started to fill. All teams had done their marketing, but only one team closed the sale. And that is the team that received the highest investment total.

With the completion of Investor Day, the class ended and new classes started the following Monday. Bill and Dan, however, are already talking about their next multidisciplinary course. It is sure to be a good one.

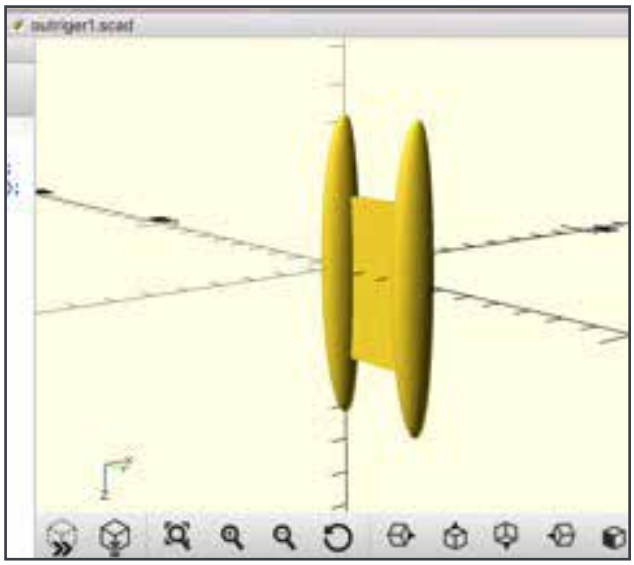



*The burndown chart (a measure of progress toward the final goal) of a high functioning student group.*

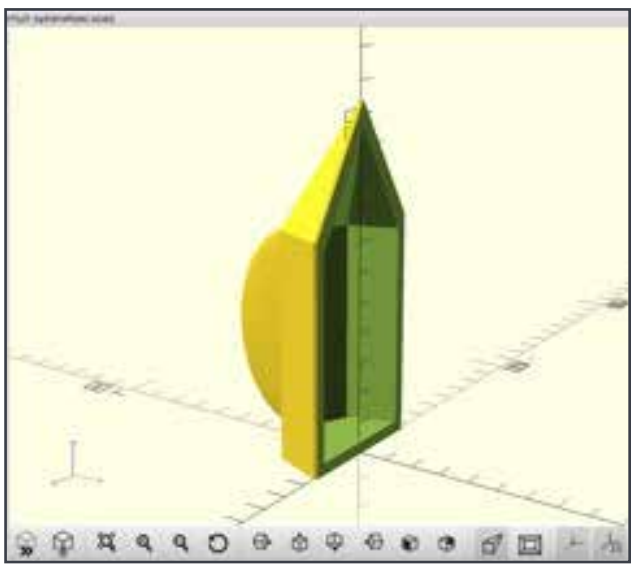
***“These classes are ungraded and students present their work instead of writing a final exam.”***




*A burndown chart of a group that struggled to work together.*




Sample boat by  a student, showing the use of geometric shapes (cubes & spheres) and geometric algebra manipulated with translation, as well as scaling and set theory operations (union and difference).



Sample boat by the a teacher, demonstrating modules (reusing code) and variables to resize the boat at will for different design needs. This also demonstrates the concept of faces, used to create additional shapes (in this case a hull with 2 points of stability).

## About the authors

**Bill Tihen** works in IT as the school's Systems Engineer and Coder. He enjoys exploring new ideas using Lean Start-Up methodology, particularly when he can share them with middle school students in short, creative classes. Bill has also worked as an Electrical Engineer, Robotics Engineer, Research Engineer, Environmental Educator, and as an Outward Bound Instructor.  He enjoys technologies involving Arduino, OpenSCAD, R, Python, and Elixir. btihen@las.ch

**Dan Patton** is a science teacher with an interest in adding authenticity to the curriculum through interdisciplinary "real world" projects. As a member of the STEAM special interest group with ECIS, Dan and others have been been experimenting with STEM and citizen science projects to engage students in projects that have benefits and constraints beyond the classroom. Dan is relatively new to computer programming, but sees its power and has worked with Bill to learn Arduino and OpenSCAD. His next challenge is Python, which students will use to solve analysis problems with citizen science data. dpatton@las.ch

**Paul Magnuson** is the director of the middle school and the school's educational research department, which supports the exploration of innovative teaching and learning. He has been a member of the ECIS special interest group for Research Engaged Schools since its creation eight years ago. pmagnuson@las.ch

# THE GOLDEN RULE OF INSPIRING LEARNING

**Andrea Robson** | Director
Inspired Learning

The central question in many schools is how to continually raise the standard of pupils' learning. Fundamentally, progress and achievement are the bottom line. So, what are the most effective ways of achieving this, without suffering initiative overload, or excessive change? Sadly, this often creates a continual tension between staff, who feel there is already too much to do, and school leaders who feel the school needs to do more.

The irony is that both leaders and teachers would gladly "do more" if it enabled children to maximize their true potential. There is already a huge amount of brain, psychological and learning based evidence available to us, all imperative in improving children's ability to learn. As such, we don't lack the knowledge, skill or resources around learning - yet still the issue prevails. Sometimes I feel the most elegant solution is the one that is so easy to overlook. It is, very simply, pupil´s genuine engagement in their learning.

## The golden rule of engagement

As a Certified Coach, I am well aware that it is unethical, not to mention completely pointless, to coach a client who will go through the motions of being coached, without engaging with, or committing to, the learning process. In these circumstances, virtually no learning of any depth or meaning takes place. While this seems obvious, it is easy for us to forget that the same principle applies to teaching. So, I would like to share with you two of the approaches that I have found to be most effective in inspiring pupil engagement. By this, I mean that they assist children to take control of their learning, and so create the golden rule of pupil engagement.

The first approach helps children to think about, and find connections between what they are learning, and the ways in which this is relevant and meaningful to them. It helps them develop a sense of purpose, enabling them to identify how what they are learning relates to them personally. The second approach is to engage children in generating their own success criteria so that they can continually monitor their own progress, and feel a sense of achievement as they meet and exceed their own challenges. I believe that combining these two approaches help children thrive in and out

***"It is, very simply, pupils' genuine engagement in their learning."***

of the classroom environment, personally as well as academically. They are designing their learning, so that it is relevant, meaningful and purposeful to them, without additional workload for the teacher.

## What's the point?

All too often, children are disengaged because they see no connection between their lives and what is being taught. Therefore, it is essential to connect the how and why they are learning something. It takes just a few minutes to achieve this at the start of each lesson. Yet those precious few minutes matter because this shifts the mindset from just "doing" to being engaged. Now children can see relevance and purpose in what they are learning for them. So, when we ask children, "Why are we learning this?" they soon start to identify real-life connections for themselves. We are all unique, so it stands to reason that children will see the world in a way that is meaningful to them, and so come up with different ideas. All this is part of the learning process. This approach is like a muscle, the more we use it the more powerful it becomes.

Let us take the example of using this approach with writing first person recounts from the curriculum. At first sight, knowing how to write in the first person is about accurate use of pronouns, or noun and verb agreement – neither of which are especially exciting. However, by including the reasons why children need to learn about this, first person recounts suddenly enable children to see an event from another person's point of view. It´s a key life skill and it is right there in the, often rather dry, curriculum content. Being able to see another point of view can help children see the impact of their behaviour towards others. This applies when they are in the playground, working in groups, or even

in their power struggles with others. Once they see how behaviours can seem appropriate to the person exhibiting them, but not to another person looking in, then that becomes a very powerful way to engage children. The list is endless – the possibilities genuinely exciting.

## What is success?

If children know what they need to do in order to be successful in their learning, they will aim for those standards - and higher. Again, this isn´t new; success criteria have been around for many years. Success criteria are explicitly linked to the purposeful learning intention for the lesson. As such, they are an excellent way for the children to articulate what they know about what they are learning – and for the teacher to be clear on the same. Again, those few precious minutes, this time before the start of the task, truly matter, as their power to propel learning is staggering. Success criteria have two very distinct purposes. The first is to enable children to know exactly what they need to achieve in order to be successful in their learning. Secondly, they enable children to self or peer-assess their work at the end of the lesson, so they can reflect on what went well, and identify what did not. This enables children to immediately identify what they need to focus on next time. It is one of the most powerful feed-forward approaches in learning – and the teacher didn´t tell the children – they were able to identify it for themselves. This leads to both powerful engagement and learning focused conversations with the children.

To give an example, I was working with a ten year-old and together we crafted the success criteria for a short piece of writing. The aim was to improve his grasp of basic sentence punctuation. We established clear success criteria. This included punctuation at the end of a sentence, include a person´s point of view and using a combination of long and short sentences. Immediately, before we started the task, he blurted out, *"Hang on, I want to include two different points of view. One isn´t enough."* He was truly engaged in the learning, not just the activity. I very much doubt whether that extension of that challenge would have happened had I just told him to complete the task. When he assessed his writing against these criteria at the end of the task, he identified that he hadn´t used a question mark in his writing. So, he has set that as a target for next time. He was able to do that, simply because he could self-assess his writing against what it meant to be successful. The standards were clear. They had been designed by him in a language

he understood. He had the control and he was totally committed to reaching and exceeding those standards.

## It´s not "doing more"

When I deliver training in schools, I take time to reiterate the message that these approaches are not "add-ons." They are not "extras" to a teacher´s workload. Rather, it is "flipping it" – these simple approaches underpin genuine pupil engagement. Their impact when used in conjunction with one another is powerful and leads to a dramatic rise in pupil attainment and progress. Teachers are already aiming for this outcome – if we can engage children, then the children do the heavy lifting – not the teacher.

In conclusion, when children drive their own learning, they make astonishing progress. Their interest in the world around them becomes profoundly improved. They become flexible, proactive and communicative learners. They have a growing awareness of how to solve problems. They are resilient, and open to new ideas. To coin a phrase, they develop a passion for learning. The teachers who enable children to thrive, take risks and achieve standards of excellence are in a league of their own. School leaders, who are responsible for pioneering initiatives that enable a significant rise in school standards, are then truly exceptional. Children and teens who are inspired, thrive. Yet you will always know that you were the one who made that possible. That to me, is inspired learning.

## About the author

**Andrea Robson** is a Certified Organisational and Leadership Coach, former Head of School, founder of Inspired Learning and an international trainer and workshop leader. She is the co- author of "Igniting a Passion for Learning in the Primary School" and is passionate in enabling all stakeholders within the education system to thrive and maximise their true potential.

# INSPIRING DAYS IN VIENNA

# PLANNING FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVELY

**Eowyn Crisfield-Burr** | Director
Crisfield Educational Consulting

*" A strong framework for language objectives starts with functional language goals "*

Given the increasing linguistic diversity in international school classrooms, there is still relatively little attention paid to actively planning for language development. There is a common misunderstanding that simply teaching the curriculum in English is sufficient to for students to learn English This belief is flawed on many levels. Firstly, it is not supported by language acquisition research: years of research on immersion education have shown clearly that simply using the new language as the vehicular language for teaching does not automatically produce fluency or accuracy (Lyster, 2007). Therefore, this approach often produces students who have excellent comprehension skills and speaking skills, but are lacking in their ability to write with the levels of language needed to be academically proficient. Secondly, it neglects the very real experience of students who are expected to learn a language while also learning in that language – a double challenge that is rarely recognised and acknowledged in classrooms and in assessment. And finally, it neglects to adhere to the standard for all other teaching that happens in schools, which is that we plan for learning.

In every other subject, teachers have a curriculum to follow, and plan learning, classroom experiences, and assessments to meet the curricular goals for their classes. When it comes to language learning, we follow a curriculum for foreign languages, we follow a curriculum for English language and literacy, and yet when it comes to planning for EAL/ELL in the classroom, there is often no plan at all. Students are given support in different ways, and some schools do use a curriculum for withdrawal classes for new learners, but when students are mainstreamed they habitually face learning English to a high academic level with no consistent programme for development and tracking of their language progress outside the normal school processes designed for native-speaker learners.

## Making language a part of the curriculum

*"...including systematic and explicit language instruction that is linked to students' communicative needs Is important in promoting additional-language proficiency even when content is the vehicle for teaching."* (Genesee & Hamayan, 2016, p. 33)

Students who are learning language and learning through language face a double challenge in our schools. They are learning a new language, and attempting to learn content through that language simultaneously. Generally, this is happening alongside native speakers of English (or other school language), and the two very different cohorts are taught and assessed on the same curriculum and schedule. Supporting language learners overtly across the curriculum will give them a better chance to not only learn English more quickly (or any other language of instruction) but it will also provide them with better access to the curriculum. Planning for language growth in the curriculum starts at the same place as any other planning: setting objectives.

The inclusion of language objectives should be mandated consistently across subjects in primary school as well as in secondary school. Every unit or theme, whether it be a PYP Unit of Inquiry, a Maths unit or a unit on basketball, has language involved in understanding content and needed for producing content. The planning process starts with the following questions:

1. What language do students have to learn to be able to access this curriculum content?
2. What opportunities are presented by this content to develop students' broader language skills?

A strong framework for language objectives starts with functional language goals which relate to what the students will need to do with language (i.e. describing, comparing, predicting, sequencing, etc.). The chosen functions will inform the kind of language structures needed, and will be a starting point for vocabulary development. A second source of input for vocabulary development is to look at the three tiers of vocabulary: Tier 1 (everyday language; Tier 2 (cross-disciplinary) and Tier 3 (Academic) vocabulary. Planning for and integrating language objectives across the curriculum is not always straightforward, as the planning documents for most curricula do not include clear and specific space for this aspect of planning. Teachers need to include in their planning specific information about what language will be developed in their teaching, alongside the subject specific content. If this space is not on the current planning system in use, schools need to create their own space or additional documentation to ensure that language objectives are set consistently and unambiguously.

## Developing a school-wide language development trajectory

There are a variety of starting points for developing a school-specific language trajectory. A wide variety of vocabulary lists is available online for all subjects, and there is particularly good support for the Academic Word List (AWL: Tier 3). While these resources can be a good first step, they should be considered as a starting point, and not an end point. Each school has a particular approach to education, and a particular implementation of the chosen curriculum. The language trajectory should include that which is key for learning within the school itself, and not only from outside sources. This creates a 2-step process, with the first step being developing a draft language learning trajectory from outside sources and the second step being the refinement of this trajectory to reflect the the specific curriculum and pedagogy of the school.

A good school-wide language development trajectory will contain documentation that tracks the development of functional language both horizontally and vertically, as well as bespoke vocabulary development (both Tier 2 and Tier 3, and potentially also Tier 1 for young learners) for each year group, by subject. The consistent use and implementation of this resource will make certain that language development is being overtly attended to across the curriculum, thus providing better scaffolding for language learners.

## Planning for learning

The process of planning for language development is best embedded within the regular curricular planning,

rather than being a separate process. Much like unit or topic planning, planning for language works well within a backwards by design model (Wiggens & MacTighe, 2005).

1. Set learning objectives and other relevant objectives

2. Design or identify summative assessment: How will you evaluate success?
What language is involved in the assessment?

3. Set language objectives: Identify the necessary language needed to learn within the unit and successfully complete the summative assessment (functions, structures, vocabularly)

4. Plan learning engagements to build towards learning and language objectives
Plan for language support if needed (EAL, other)

The planning system essentially requires the addition of one extra step, which is setting language objectives. These are set by topic/unit, and over the academic year will ensure the coverage of the language trajectory for that year group. Integrating the language objectives into the unit plan, and connecting them to the assessment assures that the students will have scaffolding throughout the unit that builds the functions/structures/vocabulary necessary to be successful in the summative assessment. Putting a system such as this into place often requires collaboration between subject/classroom teachers and EAL specialists, as initially setting language objectives can be challenging for teachers without language teaching training or experience.

## What is the pay-off?

Developing a school-wide language trajectory, integrating a language-rich planning system and pedagogy are all significant challenges for a school. It is a longitudinal journey and results may not be immediate. Despite the challenges, research clearly shows that programmes that include overt and explicit focus on language as connected to the curriculum and context provide learners with the potential to improve not only in language development but also in subject-area performance, which makes it a worthwhile undertaking for any international school. These benefits are not limited to supporting language learners; they also provide excellent scaffolding and differentiation for English native speakers in their development of academic English, and for students with other areas of challenge. Overall, attending to language development as a discrete element of teaching in English provides the potential for students to develop academic English across the curriculum more efficiently than through an immersion-only model.

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## About the author

**Eowyn Crisfield** is a Canadian-educated specialist (BA TEFL, MA Applied Linguistics) in languages across the curriculum, including EAL/ELL, home languages, bilingual and immersion education, super-diverse schools and translanguaging. She maintains two popular blogs; for parents (onraisingbilingualchildren.com); and for teachers (www.crisfieldeducationalconsulting.com) and writes regularly for other publications. She is co-author of the recent book "*Linguistic and Cultural Innovation in Schools: The Languages Challenge*" (Palgrave-Macmillan, Feb. 2018, with Jane Spiro, co-author).

SCHOOL *Snapshot*

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*St. Gilgen International School offers a world-class international education set in the culturally rich and beautiful village of St. Gilgen, Austria. The school combines the traditional charm, security, and cultural heritage of a small village, with a dynamic and modern teaching and learning environment and an ambitious and globally-minded school community.*

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With the support of our partners, to be able to continue to offer a means tested scholarship program up to approximately 20% of our student body.

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
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| 86 BOARDERS | 44 TEACHING STAFF | 12 AVERAGE CLASS SIZE | 31 NATIONALITIES |

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Summer camp learning tends to play second fiddle to academic year learning.

There might be some good reasons to reconsider. Summer camp is full of fun, games, flexibility, and creativity. Aren't those the type of things that support good learning, no matter what season of the year?

When I look back on my own career so far, many of the key insights I draw on as a middle school leader come from my years working in summer camp. Here are seven of them that come up daily.

## Adults should surround themselves with kids

Maybe it's to learn what's next on the schedule, or to hear the rules for a game, or to tell stories and sing songs. Whatever the reason, there are lots of whole group meetings in summer camp. There's usually a couple leaders at the front vying for the attention of a squirrely horde of kids. The rest of the adults know to spread out among the kids, modeling good listening behavior and, better yet, being close to kids to help with crowd control.

Just last week we had a large meeting with students. A number of teachers attended the meeting, taking up their usual positions in the back of the room, next to each other, physically separated from the students. When the first teacher arrived, I asked her to move in order to sit with students. She smiled at me blankly. Meanwhile other teachers arrived and took up positions next to her. Aargh.

How we position ourselves physically sends a strong message to our students about how we position ourselves mentally. Be with the students, as collegial learners. Besides, you'll make it a lot easier for your colleague at the front.

## Get two adults with a group of students

The number of staff assigned to groups of kids may be the biggest difference between summer and academic year learning.

I'll never forget watching two young camp counselors

"teach" a radio show activity. They were recording their own voices, laughing, having a great time … and had entirely forgotten the kids that had signed up for their activity. I could see on the faces of the kids that they wanted to be part of the activity, too, if only because it looked like so much fun. "If the teachers would just pay attention to me," they must have been thinking. "How can I have that much fun, too?" The kids got to watch good modeling. They also realized these two staff members would be doing this activity even if they, the kids, weren't there. That seemed to pique their motivation.

During the academic year, we generally sort one teacher into a room of several students. Not because it's pedagogically best, but rather for more mundane reasons. The result is that in our classrooms, adults rarely get to model how they collaborate in order to learn. Students don't see how we get stuck, get unstuck, and get stuck again. How the whole process of learning unfolds, between people, not just in one person.

## Have a plan, be enthusiastic

Twenty years ago the mantra during my summers at a German language immersion camp was: "Habt einen Plan, seid begeistert." Have a plan, yes indeed, and then be enthusiastic. A good plan with no enthusiasm is a

boring loss of potential. No plan with lots of enthusiasm comes across as maniacal. Neither approaches lead to much learning.

Since we've been pulling the Agile Mindset into education (see Willy Wijnand's eduScrum, John Miller's Agile Classrooms, and others), we've done lots of thinking about the type of plans we have and how we use them. We're learning to avoid the Big Plan - the one that shows every step of the way. Big plans, we've discovered, are created when you know the least about what you are doing, namely: before you have started working. Smaller plans start with the assumption that you'll adapt along the way. The adaptation of the plan isn't wasted effort, it often is an act of addressing student interest, of differentiating for students, of playing to your own teaching strengths. And because the plan is smaller, it's more flexible. The teacher has more ownership, which in turn supports enthusiasm. Since you've got both a plan and enthusiasm, plan lightly.

## You go from point A toward point B but …

One fantastic mentor told me once that as administrators we should feel good about the days we're able to follow our plan and go from point A to point B, and that we should feel just as good about the days that require taking care of whatever it is that needs attention, even if reaching B is no longer realistic.

It seems that anything can happen in summer camp. A homesick child, a fish hook in the finger, a swamped canoe, a bunk too short or a bear too many. You deal with what comes up, not as a nuisance, but as the raison d'être of your being there. In other words, start off purposefully, but don't let your purpose get in the way of, well, your purpose.

## Get people all the information you can, quickly

Time and time again I've watched colleagues make the mistake of waiting to share information, forgetting to include people, the people who need to know, and allowing small jobs to turn into big ones, small discomforts to drive wedges between people, and little concerns to grow to the point where good staff decide to work someplace else. I've done it myself, of course, too.

In the just-in-time environment of summer camp, where each day often feels like a week, we learned to get people all the info they need, right away. We get stuff done - and done with quality - when we have enough information to make the best decision we can.

## You don't have to give everything a grade

Most camps aren't focused much on grades. But don't think for a second that kids at camp won't engage or aren't enthusiastic. Even without the carrot and stick of marks, grades, grade point averages, dean's lists, and all that, kids engage at summer camp. Perhaps it is even the reason summer camp is so engaging. Learning, it turns out, is highly satisfying, particularly if we don't reinforce that learning only happens when an adult passes judgment with marks or grades.

## Swim with a buddy

At one camp, we hung our birch tree name tags on the swimming board together on a hook, so that the lifeguard always knew we were looking out for each other.

Don't ever go it alone. Observe other teachers, invite them to observe you. Ask for advice. Borrow liberally. Share your doubts, your plans, your lunch if it helps grow the collaboration in your school.

And know that someone is always checking that you're able to keep your head above water.

## About the author

In addition to leading the middle school, **Paul Magnuson** is the director of LAS Educational Research at the Leysin American School in Switzerland, specialising in self-regulated learning. He worked 21 summers in summer camps in the US and Europe. His interests include Agility, professional learning, and languages. pmagnuson@las.ch

# UNSPOKEN STRESSES OF THE IB AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM

## The stress no one talks about, but everyone experiences. -A student's perspective.

**Ceola Daly** | IB Student
St. John's International School | Belgium

Starting the IB diploma programme comes with a few well-known warnings: you might not get as much sleep, you need to keep doing your CAS, and you need to work hard. However, as deadlines are passing all of us by, I realise that what I struggle with – and what I see all of my peers struggle with – is not on the list I have just mentioned. Before I continue, it's important to note that most of us are in the middle of those hectic months of deadlines and submissions and absolute craziness – but somehow all of that pressure is just one of the many things we have on our backs.

We're unsure. Anybody who tells you they aren't is probably lying to either you or themselves. After nearly 18 years of saying what we wanted to be, we're faced with an even more horrifying prospect – the fact that we might actually have to be what we want to be. To most people this sounds like a dream; I knew what I wanted to be, or at least what I wanted to study, ever since I was in primary school. The problem is that the stress isn't about deciding what we want to do (although this is also pressure – inducing and problematic in its own right) but it's the realisation we actually have to do it. Every dream you have ever had is suddenly becoming an option. It's been months and already I see people second-guessing themselves every day because during this year nothing is certain anymore!

Do we want to be who we said we wanted to be yesterday? Will we want to be that person a year from now? We find ourselves looking for safety nets, 'get out of jail free cards' from any sort of major life planning that could be avoided. This pressure, this constant fear of having to make decisions for and by yourself, creates an unnerving and insecure atmosphere that transfers itself across to all disciplines of our lives. I sent a final IB

assessment one day and then resent the same email with a modified attachment entitled "FINAL FINAL FINAL Version" – this, I'm sure, is a scenario relatable to all IB students.

This is the type of pressure that unfortunately makes or breaks our relationships. When undergoing these sorts of emotions, you either find solace in your friends or rival them – do they know what they're doing? How are they so together? Why can't I be more like that? It's times like these it can be admittedly hard trying to remember that we need to look out for people other than ourselves.

On top of these emotions, the stress of extracurriculars can get to you too. We do extracurriculars because we love them and they're our passions – either that or we have a CAS requirement. I like to think we do them because we love them. But when you're running on minimum sleep, you know you have basketball practice until late, college apps (yes, the ones you haven't finished yet) are due in two days and the tiniest thing goes wrong? Disaster. It's awful. It feels as if that one thing that went wrong that you were counting on to go right was a foreshadowing of your whole day/week/month/life.

I can look back and safely say that November was the most stress inducing month for me (until May, presumably). I remember getting in the car after a long day of school late November, knowing that I had a mountain of work to do when I got home, and hearing my Mum tell me that we were going out to dinner as a surprise. Tears weren't the result, but they were pretty damn close.

You're probably wondering, "But that's a good thing! A dinner out is a lovely surprise for a stressed student!" and to that I would agree with you. However, this is merely an extension of my previous point. When your time is being stretched thinner than is visible to the eye, the slightest changes in scheduling can be the straw that breaks your back. This is what has become extremely apparent to me watching my peers.

***"Do we want to be who we said we wanted to be yesterday? Will we want to be that person a year from now?"***

So, if I have any advice to you future IB students, it would just be to give everyone a break. People will be snappy, moody and rude at times and you just have to accept it. You'll all be cranky and you'll all be tired, but most importantly, you'll all be going through the same thing.

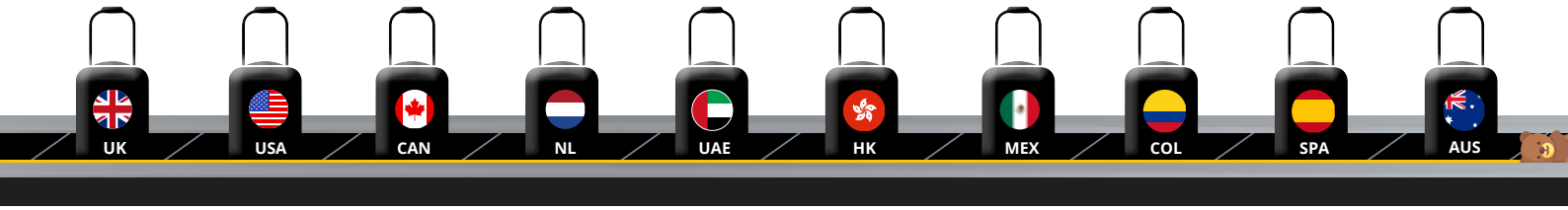
*This article first appeared in The Lion's Tale, a student-managed website at St. John's International School, Waterloo, Belgium:*
http://lionstale.news/page48.html

## About the author

**Ceola Daly** is an IB student at St. John's International School and a writer for *The Lion's Tale*.

Permission has been granted by the student, parents, and school to publish this article.

## HIGHER EDUCATION COUNTRIES FOR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVERS (2016) 01-10





### TOP 10 UNIVERSITY DESTINATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVERS (2016)


## DATA PROVIDED BY ISC RESEARCH

Visit www.iscresearch.com for more details regarding this data, plus further information about ISC Research.


# SIMULATING TO GET REAL

**Hervör Alma Árnadóttir**
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Faculty of Social Work/School of Education
University of Iceland

In many cultures, children are increasingly seen as social actors, participants with their own rights and independent roles in society. This position is grounded in theory about children's competencies and in practice in various laws concerning children's rights.

We always need to think about rights in context of what is best for the child in any given situation. All children should have the same basic rights, but how children are given power and empowered to participate takes different forms in different countries in a context of cultural and legal frameworks.

Almost every country has agreed to and ratified the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989). Some countries have taken it further, bringing the convention into legislation, which strengthens the emphasis on children's rights even more. While the Convention includes 54 articles, all important for children, article 42 states: "You have the right to know your rights! Adults should know about these rights and help you learn about them, too." So, we set out to make sure our students are aware of these rights.

"And you two," we told a Scottish and a Turkish eighth grade pair, "are going to represent the country of Strabana." It was International Week at our school, and Alma, a visiting scholar with a specialty in the rights of children, and Paul, the middle school director, had prepared a two-day simulation in international policy making. Almost every student was from a different country. We started by dividing the class into six groups, giving each group a half-page description of a different fictional country.

The students took a few minutes to study their new countries, learning that in one country corporal punishment was common, that in another health care was available to all, in yet another the wealthy attended good schools and the poor were lucky if they attended

school at all. One country experienced lots of violence, in another country it was common for children to start working at a young age.

To test how well the students had adopted their new countries, we called out some news headlines that we had prepared earlier, all made up, of course. The headline of the International Daily, Alma told the students, says this: " *'School Aghast that Teacher Hit Child.' Which of your countries finds that surprising? Which of you don't find it surprising at all?"*

The students responded with thumbs up or thumbs down, indicating to us headline by headline that they were thinking along the lines of their pretend country and not solely according to their own experience and beliefs.

Comfortable that the students were now part of the simulation, we asked the delegates from each country to formulate three to five rules for treating children that they think would be good for the international community. They didn't know it, but these rules were drafts of articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, at least the version they were beginning to write.

Now with the delegates from all six countries prepared with statements about the rights of children, it was time for the conference to begin.

"*I'd like to invite the delegates to the conference table,*" Paul announced, indicating the large hexagon with a country sign on each section. "Please take your places."

Over the rest of the class period and the following day, students introduced their rules, for example: Children need to have the right to speak, children need to have access to school buses, children need protection, children need to choose their actions independently, there should be free education for everyone, children have the right to be loved by their family, and children should be free from punishment. The next step was to work on the rules that contradicted each other, so that the students could create one poster with rules for all children. To do so they needed to compromise and perhaps make some political bargains. The delegates of one country initially balked at the right of clean water for everyone, because, in their own words, it would place too much of an economic burden on the country. When a wealthy country promised to supply them with clean water, however, the poorer country agreed to the right to clean water, and in a goodwill gesture, compromised on their hardline position that boys should go to school longer than girls. (They were playing within the role of the pretend cultures they had been given.)

After fruitful discourse and negotiation, the students settle on a few overarching themes. Here are a few examples:

### Safety

• No punishments for children.
• Children have the right to not be punished through cruel or unusual punishment.

### Education

• The government should give money to poor families for education.
• If children don't want to learn, their parents shouldn't force them.

### Health

• Everyone should have basic and free healthcare.
• Children should have at least one parent at home to support them, if family economics allows it.

### Information

• Children should have the right to access the internet through a device.
• Info should not be censored and controlled by the government.

### Religion

• Everyone should have freedom of religion not to be forced into a particular religion, unless a country says there should be no freedom.

Now that the students, in the role of delegates from other countries, had worked with the idea of rights for children, we wanted to introduce them to the version that already exists, namely the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child. We explained that the simulation was over and they were now speaking for themselves.

# UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

## In Child Friendly Language

**"Rights" are things every child should have or be able to do. All children have the same rights. These rights are listed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Almost every country has agreed to these rights. All the rights are connected to each other, and all are equally important. Sometimes, we have to think about rights in terms of what is the best for children in a situation, and what is critical to life and protection from harm. As you grow, you have more responsibility to make choices and exercise your rights.**

unicef

**Article 1**
Everyone under 18 has these rights.

**Article 2**
All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

**Article 3**
All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

**Article 4**
The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family to protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.

**Article 5**
Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.

**Article 6**
You have the right to be alive.

**Article 7**
You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

**Article 8**
You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.

**Article 9**
You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.

**Article 10**
If you live in a different country than your parents do, you have the right to be together in the same place.

**Article 11**
You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.

**Article 12**
You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

**Article 13**
You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.

**Article 14**
You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

**Article 15**
You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.

**Article 16**
You have the right to privacy.

**Article 17**
You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.

**Article 18**
You have the right to be raised by your parent(s) if possible.

**Article 19**
You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

**Article 20**
You have the right to special care and help if you cannot live with your parents.

**Article 21**
You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.

**Article 22**
You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee (if you have been forced to leave your home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.

**Article 23**
You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

**Article 24**
You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.

**Article 25**
If you live in care or in other situations away from home, you have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate.

**Article 26**
You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.

**Article 27**
You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.

**Article 28**
You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

**Article 29**
Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

**Article 30**
You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion - or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

**Article 31**
You have the right to play and rest.

**Article 32**
You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

**Article 33**
You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.

**Article 34**
You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.Article 35No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

**Article 36**
You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).

**Article 37**
No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

**Article 38**
You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.

**Article 39**
You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.

**Article 40**
You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in the justice system that respects your rights.

**Article 41**
If the laws of your country provide better protection of your rights than the articles in this Convention, those laws should apply.

**Article 42**
You have the right to know your rights! Adults should know about these rights and help you learn about them, too.

**Articles 43 to 54**
These articles explain how governments and international organizations like UNICEF will work to ensure children are protected with their rights.

QUEEN ALEXANDRA FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN

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We selected 14 articles from the Convention, for example the right to be alive, the right to play and rest, equality, the right to protection, the right to participation, the right to independency, the right to education, the right to health care, and the right to information. We put each article on its own slip of paper.

Then we divided the students into groups and asked them to rank the 14 articles in order of importance, in their opinion. Once ordered, the students compared the ranking with the other group.

It is interesting that of the articles we asked them to rank, articles about education, for example *"You have the right to a good quality education"* and "*You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can"* were on the bottom of the list, just like "*You have the right to play and rest."* Roughly, articles about the rights of children to protection were at the top of the list and articles about the rights of children to participate were at the bottom.

Finally, we gave the full version of the Convention, still in child-friendly language, to the students and asked them to highlight the articles that they had come up with independently. We noticed that they all read the articles, motivated by their desire to see the degree to which their own worked overlapped with the real document, which you can see here:

We are pretty sure that we wouldn't have had such avid readers of the Convention if we had started with the articles themselves. This is part of the beauty of approaching a topic with a simulation. But there are other advantages as well. When the students are delegates from a made-up country with a silly name, they are better able to take risks. They aren't the ones arguing for this or that, after all, it's the crazy delegate from Strabana saying that! Further, they have to approach a topic from a different perspective, one that is not their own. The added perspective jogs their thinking a bit, offering just that much wider a window to the world.

We're also very sure they appreciate how difficult it can be to get to yes. *"It's hard for us to make a compromise with just six countries!"* said one boy from Spain. How incredibly difficult it must be to create an internationally accepted set of behaviours – whether for the rights of children or for any other important topic.

## About the author

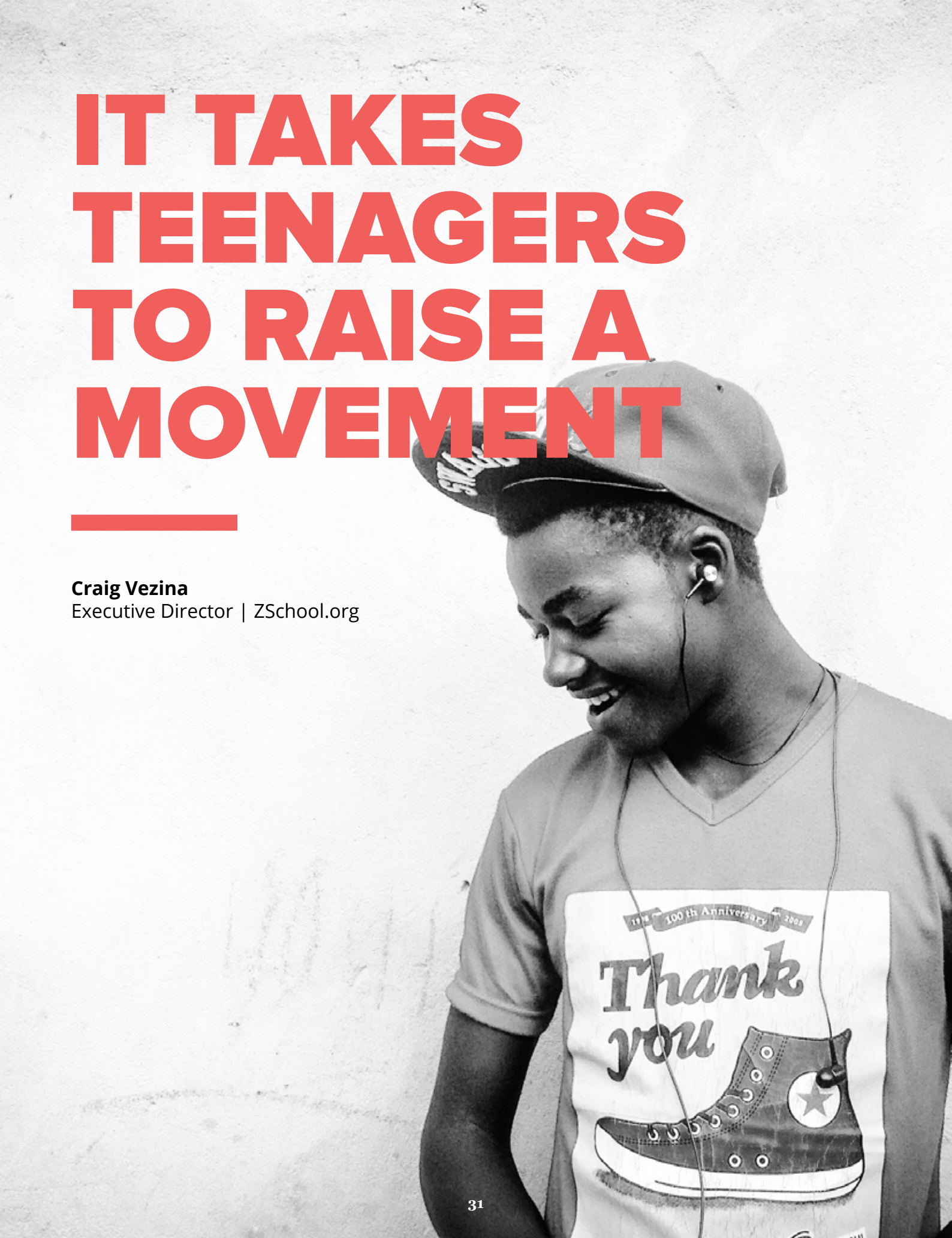
**Hervör Alma Árnadóttir** is an Assistant Professor in the faculty of Social Work at University of Iceland and teacher in the School of Education at University of Iceland. She has worked for and been responsible for outdoor therapy and group work with youth. Alma teaches about children's rights, community work and group dynamics. Her main research focus is with children and youth, children's rights and group dynamics.

Image: UN Convention on Rights of the Child used with permission. Source:

https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchilldfriendlylanguage.pdf

# IT TAKES TEENAGERS TO RAISE A MOVEMENT

**Craig Vezina**
Executive Director | ZSchool.org



Although sometimes described as screen-obsessed and attention deficient, our youngest of generations, Generation Z (born post-1998) is shaping up to be the most diverse, inclusive, connected, resourceful and entrepreneurial generation in American history. However, according to recent research, they also appear to be the most concerned. A report by 747 insights, in partnership with consumer research platform Collaborata, finds that only 32% of Gen Zers feel the country is headed in the right direction. When asked how "things are going in the US," 21% say they are "scared" and only 12% report being "optimistic." On each of these indicators, our youngest citizens have a more negative perspective than any other generation. Nevertheless, there is cause for optimism. Today's young people are less afraid of chasing dreams and pursuing paths that could help society than any previous generation. According to CMO statistics, 60% of this generation want a job that will impact the world and 76% are concerned about humanity's impact on the planet. There is reason to believe that the solutions to many of the world's great problems will start with Z. From a young age, this generation interacts with global peers with fluidity never before possible. As a result, their ability to mobilise en masse is unprecedented. This is especially timely. Growing concern over violence in schools has become a generational rallying cry and there are many reasons to believe that Generation Z will spark positive change.

It is our duty as educators, parents and concerned citizens to have their backs. Our support is vital for this generation to fulfill its incredible potential to bring positive and sustainable change. But history, of course, is also a powerful teacher; there are distinguishing features between successful movements and those that make noise before fading away.

## 7 traits of successful movements

**Clear End Goal**

Successful movements do not simply show outrage over a wrong—they clearly articulate what a better future requires. The Abolitionists sought an unequivocal end to slavery. The Suffragettes wanted to secure the vote for women. Civil Rights leaders wanted specific legislation passed. The anti-war demonstrators of the 60s and

early 70s wanted an end to the Vietnam war. Successful movements connect to people's deepest passions about right and wrong with a cause that makes them think about what really matters (i.e., creating a better world for children). The lack of a clearly stated outcome risks a movement that is loud, but confused and therefore incapable of creating concrete change. A case in point: what was the specific and shared outcome driving the Occupy Wall Street movement?

**Talk Helpful, Action Essential**

As journalist-legend Edward R. Murrow put it: "*Our major obligation is not to mistake slogans for solutions.*" It's not enough to just express outrage or longing for change on social media. Tweets and Facebook posts are sometimes helpful for articulating points of view, but rhetoric rarely moves people. Anger can resonate with others, but anger without hope is more destructive than constructive. For real change to happen, momentum must be directed into civic participation. Leaders must identify concrete and positive steps that will push the movement forward towards a positive

***"There is reason to believe that the solutions to many of the world's great problems will start with Z."***

outcome. Early and often, use data to measure progress, have a clear timeline for action items, and share tangible progress to boost morale while pushing the movement forward.

**Strength is in Cohesive Teams, Not Large Crowds**
Successful movements focus first on building teams around strategically sequenced, clear, attainable goals. If this is done well, larger followings will develop naturally. Large crowds and massive demonstrations are more often the result, not the cause, of a successful movement. When small teams connect and work together—easier than ever before in the digital age—they are capable of remarkable impact.

**Diverse Leadership & Follower-ship**
It is important to grasp the range of interests and perspectives that could help or hinder the cause. Who is likely to support the movement? Remain neutral? Oppose? Focus first on the active supporters, then passive supporters before reaching out to bring neutral groups over to your side. Look for ways that different concerns could unite behind a common cause. Don't make uncomfortable compromises, but do seek to find clearly shared values to build and strengthen connective tissue. Transformative change comes when there is a clearly defined future that compels others—even those at first skeptical—that the mountain is worth climbing.

**Understand Power Dynamics**
Which institutions have the power to implement the change you seek? How can they benefit or be hurt by change? Consider the media, education systems, political establishments or other organisations with power and/or influence. Find partners who share your values and passion and be sure that the movement is not about just about a specific individual(s) or organisation. Popular support is valuable, but institutional support is vital for a movement to successfully bring change.

**Seek to Attract, not Overwhelm**
It is a mistake to exhaust energy on demonising those who don't support you. Do not try to overwhelm opponents. Stay faithful to core values, but be open to alternative viewpoints. If only the views inside the circle are considered legitimate, those with different perspectives become outsiders (and feel that way too). Movements which alienate rarely lead to enduring change because they create enemies that come back to undermine them. Perhaps most importantly…

**Engaged Citizens are the Greatest Force for Change**
Without question, the role of our government and our institutions are critically important, but it the moral compass and energies of committed citizens who steer transformational change. Gun violence has plagued the US for decades. Now is as good a time as any for Generation Z to point the way to a preferred future. Indeed, there is reason for great optimism that this generation could not only help us turn the tide to stop gun violence, but be a powerful force for positive change in the face of many of the great challenges of our time. There is real urgency.

We cannot wait another generation.

## About the author

A life-long educator and passionate teacher, **Craig Vezina** is convinced the skills and mind-frames of entrepreneurship empower youth to both imagine and create their preferred futures. Craig received his Ph.D in international diplomacy from the Centre des Etudes Diplomatique et Strategique in Paris after earning his BA at Bowdoin College and MA at Columbia University. As an entrepreneur, Craig has founded or co-founded several leading educational startups, including testme.com and realcast.io.

# PUZZLES, STORIES, & SHOW & TELL

## Teaching Students the Language of Thinking

**Laura Benson**
Director of Curriculum & Professional Development
International Schools Services

A puzzle. A conundrum. A big fat juicy problem to solve. Watching small and tall children over the last four decades, I learned that curiosity is the rocket fuel of learning. Children's sense of wonder ignites them to be the most brilliant and brave problem solvers. This law of nature was once again affirmed for me on a Sunday in Shenzhen, China several years ago.

Having recently moved to Southeast China, my new colleagues took me to a local art market. The art was compelling, for sure, but I found myself magnetically drawn to a pair of children creating their own art.

For the four hours we prowled the stalls of the Darfen Art Market, these two young artists built a number of sculptures trying a number of methods and materials until they achieved satisfaction. The preschool innovators were completely devoted to their art puzzles – without any adults needed - and powered with the energy of their own very focused sense of creative problem solving.

Reading is lot like the constructive puzzling of the young Darfen artists. Reading is problem-solving (Vinton, 2017). Lifting the ink from the page of a book and transforming those black dots and squiggles into thoughts? Miraculous problem-solving! Making sense of the recorded words of another person? Complete brain fireworks show of interpretations and resolutions!

How can we craft reading instruction to tap into children's natural problem-solving disposition? Whether taking an inductive (Barnhouse & Vinton, 2012; Vinton, 2017) or deductive approach (Harvey & Ward, 2017) to teaching, here's what reading as thinking sounds like as you sit in the nest of Readers' Workshop classrooms.

## Model thinking with students

Share your ways of understanding with students. Voice your internal meaning making dialogue. For example, as students and I read a lot of mysteries and poems, I demonstrate how I work to understand by inferring with self-talk such as "I bet…" or "I think that maybe…because the text said…" The language I use primes, prompts and patterns the thinking of my students (Ritchhart, 2002 & 2015). This self-talk modeling of thinking may come from me or from a student. It's our way of creating a brain show and tell (Benson, 2002) together to make the thinking of readers more concrete, more relevant, and more inviting for all.

This kind of reading-as-thinking teaching deprivatizes literacy learning for students of all ages. When many of us were growing up, we were told to read. But we were never shown or told how. In order for students to do excellent work, they have to know what excellent work sounds like (Wiggins, 1997). So, work to help your students gain vivid soundtracks of how readers talk to themselves to understand texts before, during, and after they read.

To plan for your modeling, keep a notepad by your nightstand or wherever you do most of your reading. When you notice a way of thinking, a strategy you use to create meaning as you read, jot it down. Once you have even a small bundle of these notes, you have a pool of lesson plans and conference coaching tips. Looking over your own ways of understanding, which one/s would be

***"The author and the reader know each other; they meet in the bridge of words."***

-Madeline L'Engle

the next easiest thinking step/s and the most interesting thinking strategy/ies for your students to try in their own reading? Drawing from my own reading well and knowing my students really well are two key ways I determine and develop responsive learning journeys for growing thinkers (Benson, 2003).

Of course, the goal of our modeling is always to help students understand what they read. So, take care in modeling your ways of understanding. As Vicki Vinton (2017) advises, I believe that considering and constructing an understanding of a text's meaning should be the purpose of reading, rather than practicing a strategy or skill or meeting a particular standard.

Thus, while I hand over my ways of understanding to students through my modeling, these are invitations and possibilities but not hard assignments. I strive to not set an agenda for students as they read independently. Our teaching has to put students in the driver's seat of their own reading and not take away their sense of discovery and ownership. Expecting kids to discover their own best ways of understanding is paramount in nurturing our students as independent, eager, and self-fueled thinkers.

## Encourage students to notice and name their thinking

An edifying piece I share with students of all ages comes from the brilliant and gritty writer Gary Paulsen from his book The Winter Room:

*If books could be more, could show more, could own more,*
*this book would have smells…this book would have sounds…*
*this book would have light…But books can't have light (and sounds and smells). If books could have more, give*
*more, be more, show more, they would still need readers,*

## *"I am a part of everything I have read."*

-Theodore Roosevelt

*who bring to them sound and smell and light and all the rest that can't be in books. The book needs you.*

From this piece, the kids and I talk about "How does the book need us?" For the rest of the school year, this is our touchstone – Thinking about thinking. Figuring out what each book needs us to do to understand it. Reflecting on his thinking of a current mystery, Kamil shared 'My book needs me to keep thinking "What next? What's going to happen to the character next?" This makes you want to keep turning the pages!'

And Zahra burst forth with the following discovery from her reading of multiple texts, "It's like we are Sherlock Holmes, Mrs. B! We just look for the clues (in the book) to solve our mystery! I figured out a lot today – I think I know who stole the jewelry in this one!"

Responding to Zahra, I shared, "*How exciting! That is such a great way to describe thinking, Zahra. And I know exactly what you mean. That's just what it feels like when I read The Girl on the Train. There are so many clues from the author and I have to put these clues together to solve the mystery of this story – Like I am Sherlock Holmes!"*

## Nurture thinking as students read independently

As students read on their own during our Readers' Workshop or in any content area class, I sit with individual students to engage in conferences. I often begin with a question such as "Tell me about your thinking" (Benson, 2004) or "Can you tell me what's going on here?" (Vinton, 2017). Nurturing thinking dispositions, I am very intentional with my conferring. My most common conferring ritual is a 3-step process to with a very natural conversation feel - Listen, Name, Nudge. I listen to determine how the student is working


to understand what he/she is reading, the student or I name an effective way of understanding he/she is using well, and I nudge the student to take on the next easiest and most supportive strategy or skill of thinking to understand. Sometimes, the best nudge is to encourage the student to continue using the named way of thinking so that it becomes a habit of understanding (And these conferences do not have to be very long to be hugely helpful in supporting students' thinking.).

## Reflect on thinking with students

As John Dewey shared, "We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on our experiences." Thus, to help students become intentional thinkers, I often close our Readers' Workshop with a Talking Circle. I initiate the conversation with questions such as "What did you notice today as you read?" or "What did you learn about yourself today as a thinker (or reader) today?" Even with young children, they quickly find ways to reflect on and voice their ways of thinking (For very young children, you can frame this reflection around how the kids worked to understand as they listened to you read to them.)

Apprenticing growing readers and writers, the kids are constantly my very best mentors. Teaching as storytelling, telling students the story of my thinking to ignite their insights about their own thinking, I also expect to learn more about thinking from students. It's kind of like going to book club each month. My reading of the chosen title is rich with the details of my understanding. But after talking with my book club mates, my understanding of the book is vastly larger in scope blossomed with new insights shared in our conversation. As a community of readers, for my students and I, reading together and talking about our reading regularly expands our understanding

of the texts we read and of our ways of working to understand, too.

Whether students are reading in literacy classes or for content area studies, our responsive thinking-focused teaching can help students define reading as thinking, give them opportunities to discover and name ways of understanding, and offer them continuous apprenticeship experiences as we model our thinking and invite students to demonstrate their thinking aloud with one another. Knowing how to think as readers, as learners, as friends makes understanding possible and compelling for our students. We can live Gary Paulsen's advice as you create a thinking community with our students where each child understands how books need us.

## About the author

**Laura Benson,** Director of Curriculum and Professional Development for International Schools Services, brings over thirty-nine years of teaching and leadership experience to her work. Laura's expertise and research are cited by many of our current education scholars in their books including mentors such as Lucy Calkins; Douglas Reeves; Bonnie Campbell Hill; Shelley Harwayne; Cris Tovani; Stephanie Harvey; Patrick Allen; Ellin Keene; Patrick Allen; Diane Sweeney; Larry Ainsworth; and Ron Ritchhart. Mrs. Benson is the co-author of Standards and Assessment: The Core of Quality Instruction and Bearing Witness and has published numerous articles in professional journals. Laura earned degrees from Trinity University and University of Denver and further her studies at Harvard University, Columbia University Teachers College, Cambridge University, and with Donald Graves, Georgia Heard, Karin Hess, P. David Pearson, and Kevin Bartlett.

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# DESIGNING THE RIGHT SPACE FOR YOU AND YOUR LEARNERS

**Andrew Short**
Sales Director | Furnware

We all want to see students thrive in the most inspiring learning spaces - ones that give students every opportunity to achieve their best. Here at Furnware, we've been working with educators to design flexible and innovative learning spaces for more than 60 years. In this time, we've worked with many schools and have seen a lot of changes in classroom furniture. Here's some of our observations:

• **Single desks** are giving way to more flexible table solutions. Students are choosing to work at standing height surfaces, in smaller nooks and crannies, or on the floor.

• **Teachers, too,** need flexibility and are choosing mobile work stations that take up less space and can be moved easily around or between rooms.

• **Writeable surfaces** are increasingly popular in the classroom. They encourage students to be more creative and less inhibited as they work through solutions before documenting their work through photos. Whiteboard tables are a great way to facilitate interaction with teacher and students, and between groups of students.

• **And structure is still important** – comfortable chairs like the Bodyfurn Sled chair, paired with hard work surfaces at the correct height have their place in classrooms and should be included in the overall mix.

In fact, innovative learning environments are no longer the big unknown factor for schools. Over the past few years, schools have become more mindful that environmental factors in these spaces play a huge role in the comfort levels and engagement of students. Light, sound, air quality and colour all have an impact on how well the space functions, particularly when it is busy with a room full of inspired students!

## Look before you leap

A common mis-step in designing a learning space is to get caught up in the bright lights and aesthetics of new space planning. Large or small, before you start adapting your classroom to a more dynamic and innovative space, here's some useful and practical advice from teachers we've had the pleasure of collaborating with. And all the while still working with your physical and budgetary constraints.

*Whiteboards – a simple tool to encourage big thinking.*

## Define your overall teaching and learning strategy

The most important consideration when designing a space is, as Simon Sinek says, "start with why". Your overall teaching and learning strategy is critical – first you agree your values and then work through the process of defining your strategy. This is key to designing a successful learning space. If you are developing competencies around communication and collaboration, then what practices are supporting this? For example, are you team-teaching? Do you practise flipped learning? Is your learning inquiry-based or play-based?
There are various terminologies associated with creating learning spaces and it's important everyone agrees what they are from the start to ensure immediate understanding and engagement.

*Flexible spaces that reflect different learning styles and activities will ensure you meet the needs of your learners.*

## Practise makes perfect

It's also essential to think about how your Learning Practice fits into your physical space. This guides the design and how it is to be used, rather than the other way around. The environment should support and promote the learning practices.

## Factoring in success

Consider what your goals are and how you will measure the successes associated with the space. Much like children who need to understand their success factors to achieve the next level, all stakeholders need to agree on the fundamental elements to create a space that supports active and collaborative learning.

## Meeting the needs of learners

Now it's time to consider learning styles and activities in your space. There will be cultural differences within the group, students with special needs, those that prefer to collaborate and others who prefer quiet spaces.

Similarly, think about the activities in the space and what collaboration, creativity and critical thinking might look like in action. How will classroom technology be used, are you catering for wet areas in the space and how will the students move from indoor to outdoor activities seamlessly?

Here are some ideas about what to consider when creating spaces to meet the needs of your individual learners:

## Spaces to suit the task:

- A space for buddies to work in pairs
- A space to collaborate in groups of three/four
- A space for larger group collaboration, brainstorming or wider discussion
- A space to work alone
- A presentation space for small, medium and large groups
- Display spaces, TV screens, projectors, wall displays, writeable walls and tables
- Spaces to suit the learner:
- A nook or cranny with few distractions

- A high space which affords an overview of a room
- Low surfaces such as kneeler tables or floor cushions
- Standard table task areas with emphasis on ergonomics and comfort

Flexible spaces that reflect different learning styles and activities will ensure you meet the needs of your learners.

## Reflect and review

Along your exciting journey, it's important to stop and review how things are going – a race to the finish line could mean you're missing out on invaluable reflection and review time.

Are you meeting the success factors you agreed with your teams? Are your stakeholders happy or is there room to fine-tune and improve?

Remember it's an ongoing process, but don't forget to celebrate success along the way and take the time to appreciate all you've achieved.

Is student comfort important to you? The award-winning Bodyfurn® system that changed the game.
In 2003 Furnware realised there was an opportunity to investigate how learning could be improved. There was no meaningful data to show how the size and makeup of children had changed over the years. So, we travelled across New Zealand and measured 20,000 children of all shapes and sizes. From this research project, our award-winning Bodyfurn® system was born.

Bodyfurn® is an innovative and ergonomically designed system that reflects the ways students of all sizes use school furniture, giving them the best chance to be comfortable, to concentrate and to learn well.
Aside from understanding that one size does not fit all, a fantastic feature of the Bodyfurn® chair is just how dynamic it is. With its independently pivoting seat and back, students can sit forward or lean back in comfort with no pressure points.

The Bodyfurn® system works because it provides comfort for students. It's that simple. The design supports students and keeps them focussed. An independent study from Waikato university on the impact of Bodyfurn® in the classroom showed a significant increase in concentration and a reduction in off-task behaviour.
While the Bodyfurn® design has attracted significant media interest and awards, it was the approval from principals, teachers and students that really means the most to us. It shows that our own research, independent studies and the endorsement from educators and students have been a game changer. Bodyfurn® has set the benchmark for the way we continue to design and create our furniture.

## About the author

When **Andrew Short** was a teacher he constantly looked for a better way to do things, from more innovative learning environments to a more engaging curriculum.
This success in the classroom enabled him as a Principal and school leader to drive this across an array of different classrooms and schools.
It was this passion for creative change that led him to become an education consultant, where he had the challenge of implementing new curriculums to schools in New Zealand, Asia and the Pacific Rim. His career then progressed into leading educational reform programmes in the Middle East in Qatar and then later for GEMS Education in Abu Dhabi.
He's always been an advocate for Furnware because he recognised the company's drive to better the student learning experience based on academic research to deliver improved environments that encourage stronger engagement in the classroom.

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# ECIS NEWS


At ECIS, we are obsessed with creating value for our member schools. We believe that, in exchange for your membership subscription, you should receive items that are tangible and meaningful, whose value speaks for itself.

With ECIS, you receive value elements ranging from cloud-hosted safety and security audit software to annual child protection training for your entire staff to induction for your new trustees (governors) to global competence methodologies for your new teachers, not to mention access to teacher recruitment, enhanced screening for employees (including social media checks!), first-year university scholarships for your students, and much more!

Our membership subscription is easy to quantify because we tell you the value of the combined items, so that you can see the massive savings to your school by belonging to ECIS. This in addition to the time-tested value of our professional community of practice with its tradition of sharing and exchange. We think it's the leading membership on the market.

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## A SPECIAL INTEREST GRÜEZI!

Inter-Community School of Zurich were fantastic hosts of our inaugural Special Interest Group (SIG) Annual Chair Planning and Strategy Day. Of our thirty wonderful volunteer SIG chairs, twenty-three were able to join us for the day, to develop the SIG community.

Collaboration was the theme of the day, focusing on creating a robust calendar of professional learning opportunities, events, digital materials and activities for the next eighteen months for our schools. These professional learning opportunities will be shared shortly for ECIS members and non-members to engage in or attend providing our schools with immersive opportunities in a blend of both face to face and online professional development touch points.

A wonderfuly creative day, with a highly committed number of expert educators, our ECIS SIG Ambassadors, some of who travelled internationally to join us for the day. Collaboration is Key!

“THE BEAUTIFUL THING ABOUT LEARNING IS THAT NOBODY CAN TAKE IT AWAY FROM YOU.”

B.B. KING