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Cover photographs (left): Dr Lucy Nicholas and Associate Professor Debra Dempsey at a Safe Schools rally. Credit: Dr Lucy Nicholas. (right): A student engages in Aboriginal inspired hand painting. Credit: VAEAI.
The silly season is upon us. Schools are swamped in Term 4 with graduation ceremonies, final exams, school concerts, Christmas carols, and everyone is getting just a bit frayed and tired. In keeping with the endless extracurricular activities at this time of year, a friend of mine recently sent me a very short video clip of her son’s Year 3 school play. Her boy was narrating a story to an enthusiastically proud audience of smartphone wielding parents and friends while the rest of his classmates acted out the play. Among the students in the class, a young boy named Lachie was up on stage with the rest of his classmates. Lachie was clearly incredibly excited to be up on stage and spent the vast majority of the time gleefully waving at his family, yelling out ‘Hi Mum!’ and occasionally trying to snatch the microphone out of the narrator’s hands in order to be truly heard by his, now laughing, mother in the crowd. After having a bit of a giggle at the video, and duly paying admiration to my friend’s son’s very able reading skills, something struck me. I must have watched that video over and over about 10 times, watching different children up on that stage. Then it finally hit me.

Not one of those children was embarrassed, awkward or surprised at Lachie’s antics. They had spent a whole year with Lachie in the classroom and were now quite familiar with what a young boy with down syndrome was capable of. Most of the kids who were on stage simply smiled at Lachie and continued with what they were supposed to be doing. At one point, a child quietly came up to Lachie and, without prompting from his teacher, carefully guided him back to his prearranged spot when he was getting a bit too close to the edge of the stage trying to secure his mother’s attention.

The kids in that class were familiar with Lachie. They knew him. They knew what a delightful, excitable and playful kid he clearly was. He was their mate. They obviously knew that his behaviour at times could be a bit unconventional, but that was just him – he certainly didn’t mean to harm anyone, in fact, he would make them laugh.

After many years of teaching, it finally resonated with me, probably for the first time, that the kids in Lachie’s classroom were arguably learning more from Lachie than he was from his classmates or his classroom teacher. They were getting hands-on experience with what it means to be a member of a truly inclusive, tolerant, patient and diverse community of people.

Lachie wasn’t some ‘other’ who they weren’t familiar with, or sneered at in peer groups out in public, he was one of ‘them’. He was Lachie. He was a kid who loved his mum, he wanted to be seen and acknowledged, he liked to play and had a fundamental desire to be happy – he is just like the rest of us.

It is stories like this that inspired us to focus this Term 4 edition of Ethos on the theme of diversity and inclusion. The subject areas that SEV represents offer a great opportunity to consider ideas such as this in their teaching, and we wanted to put together a collection of different perspectives and ideas as to how educators might do this. We hope that you find something in this issue that sparks your curiosity and makes you think.

For this issue, we have sourced articles from an inclusive and diverse range of perspectives. They include looking at inclusive practices from a gender perspective, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander views, stigmas surrounding homelessness, and we have a story from someone teaching in a foreign country who explores how classroom pedagogical practices can differ when faced with cultural differences. We also hear from Lee Watanabe-Crockett from the Global Digital Citizen Foundation on what it means to be a more mindful, inclusive digital citizen.

As always, we give focus to student voice. In this issue, we hear from some fascinating young ladies who took part in the recent Evatt Competition and how this forum has opened their eyes to the process and complex nature of international politics.

We hope this issue gives you some food for thought and inspiration for future classroom learning activities.

Remember to always be open to new ideas.

Amy Haywood and Meg Talbot

For our final issue of Ethos for 2017, our co-editor, Meg Talbot, shares a story of inclusivity that encapsulates the theme of this issue.

EDITORIAL
As I write this report, two stories are dominating the Australian news: the dual citizenship ‘crisis’ and the conclusion of voting in the same-sex marriage postal survey (the result of the latter will be known by the time of publication). Apologies for my hyperbolic stance, however, I am prepared to state that these two stories demonstrate that there has never been a more important time to promote the teaching of Civics & Citizenship and Australian Politics.

If you’re like me, then you also spend more time than you should being ‘distracted’ by Facebook¹. What I notice across all the various and disparate Facebook groups that I belong to is that there are many diverse opinions on both of these issues. I’ve also noticed that much of this opinion is often based on limited understanding, or even outright misunderstanding, of the political and legal structures that underpin the Australian democratic system.

For those of you who work in education, you will be aware of the push to promote STEM education. We are continually told of the dire state of Science and Technology, and I am of course not denying the importance of these learning areas. However, as a passionate advocate for social education I am unabashedly laying claim to the importance of our learning area.

Much has been said about the high rate of participation for the non-compulsory same-sex marriage survey. The general consensus seems to be that we are used to compulsory voting and, therefore, we are conditioned to comply. However, why aren’t we also conditioned to be actively engaged in understanding our political and legal structures? Rather, we seem used to accepting throw-away lines and dismissing politics and politicians as being, at best, ineffectual and, at worst, corrupt – a feeling that has been even further enhanced by the current dual citizenship crisis that is currently unfolding.

Education has the power to inform and empower. As Civics & Citizenship and Australian Politics teachers, we need to understand our responsibility in this critical time – where it is common to see people on social media stating they are ‘sick of politics’. However, as teachers in these key learning areas, we know that everything we do cannot be separated from politics – health, education, sport, leisure, art, racial cohesion, etc. – and that those people in the LGBTIQA+ community currently don’t have the privilege of separating themselves from politics as they await the results of the postal survey. What we can do is use our teaching to encourage a new generation of students, who will be informed and empowered by their knowledge and skills in these learning areas.

I am pleased to inform our members that our committee is currently working hard to support these two important areas of learning. It’s a particularly exciting time for Civics & Citizenship education in Victoria with this essential learning area now being a mandated area of the curriculum from Years 3 to 10. Social Education Victoria is committed to supporting teachers to create engaging learning experiences for their students. More details will follow for professional development experiences early next year.

On the flipside, we continue to see the decline in enrolments in Australian Politics at the VCE level. As a committee, we acknowledge our responsibility to promote this learning area. We will be seeking input from our members and hope to announce some exciting plans in relation to this learning area very soon.

I look forward to communicating further with you in the new year and I hope that everyone has a safe and restful holiday period.

Janine Forbes-Rolfe
SEV President

¹ I am being a bit facetious as I would actually argue that Facebook and other social media platforms hold an important social and political capacity – something that I look forward to discussing further in another issue of Ethos.
FROM THE OFFICE

This has been a year of change and new directions. I am so impressed with the enthusiasm, dedication and generosity of the writers and presenters, from schools, universities and other organisations, who have provided such excellent advice, professional learning events and resources during 2017.

VCE Global Politics and Sociology 2018 course planning and information sessions have been organised and will be held on 11 December. If you have missed registration for these sessions, there will be more opportunities next year. Information is available below or you can contact us by email at admin@sev.asn.au.

NEW TEXTBOOKS FOR 2018

VCE teachers will be well into preparation for, and organisation of, the new curriculum for Australian and Global Politics and Sociology for next year. A large portion of office time has been devoted to the production of four textbooks to resource these new courses.

Throughout 2017, authors have been selected, ideas have been developed, resources chosen and short deadlines have sometimes been stretched. The office has dedicated many hours to editing, checking copyright permissions and proofreading the books.

We hope VCE teachers will be happy with the results. Details of how to order the texts can be found on our website: https://sev.asn.au/.

AUSTRALIAN POLITICS

The SEV committee has also been concerned with finding ways to support Year 12 Australian Politics. As in past years, a small number of students undertake Australian Politics as part of their Year 12 study. However, unlike previous years, in 2018 there will no longer be a textbook commercially available to meet the requirements of the new Study Design. A small group of concerned SEV members have been meeting and will develop some interim resources for 2018. We hope to produce some more substantial material for the following year. If anyone is interested in joining this group, please contact me at anne.matthews@sev.asn.au.

DEVELOPING PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

We have been investigating the interesting world of strategic plans and how best to continue our focus on resource development and professional learning, while also developing new ideas for the future. The SEV committee will be setting priorities at the next meeting.

Associated with the strategic planning will be a review of our constitution. SEV operates as a not-for-profit entity and must adhere to the relevant legal requirements that this involves. We hope to focus on a few key legal issues at different times throughout 2018.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN 2018

New and early career teacher and course planning workshops

• VCE Sociology Units 1 & 2
  This workshop will cover the Sociology Study Design and provide ideas for resources, tasks and assessment for 2018. This two-hour session will be held in Carlton on Tuesday, 6 February and will commence at 4.30pm. Registration details are on our website.
  Cost: $80 for SEV members, $100 for non-members.

• VCE Australian and Global Politics Units 1 & 2
  This workshop will cover the Australian and Global Politics Study Design and provide ideas for resources, tasks and assessment for 2018. This two-hour session will be held in Carlton on Wednesday, 7 February and will commence at 4.30pm. Registration details are on our website.
  Cost: $80 for SEV members, $100 for non-members.

DATE CLAIM AND CALL FOR WORKSHOP PROPOSALS

Attention all SEV teachers and members – the 2018 SEV VCE Teachers’ Conference is on Friday 23 March 2018.

This important annual event will be held at the Melbourne Business School on Leicester Street, Carlton. A larger venue has been booked in anticipation of increased teacher attendance as a result of the new Study Designs in Sociology and Australian and Global Politics. Further details of the conference will be communicated to members, and placed online, as they are confirmed.
SEV welcomes expressions of interest by teachers interested in presenting a workshop. If you would like to participate, please email admin@sev.asn.au with your name, school, subject and proposed topic.

**PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION**

SEV is in partnership with a number of excellent organisations and institutions and values its relationship with these groups. We hope to renew and even extend these relationships in 2018. For more details on our partnerships, visit www.sev.asn.au/about/partners-and-affiliates.html.

**SCEAA CONFERENCE: 8-10 JULY 2018**

The Social and Citizenship Education Association of Australia (SCEAA) warmly invites you to its conference as a participant or workshop and paper presenter. For further details, visit www.sceaa.org.au.

The conference theme is ‘Making it happen: Participatory citizenship and social justice – past, present and future’. The theme provides opportunities to make connections to all learning areas of the Australian and Victorian curricula: History, Geography, Civics & Citizenship and Economics. It encourages educators to have debates about cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities. SCEAA has invited prominent politicians, historians, educators, community members and students to the conference and hopes to provide stimulating and useful professional learning.

**A REMINDER FOR SEV MEMBERS**

SEV oversees four discussion lists for teachers. To subscribe to any of these lists, you will need an education email address. If you would like to be part of this useful tool for collegiality and idea-sharing, please click on the subject below that is relevant to you:

- Sociology
- Global Politics
- Australian Politics
- Civics & Citizenship

The SEV staff and committee would like to thank the members, colleagues and friends of SEV for their involvement in this very busy year.

Have a great Christmas celebration and we look forward to meeting with you again next year.

*Anne Matthews*

*SEV Executive Officer*
EDUCATING STUDENTS ABOUT HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is one of Australia’s most significant social issues. Naturally, school-aged children are aware of the problem and have questions about it. Part of providing a well-rounded education is ensuring students have appropriate opportunities to understand and engage with the vast array of experiences that people face including homelessness, marginalisation and disadvantage.

At The Big Issue Classroom – a program run by The Big Issue in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra and online – we start both our primary and secondary homelessness education sessions with a discussion of what it means to be marginalised. The Classroom has had more than 100,000 students through its doors, and I’ve found many of them aren’t familiar with the definition of marginalisation. Therefore, it’s good to first explore the concept of inclusion and the connections they have in society through school, sport, family, friends, social media and work if they’re older. This then leads to a conversation about exclusion – the varied reasons people don’t have these connections and how that contributes to marginalisation and other forms of disadvantage. Other elements fundamental to stability, such as housing, income and health, also come into play.

One of the best ways to engage students in this kind of learning is to incorporate first-hand accounts from people who have experienced homelessness or disadvantage.

These discussions help to show children that issues such as homelessness are complex and can happen to anyone who loses their support structure. Breaking down stereotypes is important. Often children first encounter homelessness when they see someone sleeping rough on the street, or perhaps adolescents have heard negative news stories about homelessness that suggest it’s a choice or that people who experience homelessness have done something wrong. This certainly doesn’t provide the adequate context or exploration of the issue students should have access to. While the stereotype of the older man sleeping on the street is sometimes accurate, children are generally surprised to learn that people sleeping rough – the visible homeless – only make up 6 per cent of the overall homeless population.

According to the 2011 census, 105,237 people are homeless in Australia. I’ve heard children gasp when you show them that this number is bigger than a full house at the MCG. It’s important to explain to children that homelessness comes in many forms, including couch surfing, boarding houses and sleeping in cars.

Left: Shane, a Big Issue Classroom guest speaker since 2011.
Credit: Michelle Grace Hunder
Secondary students can also explore the drivers of homelessness, including family and domestic violence, the chronic shortage of affordable housing, financial crisis, mental illness, addiction, unemployment and social exclusion. Age-appropriate activities are great for illustrating each of these ideas to students. At the primary level, for example, the focus may be on the importance of support structures, while secondary school students develop a deeper understanding of disadvantage and its impacts. We use a games-based learning ethos to teach our students at The Big Issue Classroom. But, regardless of the method, all activities should help students appreciate that no one should have to experience disadvantage and marginalisation and that everyone deserves support and compassion.

Homelessness education can be challenging for students. It requires them to think deeply about social issues, it tests misconceptions they may have and it opens their eyes to things they haven’t experienced. One of the best ways to engage students in this kind of learning is to incorporate first-hand accounts from people who have experienced homelessness or disadvantage.

Each session at The Big Issue Classroom features a personal story from a guest speaker, which puts a face to the issue and helps break down stereotypes.

Jessica, a student from Colac, said to our guest speaker, “Your story had a noticeable impact on my life as I was unaware of the severity of homelessness. I have never had a problem with money or accommodation so your story really showed me a different side of life.”

First-hand stories also provide students with an opportunity to ask questions and open discussion is the key to helping students understand these issues.

Shane, who has been a guest speaker in the classroom since 2011, said, “The interaction with students is amazing. I love to see their reactions when they learn about homelessness. Kids come up to me weeks or months later and ask how I’m going – I can see the message is getting through.”

For more information visit thebigissue.org.au
Beyond quiet tolerance to diversity perspectives: When you’re accustomed to privilege, equality feels like oppression

Lucy Nicholas

It occurs to me, following the backlash to Safe Schools, and more recently in wider politics with the rejection of the Uluru statement, that it is when practices go beyond tolerance to celebration or affirmation that the greatest backlash occurs. Why is this? Because it requires work on the part of the accepted and neutralised majority. As the adage goes, when you’re accustomed to privilege, equality feels like oppression.

For me, one of the key issues here is the enshrinement of the Western value of (quiet) ‘tolerance’ as the best way to manage diversity – an approach that more conservative commentators also stop at for diversity in schools. Take, for example, former curriculum adviser Kevin Donnelly’s perspective on both the so-called ‘black armband’ view of history and the apparent ‘promotion’ of queerness for Safe Schools. For him, these were both going too far because they shifted the norm off centre.

TOLERANCE

Tolerance has long been critiqued by ‘race’ and ethnicity scholars, and gender and sexuality scholars. It is not a particularly positive aim: the state of tolerance is equated with forbearance or suffering; we ‘tolerate’ (rather than affirm) views, practices or people who we might disagree with. In academia, there has always been extensive critiques of diversity approaches, which focus only on the part of the minority group (Nakata 2007). Most of the time there is only a focus on ‘tolerance,’ as opposed to real affirmation, as an aim (Hage 2000). An example of this is ethnocentric tolerance of minorities in a culture dominated by one cultural heritage (e.g. the dominance of Anglo culture in Australia). In her critique of the term, Wendy Brown argues that the invocation of tolerance ‘operates from a conceit of neutrality that is actually thick with bourgeois Protestant norms’ (2009, 7). For Brown, tolerance is not particularly empowering as it ‘regulates the presence of the other’ (2009, 8) and can ‘overtly block the pursuit of substantive equality and freedom’ (2009, 9).

In essence, ‘to “tolerate” and to be “tolerated” [inherently] involves an unequal relationship’ (Mirchandani & Tastsoglou 2000, 49) and requires little work on the part of those with the power.

One way to understand why tolerance does not get at the heart of the problem is that, with a tolerance framework, identity remains premised on ‘inside/out’ status (Fuss 1991). Until we undermine this persistent mode of thought, we will not get beyond the othering and subordination of minorities. As queer pedagogue Britzman states, ‘more is required than simply a plea to add marginalized voices to an already overpopulated site’ (Britzman 1995, 158).

Indeed, one of the issues that caused such alarm about Safe Schools was its focus on the ‘whole school’ culture, with an aim of challenging the perceptions of the ‘insiders’ or the dominant groups, an approach also taken by the British schools’ initiative ‘No Outsiders.’ These approaches actually target the underlying issues of prejudice being caused by dualistic inside/outside thinking more generally (Butler 1990; Fuss 1991) rather than patching over the issue. I have argued elsewhere that the dissolution of the very idea of and focus on ‘minorities’ and in and out groups is a much more effective way to reduce prejudice in the long term (Nicholas 2014).
DIVERSITY PERSPECTIVES

In this vein, then, I am so inspired by the idea of the imperative to foster what political theorist Squires calls a ‘diversity perspective’ (2001, 7) at the individual, interactional, institutional and social levels. I conceptualise this as an approach that fosters norm interrogation by all members of schools/societies and the development of positive counterpart ways to relate to each other. A whole school or whole society approach means that the work is not all on the minorities and it gets us past these add-on approaches that ‘let the larger society off the hook of anxiety’ (Duggan 1994:5).

A whole school or whole society approach means that the work is not all on the minorities.

This perspective has been echoed in recent shifts in social psychology, with a shift away from considering ‘prejudice reduction’ towards the aim instead of increasing positive attitudes to difference and diversity. This is a ‘loftier goal – truly bringing diverse groups together by understanding and promoting positive intergroup attitudes’ (Pittinsky, Rosenthal and Montoya 2011, 42). This has wider benefits by also fostering students’ ‘critical thinking skills to question presumptions and biases’ (Temple 2005, 289).

A key starting point for this is for all students to be critical of their own identity and to reflect on the particularity of it. It places at the centre of analysis the socialised ideas about identities and groups that are neutralised and normalised and that allow for the establishment of ‘in’ and ‘out’ groups at all.

Exemplary of concepts that help with this are heteronormativity (as the counterpoint to homophobia) (Schilt & Westbrook 2009); gender normativity (Gilbert 2009) and the related naming of ‘normal’ or ‘non-trans’ gender as ‘cisgender’ in order to decentralise and de-neutralise it; white ignorance (Mills 2007), ethnocentrism and orientalism (Said 1994) and of course white supremacy (Bonilla-Silva & Lewis 1996); and othering of cultural difference (Hage 2000).

In turn, the thinking goes, this will lead to a greater sense of ontological security for all students, such that the motivations for bullying may be undermined, i.e. ‘positive feelings, attitudes, and behaviours towards outgroups may also lead to positive outcomes for those with privilege, including personal growth and increased wellbeing’ (Gonzalez et al 2015, 378).

DIVERSITY PERSPECTIVES IN ACTION

As an example of such an approach, ‘SMS’ (students for a meaningful solution) is a US youth empowerment program that deals with transforming bullying by addressing bullies, victims and bystanders. It interrogates entire mindsets and ways of interacting, offering students new, positive resources for understanding themselves, others and the world (Kalayjian 2015). Similarly, the ‘No Outsiders’ project in the UK sought to consider how schools may go beyond the tolerance discourse in the form of mere anti-homophobia stances, towards instead explicitly enabling, truly diverse discourses and environments. Their explicit aim is ‘moving beyond a discourse of tolerance to challenge heteronormativity in primary schools’ (DePalma & Atkinson 2009).

In the Australian context, the original iteration of Safe Schools Coalition addressed bullying based on othering by deploying resources to schools about the nature of sexual and gender identity, relationships and diversity. Youth group Minus18 creates visual resources that communicate affirmative messages to young sexually and gender diverse people, such that school cultures may be more actively inclusive.

In terms of wider practices that can be actioned in less systematic everyday teaching contexts, the notion of ‘microaffirmations’ (as the counterpoint to micro-aggressions) is the idea of actively creating an affirming context for diverse students, rather than defaulting to the dominant norm. An easy example proposed is ‘Using inclusive language – for instance, talk about “families” instead of “parents”.’ Using examples in teaching materials of a diverse range of ethnicities, sexualities and genders is another easy example that many of us already do. Call it promotion if you like but if it results in one student feeling less othered, then it is worth it.


WHOLE SCHOOL/BEYOND TOLERANCE RESOURCES

https://www.amazon.com/No-Outsiders-Our-School-Teaching/dp/1909301728
http://www.schools-out.org.uk/
https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/16/12/accentuate-positive
References


Look out for the new textbooks from Social Education Victoria in early 2018. Textbooks have been written for the new study designs for VCE Sociology and VCE Australian and Global Politics 2018 – 2022.

More information is available at [www.sev.asn.au](http://www.sev.asn.au)
When it comes to being inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture, one of the most common questions the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) hears asked by educators is, ‘How do I start?’ Many educators have expressed to us their fear of appearing ‘tokenistic’ when implementing Koorie-related activities in isolation. We would like to offer some advice to allay this fear.

**STEP 1**

The first step is self-reflection. There are some important questions for you and your colleagues to consider when committing to becoming Koorie-inclusive. These include:

- What do I feel?
- What do I know?
- What do I want/need to know?
- What are my own cultural biases?

Be prepared to do some research, enrol in cultural awareness programs and learn about Koorie cultural norms and protocols.

**STEP 2**

The second step in meaningfully embedding Koorie perspectives is to know and understand your local Koorie community. Utilising Aboriginal languages maps can help you identify which Aboriginal tribal/language group is in your local area. This means that when you design learning programs, you can implement cultural activities that are as locally relevant as possible. Also, once you know whose land your school operates on, you can put up an acknowledgement plaque to pay tribute and respect to the traditional owners. In fact, whenever you talk about any aspect of Aboriginality, you should try to identify where it is located and for whom it holds significance so that the experiences of students at your education setting are as contextualised and authentic as possible.

Be mindful that it takes time to build relationships, so start small and practise patience.

VAEAI can be your first point of contact for connecting with your Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG). VAEAI advocates for community involvement, which is why LAECGs are so important. LAECGs are voluntary bodies made up of a broad range of local Koorie community members who dedicate their time to improving the education opportunities for Koorie people in their local community.

Left: A student engages in Aboriginal inspired hand painting. Credit: VAEAI
communities. However, when engaging with Koorie people, remember not to expect that they will necessarily know or want to talk about their cultural backgrounds and be respectful of this.

Many educators from the schools VAEAI has visited have expressed interest in inviting elders into their classes to talk with students and perform cultural ceremonies such as Welcome to Country. Being in touch with an LAECG can enable educators to connect with elders and other community representatives. The Department of Education and Training (DET) can direct you to your local Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO). These workers help support Koorie students in primary and high school and offer advice on culturally appropriate activities. Be mindful that it takes time to build relationships, so start small and practise patience.

**STEP 3**

The third step is to resource your education setting. This is to ensure your school is culturally representative and inviting on a daily basis, not just for special occasions such as NAIDOC Week or Reconciliation Week. In this way, non-Indigenous students will be able to experience truly integrated learning and Koorie students and their families can experience a sense of belonging that is embedded and continuous. We know from discussions with Koorie families that they are more likely to approach a service or education-provider and identify as Koorie if they see some visible form of culture on the buildings.

Don’t only look to traditional resources and ideas because, while these are important, students need to learn about the present day and how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have evolved over time.

We know from discussions with Koorie families that they are more likely to approach a service or education-provider and identify as Koorie if they see some visible form of culture on the buildings.

We’ve come up with some great ideas that you could use to resource your education setting:

- Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.
- Exhibit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork.
- Display age-appropriate information about significant events such as Sorry Day, NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week.
- Use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musical instruments and play Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music for students to listen and dance to.
- Incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colours and language in classroom decorations.
- Read books or watch films with themes relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and perspectives, as well as to reconciliation. (Aboriginal Studies Press, the Victorian Aboriginal Languages Corporation and Magabala Books all publish a range of materials that can be used with students.)
- Explore the Mission Voices website that portrays the unique culture and history of Victorian Aboriginal people and where Elders tell of their lives on missions and reserves.
- Make puppets and dolls with differing skin colours and clothing (traditional and contemporary) to prompt discussions around identity.
- Create bush environments so that Indigenous knowledge of plants, animals and environments can be explored.
- Use beads and sand so students can recreate symbols and learn to represent language.

Left: Aboriginal art and craft activities at a school. Credit: VAEAI
**STEP 4**

The fourth step is to make a commitment to honour the differences among the students enrolled at your education setting. Don’t have the attitude of ‘treating all students the same’ regardless of cultural background. They are not the same. Some of their differences can be seen, but many cannot – for example, the way they think about culture, the way they interact and their ideas of family and kinship.

Students need to be respected as individuals and see themselves reflected in the classroom and education program. If you are fortunate enough to have Koorie students attending your school, you can ask their families what they would like to see in the program or in the physical learning environment. After all, they know their culture best and it will make the families feel valued to be asked and viewed as having something to contribute. Remember though, it is important to celebrate Aboriginal people and culture even if there are no Koorie students currently enrolled in your school as non-Koorie students need to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and perspectives.

Don’t have the attitude of ‘treating all students the same’ regardless of cultural background. They are not the same.

**STEP 5**

Finally, try not to become someone whose motto is, ‘I didn’t know where to start, so I didn’t start’. VAEAI recently asked some Koorie educators what advice they would give to non-Indigenous educators who want to be Koorie-inclusive. This is what they said:

- ‘You only know what you know, so unless you ask questions you’re not going to find out about what you don’t yet understand.’
- ‘Be honest and open. If you want to know, you need to educate yourself – it’s your responsibility to do so.’
- ‘Getting to know people in your local Koorie community is so important. Invite them in to your service and ask if they’d be willing to share some of what they know with the students.’

- ‘Be prepared to take time and not rush.’
- ‘You will never get it right all of the time. We are all subjective beings and we view the world through our own lenses, but we can learn from people who know what they’re doing.’
- ‘“Best practice” is often intangible. It’s about providing a welcoming environment, having inclusive attitudes, and building respectful relationships.’
- ‘Don’t be afraid – just have a go!’

A version of this article first appeared in the Victorian Inclusion Agency’s *Embrace* magazine, which is published by Community Child Care Association.

Above: Aboriginal art and craft activities at a school. Credit: VAEAI
It all started with the mahogany sauce.

Ever since I had moved from Perth to Melbourne to take up a teaching position at the wonderful Emerald Secondary College, my Mum had been insisting on more adventurous Christmas holiday locations every year. First it was Tasmania, then New Zealand and soon enough, here I was eating pan-fried radish cake with mahogany sauce just outside Taipei.

The older gentleman at the market standing next to me started the usual traveller questions. I had pieced together a few phrases of Mandarin to simply explain that I was from Australia, I loved Taiwan and that I was a teacher. No sooner had I mentioned I was teacher, he looked surprised, bowed reverently and said in broken English, ‘Oh you, teacher. Very good. Very good’ backing away slowly, eyes respectfully downcast and hands together in prayer position. He looked up once he was a few feet away and the twinkle in his eye was as if I had told him that I had the cure for cancer or that I could levitate.

Not only had I never experienced this sort of reaction when telling people that I was a teacher in Australia, but I had never really imagined it possible. Was Taiwan the promised land where merely mentioning your profession would win instant respect from all, even those five decades your senior? I instantly started dreaming of classrooms that ran like clockwork, where the students completed every task perfectly and then asked respectfully for extension work. I dreamt of leisurely planning time, no yard duties and a minimal marking load. I dreamt of a place where the wider culture would embody the Confucian ideals of family and learning and apprenticeship but with none of the associated stresses of overworked children and ‘tiger mothers’ we hear in snippets of horror stories.

I spent the rest of the year dreaming about taking my teaching overseas before pulling the trigger in late 2016. I would take a year’s leave without pay and chase the sun. It took me across the world before I settled in Taipei in early May. I found an evening gig teaching an adult conversation class almost immediately. It was easy money. The students were all professional women in their early 30s who had spent various amounts of time living and studying abroad. Their English was probably better than mine. I didn’t dumb anything down, go easy with acronyms or slow my pace at all. We pushed and pulled across all manner of current affairs and feature topics in the cosy surrounds of a cat café. Every now and then, a particularly hefty feline would try to cuddle up just as I was making a point about population growth in the developing world or the lack of a dairy industry in Taiwan. The next week I

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1 Despite mahogany sounding like a material you’d make a shelving unit out of, it goes surprisingly well as a condiment on your breakfast.
would come back to see the cat had been shaved in a
cutesy attempt to make it even more Snapchat worthy.

Despite the cats and great conversations, my few hours of
conversation classes per month weren’t enough to cover
my newfound addiction for indulging in the café scene in
Taipei. Despite having some of the best tea production,
storage and processing in the world, Taipei is in the grips
of a café boom. Single origin roasters can be found on
nearly every other block, with cold-brew, aeropress and
other exotic techniques never far away. A single cup often
costs nearly ten Aussie dollars. So, I found a summer gig
teaching primary school kids.

It seemed straightforward enough. An hour of guided
reading, then a scenario teaching lesson before an hour of
phonics, an hour of science and, mercifully, a trip to the
local park. I was in charge of playtime at the park – with
concrete all around, not a blade of grass and a tiny playset
– it was tough work in the choking humidity. We would all
return to the school dripping with sweat and lie underneath
the air-conditioning for a few minutes. The overnight
temperature didn’t drop below 25°C for six months. It felt
a million miles from the intensity of VCE preparation and
from the frosty mornings in the Dandenongs where the
thermostat in the classroom would read 2°C.

Soon enough, I found a ‘real’ job at a school that aligned
with my basic values. My current role gives me a lot of
freedom to plan meaningful lessons and use a wide variety
of resources. The students follow an American curriculum
with lessons ranging from Spelling, Grammar and Phonics
to Social Studies and Science. There’s a weekly research
class as well as guided reading and a writing project. It’s
comprehensive and it’s incredibly effective. On one of my
first days, a girl in my younger class, who is not yet seven,
shared with me that she had read a book about Rosa
Parks and could tell me what the word ‘segregate’ meant.
I was astonished. I still am. I’ve been drilled in my teacher
training to have high expectations, but I have never really
thought about what that might look like. Too often, I’ve
probably only expected each student to raise themselves
a step or two above where they currently are. When a six-
year-old, in her second language, has a better grasp of
racial dynamics during the civil rights era… maybe I’ve
been failing to hold my Year 10 History kids in Australia to
truly high expectations.

My current role gives me a lot
of freedom to plan meaningful
lessons and use a wide variety
of resources.

Taiwan is an island in the South China Sea, only a few
hundred kilometres from the eastern Chinese seaboard.
In my short time, I’ve heard the air-raid siren and been
ushered from the streets into the underground more than
once. When travelling down the east coast, the roar of
F-16s overhead was an hourly occurrence. The fear of the
inevitable Chinese invasion seems childish, paranoid,
fanciful. But when the sirens wail, and the streets are quiet,
there’s no roguish laughter, I think back to the lessons on
the Battle of Britain. I remember showing my Year 10
History class a YouTube clip of the air-raid siren and always
thought it was haunting but quaint – like a fairground ghost
train. I never thought I’d hear one in 2017.

Other teachers share their stories. Many had come to
Taiwan with the intention of staying for a few months,
which turned into decades. Some were qualified teachers,
but most had never taught in their home country. Some
probably should never teach here either. A few were
looking to save some money but most just wanted to
finance their holiday. Many teachers who are looking to
Teach English in Asia look to South Korea for the best
wages and low cost of living, but Taiwan is another
attractive option. Wages aren’t amazing but life is quite
cheap, clean and easy to navigate for a non-Chinese
speaker. Every teacher talked about the bizarre
bureaucratic rules and loopholes.

Kindergartens are legally not allowed to be taught by
foreigners. So, when the inspectors come knocking, many
school managers create hilarious diversions so that
foreign teachers can exit via a back door, hide in the

Above: Taroko Gorge in Taroko National Park on the
East coast of Taiwan. Taiwan is known for its National
Parks which cover 8.6 per cent of the entire land area
of the country. Credit: Stephen Barrett
storeroom or even hop out a window. Being asked to go to the local café for a few hours until the inspection is over is common practice. ‘Beware the stranger in a tie’ is typical advice during training and induction. The charade goes on and is an open joke in the expat community.

Once the regular teaching started, I became accustomed to the routine. The younger kids arrive around midday, have lunch and then sleep on the floor in my classroom. Their sleeping bags are kept at the school and most don’t use pillows. Students from third and fourth grade finish their regular school day and come to us for an afternoon snack before beginning their after-school classes at 5pm and finishing at 7pm. The sky is dark by 7pm almost all year round and I think dreamily back to my childhood – afternoons spent climbing trees, endless games of backyard cricket, riding bikes around the neighbourhood, a feeling of warmth, of sun, of unstructured fun. That feeling dissipates quickly as I peer out the window. The chrome and glass skyscrapers around me project their lights up into the never-quite-dark sky. There are no stars. Only the pink-grey hue of the haze. My lessons about Native American cultures go surprisingly well. Maybe the kids are aware of what they’re missing. Do they dream of stars? Of birds? Of catching salmon or roaming across plains?

We often hear of the remarkable results in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests from small Asian nations such as Taiwan and South Korea. We don’t hear about the students who never see the sun. The days roll on and begin the all-too familiar blur of time passing rapidly. The calendar offers no reprieve at all. There are no term breaks. There are summer holidays but, predictably, the school offers a full-time summer program and you are expected to teach right through. There is a major examination on Christmas morning and the few public holidays that do occur are often made up with Saturday classes. My housemate has taught for 18 months with his longest stretch of leave being four days in a row over a rare long weekend.

Taiwan is only half the size of Tasmania, yet has a population slightly greater than Australia. Far from the wide-open spaces of living and teaching in the Dandenong Ranges, I now live in a district that Wikipedia tells me is one of the densest urban settlements in the world. As a Humanities teacher, I often think of the geographical concepts of place and space. I wonder how the Taiwanese feel. How do they navigate the estranged relationship with China and the difficult international position that follows? How do they deal with the twin problems of a falling birth rate and remaining true to the ideals of looking after the elderly? How do they ensure that their younger generation is globally competitive, capable in English and has some semblance of a normal childhood?

I’ll be glad to come home. But I’ll miss the helpful locals, the incredible landscapes and that feeling that coming to teach here was one of the best things I could do. Despite my dreams, the classrooms here don’t always run like clockwork. I struggle with extending the bright kids, helping the weaker kids and, frustratingly, stamping out bullying. I still have marking to do, parent-teacher meetings and articles to write for the newsletter. I dress up for Halloween and print pictures of Australian animals for the kids. I pick up leaves from the park for our science experiment and I lead the dodgeball game on Friday nights.

Life here is completely foreign in many ways. But the familiar routines of the teacher remain. I’ll miss being a teacher here. And I’ll miss that mahogany sauce too!
CIVICS & CITIZENSHIP

Diplomacy beyond the classroom: A student perspective on the UN Youth Evatt Competition

Isabella Fenech and Stella Le

*Isabella Fenech is a Year 11 student at Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School (PEGS), who is a bit like salt and pepper – she’s in everything: debating, drama, music, you name it – and she isn’t just making up the numbers; annoyingly she seems to be talented at everything she does. Stella Le, also in Year 11 at PEGS, has represented the school at national level at the UN Youth Voice finals. In her spare time, Stella enjoys solving the world’s problems – a skillset that came in handy during the Evatt competition.*

**Ethos: What is Evatt?**

*Isabella and Stella:* The Evatt Competition, named after former president of the UN General Assembly H. V. Evatt, is a model United Nations Security Council diplomacy competition for students in Years 9 to 12, run by the United Nations Youth Australia (UN Youth). In teams of two, students act as diplomats from a designated country of the United Nations Security Council. They work towards amending, voting and debating on a proposed resolution for a current international issue in such a way that it aligns with the interests of their assigned nation but, at the same time, must take the global situation into consideration. Unlike other competitions, Evatt requires cooperation with those who you are competing against. Students must work together within their own partnerships but also with other students representing other countries. The key to performing well is to be judged the most effective diplomats.

**Ethos: Why did you apply for Evatt?**

*Stella:* As a student, my subjects are dominated primarily by Maths, Science and Languages. A few months ago, I would have told anyone who asked that I had absolutely no interest in the vapid world of politics and international law. Honestly, I couldn’t even name the prime minister (in my defence, we have had too many too quickly). I did not actually know very much about Evatt when I signed up.

Left: Student diplomats in action in the 2016 Evatt competition national finals. Credit: UN Youth
In fact, I heard it was similar to debating, and I have always liked the elegance of arguing. So, I was tentatively curious. I wasn’t entirely sure what I would gain, but what could I lose? With that in mind, I partnered up with the much more competent Isabella Fenech and we decide to try our hands at being diplomats.

Isabella: My partnership with Stella spans all the way back to our more tentative years at the bottom of the high school hierarchy in Year 7. We really didn’t know each other, in fact, we were more friends through other people rather than actually having a relationship ourselves. But after working together in an academic competition, we kept being in similar teams throughout the years and fitting together pretty well. From drama to debating, we made a pretty awesome duo, and Evatt was an opportunity to continue that. So, we signed up, having a very vague idea of what it was and how many early nights and sleep-ins we had committed to sacrificing. To begin with, I was first attracted to Evatt because I was sick and tired of blundering through political conversations and not having the slightest idea of what anybody was talking about. I saw Evatt as my foothold into the mysterious world of international politics. Little did I know we’d be plunged in over our heads, in the best way, of course.

But the deeper you delve in, the more you learn, the more you are able to navigate the intricacies of the international laws and relations and suddenly you begin to feel like you’re actually getting somewhere. It is fascinating and, even before the actual competition, we had already learnt an incredible amount about global politics and this layer of society that attempts to establish the order in which we live.

The actual competition was where the real magic happened. As the diplomats of a country, you have to create a vision to fit your nation’s best interests and you must present this in a very clear, logical and precise way. Evatt is extremely fast-paced; everything happens quickly, so whether it be note-passing, answering questions or voting, you learn to think fast and act fast. The Negotiation Chamber is where students directly interact with each other. In order for an amendment to be proposed, it must be signed by other countries – that is, it must be supported by other teams. Each country has its own interests, issues and values and manoeuvring around this complex web is almost an athletic feat. Throughout all this, you learn to be more proactive, more confident and, above all, more versatile. In Evatt, you research and you vote, you speak and you listen, you negotiate and you compromise, you argue and you empathise.

Australia is a large country but, physically, we are quite isolated, surrounded by water. In some ways, unfortunately for many Australian students, the world is contained within these borders and it’s difficult to blame them – watching the 7 o’clock news every night will only bring your understanding so far. The convoluted world of contemporary international politics is hard to teach because it is constantly changing. So, it becomes faraway, detached and, as such, irrelevant. Who cares about extraordinary rendition or torture in Russia? Why does extrajudicial violence in the Philippines matter? How does mass surveillance in the United States affect us?
These were all topics we discussed and debated on during Evatt. In this interconnected age, indeed, we should all care because these are significant global issues concerning human rights and international peace that we, as global citizens, and simply as human beings, ought to be informed and aware of. Often, you will hear starry-eyed students announce, ‘I want to make the world a better place!’ Perhaps to make the world a better place, the first step is to gain an understanding of the world we live in.

In the end, it is one thing to do the research, to read textbooks and to watch videos but to be able to be immersed in the workings of the United Nations Security Council firsthand is an entirely different story.

Evatt goes beyond the theoretical, beyond the monotonous classroom – it is practical and it is relevant and that is what makes it so worthwhile.

MORE INFORMATION

Evatt 2018 will run in Term 3, with preliminary rounds throughout August. More information can be found at unyouth.org.au/programs. If you’re interested in running an in-schools program at your school, you can contact UN Youth at vicschools@unyouth.org.au.

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How to begin teaching global digital citizenship the right way

Lee Watanabe-Crockett

When we woke up one August morning in 1991, the world wide web had officially been introduced into our lives. Because of its presence in our lives today, our level of global interconnectedness is staggering. Above all, this connectivity has allowed us to become true global citizens. We can now witness first-hand how local or individual efforts can have a global effect.

This demonstrates the great positive potential of the internet. Unfortunately, we have also learned how exposed we can be to scrutiny, manipulation and threats to our privacy and security. It makes sense to cultivate empowered individuals that are dutifully aware of their responsibility both for and with the power of the internet for the lasting wellbeing of our global community. This is a hallmark of what we call the global digital citizen.

THE GLOBAL DIGITAL CITIZEN: A COMMON HERO FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

There’s no one quite like the global digital citizen. This citizen is conscientious, respectful and compassionate. It’s an individual who strives to establish a sense of global community. They practice this in all online and offline relationships, duties and endeavours. At the Global Digital Citizen Foundation, we see such a person as one who is characterised by the practice of the following five unique principles or tenets.

1. **Personal responsibility.** This concerns how one governs themselves in such matters as finance, ethical and moral considerations, personal health and fitness, and interpersonal relationships in both the digital and the non-digital world.

2. **Global citizenship.** Global citizenship is about recognising and respecting diversity and having an appreciation of the values, traditions, religions, concerns and cultures of our fellow citizens.

3. **Digital citizenship.** Digital citizenship means showing respect and responsibility for yourself, for others and for property of every definition. It involves setting up a proper program of digital ethics and best practices for all.

4. **Altruistic service.** This means a concern for the wellbeing of the people with whom we share our world and a desire to serve others.

5. **Environmental stewardship.** This is all about the demonstration of common sense values and of an appreciation for the beauty and majesty that is surrounding us every day.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR EXPLORING THE GLOBAL DIGITAL CITIZEN**

Teaching global digital citizenship is all about asking the right questions. Our classrooms are the perfect places to begin nurturing global digital citizenship values within our children.

Here are 10 essential questions for teaching citizenship on the world wide web:

1. **Search and share ethically**

How can students source and use content for multimedia projects safely and ethically?

Websites such as MorgueFile and Pixabay are great places to find top quality images. This is work that photographers have placed online for free use.

Students, and all of us, need to be careful about checking the background of resources found on Google. Google advanced searches and using Creative Commons are also a safe bet. Sometimes the results they show are properties that are still licensed to some degree.

It’s a good practice to cite sources and link to original works and to seek permission to use content wherever possible. Always properly attribute a website or post if using a quote or text from that source.
2. Be social media savvy

What can students do to keep themselves safe in their social media environments?

Social media profiles are an integral part of the connected student’s life. They need to know how they can protect themselves and keep these domains safe. Employers and tertiary education institutions can view social media sites of candidates they screen. What they see is what they use to decide to accept that individual or not. This means only posting appropriate content.

Students must be careful with pictures, names and updates they post on profiles. Teach them the ‘grandma rule’ – if you wouldn’t say it or show it to your grandmother, don’t post it!

3. Follow your footprint

How can we manage and minimise the negative impact of our ‘digital footprint?’

What gets posted online never really goes away. It can still be retrieved by anyone who knows how. It’s what we call our ‘digital footprint’. It generally includes two kinds of information:

1. Active information – such as what we put on social media; and

2. Passive information – e.g. web cookies, etc.

Companies use this information for target marketing. It’s a virtual roadmap of how we consume certain products. Ask students this question: If their name was typed into a web search, what would people see about them? Is there anything they wouldn’t want anyone to know about?

There are guidelines students can follow for cleaning up their digital footprints:

- Never post anything that will place you in a bad light later on. This includes web searches and comments in blogs and websites such as YouTube.
- Be careful with schedules and personal info. Try not to disclose addresses, phone numbers or bank card numbers unless absolutely necessary.
- Information posted online is almost impossible to remove. Web archiving and file sharing ensures that our online records are there for life even if we deactivate or delete old accounts, it’s still out there.

4. Be kind

How will I show appreciation and respect for any intellectual property provided for free online?

In teaching Global Digital Citizenship, we teach the responsibility of ownership. Students can learn to recognise the hard work that goes into developing and sharing intellectual property. It takes time and effort to create something meaningful and sharing it with others is an act of community-building they can support.

It takes time and effort to create something meaningful and sharing it with others is an act of community-building they can support.

The commenting features sometimes get disabled on videos, blogs and photo galleries because of cruelty and abuse from anonymous viewers. Let your students know they are better than that. They can set an example by supporting and inspiring others.

A kind word goes a long way so teach them not to post things to bully, blackmail, insult or harm others. Lead them towards seeing the benefits of giving positive reinforcement. They should also feel safe to share their own work.

5. Share your smarts

How can I share my interests and skills with others?

Our students are inherently creative – there is always something a student can do well. Maybe it’s a hobby or interest or a subject they excel in. Why not encourage them to share what they do best?

Create an open discussion in class about how we learn from others in the digital age. Look at examples of blogs, wikis and videos. What makes these things interesting, unique and informative?

Encourage learners to share what they do with larger audiences. If they know lots about a topic or are passionate about it, they can create resources for others. Show them how to give benefit from what they know.

Encourage students to create digital online resources by:

- starting a blog
- writing and publishing a wiki
- hosting a web page
- recording a podcast episode
- creating a video for their own YouTube channel
- designing an ebook or a white paper.

6. Practise tech health

How can we preserve and protect our health when using technology?

‘Screen time’ isn’t just a parental term. It applies to classrooms, living rooms and workplaces everywhere. The way to minimise the effects of too much time with digital technology is by practising ‘tech health’. These tricks help students stay fit for digital work and play.
Screens produce an artificial illumination that can affect melatonin. This is the hormone that we produce in anticipation of darkness. It regulates our sleep cycle and our ‘internal clock’. In a 2012 article, the New York Times cited an interesting study done at Rensselaer Institute that discussed how digital technology affected our eyes, hormones and sleep.

**Make use of the 20-20-20 rule:**
every 20 minutes focus for 20 seconds on something 20 feet away.

When working with their devices, encourage students to take eye breaks and stretch breaks. Make use of the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes focus for 20 seconds on something 20 feet away.

**7. Contribute to communities**

How can we use technology and teamwork to help local and global communities?

There are lots of ways for students to honour folks in any community. They can invite local professionals in to give talks on their craft. You can also set up web conferences with them through Skype.

Students can also help businesses grow their web traffic by offering to work on their websites as school projects. Try organising other schools in community clean-up challenges. You can also create fundraisers for local community projects through Kickstarter or Indiegogo.

**8. Touch global lives**

How can we help people in different parts of the world lead better lives?

Crowdfunding is a beneficial part of starting up businesses and projects of all sorts. It can surprise you how many people out there are willing to help others. It’s what makes this a truly global culture.

This is the kind of thing that has made organisations such as Kiva so successful. Kiva is a micro-lending service that lets you donate a loan to people in need all over the world. Schools can change lives for the better with a service like this. Try out a campaign and give students a chance to help someone far away.

**9. Make a stand**

What can we do to stand up against bullying and cyberbullying?

A big aspect of teaching Global Digital Citizenship is taking a stand against bullies and cyberbullies.

Being bullied is a degrading and terrifying experience. Kids can help each other by listening, learning and acting out.

Invite students to create resources such as videos and presentations about the subject. They can also work with other schools on anti-bullying campaigns. Students must be encouraged to talk about the subject in safe and supportive environments. Here are some great online resources for you to explore cyberbullying:

- MediaSmarts—Cyberbullying Resources
- CommonSenseMedia—Cyberbullying Toolkit
- SafeKids.com
- Teens Against Bullying

**10. Connect with culture**

What projects can students collaborate on to learn about other world cultures?

Teaching students to understand other cultures shapes great citizens. Have students show an understanding of culture with exploration projects such as web slideshows, documentaries, cultural spotlights and more.

A great place to find collaborative problem-based learning and inquiry lessons on world cultures is the Solution Fluency Activity Planner. Our user-generated learning community contributes global unit plans on international cultures every day. They’re the perfect tools for getting your students savvy with this subject.

**A ROADMAP FOR GLOBAL DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP PRACTICES**

There is so much for educators to think about when it comes to ensuring guidelines for safety and proper etiquette for our digital students in their tech-oriented lives. The best way to guide students towards global digital citizenship practices is to ensure the knowledge we have is both current and relevant for making this shift. You’ll find everything you need in our book Growing Global Digital Citizens: Better Practices That Build Better Learners.

Global digital citizenship practices empower students to effectively and ethically participate in and contribute to the digital world around them and this book provides the perfect roadmap for bringing those practices into your own classrooms and schools.

Growing global digital citizens helps educators of all levels in establishing a Global Digital Citizenship program in their school. Additionally, the book offers professional guidance on how K-12 teachers and administrators can grow global citizens who are respectful and responsible critical thinkers with the skills necessary for living in an interconnected world.
RESOURCES

A platform for asylum seeker voices in Australia: Oki Gardner with Behind the Wire

Camilla Chapman

Behind the Wire (BTW) is an oral history project that aims to reveal a nuanced picture of seeking asylum and life in mandatory detention. BTW wants to show a reality that goes beyond queue-jumpers on the one hand and passive victims on the other to reveal resilient, suffering human beings and important literary voices. BTW also seeks to place the voices, faces and perspectives of asylum seekers, which are rarely represented in public debates on refugee issues, at the centre of the discussion.

BTW has published a book, They Cannot Take the Sky, featuring 35 first-person stories about seeking asylum and life in detention. BTW also developed a museum exhibition comprising over two hours of audio and video stories, which was held at the Melbourne Immigration Museum from March to July 2017. The award-winning podcast, The Messenger was co-created by BTW’s Michael Green and The Wheeler Centre.

With such a wide range of media at its disposal, BTW wanted to make these stories accessible for teachers and schools and believe there is ample opportunity for dynamic and memorable lessons. Thus, BTW is developing new educational resources that will enable students to broaden their awareness of issues that surround them through multimedia examples of first-person narrative storytelling.

HOW TO USE BTW's RESOURCES IN SCHOOLS

The educational resources developed by BTW will be available by the end of 2017 for Australian teachers to use in their classrooms. These resources address questions of identity and belonging, political policy, religion and culture, and global immigration patterns. The resource pack comprises four stand-alone lessons, which can also be taught in a sequence.

SNAPSHOT OF FOUR LESSONS IN THE RESOURCE PACK

1. Reading and Reflection for Civics & Citizenship – citizenship & belonging

This lesson is based on Citizenship, Diversity and Identity from the Civics & Citizenship curriculum for Years 7 and 8 and includes Years 9 and 10 with the extension task. It also incorporates several of the General Capabilities (Critical and Creative thinking, Personal and Social capability, Ethical Understanding and Intercultural Understanding) by asking students to reflect on their own experiences of belonging and drawing contrasts and comparisons with the story. Students examine the story of Jamila Jafari.

Above: Jamila left Afghanistan when she was five years old. She is now 20 and studies at a university in Perth. Credit: Melanie Adams.
2. Cross-curricular class for junior Humanities – mapping refugee journeys

This lesson is aimed at Years 7 and 8 and draws from Geography and Civics & Citizenship curricula to offer a cross-discipline lesson.

It is specifically suited to the Australian Curriculum for the Geography Place and Livability unit and the Citizenship, Diversity and Identity requirements in the Civics & Citizenship Curriculum. Furthermore, the lesson employs mapping and timelining skills, along with a research component in the extension task, which aligns with the Australian and Global Politics Unit 2 Area of Study 2 on Political Actors and Power.

Students are asked to annotate world maps with a compilation of their own knowledge, an atlas and information from stories in They Cannot Take the Sky.

3. Media text evaluation – The Messenger podcast

This lesson sequence is aimed at students studying Year 8 English and focuses specifically on listening and speaking iterations and oral presentations. There are also writing and research activities that support the lesson sequence. It uses individual and group tasks to direct students towards joint construction. There is an assessment tool included for the final activity, which is designed to be used for self- or peer-assessment. The sequence is structured around three lessons, however, depending on various factors, it could easily be adapted into either a longer or shorter timeframe.

The Messenger podcast is based on thousands of voice messages sent by Abdul Aziz Muhamat, a refugee currently detained on the Australian-run detention centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, to BTW’s Michael Green. The Messenger, co-created and produced by The Wheeler Centre, has been nominated for a Walkley Award for Excellence in Journalism and won the top honour at the International Radio Awards.

4. Creative task

In this creative task, students compose letters between friends in and out of mandatory detention. The lessons are linked to the English curriculum and can cover a range of year levels. It includes an extension for Year 10 Media in which students listen to The Messenger podcast and are assessed on creating a short podcast episode of their own, considering various production elements.

A message from the resource author, Oki Gardner

Behind the Wire has developed a unique set of resources in The Messenger, They Cannot Take the Sky and the exhibition materials. The time is ripe for an authentic, informed and sensitive inclusion of refugee and asylum seeker stories in Australian schools and, I believe, there are multiple opportunities within existing curricula which invite teachers and schools to build these themes into our classrooms.

These lessons aim to provide a range of ideas for including Behind the Wire in secondary classrooms. They focus on Humanities, English and Media learning areas and are designed around sequences of lessons to facilitate a development of skill construction.

I encourage teachers to use, modify, combine and amend these lessons to suit their own students’ needs.

More information

SEV is very excited to be launching these materials, which are available at behindthewire.org.au/. Please feel free to email education@behindthewire.org.au for more information.

Camilla Chapman is a Sydney-based teacher with a background in psychology who works with a social psychology research team that focuses on post-traumatic stress and related phenomena. Since 2011, Camilla has used her spare time to volunteer with various refugee support organisations. She joined Behind the Wire in 2016 and is currently their education coordinator. Camilla is passionate about education as a tool to instigate social change and facilitate productive discussion of human rights issues.