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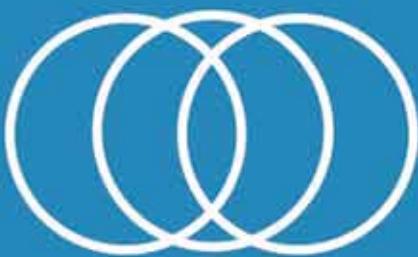
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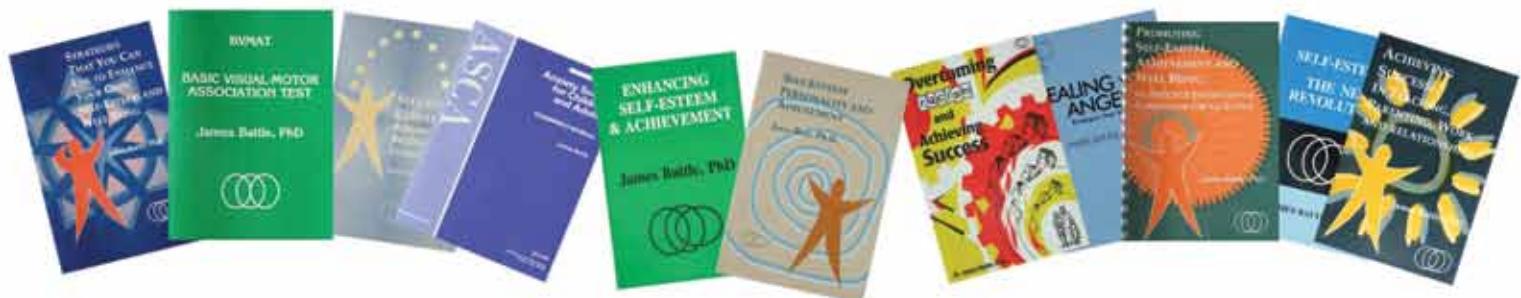
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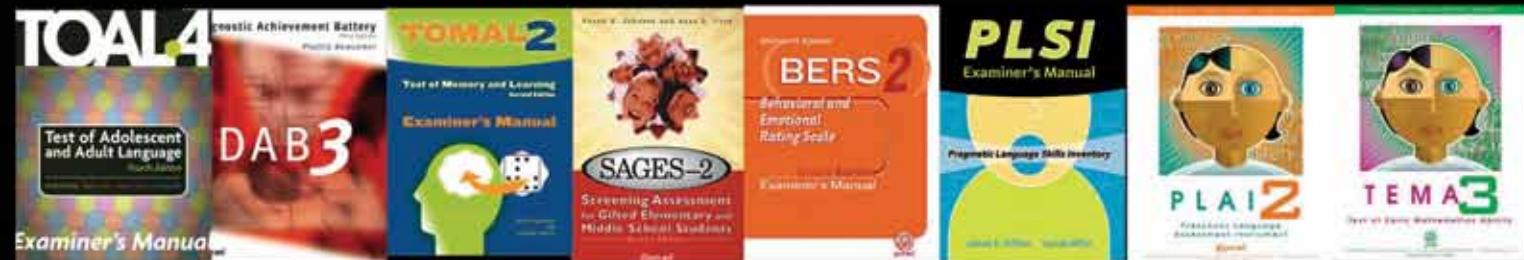
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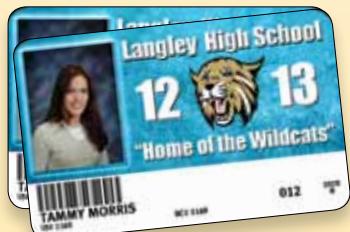


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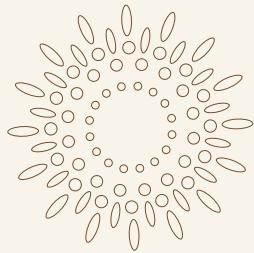
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# CAP JOURNAL

The official publication of



SUMMER 2012



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Editor **ALAN SCHROEDER**

Art Direction & Design **MATT MCCLAY**

Production Coordinator **FRANCES BRADY**

Contributing Writers **KIERAN EGAN**

**JOYCELYN FOURNIER-GAWRYLUK, GILLIAN JUDSON**

**JENNIFER KATZ, RON NORMAN, ALAN SCHROEDER**

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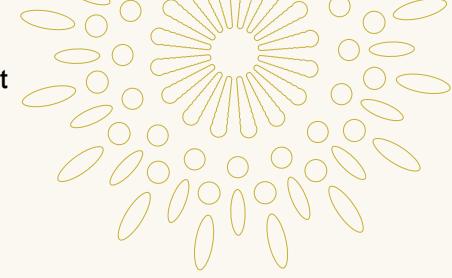
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The CAP Journal has evolved over the past year with two major changes. Firstly, The CAP Board is pleased to announce that we have entered into an agreement with Market Zone Productions to publish our Journal as we move forward as an Association.

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Market Zone Productions will provide some new services which we believe will be well received by our membership. One service that I am certain many of you will appreciate is an electronic version of the Journal which will be available on our website. It will be done in a very user friendly format and we see this as a value-added service for you. In addition, Friesens Printing has come on board as a platinum sponsor of the Canadian Association of Principals. We are very appreciative of our partnership with them and want to acknowledge the important role they play in printing the Journal for us. Our working relationship has been extremely positive. The quality of the Journal is state of the art and presents a professional look for our Association.

As school leaders, it is incumbent on us to be at the cutting edge of educational research and best practice for teaching and learning. This issue is entitled "Putting Imagination Back into Schools". As we consider what brain research is telling us regarding how students learn in the 21st century, educators must reflect on their teaching. Is current practice regarding curriculum implementation and assessment encouraging our youth to be critical and creative thinkers? Are we offering meaningful and authentic learning experiences which will encourage student engagement? In particular, the articles will center on curriculum design, engaging students' emotions and meaningful learning experiences.

As President of the Canadian Association of Principals, I hope to meet you at the CAP 2012 conference in Montreal Quebec. The CAP Board will be holding their May meeting at this time and also attending the conference. The theme Leadership Under Construction supports the need for us as school leaders to be lifelong learners who are open to new understandings in support of educational programming for all students.

In closing, I would like to convey best wishes to you as the 2011-12 school year quickly comes to an end.



Sincerely,

Joycelyn Fournier-  
Gawryluk  
PRESIDENT  
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PRINCIPALS

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# Putting *Imagination* Into Education

THIS INTRODUCTION HAS EXTENSIVELY EXCERPTED THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

*The Three Block Model Of Universal Design For Learning (Udl): Engaging Students In Inclusive Education*  
by Jennifer Kat, University of Manitoba

The Imaginative Education Research Group: ierg.net

by Alan Schroeder

When teachers talk about their work, common themes reoccur more often than not. Teachers find fulfilment in helping students become excited by learning. They want to ensure that students not only acquire knowledge, but also understand the importance, value, and usefulness of that knowledge.

In order to be certain of student success, teachers aspire to help their students attain improved performance in assessments of learning and academic achievement that demonstrates student learning. This is particularly important in today's climate where education systems are faced with increasing pressures to participate in standardized assessments.

Putting Imagination into Education is a key approach to education that effectively cultivates and cements learning. It accomplishes this principally by encouraging and engaging students' emotions and also, connectedly, their imaginations in the material of the curriculum.

Educators have long known that children's thinking is most deeply and energetically engaged when their imagination and emotions are in play. What is new and unique about venturing into Imaginative Education featured in articles in this issue of the Journal is that it offers a theory and a set of frameworks and techniques for actually accomplishing this within the mainstream academic curriculum.

Imaginative Education is based on five distinctive kinds of understanding that enable people to make sense of the world in different ways. The purpose of Imaginative Education is to enable each student to develop these five kinds of understanding while they are learning math, science, social studies, and all other subjects.

The Imaginative Education approach deals with knowledge, psychology, and emotions together. Imaginative Education encourages and enables students to think of the possible, not just the actual, as an enabler of invention, novelty, and flexibility in human thinking. Imaginative Education is not distinct from rationality but is rather a capacity that greatly enriches rational thinking; it is tied to engaging students' abilities to form images in the mind, and image-forming commonly involves emotions.

Typically, the next question that will come to the minds of dedicated classroom educators, is, just how am I going to step into this Imaginative Education realm as far as my classroom, and planning for student success is concerned? Around the world, children of the same age enter today's classrooms with differing learning strengths and challenges, background knowledge, cultures, languages, and experience. Students do not learn alone, but rather, in diverse communities, interacting with their teachers, in the company of their peers, and bringing with them the values and teachings of their families. Schools are among the most effective socialization contexts in our culture, and among the most influential in guiding social and emotional learning. Children's social and emotional learning can be fostered via classroom and school-based intervention efforts.

For students to learn, all students must be recognized as having diverse needs, and have classrooms created that allows all students to learn and develop a sense of belonging. To support inclusion and diversity in Canada, several Canadian provinces have added social and emotional curricula to their

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mandate. But as an educational community of teaching professionals, have we effectively embraced those mandates in our planning and delivery throughout our public schools? Classrooms provide different emotional, social, and academic environments, and these factors affect student's social and emotional learning, which in turn, affects the classroom climate, and learning. And so the cyclical nature can be directed, but only if the intent and resultant planning is deliberate through, and with a focus on, curricula requirements.

It is possible, and as such is presented in this Journal through the articles on Universal Design for Learning! But for UDL to really work, one more underlying tenant needs to be named, specifically the imperative of actively supporting, planning for, and encouraging learning within, and through Inclusion. Students come to school to learn – all students, including those with disabilities. Education must set high standards for all students, and support students appropriately and reflectively of

their individual needs, to achieve those standards. The presence of students with disabilities does not negatively impact the learning of other students. Globally, students with disabilities have demonstrated improved academic outcomes, including literacy, numeracy, general knowledge, and higher order thinking when placed in inclusive settings as compared to peers matched for level of disability in segregated classrooms. Students with disabilities also outperformed their peers in segregated classrooms in adaptive/life skills, vocational and academic competence. Clearly, inclusive education benefits students with and without disabilities, both socially and academically. Despite this, many students with disabilities in Canada continue to be excluded and placed in segregated classrooms (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007).

Inclusive education means just that – an educational system that creates learning communities inclusive of all students. What are the best instructional paradigms to facilitate social and academic inclusion and

engagement for ALL students? It is a 'no brainer' that active engagement of students in their learning is predictive of educational achievement, positive attitudes to learning, and student self-efficacy. But, how do we do it? The 'it' can be accomplished through one promising instructional framework for inclusive education that appears to provide the opportunity for social and academic inclusion of all students, while improving student engagement: Universal Design for Learning!

Enjoy this edition of the CAP Journal as it explores, through the scholarly contributors, the thinking and value of Imagination's power in developing and cultivating the minds of students to become the citizens and contributors of tomorrow's society. **CJ**



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# If You're Headed in The Wrong Direction Walking Faster *{With Improved Style}* Won't Help You

By Kieran Egan

Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

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Imagine you are an Athenian man among a group of your fellow citizens about two and a half thousand years ago. Ahead of you, and slightly raised, is a stone altar, beside which wood burns and crackles in a shallow pit. Smoke is rising from a hole in the altar at the farthest end from the pit. A heifer, meticulously groomed is being led towards the altar by two men whom you know. The heifer kicks and then moos. Startled by the fire and the silent crowd it is firmly forced up the steps.

---

The priestess raises her arms, praises the wisdom of the goddess and asks Athena to accept this pure sacrifice and to enjoy the rich smell of its burning meat. The blade of a long knife flashes down into the neck of the heifer. There is a momentary squeal, then as its legs give way, silence. The animal is skillfully butchered. Its entrails are scooped into long bowls and

placed before the priestess on the altar while the carcass is tossed into the burning pit. The priestess pours a cup of wine onto the hissing sacrifice.

As the carcass continues to sizzle, you and your fellow-citizens stand but remain silent, watch the priestess swiftly cut away the liver and tip the remnant entrails into the smoking hole at the side of the altar.

The pungent smell delights the gods. All eyes watch intently as the priestess carefully dissects, until after a few seemingly endless minutes, her bloodied hands hold up pieces of the liver. She shouts, proclaiming the unspotted quality of the sacrifice, certain that Athena is pleased with the sacrifice and guarantees success in battle against the Corinthians. A great shout thunders through



# One must first uncover the source of error otherwise hearing the truth won't help us.



the air, as the goddess offers her support to those who proposed war, rejecting the peace treaty some had favored.

Later, when the burned meat which Athena most savors is cut away, and after her portion is set aside, you and your companions receive a small portion of the heifer's meat. If, as you sit around a table with your friends enjoying the meat and the accompanying bowl of wine, you suggest to them that cutting up an animal and examining its entrails is not a particularly good way for making foreign policy decisions, you would certainly be considered crazy. If you persisted, saying that the ceremony you had just been through seemed an unlikely best procedure for running the state, and argued that the condition of heifers' livers had nothing to do with the wisdom of going to war, you would be faced with the incredulity of your audience and then perhaps with their hostility. They would likely respond to you in a patronizing manner, with their own common-sense arguments.

How else, they would say, do you propose to discover the will of the goddess? The priestess is highly trained, with many years of skilled experience in discovering and interpreting the data. She has a Ph.D. in haruspication from rocky Chios; it is a complex and refined science and provides the most effective methodology for reaching the best political and social decisions. The liver of heifers is known to be the most reliable source of relevant information.

The problem with trying to continue this argument, of course, is that those you wish to argue with take as beyond question precisely what you want to question. They consider themselves common-sense realists because they are intimately familiar with how things are and how they work. If you

press your case, the kinder among the group will smile at each other and, when you aren't looking, tap their heads to indicate you are an echinas and hypotrachelion short of a column or not the sharpest adze in the tool-shed.

Now imagine that you are a historian two and a half thousand years into the future. Your special area of study is the distant period between the mid-nineteenth and the mid-twenty-first centuries, and you are composing a thesis about a peculiar institution found in every modern society of that time. The school existed as a central institution of what were then considered modern states for just over two hundred years, beginning roughly in the mid-nineteenth century. You are trying to explain, in a clearer way than anyone before you, how such an institution could have come into being in the first place and could have survived so long—despite people at the time constantly complaining about its ineffectiveness.

Your thesis is that twentieth-century people, even though they conducted endless inquiries, commissions and task forces into schools' ineffectiveness, simply failed to identify the fundamental problem. Most reformers were intent on insisting that some particular changes would finally make the system more effective—more technology, less drugs, better family situations, more mindful teachers, more attention to basics, more attention to letting students explore and follow their interests, political interference, excessive and irrational assessment pressures, and on and on through the usual suspects school administrators liked to line up as the main cause of their problems. They seemed unable to recognize that the real problem lay in what they so took for granted that they never questioned it.

You are thinking of preceding your thesis with a quotation from Ludwig Wittgenstein, a philosopher contemporary with the schools of your research: "One must first uncover the source of error otherwise hearing the truth won't help us." A part of your difficulty in composing your argument is that those who will view it are spread across eight star systems and will find it incomprehensible that anyone could ever have believed such an institution provided a sensible way to educate children.

Well, now that I have dragged you through these past and future scenarios, let us leave our ancient Greeks eating their roasted heifer, anxious and excited at the prospect of war, and our historian preparing for her morning's work, feeling the warmth of distant Sirius rising and obliterating the sight of the five moons currently in the sky. I have suggested that our problems with education are more fundamental than people have believed. Most books about educational practices have communicated an assorted array of reforms which they believe would make the school system function satisfactorily. We have to address the tougher task of reframing the idea of education that we have inherited from ancient and more modern Europe and its tangled history.

## Conflicting ideas

The vast array of activities within our schools today is quite remarkable. Society is pushing demands upon school personnel which extend far beyond the original purposes of the public school system. We expect teachers to monitor, directly and indirectly, student health and drug regimens, psychotherapy services, sports and band activities, car wash drives aimed at raising money for athletic or science fair

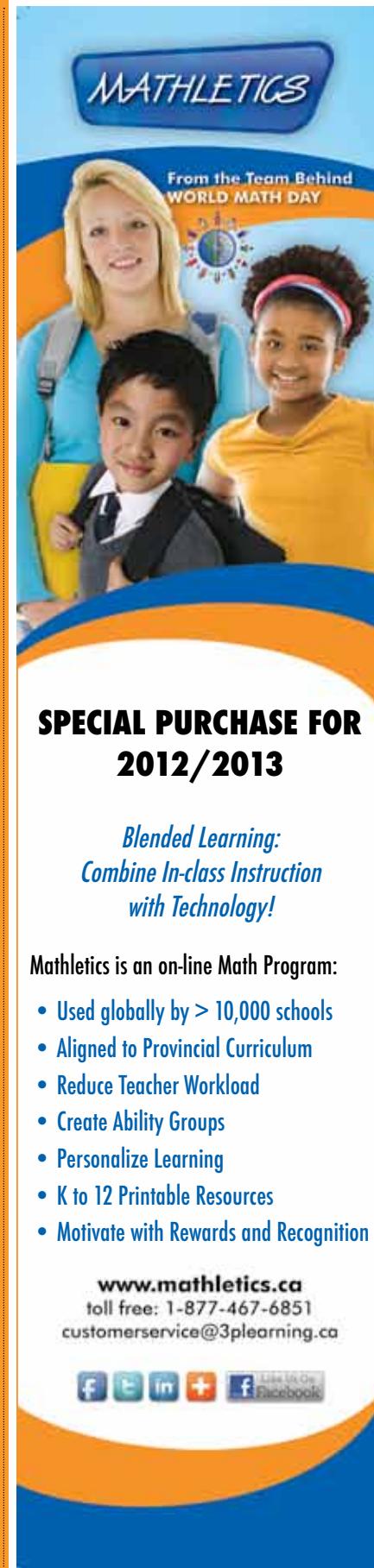
teams, projects that aid children who are living in impoverished conditions around the globe, rehearsals for musicals and plays, and road safety. Participation in this wide range of activities varies depending upon school traditions, administrative preferences and the interest level and ability of individual teachers.

In our educational system which seems to be spinning out of control as more and more activities are being required of those working within our schools, we need to find some sense of order which can help explain the ever broadening complexity of the purpose of education. Three distinct ideas constitute what most people think of when we speak of education.

We seem to want schools to do three main things. The oldest idea is society-oriented: preparing students to be productive members of society. That is, any activities we introduce to schools whose purpose is to better prepare students for their future social life—skills that are justified in terms of the jobs they will be able to do as adults, the attitudes and commitments that a generally tolerant and humane social life requires, the basic forms of literacy and numeracy that adequate citizenship calls for, and any sports or computer or driving or behavioral skills that successful social life demands—counts as “society-oriented”. The aim of education, in this view, is to shape individuals to become good citizens who demonstrate competency in a range of appropriate skills and are equipped with knowledge relevant for their time and place.

The second idea, as old as those ancient Greeks, we may call “academic.” This educational practice is made up of all those things we might do with students that are designed primarily to improve their minds—regardless of social utility. So, we teach many things that will be of no practical use but which give students a fuller understanding of the realities of the world around them, and inside them. Further, we attempt to teach students how to prove that in any right-angled triangle, the area of the square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the area of the squares on the other two sides. Or we teach them that we live on a round planet that travels in an orbit round the sun (rather than that the sun travels round us, as seems much more obvious.) Or we teach that sound travels 15 times faster through steel than through the air. These facts are of value to the mind building a better picture of our world, even though they have no practical use to nearly all the students who will learn them. It wouldn’t matter whether all the citizens of Surrey, B.C. believed that the sun went around the earth or the earth around the sun, or that sound traveled through air fifteen or ninety-nine times faster than through steel. In schools, we teach many things that have no practical utility because knowing them is good for the mind rather than good for social life; we would think it disgraceful if students emerged from their years of schooling not knowing that the earth goes around the sun. The aim of education, in this view, is to teach those special forms of knowledge that will bring the mind to the fullest understanding of the world and experience.

The third big educational idea is about two and a half centuries old and is a product of Enlightenment views about Nature. Instead of seeing education in terms of the skills one wants children to acquire to become useful citizens or the knowledge one wants them to learn for the good of their minds, people like Rousseau—as if there were other people like Rousseau!—thought education should focus on the whole person, recognizing that education was not simply something done to children for some supposed future social or intellectual benefit, but the very experience of being educated was what should be a central focus. Education is what is done during the process, not simply the end product of a process that might itself be tedious, painful, or ‘Gradgrindish’. It is contradictory to think that one might become educated by means of a process that isn’t itself constituted by the values we hold to be inherent in education. And one cannot make the experience educational unless one better understands how children



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learn and develop and what motivated them. That is, only by understanding the nature of the child can one educate them through a “natural” process of development through to adulthood. The aim of education, in this view, is to achieve a holistic development of the individual to her or his fullest potential.

Most people want all three of these ideas to drive their educational system but in practice the result is that each idea manages to undermine the adequate achievement of the others. Superficially, it may seem that we should be able to implement all three ideas in the same institution at the same time. That, after all, is what most school mission statements claim—they will produce good citizens, with “job-ready skills,” they will aim for academic excellence, and they will strive to develop the individual potential of each student. The question is if it’s so straightforward to manage all of them together, why has there been 150 years of arguments about what the public schools should be doing?

We have taken it so much for granted that schools can incorporate these three different ideas of education that the claim that they are incompatible may seem strange. Let me just take the first two ideas—the “society-oriented” idea and the “academic” idea—and try to clarify why it makes sense to see them as mutually incompatible.

You are invited to imagine a future in which the government has introduced a new way of allotting money for work—stimulated perhaps by the grotesque injustice of the current distribution of wealth and incomes. As a citizen in this future scenario, you will be required to go to the cinema once each week and watch whatever movie is showing. After the movie is over—and after you have carefully read and tried to remember all the credits—you will go out into the foyer. There you will find rows of small tables and chairs. One of the tables will have your name on it. On each table there will be a multiple-choice test about the movie and a pencil for you to mark your responses. The questions will be something like: What was the name of the central character’s horse? Trigger \_,

Paint \_, Godolphin \_, Charlie \_; or what was the name of the aliens’ home planet? Betelgeuse Four \_, TrES-2 \_, Sirius Five \_, Charlie \_; or what do you estimate was the area of the heroine’s front lawn? 200 sq. ft. \_, 20 sq. ft. \_, 2,000 sq. ft. \_, infinite \_; or Who was the assistant wardrobe supervisor? Stuart Grieve \_, Peter Ellis \_, Wes Magee \_, Margaret Smith \_; or . . . well, you get the idea. Your score on the test will determine your salary for the following week. A week later you will see another movie, answer another multiple-choice test, and your new score will determine your salary for the subsequent week. And so on, for the rest of your working life—regardless of whether you are a teacher, the CEO of a vast corporation, or a janitor. Also, you will no longer have a choice of the movies you see; you will have to watch whatever is showing on the evening that has been allotted to you.

This might seem like a ludicrous scenario. It confuses two social functions and allows each to undermine the other. What ought to be the easy pleasure and entertainment of watching movies is now fraught with anxiety. And what ought to be a rational method of distributing money for work has been detached from the value of the work to society and made dependent on the results of arbitrary multiple-choice tests that are irrelevant to a person’s ability to do her or his job.

What are you reminded of when you hear this scenario? Well, it’s supposed to remind you of school. In setting up the modern school we have confused the social purposes of schooling with the academic purposes. So, we allot life-chances and work opportunities to students based on how well they can remember how to prove that alternate interior angles of a parallelogram are congruent or remember the provisions of the treaty of Versailles. Becoming a successful CEO or janitor is not well articulated with the academic skills that we largely use to determine such decisions.

You might protest that the cinema scenario is genuinely absurd, but that our current school scenario is quite rational:

how well a student can prove that interior opposite angles of a parallelogram are congruent or remember the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles is reasonably connected with how their “intelligence” fits them for the job as CEO or janitor.

We do have a tendency to take for granted the rationality of the institutions we find ourselves among. Try to imagine if the cinema scenario had been in operation for fifty years. People would accept that this was a perfectly rational way to determine payment for work, especially as those who were best at doing such tests would have increasing wealth and influence in the society and they would see how obviously sensible and just the system was. It would become to a significant degree self-justifying. Also no doubt, there would be expensive coaching companies, preparing people each week for the tests. The oddity, in our eyes, would likely disappear as the system was used over time.

## Conclusion

We have inherited three foundational ideas about education. Each one of them has flaws, at least one flaw in each being fatal to its ambition to represent an educational ideal we might reasonably endorse. And the worse news is that each of the ideas is incompatible with the other two. These warring ideas hovered around the cradle of the state schools, proffering their gifts. The schools eagerly took them all, and so education remains difficult and contentious.

Our fundamental problem in education is theoretical. Improved and more effective work by all the groups in education will not solve our problem if we have confusion at the root of the system; running faster with improved style will not help us if we are going in the wrong direction. We behave as we do, design schools of the kinds we have, as a result of the ideas we hold. If we want to improve our schools, first we must deal with the abstract and awkward realm of ideas. CJ

# Engaging Students in Their World:

*Some Features of Imaginative Ecological Education*

By Gillian Judson



Imagination and Place<sup>1</sup> are two concepts, described within the framework known as Imaginative Ecological Education (IEE), that are rarely given the educational importance they deserve, since each is often considered, for different reasons, peripheral to the “real” learning done within mainstream schools.

It is not difficult to generate support for either concept. The benefits of engaging a student’s imagination in the learning process seem obvious. Many teachers are open to learning more about how to connect their students to Place because they see the value of developing a student’s ecological understanding—a sense of connection with and

concern for the natural world. Increasingly, teachers are being mandated to do so but there is theoretical and practical support for centralizing both of these neglected educational concepts in one’s teaching practice.

Egan’s (1997, 2005) theory of Imaginative Education (IE), detailed elsewhere in this issue provides a theoretical framework and rationale for incorporating students’ emotional and imaginative lives in the teaching process, as well as an extensive range of resources to translate this into practice. In IE, the content is designed in ways that connect to the imaginative and emotional lives of the students. Language learning helps us to develop awareness and make sense of our world. In this process, the tools for language learning can become the same tools teachers use to make content meaningful and memorable. Imagination is one of the main workhorses of learning and not just a “hook” for grabbing the students’ attention. Similarly, there is a growing broad base of literature indicating the theoretical importance of Place for cultivating ecological understanding and corresponding practical applications. Place-Based Education (PBE), like other nature-focused programs, aims to afford students opportunities to develop deep knowledge of their context and form emotional attachments to it. Bringing imaginative engagement and an interest in Place together, we enter into the new pedagogical terrain of Imaginative Ecological Education (IEE). (To learn more about IE visit the Imaginative Education Research Group, or IERG, website: [www.ierg.net](http://www.ierg.net).)

Although some readers might be questioning why another educational approach is necessary, thinking there are adequate resources to support students in cultivating ecological understanding, but

<sup>1</sup>My interest here is to explore the implications for lesson planning. If we consider the natural and cultural context in which we are teaching, not simply as the location for learning but, more profoundly as co-teacher, one would capitalize the word ‘Place’, just as one would capitalize the name of the human teacher, as a way to emphasize the importance of the place of learning. The teacher designs lessons through shaping and co-developing the collaborative work of the human teacher and the learning Place, each influencing what and how the students learn.

~

## IEE offers ways to teach a rich and varied curriculum while acknowledging and nurturing the imaginative life of every child.

~

there are at least four reasons why current approaches are ill-equipped for the task. First, few programs actually centralize the development of students' ecological understanding within the curriculum but instead introduce ecological initiatives as add-ons to the regular curriculum (Judson, 2008). Second, students are not given sufficient opportunities to engage with the natural world around them because they are not getting outside. While use of multimedia and textual resources within the school environment can increase students' knowledge of what is going on in the world, these mediums cannot replace the emotional connections that develop when students are given direct engagement with various aspects of the world in its natural context. Direct emotional engagement is possible in all contexts—urban, suburban, and rural. Further, when students are not physically engaged in the learning process, and/or emotional and imaginative engagement is routinely marginalized (Judson, 2010), they are left with a limited sense of how the topics of the curriculum relate to them emotionally or enhance their worldly perspective. Current teaching practices do not nurture the emotional and imaginative core of ecological understanding because the educational initiatives seem to be misaligned and separate from the diversity of life in all its contexts.

IEE may be a better strategy for developing ecological understanding and may serve to nurture and sustain the kind of wonder that underlies our hopes for a sustainable future (Judson, *in press*). Three principles guide this imaginative and ecological approach to teaching: feeling, activeness, and place.

### **Feeling**

The classroom environment is a place of modeling and learning. Teachers must be engaged in the content themselves in order to draw their students into the "wonder of learning". As well, teachers need to be aware of their own learning styles in order to evoke a sense of wonder and act as models of learning. The teacher introduces the topic to the student in an imaginative and emotionally engaging manner. All subsequent teaching plans operate according to this teaching style and inspire the way the teacher shapes her instruction. Although the teacher chooses, as part of any classroom teaching, what aspects of a topic to introduce, and when and where to introduce the topic, an IE approach directs the teacher to consider the emotional and imaginative interests of the topics first. Drawing from the ways the students engage emotionally and imaginatively with the world around them, lessons are constructed to stimulate a feeling response from the students. Employing tools of the imagination, something Egan (2005) refers to as "cognitive tools", the teacher engages the students in the process of discovering wonder as it relates to the topic.

### **Activeness**

It is important to consider that simply being outside or doing things outside will not necessarily contribute to a student's learning or sense of connection to nature (Blenkinsop, 2008; Takahashi, 2004). In IEE the aim is to cultivate what Naess (2002) calls activeness. Activeness describes a profound internal form of relationship we can cultivate with the natural world that has the most potential to impact our understanding of nature. "To do a great many things is not

enough; what is important, is what we do and how we do it; it is any specific action which affects our whole nature that Naess calls activeness" (Naess, 2002, p. 76). Rather than a form of physical activity, activeness may be better characterized as a "pause" or a "lingering in silence" (Naess, 2002, p. 2-3). The attunement of our senses with our surroundings develops through engagement of our sense of patterns, configurations, musical tones, and other body movements. Our somatic engagement in the world contributes to activeness.

### **Place**

The PBE body of literature discusses the educational value of engaging students in the natural world as a way to make their learning meaningful. As well, it suggests that students develop a lifelong sense of caring about the natural world and a sense of connectedness with their world because they experienced direct, physical engagement in nature as a child. So, unlike most pedagogy created in the current climate of objectives-based teaching, IEE teaching is situation specific and connects to the local natural and cultural contexts in which students live and learn through engagement of the imaginative means in which human beings make sense of place. IEE also considers place-making in imaginative terms. Through the engagement of place-making tools—the sense of relation, the formation of emotional attachments, and creation of special places—increasing knowledge of place (including such examples as knowledge of flora and fauna, geology, and cultural history etc.) relates to increases in affective engagement.



## Place-making Tools

One of the imaginative means through which oral language users develop a sense of place is through the formation of emotional attachments with particular features of their immediate environments as well as with particular processes or rituals they experience on a frequent basis. For example, the teddy bear or “blankie” contributes to the child’s sense of self and the world, offering a needed source of comfort and security. Children often grow attached to objects of permanence in their environment. The young child’s sense of self and place is often blurred, as they experience a highly participatory form of engagement in the world as oral language users. In addition to emotional attachments to objects, shared processes or rituals contribute to the child’s sense of belonging in a place, to the meaning of the place and what sets that particular place apart in the child’s mind. One sees, of course, in the adult world, ways in which shared rituals or customs continue to contribute to the sense of place and one’s sense of belonging. Familiar examples include raising a flag or customary patterns of interaction.

Older students use their imagination to make sense of a situation in ways that reflect their growing sense of independence. In terms of place-making, children make more direct attempts to create special, and often personalized “places of their own” as in building forts and hideouts, personalizing lockers or decorating bedrooms. The creation or also discovery of special places supports a child’s attempts to deal with a

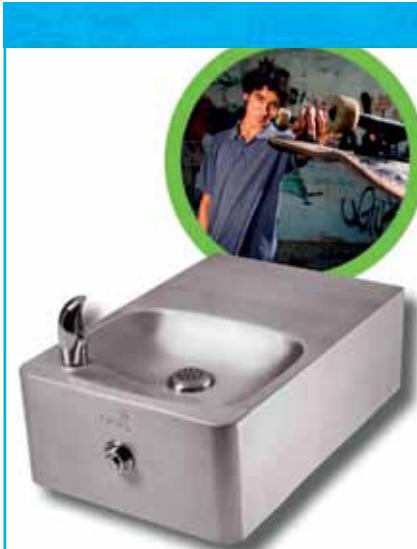
new sense of reality by offering a secure place in which he has autonomy and from which he can creatively and safely explore wider social, cultural or natural contexts. Place-making seems to coincide with more direct forms of creative engagement in the world. A central premise of IEE is that by employing in our teaching, the place-making tools that students are already using to make sense of their situations, we can engage imagination in place-making as part of any unit of study. [For more information on cognitive tools of place-making see Judson (2010), or Fettes & Judson (2011).]

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the scope of this article was to provide an overview of IEE in order to create an interest in this topic and to encourage the use of this teaching method as a means of developing a student’s emotional and imaginative relationship within the learning process. Cultivation of ecological understanding represents a distinctive teaching strategy for educators and contrasts the current approaches to teaching as outdated and ill suited for the task of engaging students in their world. IEE offers ways to teach a rich and varied curriculum while acknowledging and nurturing the imaginative life of every child. To learn more about IEE visit: [ierg.net/iee](http://ierg.net/iee). There are links on this website to various articles including information on Judson (2010), a book offering guidelines and specific examples for engaging students’ bodies, emotions and imaginations in Place. **CJ**

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# Learning in Depth

*A simple innovation that  
is transforming schools*

By Kieran Egan

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The general curriculum of the school is designed to equip students with some knowledge about the world at large, about its history and geography, about politics in their own and other countries, about what is generally going on in the sciences, about arts and literature, and so on. Inevitably, as there is simply so much to cover in the curriculum, students tend, at best, to leave school with a breadth of rather superficial knowledge.

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**F**rom the beginning of educational thinking to the present there has been a constant insistence that being educated involves satisfying two criteria—those of breadth and depth. We struggle to achieve the breadth criterion often against the odds of TV and other media's attractions and distractions, of students' frequent boredom in the face of, say, algebra and medieval history and much else, and the extremely variable abilities of students to retain what they have been taught in previous months and years. In this struggle, the depth criterion commonly receives only the most marginal attention. And yet, educational thinkers have argued that only by learning something in significant depth can students come to grasp how knowledge works, or understand something of the nature of knowledge. These are vague phrases, and specifying what constitutes depth of learning is less easy either to characterize or justify than is breadth, with its plain social utility. We get some clues about the importance of understanding the nature of knowledge more fully when we discover that many people seem unable to distinguish a knowledge claim from an opinion, or are vulnerable to believing the most bizarre accounts of weird creatures, alien abductions, and even stranger events in the face of overwhelming evidence, and so on through the modern panoply of exotic beliefs accessible on the Internet and in your local pub.

Learning about something in depth has been seen as one antidote to these ills. It does not guarantee immunity, of course, but it is hard to accumulate a great deal of knowledge about some topic and not have the methods of critical inquiry accumulated in the process, also provide some protection against the worst vulnerabilities of ignorance.

In this article I want to describe a newly devised Canadian program, called "Learning in Depth," which is strikingly simple and is already being implemented in a wide variety of educational contexts in a number of countries.

### The Canadian Learning in Depth project

"Learning in Depth" was introduced to 30 students in two classrooms in British Columbia in the 2008/9 school-year. In the 2009/10 school-year there were more than 2,000 students involved, and in 2010/11 there are many more, in Canada, USA, UK, Hungary, Australia, Japan, Romania, China, Iran, and possibly other countries. (I should declare an interest. It is my proposal, and my book about it has recently been published (Egan, 2010).)

LiD can be described in a paragraph, and I will simply quote from the program's website: "Learning in Depth is a program in which each child is given, during the early weeks of schooling, a particular topic to learn about through her or his whole school career, in addition to the usual curriculum. Topics might include such things as apples, ships, the circus, cats, railways, the solar system, etc. Students will meet regularly with their supervising teachers, who will give guidance, suggestions, and help as students build personal portfolios on their topics. The aim is that each child, by the end of her or his schooling, will have built genuine expertise about that topic. The expectation is that this process will transform for most children their relationship to, and understanding of the nature of, knowledge. It should also transform for each child the experience of schooling" ([ierg.net.LiD](http://ierg.net.LiD)).

The website also notes: "Learning in Depth (LiD) is an unusual program and tends, after the first simple description, to elicit enthusiasm from some people and hostility from others. While the basic idea is quite simple, we think the potential implications of the program for students, teachers, and schools are profound." Another oddity of the program is that it is entirely voluntary and is entirely free of any forms of assessment.

*(The) engagement level with LiD is surprisingly intense, and – evident both within class and in (student) work on LiD portfolios outside of school.*

The direction of students' study of their topics is entirely up to them, helped by their teachers. In most of the materials about the program, it is suggested that LiD begins as children start school. This is the ideal, but not always possible for many teachers. If you teach grade 6, for example, and are attracted by LiD, there is no reason not to start then. At the moment there are LiD programs beginning in all grades in some schools somewhere, even grade 12.

I think it helpful to describe the initial implementations to give some sense of why the program is taking off so rapidly, even while it seems to some people, on first acquaintance, as bizarre and unworkable for one or another reason.

In one school in Langley, British Columbia, one teacher decided to try out LiD after she heard it described in a university class she was taking at the time. It should be said that she did so in the face of not a little skepticism from some of her fellow teachers. In the following year, six other teachers in the school began the program in their classes, and in 2010/11 there were eleven teachers implementing it, from K through 7 classes. What did those other teachers see that made them go from dismissive skepticism to becoming enthusiastic

implementers themselves, within one year? They saw a class of students who were showing huge enthusiasm to learn about their individual topics, also bringing to school materials for their fellow students to help them build their portfolios, coming to school with special energy on the day they had their one hour time slot set aside for LiD, talking to their parents and siblings about what they were learning, accumulating knowledge from libraries, papers and magazines, the Internet, drawing, tracing, talking with adults, including other teachers, etc.

The first Langley teacher, who has around 30 years of teaching experience, said "I have never experienced the kind of questions and interactions I now have with my students . . . I have never experienced these kinds of conversations with children." Another teacher simply summed up his experience after a year with "The kids love it!" A teacher in Oregon wrote: "The Learning in Depth project has brought to our students a completely new relationship to learning that has been surprising in its depth and quality. After seeing Learning in Depth at work in our school community, I know this has been a critical, missing element. It has proven to be everything we imagined (and much more we didn't) when we heard about [it initially]." (Quotes have been taken from the LiD website.)

The program begins with an initial ceremony, attended by parents, caregivers, siblings, etc., in which the child receives a portfolio folder and learns the topic on which she or he is going to become an expert. In some schools they are also given a ribbon with a medal that includes their name and topic; in others they receive a tile with their name and topic and a colored picture of the topic. The tile is then fixed to a wall in the school. In the beginning, the LiD program need take no more than one hour a week in school. Increasingly work is done outside of school but the main portfolio is kept at school. Quite quickly the initial folder is outgrown and a number of schools have given each student an Ikea box. Students are also given a "travelling folder" in which they can bring items from home. Parents are encouraged to help—but not take over. A letter about the program is given to parents and caregivers making suggestions, for example, that is not desirable that Sarah receives her topic one day and her father downloads fifty-five gigabytes of information about it the next day!

## Conclusion

The LiD project has burst into schools so fast that research on it is scrambling to catch up. One preliminary research study is currently underway in Canada and the US, seeking to examine some of the issues raised as objections, like drop-out rates, if there are any; boredom; claims of cognitive skills that the program will

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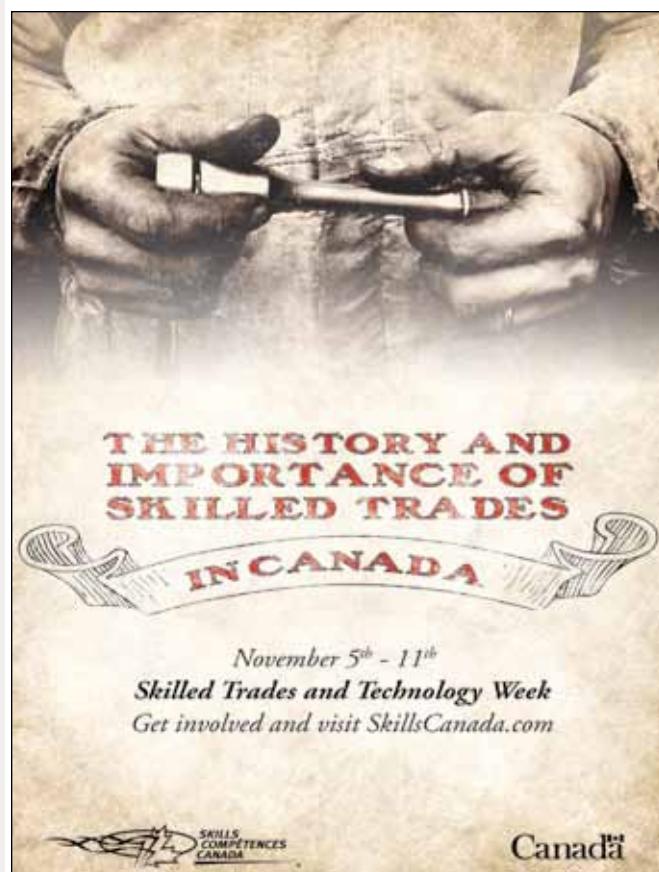
develop; transfer of abilities gained in the program to other work; teacher and student commitment; developing self-confidence as learners; whether the random assignments of topics engenders any disaffection among students; whether any topics give evidence of being “developmentally inappropriate;” etc.

Preliminary results, based largely on interviews with about a dozen teachers who are currently implementing the program suggest that students’ engagement level with LiD is surprisingly intense, and that their engagement was evident both within class and in their work on LiD portfolios outside of school. Most teachers reported also that students were connecting their LiD work with the work they were doing in other classes routinely, and that they were giving evidence of greater imaginativeness in their portfolio work as time went on. It was common that students helped each other in adding to their portfolios. The disappointments, from the researchers’ point of view, was that the preponderance of portfolios examined—and this was supported in subsequent discussions with teachers—had been built almost entirely from text-based sources and the internet. There was some creative work, but usually finished work was an elaboration of text sources. There seemed to have been little experiential engagement with topics, or less than we had expected. This suggests an issue to emphasize in preparing teachers to support LiD programs, as is the finding in a couple of schools that no efforts had been made to engage parents’ support for their children’s portfolio development. These finding will also influence a new “LiDKiT” currently in preparation and to be published by Pacific Educational Press in Vancouver.

While we will have to wait on the completion and more detailed analysis of results of this research before being able to say anything convincingly about the program, the dominant sense I have after visiting a number of schools where it is being implemented is that something is working beyond all proportion to what one might expect. I retain images of groups of students eagerly carrying their “LiDKiT” folders, one boy coordinating work with a girl, not a usual friend, because they have discovered something their topics have in common that they can add to both their portfolios, a girl asking her father to buy two birds so she could study them over the summer holidays and release them afterwards, a five year old asking me what my topic is—as though it is everyone’s birthright to “have a topic”. Within a few months, students associate with their topics as if they were almost a part of their identity—a kind of totem, but mainly, I have been struck by teachers bemusedly saying they have not seen anything like this before. **CJ**

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# Re-Imagining

## Inclusive Education

### (Inclusion)

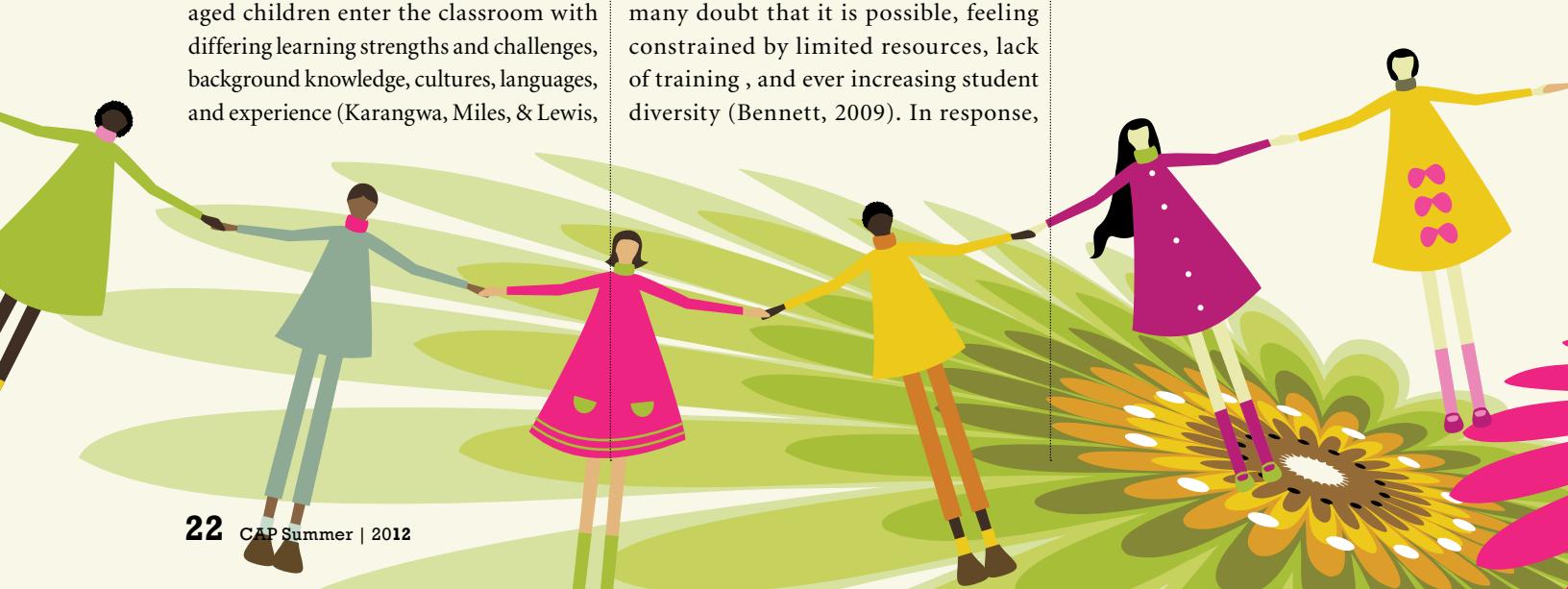
By Jennifer Katz

Imagination in education has often been defined synonymously with creativity where the “imaginative” teacher plans creative, art based lessons and the student engages in “imaginative”/creative endeavors (Nielsen, 2006). However, Egan and Judson (2008) have brought forth a more cognitive perspective, describing imagination as “the ability to think of the possible” that which is “not constrained by the actual” (p.127). Creative thinking and planning moves beyond instructional practice to a more abstract visioning of what is possible in education and stands in the face of those things which live in opposition to the perceived actual.

Inclusion, also referred to as inclusive education, has been a global consideration for more than three decades now. Around the world, same-aged children enter the classroom with differing learning strengths and challenges, background knowledge, cultures, languages, and experience (Karangwa, Miles, & Lewis,

2010; Mowat, 2010; Schirmer & Casbon, 1995). Ideally, most educators agree that all children should be included in the classrooms of our school systems and yet many doubt that it is possible, feeling constrained by limited resources, lack of training , and ever increasing student diversity (Bennett, 2009). In response,

how do we introduce imagination into the dialogue about inclusive education and its implementation? How do we show students, parents, teachers and administrators that



inclusive education is possible and can be achieved despite the perceived “actualities” of budgets, systems and student diversity?

Imagining begins with an ideal, stretching beyond what we think are the limitations. Imagine the ideal inclusive classroom, school and school system. What would it look like, sound like or feel like to those who spend time there? Imagine a place where all students feel good about themselves, what they have to offer, and feel a real sense of belonging. Imagine a place where all students are challenged to learn, to grow and to reach their full potential. Imagine a place where these same possibilities and opportunities are made available to adults from the community. Perhaps, imagination is more about having a vision than it is about creativity. The question is what is our vision for the educational system?

We cannot decide what is possible until we decide what it is our ultimate goal. Inclusive education means providing an education in a place where all students feel welcome and a part of the whole community. As such, it is important to recognize that diversity does not refer only to children with exceptional needs. Nor does it refer solely to ethnic, racial or linguistic diversity. All children are diverse – fat/thin, rich/

poor, personalities, ethnicities, languages, family constructions and learning styles all contribute to the composition of a diverse classroom. An inclusive learning community by definition includes ALL of the students in that community. Extrapolating from this definition, we can conclude that inclusive education is about including all students, those with disabilities, those from culturally or linguistically minority populations – it is about providing education to ALL students.

In reality, our education system is significantly dependent upon verbal linguistic ability. The vast majority of learning occurs either through text or lecture/discussion, excluding students who do not learn well in this way. Alternative modalities are often seen as secondary. Yet in the workplace, a great deal of our task performance occurs through non-text methods. Do architects, software programmers, chemists, carpenters or doctors spend much time reading novels and writing essays as part of their occupational assignments? Their performance is not evaluated solely through writing. Even those learners who can learn in traditional

ways – read the chapter, write a summary/read the textbook/take a test – there is little engagement and less higher order thinking. In science, diagrams, dissections and models are related aspects of quantum physics, biochemistry, biology and other fields, yet in elementary school it is not unusual to hear a teacher say “you can draw if you finish your writing.” It is much more difficult to represent a concept either symbolically or visually, than it is to write about it. A student may be asked to write a character sketch based on a novel. In response, a student might write casually, “She is brave” with little thought given to how the character could be represented symbolically or visually. This form of representation requires abstract thought. In the same way, consider music. How would the student represent the tone or tempo of a symphony entitled “Ode to Bravery”? When instruction differentiates and extends to include a broader spectrum of learning profiles, the outcome can impact the learning of all students, even those who





## Inclusive Education

learn using the traditional models. Added benefits may be the creation of a learning community wherein all students feel valued and accepted resulting in fewer behavioral challenges, enhanced student engagement, and improved student self perception (Katz, in press).

In order to create a vision that defines what inclusive education can be, we must develop a historical perspective that helps us to understand where we have been, what we have learned along the way and what obstacles have interrupted our journey. It is promising to report that we have made progress because students who were either unable to attend school due to learning disabilities or were denied access due to coming from remote areas, are remaining in the system. Despite these developments, there is room for improvement. Two themes emerge in conversations and literature within modern educational and larger societal research that outline key elements underlying a vision for inclusive education.

### Social Inclusion/Exclusion

Social inclusion/exclusion has become a growing concern around the world. Organizations like the Laidlaw Foundation conduct research and advocate for marginalized populations in Canada, in particular for children and youth. This concern stems from data which suggests that significant numbers of Canadian children are living in poverty, suffering from hunger, and due to being excluded from public policy, are being denied an opportunity to realize their potential (Wotherspoon, 2002). Social inclusion recognizes the human need for belonging, the need for acceptance and recognition of all people, and requires full and equal opportunity to participate (Koster, Nakken, Pijl, & van Houten, 2009). It is about recognizing and valuing diversity; it is about creating feelings of belonging by increasing social equality and the participation of diverse and disadvantaged populations. Within the educational framework, social inclusion refers to each student being given the opportunity to be part of a school

community and to learn and grow alongside of age appropriate peers. In Canada, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms prohibits discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability. Despite this, and contrary to the inclusive education policy legislated in each province of the nation, it is common practice in our schools to segregate based on language/origin, disability, and emotional or mental well-being (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007). Classrooms must exist for students with a range of disabilities, students learning English as a second language and, for students with emotional or behavioral disorders. Even when placed in regular classrooms, students with disabilities often do not participate in the academic or social life of the classroom. Instead, they are frequently given a separate space, a separate program, and work solely with an educational assistant (Giangreco, 2010). The neediest learners are therefore taught by the least qualified personnel. They lack models of age appropriate behavior, social skills and language with their peers hindering the opportunity to have friends. There are far too many students in Canada, with and without disabilities, who do not feel a sense of belonging and who do not experience success in our schools.

### Academic Inclusion/ Exclusion

Academic Inclusion is a model wherein all students receive their education in their home school and all services are delivered within the classroom/school. In this model, the classroom teacher accepts the primary responsibility for all students enrolled in the class. In contrast, academic exclusion refers to individuals or groups of students who are denied access to education in the fullest sense of the word. Students are denied education within their home school, have limited exposure to curriculum and instructional activities, experience limited time interacting with qualified teaching personnel, and remain separated from age appropriate peers during learning activities.

In many school divisions across the country, students with disabilities are bused to schools outside of their community, spend time in classrooms segregated from their peers where curriculum is rarely a central focus, receive instruction from educational assistants and have little or no interactions with typical classmates. In addition, it is important to note that many of our most capable students are being excluded, as they too are not being exposed to appropriate curriculum and instructional activities, and often feel isolated socially (Jackson, 1998; Stoeger & Ziegler, 2010). Again, there are still far too many students, with and without disabilities, who are not receiving appropriate academic challenges and engagement.

## Inclusive Education

What then, is our vision for the future? Is it possible to have a school system in which each child is a part of the social and academic life of their classroom, school, and community? We believe it is possible to achieve inclusive education for each and every child, without exception.

Inclusive education has evolved over the years. Early research explored outcomes of including students with disabilities with their age related peers. Despite fears that students with disabilities would negatively impact their peers because they would require more teacher time and change the complexity and pace of learning the curriculum, research has shown this concern to be unfounded. Comparisons of the literacy and numeracy skills scores on standardized tests, college entrance, and other academic scores of typical and gifted students in classrooms with and without students with disabilities are identical, even those including students with significant behavioral challenges (Bru, 2009; Cole, Waldron, & Majd, 2004; Crisman, 2008; Kambouka, Farrell, Dyson, & Kaplan, 2007). This research has been replicated over decades and across countries (Curcic, 2009). It is clear that the presence of students with disabilities, including those with challenging behavior, does not negatively impact the learning of other students.



The next set of research explored the outcomes of inclusive education for students with disabilities. Around the world, students with disabilities demonstrate improved academic outcomes, including literacy, numeracy, general knowledge, and higher order thinking when placed in inclusive settings as compared to peers matched for level of disability in segregated classrooms (Katz & Mirenda, 2002). Perhaps more surprisingly, students with disabilities also outperformed peers who were placed in segregated classrooms in the following areas: adaptive/life skills, vocational and academic competence (Kurth & Mastergeorge, 2010; Myklebust, 2006). In a national study of outcomes related to inclusive education in Canada, students in inclusive settings were reported to be in better general health, progressing more in school, interacting better with peers and, more frequently looking forward to going to school than those in less inclusive settings (Timmons & Wagner, 2008).

Despite the realities of limited training, reductions in resources, and pressures to standardize achievement and “accountability”, we have made progress in implementing inclusive education, and children around the world are benefitting. Imagine the possibilities...

Perhaps as a result of these successes, current research has shifted its focus. We have gone from the “why,” and the “should we”, to the “how do we” of inclusive education. In the last two decades, a plethora of research has focused on strategies and resources for improving and implementing inclusion. Research has identified specific instructional practices, pedagogies, and service delivery models that support inclusive education (McLeskey, Rosenberg, & Westling, 2010). However, from a classroom teacher’s standpoint, it is unclear how to apply these pieces in a holistic, practical manner that works in all grades (K-12), and across a variety of settings (e.g. rural,

urban, inner city, multigrade, etc.). This is the goal of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (King-Sears, 2009). UDL provides accessibility to the curriculum, learning activities, and social life of the classroom for all students at all grade levels.

Research exploring the outcomes of a Universal Design for Learning pedagogy in classrooms from K-12 shows that a learning community can be created in which all children can learn and grow, in interaction with each other (Katz, in press). The Three Block Model of UDL incorporates evidence based strategies for building inclusive learning communities, inclusive instructional practices, and system/structure supports. Final outcomes investigating use of this model demonstrate improved student self-concept, autonomy, sense of belonging, and engagement for all students regardless of disability, behavioral challenge or level of instruction.

Our history as educators has been much like the development of an infant. In the early stages, we were unaware of anyone who did not fit our needs and desires – we simply excluded them. Many were placed in institutions or special schools. As we began to mature, we learned how to parallel play – we placed special classes in regular schools so that students with special needs could live alongside of us but not with us. Sometimes, we placed children in a regular classroom but their program was a parallel program. They did math when we did math, but the math was different and usually the lesson was completed with an educational assistant, preventing interaction with their peers.

Now is the time to grow into maturity and to develop a system within which we all grow and learn in interaction with each other, celebrating what our diversity brings, sharing our triumphs and challenges, and creating compassionate learning communities for all of our children and youth. It can be done. Think of the possibilities. **CJ**



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# Engaging Emotions & Imagination in Learning: *A Cognitive Tools Approach*

By Gillian Judson

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Emotion is central to everything that is considered meaningful to human beings. Whether we are in a social group, a family or culture, the aspects of the world from which we derive meaning evoke our emotions and imagination. Since it is crucial that students are emotionally engaged in the learning process we need to understand what engages children on an emotional level and what stimulates their imagination.

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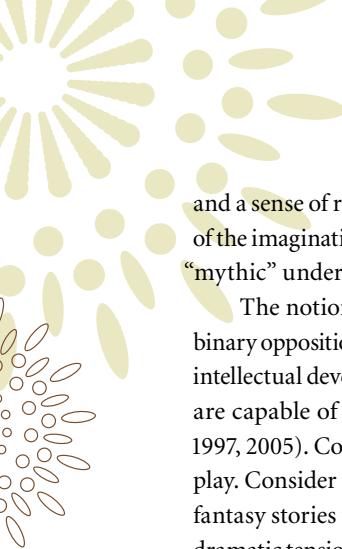
Egan (1988, 1992, 1997, and 2005) explores these factors in detail and integrates them into an educational theory called Imaginative Education (IE). IE pairs a theoretical understanding of the imagination's role in learning (Egan, 1997), with a comprehensive practical discussion of how to engage imagination in learning (2005). Critically important are Egan's insights about how students' imaginations engage differently in the world as they acquire oral, written and increasingly theoretical uses of language (Egan, 1988, 1992, 1997). These different forms of language provide the student with "sets" of learning tools or what Egan calls, following Vygotsky (1962, 1978), "cognitive tools" that shape specific imaginative understandings of the world. IE may be described as a "cognitive tools" approach to learning; it is centrally concerned with employing in teaching process, the culturally-based learning tools that come along with language in order to most effectively engage students' emotions and imaginations in learning. Cognitive tools (for example, story/narrative, jokes, metaphor, extremes of experience and limits of reality, and collections) are "little factories of understanding" (Hughes, 1988, p. 12); cognitive tools come along with language and help us to learn the knowledge with which they are attached in emotionally engaging ways.

What, then, are some of the features of young children's imaginations that oral language provides? How do features of students' imaginations change with the development of literacy?

Let's consider some of the tools that come along with oral language and that create for all oral language users what Egan (1988, 1997, 2005,) calls a Mythic understanding of the world. Following this brief description of Mythic understanding, one that will be of most interest to teachers of primary-aged children who are largely oral-language users, I will indicate how the imaginative lives of students change as they develop literacy. Now a different "set" of cognitive tools engages the emotions and imaginations of students in a "Romantic" kind of understanding of the world. What are the implications for teachers and teaching? By employing the cognitive tools approach Egan articulates in theory (1997) and practice (2005) teachers can routinely engage students' emotions and imaginations in learning. (For a detailed description of IE and access to lesson/unit plan examples and other resources for teaching, please go to the Imaginative Education Research Group (IERG) website at [www.ierg.net](http://www.ierg.net) or see Egan 1997, 2005)

## The Mythic Toolkit: Learning Tools of Oral Language

All teachers know that children love stories. What Egan (1988, 1997) does is explain why this is the case. He illustrates how the story form (a way of shaping information that brings out its emotional force) is a feature of oral language that, as we become oral language users, mediates the sense we make of the world. Oral language users are particularly interested in stories with features that include dramatic tensions between binary oppositions, vivid mental imagery



## A Cognitive Tools Approach

and a sense of rhyme, rhythm and pattern. These features are tools of the imagination that, tied up with our emotions, shape a distinctly “mythic” understanding of the world.

The notion of children engaging with abstract and affective binary oppositions runs in the face of much thinking about children’s intellectual development. However, it is obvious that young children are capable of much more than concrete thinking (Egan, 1988, 1997, 2005). Consider the worlds of fantasy that they weave in their play. Consider the affectively engaging concepts embedded in the fantasy stories they so love at that age. Abstract notions provide a dramatic tension in stories children love. Consider, for example Jack and the Beanstalk (safety/security, known/unknown) Hansel and Gretel (good/evil, lost/found), or Cinderella (rich/poor, just/unjust). Abstract binary oppositions, along with other tools, engage students’ imaginations in the stories they hear and love. When we focus on the world of the concrete and familiar with students—merely giving them “hands on” activities without tying these up with powerful abstract binary oppositions—we miss powerful means to engage students’ imaginations, to make learning meaningful and knowledge memorable.

### The Romantic Toolkit: Learning Tools of Written Language

Of course, we understand the world differently and are imaginatively engaged with it in different ways as we grow. What has changed? Well, for one thing, most of us have become literate. With literacy we encounter and internalize a new “set” of learning tools—a toolkit for learning—that shape for us a distinctly different sense of the world. Our emotions and imaginations do not lose the appeal they once had with features of oral language, but other features now take stronger hold of our attention. Have you noticed how children from about age 7 or 8 through about 15 are fascinated by the kind of extremes and limits of reality one finds in the Guinness Book of World Records? Or how they tend to idolize sports stars, musicians, actors or activists? All of these characteristics are dimensions of the literate imagination; they are cognitive or learning tools that shape a Romantic understanding of the world. For someone with Romantic understanding the world is full of wonder, one can “turn on” this fascination with the wonderful aspects of the



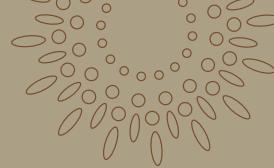
world. Everything can be seen in terms of a heroic human quality; it is through a personal association with a transcendent human quality that students become imaginatively engaged. Whether the precision of a mathematical formula or the strength of a worm, every topic we teach has something heroic about it that we can employ to engage students. It is important teachers remember that their literate students’ imaginations are still engaged with the cognitive tools of oral language—who doesn’t engage with the dramatic tension in a story, enjoy a catchy rhythm or vivid image?—and so one wouldn’t want to forget these in teaching. They are, however, less vividly engaging for students as they gain access to a different set of cognitive tools with which to make sense of the world.

### Concluding Thoughts

What this brief introduction to Egan’s theory of IE has aimed to indicate is the impact of language development on imaginative development and the educational implications that come out of this recognition. IE pairs theoretical premises of how our imaginations work and change with developed teaching resources that employ the various cognitive tools that come along with language use. The implications for teaching are profound. If we access tools from different cognitive “toolkits” throughout our lives, and these reflect the ways our imaginations work through language, then teachers interested in engaging their students’ emotions and imaginations in learning will want to be alert to the nature of each kind of understanding and the cognitive tools that shape it (Egan, 1997). So for example, teachers of students in primary and elementary school will use story, abstract binary oppositions, metaphor, rhyme, rhythm and pattern, and the recognition of mystery, among other tools, in their teaching if they hope to be most effective in engaging their students in coming to understand the content being taught. Teachers in middle and high school will focus on narrative structuring, the extremes of experience and limits of reality, the heroic, students’ sense of reality and, of course, the sense of wonder, among other tools, in order to ensure the emotional engagement of their students. When we shape teaching in ways that leave students *feeling* something about the content, we make knowledge meaningful; this is when teaching becomes storytelling. **CJ**

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# Giving Teachers Tools to Address Diversity in Media and Online Hate: *Diversity and Media Toolbox*

By Kieran Egan

Diversity and Media Toolbox is a comprehensive suite of resources for teachers, students, law enforcement representatives and the general public that explores issues relating to stereotyping, bias and hate in mainstream media and on the Internet.

The program, which includes professional development tutorials, lesson plans, interactive student modules and background articles, is divided into two distinct but complementary topic areas: media portrayals of diversity and online hate. That's Not Me resources address media representation of ethnic and visible minorities, religion, Aboriginal people, LGBTQ and persons with disabilities, while Facing Online Hate resources explore how the Internet is used to spread and incite hate – and the ways that citizens of all ages can respond to this issue.

Framed around key concepts of media literacy, the That's Not Me tutorial examines how entertainment and news media represent diversity and the impact these media portrayals can have on the value we place on individuals and groups in society. The tutorial explores how the media industry is changing to better reflect Canadian society and provides strategies for challenging negative representations and engaging young people in advocating for more realistic and positive media portrayals. Accompanying the tutorial are background articles on the issues relating to media portrayals of aboriginal people, visible minorities, queer people, persons

with disabilities and different religions. To help teachers bring this material into the classroom, we have a suite of lessons that make these issues relevant to students and provide them with the critical tools they need to address them: Bias and Crime in Media (Grades 7-12), Bias in News Sources (Grades 9-12), The Citizen Reporter (Grades 9-12), Diversity and Media Ownership (Grades 9-12), Miscast and Seldom Seen (Grades 9-12), Who's Telling My Story (Grades 9-12) and First Person (Grades 9-12), which is accompanied by Playing Diversity, an interactive quiz that looks at diversity in video games. In the quiz, students answer questions about how visible minorities, gays and lesbians, Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and religions are portrayed in video games.

The Facing Online Hate tutorial examines how the Internet is used to spread and incite hate, how radicalization occurs, and how youth encounter hate online both through traditional hate sites and “cultures of hatred”. The tutorial also provides strategies for building critical thinking skills in young people to help them understand the nature of online hate, how they may be targets and how to respond appropriately when bias, stereotyping and hatred are encountered

online. It is accompanied by background articles on the relationship between online hate and free speech, how online hate is addressed in Canadian law, the impact of online hate on victims and the community, tools for deconstructing online hate and strategies and solutions for responding to it. The lesson series on this topic includes Thinking About Hate (Grades 8-10), Challenging Hate Online (Grades 10-12), Free Speech and the Internet (Grades 10-12), Online Propaganda and the Proliferation of Hate (Grades 10-12), Scapegoating and Othering (Grades 8-10), Hate or Debate? (Grades 8-10) and Hate 2.0 (Grades 8-10), which is accompanied by an interactive quiz of the same name which introduces students to different forms of online hate and teaches them how to recognize and respond to hate content when it is encountered.

Finally, our Responding to Online Hate Guide assists law enforcement personnel, community groups and educators in recognizing and countering hateful content on the Internet – especially as it pertains to youth. The guide offers information on how to report online hate and highlights services available to victims who encounter hateful materials online. **CJ**

All of the materials in the Diversity and Media Toolbox are provided for free and can be accessed on our website at the Diversity and Media Toolbox Portal Page [media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/media\\_diversity\\_toolbox.cfm](http://media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/media_diversity_toolbox.cfm).  
The Toolbox was made possible with financial support from the Government of Canada through Justice Canada's Justice Partnership and Innovation Program.  
The Responding to Online Hate guide was produced with the support of the Government of Ontario.



# Making Imagination Real

By John VanWalleghem  
Executive Director  
Manitoba Council for Leadership in Education



# *Inclusive Education*

## *& The Three Block Model of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)*

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I believe UDL is the method needed to make inclusive education work. The concept of Universal Design comes from the field of architecture (Mace, Story, & Mueller, 1998). In the late 1980's and early 1990's, architects while exploring the concept of accessibility to buildings for people with physical disabilities came to realize that retrofitting buildings with ramps or elevators didn't work.

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**F**irst of all, retrofitting was not cost effective but also, there wasn't always the space or time to do it effectively. Perhaps more importantly, architects designed the entrances of buildings to provide a specific experience to the entrant. Whether the lobby is designed to provide a feeling of glamour, or expansiveness, efficiency or warmth, one is meant to have a particular emotional experience, and to learn something about the purpose of the building, when one enters. Having people in wheelchairs enter from a side entrance, or back door, as often happens with retrofitting, denied these entrants the intended experience. Architects began to push for buildings and cities to be universally designed – that is, to be designed in such a way that all people had the ability to enter into the structure at the same point, if not in the same way.

The term "Universal Design" was thus coined by Ronald Mace, an architect, who challenged traditional forms of architecture to better attend to the needs of all consumers rather than only design for the able bodied. What they discovered as they began to do so, was that there were many people who benefited from the additional options. In the Vancouver airport, for example, one can enter the building via an elevator, escalator, ramp, or stairs but all converge on the same place. While the ramp may have originally been meant for people with disabilities, it now serves parents with strollers, travelers with roller-board suitcases, and others. Another excellent example is that of ramped curbs which were designed to allow people in wheelchairs independence in traveling around the city

but benefited many unintended populations. Parents with strollers, kids on skateboards, the elderly...all enjoyed the advantages of the new design, while the "walking experience" of those capable of stepping up the curb was not diminished.

As educators, we have followed a similar journey. We initially denied access. Then we tried to create access by retrofitting – we called it adapting and modifying. We planned our curricula, schedules, lessons, etc. and then tried to decide, "what Johnny is going to do." As with architecture – the retrofitting became expensive since it takes a great deal of time and resources, especially as the numbers grow, to build a ramp for every child, and the truth, is, when you enter through a side door, you don't get the same experience as others. In education, that side door experience may include being "pulled out" to work in a resource room, working with an educational assistant, or by having booklets of photocopied sheets of work from earlier grades. When this happens, students do not get the same experience of being a part of the class as the students who "entered through the front door."

The concept of accessibility is the key underlying the transfer of Universal Design to education. The question posed is "how do we provide accessibility to the learning, curriculum, and social life of the classroom for diverse learners without taking away from the experience of those who could have stepped up the curb?" In other words – how do we diversify our class management, curriculum, instruction, and assessment in such a way that students who have

## Making Imagination Real

previously not been able to participate can be actively involved, without “dumbing down” the curriculum? What are the ramps?

There is a great deal of research telling us what works in inclusive practice (McLeskey, Rosenberg, & Westling, 2010). So why has it not been implemented? Why are there still conferences happening around the globe posing the question – “how do we do this?” The answer seems to be due to the narrow focus often taken by our leaders. Government ministries, school districts, researchers, and district level administrators have all tried to “choose a ramp” to center their focus, in the hope of not overwhelming teachers. Foci such as Differentiating Instruction, Understanding by Design, Assessment for Learning, etc. can be seen in policy and practice internationally. Unfortunately, as many teachers have discovered, singular application of one piece of inclusive practice rarely has the impact we are seeking. It is like performing surgery without the anesthetic – painful. Teachers go seeking the big picture, attending professional development workshops which explore one piece at a time, and then leave the learning experience wondering how all the pieces fit together. Few workshops have provided a comprehensive framework which assimilates the component parts into a practical, research grounded, K-12, efficient manner.

In the Three-Block Model of UDL (Katz, in press), decades of research on inclusive educational practice are synthesized into a step-by-step process for implementing inclusive education. The model provides teachers with a method for creating inclusive environments and improving student engagement. In order to facilitate the process of implementation, the model is broken into three blocks. The first block examines Social and Emotional Learning, and involves building compassionate learning communities, in which all students feel safe, valued, and have a sense of belonging. In this block, the Respecting Diversity program is used at the beginning of the school year to develop student self-concept, respect for diverse others, and an inclusive classroom climate. The program involves eight lessons that introduce students to their own and other learning profiles, highlighting how diversity benefits a community. Results show profound impact for both students and teachers when this program is put into place (Katz & Porath, 2011).

In the second block of this model, called Inclusive Instructional Practice, a step-by-step planning and instructional framework is outlined (Katz, in press). Physical and instructional environments are designed so that students have access to differentiated learning opportunities in order to address their varied learning modes. Essential understandings within curricula are identified, and inquiry activities promoting higher order thinking are planned. Course materials are differentiated in terms of level of complexity, methods of acquiring knowledge, and strategies for demonstrating understanding. As part of this practice, teachers build rubrics that reflect multiple developmental levels of understanding, and can be used to assess multi-modal expressions of understandings. Regular feedback and assessment is ongoing so that teachers can assess for

learning, and when needed, conduct assessment/evaluation of learning, including grading (Katz, in press).

Mr. Charles Bendu, a Special Education Resource Teacher in an inner city elementary school has begun to implement the Three Block Model of UDL in his classrooms and has witnessed an increase in student engagement. “Once the room is set up and the students understand what their strengths are, the students can begin to demonstrate their learning from that point of view. What makes the UDL model so effective is that it helps teachers guide students to demonstrate their learning and to be engaged. It’s a very democratic and flexible way of instructing students at different levels.”

The engagement and improved feelings of self-concept that develop in the students who attend classes using the Three Block Model are expressed best by the students who attend these unique classes. One student previously identified with significant learning and behavioral challenges explains after taking part in the RD program that he learned a lot about himself and others through this unique program. ““The most important thing I have learned about was people. People such as me. How someone can shine a light on you even when you are in a dark place. How all people have something to contribute. Some kids believe that there is no hope in life. That they will always fail. But these children have never heard of hope for the better, of MI and that there is something for you. I used to say that hope was a bunch of lying crap but I have seen now that there is hope in the world for people like me and others...The most important thing I learned was to always believe in myself, and never give up.”

Recently, a large study exploring the instructional outcomes, as well as the social and emotional outcomes for students, of The Three-Block Model of Universal Design for Learning was completed and funding was provided by a grant from the University of Manitoba. Over 600 students, and 58 teachers, in ten schools located in four separate school divisions participated. Students in the study ranged from grade one to grade twelve, and were located in a variety of rural, suburban, and inner city schools. Results confirm the earlier findings of the RD program (Katz & Porath, 2011), which include: improved student self-concept, respect for diverse others, pro-social behavior, sense of belonging, and perception of class climate, and reduced aggressive behavior. Overall MANCOVA results indicated significant differences post intervention between treatment and control groups,  $F(5, 204) = 14.267, p=.001$ , with treatment group students' SEL scores increasing overall, and control group students' scores decreasing. Partial  $\eta^2$  for this MANCOVA was .23, which is considered to have practical significance in social sciences research (Barnett, 2008). As well, the study indicated that students were significantly more engaged in their learning, and specifically, were more actively engaged in their learning in UDL designed classrooms at all ages. Overall MANCOVA results indicated significant differences post intervention between treatment and control groups,  $F(1, 76) =$

76.396,  $p < .000$ , Partial for this MANCOVA was .501, indicating a highly significant impact for UDL on engagement, with treatment group students' engagement scores increasing overall, and control group students' scores decreasing. This pattern of decreasing scores for control groups (i.e., students who have had no intervention) is commonly found in the literature, and has been previously explained as resulting from greater student disruptive behavior and familiarity between teachers and students and amongst peers as the school year progresses (Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group, 1999). Analyses were conducted to explore whether the model has differential impacts on students of varying ages, locations (ie. rural versus urban), and gender. None of these factors proved significant, thus the model can be used effectively across all grades and settings. For instance, it was discovered that students in secondary UDL classes, on average, spent 42/60 minutes actively engaged, while students in non-UDL classes spent 7/60 minutes actively engaged. And while the results were profoundly significant at the high school level, significant effects were found at all ages, locations, and for all genders.

Teachers have also been surveyed to determine their experience of teaching in this way; its benefits and challenges, student outcomes, and job satisfaction. After implementing the RD program, one teacher commented, "A program like this is very important, now more than ever. I can see that my students have a better understanding and overall respect for diversity, have become more independent in their learning, and are able to critically think and show their understandings as a result." A teacher in a high school physics class, after implementing the instructional model said, "I now completely believe in teaching this way. It takes a tough class to really realize the positive effect it has on all students and adults in the classroom. This made assessment quicker and smoother." The bottom line, said another "I would never have survived this year without this – especially the RD program." It is our job, as professional educators, to recognize that our goal is not only to improve students experience and retention in school, but also teachers! As a classroom teacher for 16 years, I am well aware that nothing supports kids that stresses teachers. The Three Block model is designed to make the experience of teaching and learning engaging for ALL.

In the third block of the model, "systems and structures", the requisite policy, resources, staffing, and delivery systems are explored to implement inclusive education on a large scale. Previous research has suggested that changes need to be made in the ways in which we staff (e.g. focusing on co-teaching rather than the assignment of one to one EA's (Giandreco, 2010), qualifications for educational

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leaders (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010) etc.), purchase resources (e.g. purchasing multi-leveled texts rather than textbooks or novel sets that assume a singular reading level for all students), and training (Loreman, 2010; Philpott, Furey, & Penney, 2010). In this vein, to explore outcomes of The Three-Block Model of Universal Design for Learning across the country, researchers from the Canadian Research Centre for Inclusive Education are working together to replicate this research, and further explore training and systematic implementation requirements across the country. In Manitoba, the Manitoba Alliance for Universal Design for Learning (MAUDEL) has been formed to bring together multiple stakeholders interested in implementing the Three Block Model province-wide. The alliance includes members of the Faculty of Education, graduate students in the faculty, members of the Manitoba Teacher's Society, Manitoba Education, and Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Council, and teachers and administrators from many different school divisions across the province.

Dr. Jennifer Katz's model holds real promise of making the inclusive classroom a more concretely understood practice in Manitoba. While we have a legal statute that mandates appropriate education, we desperately need to translate that mandate into everyday experience. Dr. Katz's "Three-Block Model" can help educators to create that new reality. **CJ**

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# Cultivating Imagination in Adult Education

By Ron Norman

The poet Archibald MacLeish (Williams, 1970, p.887) once commented at the height of the Cold War that the “real crisis” facing modern society wasn’t nuclear holocaust, but the demise of imagination:

To me – not many others think so – the real crisis in the life of our society is the crisis of the life of the imagination. Far more than we need an intercontinental missile or a moral rearmament or a religious revival, we need to come alive again, to recover the virility of the imagination on which all earlier civilizations have been based: Coleridge’s ‘synthetic and magical power’ by which ‘the whole soul of man’ may be brought to activity and knowledge may be known.

Nearly 35 years later, Kieran Egan (1992) echoes MacLeish. Education is

Egan’s focus of concern and he argues that educators are not doing enough to foster imagination in their students and maintains that imagination has been relegated to the dusty cloakroom at the back of the classroom. Just as significantly, the failure to stimulate and develop the imagination in teaching / learning shapes education theory and practice. “So much of the focus on students’ cognition is in terms of logico-mathematical skills that our very concept of education becomes affected,” Egan says (1992, p.5).

In this paper, I will examine the role of imagination in education and explore a

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role of imagination in teaching and learning. In addition, it serves to explore how Kieran Egan’s (1992) concept of “imaginative learning” contributes to adult education theory and practice.



framework for developing what Egan calls “imaginative learning” (1992, p. 53) will define how imaginative learning fits within the broader goals of adult education, identify and discuss potential problems, and finally, I will consider imaginative learning’s place within a philosophy of practice.

### The Role of Imagination in Education

Egan contends that developing imagination is crucial in education. The question we must ask is: why? There are a whole range of reasons. For instance, imagination helps transcend conventional thinking, or as Karen Hanson (1988, p. 138) writes: “Imagination is what allows us to envision possibilities in or beyond the actualities in which we are immersed.” Imagination is the ability to consciously conceive of the unconventional, or, to paraphrase Coleridge, it is thinking unaffected by habit and unshackled by custom. Imagination is also closely connected with creativity. Immanuel Kant ([1790] 1952, p. 134) notes: “The imagination is a powerful agent for creating as it were a second nature out of the material supplied to it by actual nature.” Then there is the role imagination plays in the development of what Brian Sutton-Smith called the “narrative concern” (1988, p.22). Sutton-Smith claims that this is how people make sense of the world and of their experiences in narratives. He suggests that individuals recall items in narrative structures better than in logically organized lists. Imagination is vital to composing and understanding narratives. As Northrup Frye (1963, p. 49) points out: “The art of listening to stories is a basic training for the imagination.”

Egan has his own reasons for promoting imagination’s importance in education. One is that imagination plays a key role in the learning process. There is a common view in both society and in the educational system that the human mind is a sort of computer, storing information for later retrieval. Egan writes: “This has been going on so long and so ubiquitously in schools that the meaning

of learning that is most common is this kind of mechanical storage and retrieval” (p. 50). Egan argues, and I agree, that the human mind does not work in the same way as a computer and that our memories are quite unlike computer “memories”:

The human mind does not simply store facts discretely when it learns. Perhaps it can do this, and we might occasionally use this capacity to remember a phone number or a shopping list in the absence of a piece of paper. More typically, when we learn even the simplest fact – that Vasco de Gama set off from Lisbon to sail to Africa in 1497 or that spiders have eight legs – we do not simply lodge these as discrete data in our brains. When learned, they mix in with the complex of shifting emotions, memories, intentions, and so on that constitutes our mental lives. Whether and how we learn and retain these particular facts is affected by the complex of meaning structures we already have in place which in turn are affected by our emotions, intentions, and so on. (p. 50)

The point is that almost nothing emerges from human memory in the same form that it was learned initially. All kinds of associations are made with each new fact or bit of data. Associations are made while in a constant state of flux, shifting, blending, constructing and reconstructing and, imagination is a crucial part of that process.

Another reason why Egan believes imagination is vital to education stems from Sutton-Smith’s idea of the “narrative concern”: imagination helps provide meaning to experience and understanding to knowledge. MacLeish makes this point stating that imagination is important, in part, because it is how “knowledge may be known” (p.887) providing understanding that goes beyond fact. Though he doesn’t call it “logico-mathematical” thinking (as does Egan), MacLeish is clearly critical of the trend toward thinking that relies solely, or even heavily, on facts: “We are deluged with facts, but we have lost, or are losing, our human ability to feel them, which means that we have lost or are losing our ability to comprehend the facts of our experience” (p. 887).

Similarly, Egan suggests that education is not only the formal process of teaching and learning within an established structure and the accumulation of knowledge but also, education is about the meaning it holds for the individual. He argues that what is absent from the “neo-conservative curriculum”, which stresses knowing a lot, is “attention to, and a clear sense of, how knowledge becomes meaningful in the lives of learners; how we can ensure that students engage, in the sense I am developing the phrase here, in imaginative learning”(p.53). Teaching and learning which ignores imagination, or what Egan calls “imaginative learning”, ignores a central component in helping learners make meaning of their experience. Put another way, ensuring that knowledge and skills are meaningful requires engaging the imagination in the process of learning.

### A Framework for Developing Imaginative Learning

Egan provides a framework, or model, helping teachers plan lessons or units in such a way that students’ imaginations will be engaged. However, the framework refrains from establishing learning objectives. Rather, taking a cue from Sutton-Smith’s emphasis on the narrative, the curriculum is set within a narrative structure. Egan (p. 64) points to the primary role that narrative can play in making meaning of experience:

The development of the narrative capacities of the mind, of its ready use of metaphor, of its integration of cognitive and affective, of its sense-making and meaning-making, and of its overarching imagination, is of educational importance because these capacities are so central to our general capacity to make meaning out of our experience.

Barbara Hardy (1968, p. 5) goes even further in detailing narrative’s role in individual lives: “We dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, gossip, learn, hate and live by narrative.” The development of the “narrative

concern" is, arguably, educationally relevant to any teaching practice. As a word of explanation, by narrative, I do not mean fictional narrative, but rather the narrative shaping of the content.

The narrative, then, forms the basis for the framework, but within the narrative are the characteristics which engage the learner's imagination. Egan suggests several characteristics, among them: transcendent human qualities that are central to the topic (and the affective images they evoke) such as romance, wonder, awe, heroism, revolt and idealism. Egan then suggests pursuing the content through details and by humanizing the knowledge, stimulating the learner's imaginative life.

Egan's concept of imaginative learning is not without flaws. The paramount problem for teachers of adult learners is its focus on students within the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system. In particular, Egan structures his planning model for teachers of students aged eight to 15. Teachers of adult learners must ask the question: Can the model serve adult learners? In response, Egan acknowledges that adolescent and adult learners differ and are not the same. "As the imagination goes through age- and experience related changes, so too do the characteristics of the narratives that students find engaging" (p. 71).

Clearly, there are differences between the way an eight-year-old responds and the way a 48-year-old responds to narratives; the differences vary based on age and experience, not just in degree but in kind. To illustrate, while the eight-year-old is still in the early stages of forming and shaping meaning, the 48-year-old may have many meaning-structures already in place. Tools like analysis, reflection and reason, other intellectual tools for making sense of knowledge and experience, develop alongside of literacy.

However, such differences do not negate the value of imaginative learning and its meaning-making capacities, nor do such differences negate the role that narrative can play for adult learners. The teacher

constructs narratives with characteristics which will engage the student and allow for experimentation so that even though the framework was designed for younger students, it remains applicable for learners at the adult level.

### The Role of Imaginative Learning in Adult Education

As Stephen Brookfield (1986), Jurgen Habermas (1971) and Jack Mezirow (1990) point out, meaning-making is a crucial element of adult education. Brookfield says one of the goals of adult education is assisting learners in the creation, and recreation, of their worlds:

It is likely that most facilitators will sooner or later fall unthinkingly into patterns of facilitation that supports structures of organizational convenience and confirm learners' patterns of dependency learned in the school classroom but have little to do with assisting adults to create, and re-create, their personal, occupational, and political worlds. (1986, p.297)

Brookfield's comments are remarkably like those of the poet MacLeish. In fact, MacLeish uses the very same word – "re-create" – to describe imagination's role in helping people to understand the world about them when he says that imagination provides a "re-creation, in terms of human comprehension, of the world we have" (p. 887).

Mezirow (1990) also points to the role of meaning and understanding in adult education. He defines adult education as a process of reflection and action, adding:

From this vantage point, adult education becomes the process of assisting those who are fulfilling adult roles to understand the meaning of their experience by participating more fully and freely in rational discourse to validate expressed ideas and to take action upon the resulting insights ... Rational thought and action are cardinal goals of adult education. (p. 354)

Again, one of the key reasons for teaching imaginative learning is to give

meaning to experience and understanding to knowledge.

As well, Habermas (1971) identifies meaning-making as a key to adult learning. He describes three types of knowledge that are critical to adult learning: instrumental knowledge, practical knowledge and emancipatory knowledge. His definition of practical knowledge refers to making meaning of knowledge.

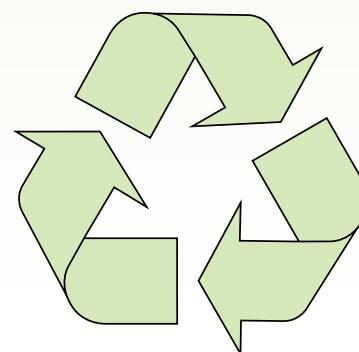
Patricia Cranton (1996) points out that all three forms of knowledge are valid and necessary. However, like Egan, she says that instrumental knowledge has been pervasively applied to inappropriate domains, such as adult education: "For adult educators, there is important instrumental knowledge, and we should not trivialize this. On the other hand, what we cannot do is view all of learning about teaching as the acquisition of instrumental knowledge" (p. 21).

Clearly, imaginative learning has a role to play in developing meaning, which in turn is a key element of adult education but it can also play a crucial part in two other aspects

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of adult education, namely, critical reflection and transformative learning. Cranton notes the components of Brookfield's critical thinking: "identifying and challenging assumptions, exploring and imagining alternatives, and analysis and action" (1996, p. 80). Identifying and challenging assumptions does involve stepping outside of conventional thinking, clearly the domain of imagination, as Hanson (1988) indicates. But even more directly connected to imaginative learning is the component Brookfield calls "imagining alternatives", requiring that people "break with existing patterns of thought and action" (1987, p. 117). Cranton says this feature is "one of the characteristics of critical reflection that makes it central to transformative learning" (p. 91). She also suggests ways that adult learners might go about "imagining alternatives" and all of the suggestions involve using the imagination. For instance, she suggests (paraphrasing Brookfield):

Immersion in an aesthetic or artistic experience can lead to imagining alternatives, especially for people who normally think in linear problem-solving ways. Brookfield (1987) suggests writing poetry, creating fantasies, drawing, photography, songwriting, and dramatizing problems or situations as some media for stimulating imagination of alternatives. (p. 91)

It is plain that imagination is a key part of critical reflection, which is central to transformative learning.

Imaginative learning is connected to adult education practice and Egan comments that engaging students' imaginations is not simply a matter of technique (Egan, 1992). Teachers must be imaginatively engaged: No doubt someone could, as it were, fill in the blanks by answering the framework's questions in a routine and dull way. But the call on teachers to construct affective images requires primarily that they vivify their own feelings with regard to the subject matter. This framework cannot be adequately used if planning is seen solely as a conceptual task; it has to be also an affective task. (p. 113)

The problem for many teachers is that we are not sufficiently attentive to our own feelings with regard to the subject matter. We are often unaware of the affective images. Too commonly, we focus on the concepts or the content that we want to get across to students. Becoming better attuned to the affective components of our subject matter is clearly an area of professional development that deserves further exploration<sup>1</sup>. Egan even suggests that learning how to engage students' imaginations should have a "central place in teacher-preparation programs" (p. 114).

If engaging the imagination is to be more than a skill or technique, and if teachers themselves are to be imaginatively engaged, then imaginative learning requires a place within a teacher's overall philosophy of practice. Cranton (1992) and Brookfield (1986) suggest that educators develop a

broader view of professional practice. This broader view should include an awareness of the educator's own philosophy and beliefs about working with learners. Brookfield writes: "Technique is, after all, only a means to broader ends" (1986, p. 289). And Cranton points out that if adult educators accept, even in part, that transformative learning for emancipatory education is the business of all adult educators, then "we must go beyond techniques--or minimally, we must think about and question the techniques we use and the bases for them" (1992, p. 3-4). That said, I believe that teachers need to understand why they are using imaginative learning and how it fits within their own practice.

### Summary

I have aimed to show the contribution that Egan's idea of "imaginative learning" can make to adult

education theory and practice. In particular, I have explored how imaginative learning relates to several key concepts in adult education, such as making meaning out of experience and knowledge, critical reflection, and transformative learning. This does not mean that there are no problems with Egan's framework, which is designed for younger learners. However, it is clear that the concept of imaginative learning fits well within the sphere of adult education. **CJ**

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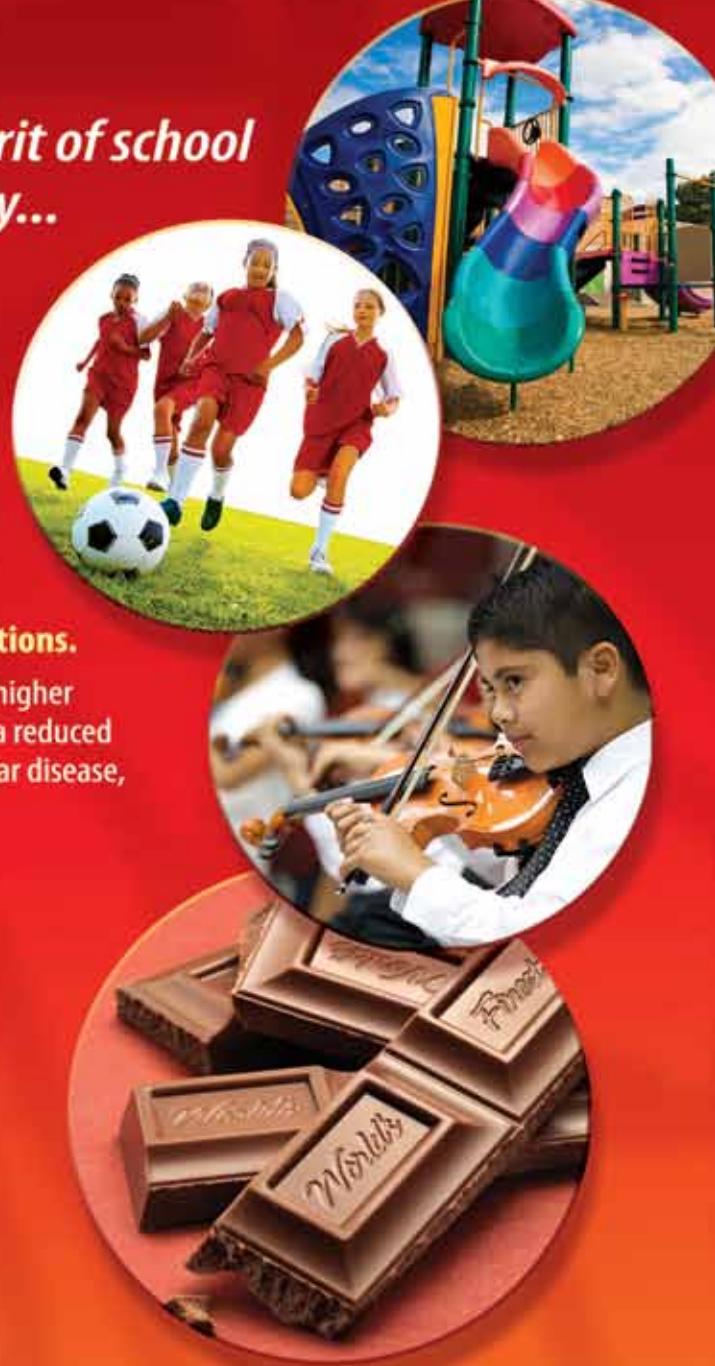
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<sup>3</sup> "British Medical Journal", chocolate consumption and cardiometabolic disorders, 7 studies, involving 114,000 people; studies up to Oct. 2010.