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EDITORIAL
Lana Hibbard

A 5 year old knows and needs to know so much. His questions assume that I am an expert in all fields. Yet in reality, despite having a Master’s degree, I would hardly consider myself a master of much at all. In a quest to find out about his world, my son’s questions come flooding in.

- The ethics questions: If there was a big fire, are we allowed to drive faster than the signs say, so we can get away?
- The urban planning questions: What if there weren’t any rubbish bins to put our rubbish in?
- The physics questions: What if the world stopped turning and the people on the other side didn’t get sun anymore?
- Family planning questions: If we wanted a baby, where could we get one?
- The linguistics questions (supposedly my area of expertise): How come some people talk in another language and I don't know what they're saying?

Then there are the religious questions:
- How will God find all the boxes in the ground when He comes?
- Is God magic?
- Could God change into a car or an elephant or a chair?
- How come I can’t hear God talking to me?
- What if God gets too busy and can’t see me anymore?

Recently, after apparent contemplation, he asked, “How come some people call God different names?” This lead to a short discussion of the fact that he gets called different names at different times: Tyson, Ty, monkey, honey, mate etc. It seemed okay then that God would have different names too. He already knew about the names Jesus and God, so I added Father’s one who looks after us and Saviour’s one who can save us. He was happy with that and went on with eating his dinner.

Just a couple of days later, his 3 year old sister asked, “Why is God called different names?” This lead to a short discussion of the fact that he gets called different names at different times: Tyson, Ty, monkey, honey, mate etc. It seemed okay then that God would have different names too. He already knew about the names Jesus and God, so I added Father’s one who looks after us and Saviour’s one who can save us. He was happy with that and went on with eating his dinner.

In an education setting teachers are supposed to have it all sorted out and know most of the answers. This perception may be overgeneralised to include spiritual matters. At times, especially the difficult times, this hinders us from sharing our real spiritual journey.

This can lead to serious consequences. Firstly, those in need of support may not feel comfortable admitting the need for help. Equally as serious, perpetuating the myth that Christians have it all together sets people up for disappointment. Young people and even children need to know that it’s okay to have questions about God and to struggle with faith issues. When significant adults are willing to share their real experience of God and their spiritual journey, young people have access to a broader understanding of God and how He relates to us, His children.

Young people have questions, they need to know. What are you doing to reveal aspects of God to those you are in contact with today?

Endnotes
I love to tell the story

Bev Christian
Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Avondale College, NSW

Introduction
A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...

These words, immortalised by George Lucas (1977) herald the beginning of a story, a narrative, an epic. A story connects people. It's how we explain the past, it's how we shape our identity, and it's how we form a picture of what the future may hold for us. Everyone relates to a story. If you don't believe it, just start telling a story in class and observe the stillness that suddenly settles on the restless young bodies and minds as they connect with the characters and plot.

Storytelling has always been part of the fabric of life. Myths and fables, heroic deeds, values and morals, have all been passed from one generation to the next in narrative form as stories, poems, dances and songs. Our students are familiar with narratives. Ask them to identify the complication and resolution of Hamlet or Farmer Schult’s Ducks and you may receive blank stares, but ask them to identify the villain in The Dark Knight Rises, and they will answer without hesitation. Our children, like those of our ancestors, learn through narrative, but with one defining difference. In the past, tribal elders, patriarchs, matrarchs, parents and church leaders were the chief storytellers. These individuals had the moral and spiritual wellbeing of their children as a priority. Today, many of the stories our students listen to are told by people who have no concern for their values or morals and no interest in their eternal safety. Tinseltown is profit driven and so it produces what sells, and what sells is a good story, an epic.

Have you ever stopped to ponder the elements of a story that make it appealing? What is it about the characters, the villains and the heroes, the complication, the interplay of good and evil and the final triumph of the resolution that makes us sigh with satisfaction? Eldredge (2004, p.13) maintains that the answer is found in Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NLT) “He has planted eternity in the human heart.” In each of our hearts, Eldredge claims, God has embedded a story waiting to unfold and understand the real story, the story that brings purpose and meaning to life. Have you noticed that every great epic, the classics of literature and the silver screen all contain the same basic elements? They often begin in an idyllic environment, into which comes a chord of dissonance, a sinister echo from the past. There is usually a period of oppression, during which the common people catch fleeting glimpses of hope. And then one is called, often from obscurity, to tackle the villain head-on, to “outwit, outplay and outlast” (Burnett, 2000) the evil forces, and the epic reaches its glorious climax, its last battle, its final confrontation. Sound familiar? It should, for this is the blueprint of the original epic, the one God has planted in our hearts. Oliver (2006, p.13) calls it a metanarrative, our worldview story of the great controversy between good and evil, based on the Bible.

As Christian teachers, we have a perfect opportunity to share this original epic with our students: not just a glimpse here and there, but in its entirety. This brings us to an important question. Does our curriculum reflect the whole epic? If our focus is too narrow, the true meaning and purpose will be lost, for it is in the context of the whole story that each part takes on meaning. The metanarrative deserves a closer examination, so, as with all good stories, we will start at the beginning.

The beginning, in this case, goes back beyond the events described in Genesis. In order to understand the metanarrative, to give meaning and purpose to the grandest story ever told, we have to go back in time, right back into pre-earth history, to discover the key character. This key character is also the Master Artist, the Poet Laureate, the Pulitzer Prize Novelist, the Academy Award Script Writer and Producer, the Nobel Peace Prize Winner and the Alpha and Omega of the greatest epic ever written. Does this sound too good to be true? This is the reality of God, yet even this partial description fails miserably to describe the Supreme Being who is God.

While secular society denies the existence of the Master Storyteller, Christians exercise their faith and accept the reliability of the biblical narrative as the word of God (2 Tim 3:16, 17). Without this belief, there is no story to tell. But God, living in harmonious accord with His created beings, the angels, is only the start of the story. It is important to note that God does not surround Himself with robotic followers, incapable of free choice. God instead takes the risk of creating beings who will serve Him out of hearts of love. Consequently, the worst scenario is realised when dissonance creeps into this Utopia. The seed of pride is nurtured in the heart of Lucifer, the shining star, the prince of this world. This describes parallelism paralleling the King of Tyre found in the book of Isaiah:

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you have clothed yourself with splendour
dressed yourself in fine linen, and put on purple 
you were so mighty in your heart. I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God...I will be like the Most High. (Isaiah 14:12-14, Mcn)

This biblical account, along with others (see Ezekiel 28:12-19, Revelation 12:7-9) is accepted by Seventh day Adventist Christians as the explanation of the origin of the sin. The importance of this point lies in a simple exercise of logic: If there is no sin in the world, there is no need of a Saviour; a hero to rescue sinners. Plainly, the absence of sin would render Christ’s sacrifice meaningless. This simple truth may help explain why our students may be reluctant to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. Unless they understand the origin and nature of sin, they may not feel the need of a Saviour. Without the whole story, individual chapters may not make sense.

So there is war in heaven and Lucifer and his followers are expelled forever (Rev 12:7-9). Therein lies our initial complication, the first conflict, the first hint that all is not well in the Universe, and all heaven waits with baited breath while Lucifer and his henchmen regroup and define their battle plan.

Then God gives a most astounding display of His power. In the face of impending evil, He creates this world, an earth of boundless beauty, delicate design and perfect order, and He inhabits it with intelligent life, patterned after who He is. The Genesis account reveals an omnipotent God with an overwhelming compulsion to create life with His words and sustain it with His breath (Genesis 1:2). It is into this perfect environment that God places the masterpiece of His handiwork—Adam and Eve. At this point, a sinister echo from the past reverberates in the newly formed paradise. We know the story; how Satan, alias Lucifer, disguised as a serpent deceived those first inhabitants of earth, tempting them with his clever lies to distrust their Creator (Genesis 3). It is here that the complication impacts our perfect planet. It is from this point that the downward spiral of hellishness and hopelessness begins for humanity.

Yet all is not lost. Into this despair comes a covenant (Genesis 3:15), the promise of a Hope, and as the metanarrative unfolds, we catch glimpses of hope in the grace God pours out on those who trust Him. All of our teaching of Old Testament stories should be grace-infused and hope-inspired. Salvation is not the domain only of the New Testament. It is the grand theme of the Old Testament also (Exodus 20:2).

Take the story of Abraham, a life lived out in the vortex of grace. At each stage of his life Abraham is the recipient of unexpected grace, but never is grace more evident than in that final climax when Abraham stands ready to sacrifice his only son, his promised one (Genesis 22:1-13). So often we emphasise Abraham’s willing obedience in this story and forget the real agenda set by God. Tyner (2000) puts it beautifully. “He [God] is the One who provides the sacrifice, including the sacrifice that gives us eternal salvation — doing for humans that which is impossible for us to do for ourselves.” This is the real message of Mt. Moriah, that God not only demands the sacrifice, but He provides it. The theme is eternal salvation – doing for humans that which is impossible for us to do for ourselves.

All of our Old Testament storytelling should be grace-infused and hope-inspired.

All of our Old Testament storytelling should be grace-infused and hope-inspired.
Teaching & Professional Practice

It is with horror that we witness our Hero cursed and spat upon, beaten and mocked (Matt 27:27-31). It is with awe and joy as we observe His self-control, born out of His all-encompassing love, as He allows Himself to be led to that roman cross, the cruelllest of all deaths. And so He hangs on a cross, this God-man who split time in two. Forever after, the inhabitants of earth will mark their time from this one event. This is the pivotal point of our story, where heaven and humanity meet in the selfless sacrifice of God and are reconciled to each other. If we have told the story well, our students will grasp the significance, and lift their hearts in worship.

The death of a hero always results in the deepest despair, but that despair bursts wide open as the curtain is rolled away. The resurrection (Luke 24:1-7), the gift of the Holy Spirit and the ascension (Acts 1:6-11) follow in quick succession, with a promise from Jesus to return and take His followers home (John 14:1-3).

At this point in the metanarrative, we may be tempted to stop. After all, the supreme gift has been offered, accepted, and the resolution is complete—or is it? Just as an epic has plots and sub-plots, so does the story of Salvation. Once again the eons pass, and once again heaven falls in anticipation. The epic is passed on by storytellers in the Colosseum and catacombs of Rome, by Waldensian peddlers in the alpine villages of Europe, by martyrs burned at the stake, by humble printer in Germany, by bible smugglers across the English Channel, by beggars and scholars, by commoners and royalty, and by Christian teachers determined that the story will not be lost. And the final, ultimate resolution of the narrative? It is a resolution that not only gives us hope for the present, but holds out to each of us the hope for the future. She pondered the task. She divided her content, and developed her strategies. She began with a gripping story: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal, the trials, and the arrest. She continued with a research project on the reliability of scripture, and her students were convinced. She taught apologetics of the Christian faith, and her students became skilled at argument, but still she wasn’t satisfied. Something was missing. Then, with a knowing smile born out of personal experience, she gathered her students around her and began to tell them The Story, and as they listened with glowing wonder, the Author and Hero stepped right out of The Story and into their hearts and lives. TEACH

Food challenges—a 200 page resource for teachers

The Sanitarium Nutrition Service has teamed up with the Victorian Home Economics and Textiles Teachers’ Association (VHETTA) to produce a 200 page teachers’ resource or workbook, Food Challenges, which encourages students to appreciate great food, and above all, to take lifetime ownership of their own health.

Written by experienced teachers (Dr Jane Lawrence, Dr Gayle Savage, Alison Kuen) with an understanding of curriculum requirements across the country, the resource makes a fresh, fun and engaging look at food. Designed for upper primary and lower secondary students, it is an invaluable resource for the teaching of Home Economics, Food Technology and Health. Since its release in 2006, it has been a best-selling resource and continues to generate interest nationally.

Each of the 12 chapters looks at a different situation or occasion and features hands-on food production, design challenges, nutrition investigations and case studies. Some of the chapter headings include: “Are your brekkies brilliant?”, “Is your canteen helping”, “Culture and diversity”; “School camp cuisine”; “What’s for dinner?”; “Watching your budget”. This resource challenges young people to be informed, aware and confident decision-makers and consumers.

For just $39.95, this full-colour, beautifully designed book is a celebration of fresh, delicious and healthy food. To view a chapter of Food Challenges and download an order form, just visit our website www.sanitarium.com.au/ nutrition/resources.html.

For more information about this resource, contact Angela Saunders (Senior Dietitian—Sanitarium Nutrition Service) on 02 434 7625.

References
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Teaching & Professional Practice

8. Pray consistently our students will listen to, understand, and unreservedly accept the Story of Salvation. Are our students given the opportunity to discover the Story of Salvation unfolding around them? Do they realise they are part of the cast? Are our students aware that the tune of their lives contributes to the symphony, that the steps of their existence are choreographed into the greatest story of all times?

We live in a world of reality and virtual reality. Many of our students become absorbed in the epics they hear and see on the three screens—cinema, television and computer. One of the insidious drawbacks of computer games is that our students can be absorbed into an epic. They can live out the saga in virtual reality, and sadly, many discover a sense of purpose not felt in the real world. Here is our calling as Christian teachers. To point our students towards the reality of the story God is telling: to introduce them to the ultimate hero of all times.

The epic is passed on by storytellers in the Colosseum and catacombs of Rome, by Waldensian peddlers in the alpine villages of Europe, by martyrs burned at the stake, by humble printer in Germany, by bible smugglers across the English Channel, by beggars and scholars, by commoners and royalty, and by Christian teachers determined that the story will not be lost. And the final, ultimate resolution of the narrative? It is a resolution that not only gives us hope for the present, but holds out to each of us the hope for a certain future? This is the story that should dominate our teaching.

A teacher was given a task by God. Her brief: to bring her students to the realisation that they were saved children of God with a sure and safe future. She pondered the task. She divided her content, and developed her strategies. She began with a gripping story: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal, the trials, and the arrest. She continued with a research project on the reliability of scripture, and her students were convinced. She taught apologetics of the Christian faith, and her students became skilled at argument, but still she wasn’t satisfied. Something was missing. Then, with a knowing smile born out of personal experience, she gathered her students around her and began to tell them The Story, and as they listened with glowing wonder, the Author and Hero stepped right out of The Story and into their hearts and lives.

Some narratives have a coda, an optional element where the pattern of everyday life is no longer quite the same as when the story began. The new order incorporates some new knowledge that has been gained from what has “happened” (BO’S NSW, 1994). The metanarrative has a coda. Simply put, it is this: God alone is worthy of worship. God is validated as the supreme ruler of the universe and sin is eradicated forever. “One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation” (White, 1888, p. 678). Only the remnants of one reminder linger. Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, forever carries the scars of His love for us in His head, His hands and His feet (White, 1888, p. 678).

Knowledge of the Story of Salvation carries with it responsibility. Are we being intentional in how students have an opportunity to engage with the biblical metanarrative each year of their schooling. It is with horror that we witness our Hero cursed and spat upon, beaten and mocked (Matt 27:27-31). It is with awe and joy as we observe His self-control, born out of His all-encompassing love, as He allows Himself to be led to that roman cross, the cruelllest of all deaths. And so He hangs on a cross, this God-man who split time in two. Forever after, the inhabitants of earth will mark their time from this one event. This is the pivotal point of our story, where heaven and humanity meet in the selfless sacrifice of God and are reconciled to each other. If we have told the story well, our students will grasp the significance, and lift their hearts in worship.

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Knowledge of the Story of Salvation carries with it responsibility. Are we being intentional in how students have an opportunity to engage with the biblical metanarrative each year of their schooling.

5. Continually point out to students where in the epic particular biblical events and stories fit. Use the biblical metanarrative as a platform from which to teach narrative writing.

7. Joyfully live out the Story of Salvation as a witness to our students.
Bringing back the school farm

Jillian Carter, Middle School teacher of technology: agriculture, Mountain View Adventist College, Sydney, NSW.

Not only does this program enhance our curriculum, it also supports all of our students in the opportunity to share in the joy of feeding the hungry and to take care of the environment. Many students have seen the value of creation. Many Sydney

Our program

Mountain View Adventist College (MVAC) has demonstrated that curriculum demands may be met in an innovative and practical way. In addition, by connecting students with the environment, the school is promoting positive values and providing ‘hands on’ experience that students and staff are encouraged to adopt.

Benefits identified by students

I enjoyed hands-on experience, building and teaching about the farm. It taught me that animals are not just there for decoration but to love and we need to be responsible for providing food and water to the chickens, quails and rabbits. They also collect, market and sell their products (10 dozen chicken eggs per week), and their young pets. When growing vegetables, the students must maintain a regular fertilising program, pick and pack their vegetables and then deliver their product to their purchaser. The students also collect money and write cash receipts.

Benefits identified by staff

School students and staff are very pleased to have an excellent technology: agriculture program running at the school. It is the opinion of all students in the school that they have the opportunity to be part of this innovative and practical program.

I noticed a difference in the students’ enthusiasm and interest. They are much more motivated and willing to try new things. The students have improved their skills in the following areas:

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1. MVAC students participating in the farm project.


Photography: Jillian Carter.

References

Australian Department of Environment and Heritage

The Australian Department of Environment and Heritage in conjunction with the United Nations, declared 2005–2014 the Decade of Education on Sustainable Development. There are, therefore, many grants currently available from local councils which can help schools to set up a farm. The Australian Government through the Australian Conservation Foundation is also one of these. The Australian Conservation Foundation offers $2500 to a school that establishes a farm program.

Jillian Carter, program contact. Jillian Carter, jill@mac.com.au

For more information on establishing a school farm program contact Jillian Carter, jill@mac.com.au

Our set-up costs

- Greenhouse & installation (8.4m x 3.2m) $1700
- Cucumber plants—bought in a tray $60
- Mixed lettuce—$50
- Mixed salad—$40
- Salads—$20
- Spinach—$30
- Tomatoes—$30
- Bell peppers—$20
- Capsicum—$20
- Dill—$10
- Mint—$10
- Herbs—$40
- Seeds—$50
- Plugs—$20
- Fertiliser—$20

- Raised vegetable beds due to poor soil quality $450
- Nesting area) $400
- Rabbit hutches (x4) $450
- Second hand chicken shed for nesting area $400
- 5 barbs at the top (28 m x 13 m) $500
- Secure fencing—3 barbs at the top $400
- Nesting area for rabbits and their babies $400
- Exercise area for rabbits $400
- Products (Agricultural Product Design) and Built Environments (Structural Design). These areas cover a range of design projects which the students identified how students can transfer their ideas, work effectively in teams, analyse and discuss God’s amazing creation. Many of these courses are essential areas of learning for all students in Australia. This subject provides both high and low achievers with opportunities to succeed. Our set-up costs are as follows:

More information on the farm program

Ongoing expenses such as feed and fertiliser are paid for out of the farm earnings, as it is a fully functioning self-sustained student operated business.

Our farm: raised vegetable beds, nesting area, exercise area for rabbits and their babies, an exercise area and a rabbit hutches, plus a clean, healthy environment for the rabbits. The students also raise free-range eggs, and the breeding of chickens, quails, and mini lop rabbits.

Further farming options include aquaponics and sustainability and water saving. The students also collect money and write cash receipts.

For more information on establishing a school farm program contact Jillian Carter, jill@mac.com.au

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Worship in an early childhood setting
Joan Hope
Director, Edinburgh Early Learning Centre, Lídydale, Melbourne, Victoria

Introduction
Children such as ‘high quality care’ and ‘warm, caring environment’ seem to be standard descriptors of early childhood learning environments regardless of the centre’s philosophy. No longer can one claim that these descriptors are unique to a centre staffed by Christians. Christian care providers need to look deeper into their practices to determine what makes their centre unique.

Young children can develop an understanding of a Christian world view from their own limited life experiences. It is the role of the Christian care provider to ensure that the children in their care are introduced to the loving Creator and his Son. It is in these early years that the building blocks for their life are established. The easiest way for children to develop an understanding of the Christian world view is through an adult who has a relationship with their Maker.

Many practitioners advocate starting their day with a time of prayer and reflection. For those with a genuine relationship with Jesus, this is more than a ritualistic start to the day. It is a time to acknowledge their Maker and cement their day to service for Him. Young children do not need to be taught to value worship. A more effective means of conveying the importance of worship is by an adult who has a relationship with their Maker.

Prayer
When introducing children to prayer, it is best to start with prayers of adoration and thanksgiving. Simple sentence prayers or statements of adoration and language more easily than abstract terms and language (Staal, 2005). Children learn to pray by praying (Mathson, 1984) and by observing adults pray. If adults set the example of praying simple prayers of adoration and thanking God for specific blessings and creations through the day, prayers of thanksgiving before a meal and actual conversations instead of recited jingles are a subtle method of introducing children to a meaningful prayer experience (Barber, 1981). Children learn to pray by praying (Mathson, 1984) and by observing adults pray. If adults set the example of praying simple prayers of adoration and thanksgiving that are relevant to the child’s experience and in the language of the child rather than the adult, children will learn to pray prayers that are relevant and appropriate for their developmental stage.

A simple prayer of thanksgiving that even the youngest children can pray can be taught through the use of props such as pictures, soft toys or artificial fruit and vegetables. Each child selects an item and says a prayer of thanksgiving relating to the object they have selected; for example, “Thank you for the sweet scent of perfume fills the air! Although the props to be used are important, the way that the props are introduced during the story telling experience can build additional curiosity and interest. One novel idea is to use an apron skirt with about twelve multi-coloured pockets that are big enough to hold props. As the story is told, props can be removed from the pockets.

The use of effective motor stimuli that are relevant to the child’s developmental level is also a valuable learning aid (Barber, 1981). A story can be enhanced through the use of dramatic play aids such as a rocking horse prop for Balaam’s donkey and pools and pans for Mary and Martha, or blocks for the Tower of Babel. However, the use of motor stimuli can be further extended to include, children physically acting out some scenes from the story being told. Young children particularly enjoy being involved in the story and relish the opportunity to get up and march around the walls of Jericho or chase the Israelites across the Red Sea. The use of props, costumes, puppets and other such aids help maintain the listener’s limited attention span.

One of the biggest mistakes made when sharing God’s word with children is failing to speak at their level. David Staal (2005) in his book, Leading Kids to Christ, reminds adults to be wary of the use of terms and analogies, as these are lost on young children. Simple phrases such as ‘having Jesus in your heart’ can be taken quite literally by children. This can be illustrated by relating an incident about a child called Peter who had been learning the song “Into my heart”. During the week he had been studying the human body and there was a model of a human torso in the room on which the budding doctors could conduct operations. He located the heart, removed it and opened it up then sadly commented, “Jesus isn’t in here!” He could locate and identify the heart, but the abstract concept of ‘having Jesus in your heart’ was beyond his current level of comprehension. This illustrates how young children understand concrete terms and language more easily than abstract terms and language (Staal, 2005).

Stories can become memorable for children when the language used is accessible and the story teller is engaging. Expressive body language, scene setting and character building all help transport the child into the story (Chown & Lawson, 1990). Further interest can be added through facial expressions, dramatic gestures, and changes in pitch, pace and volume. Simple vocabulary and short sentences help keep a toddler’s attention, whilst explanations and background events are a distraction (Haas, 1984). “Concentrate on the key spiritual idea, not the details…less is best” (Oman, 2007). Preschoolers enjoy stories that have echoing of phrases and involve some interaction with the storyteller (Haas, 1984). Carefully worded subjective questions can be used to help the listeners identify with the character’s feelings or fact based questions can be used to check on comprehension of events. It is highly advisable to spend time in small group situations at one point after the story, particularly for children who had questions during the story. While hands are active solving a puzzle or manipulating clay, the child’s brain is processing information and conversation can flow. Dramatic play areas that encourage children to act out stories during free play time are a valuable follow-up to worship time. One easy dramatic play area to set up is the nativity stable as children readily engage in acting out the roles of the characters. Other possibilities include a hospital area for stories of sickness and healing or a play dough table for recreation of story elements. The conversations that children initiate during these play times provide opportunities for integrating faith and learning and addressing any misconceptions young children may have. The secret to successfully sharing Jesus with children is being there for the questions, not just for the riveting story telling.

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To make the experience meaningful, the lessons learnt need to be applied in the children’s play.

Invent your own new song to him, give him a trumpet fanfare. (The message)

Songs are a way to talk to God and others. Music can help children communicate their feelings to God as well as share God with others (Mathson, 1984). Indirect songs speak directly to God and use the word He. When a child goes home singing a song about both, they will not be able to share freely and thoughts of God with them. The children often get the opportunity to share with others.

Songs with simple lyrics and joyful melodies have universal appeal to children (Mathson, 1984). Caregivers can use familiar or simple tunes along with a spiritual message or verses about a specific Bible character to help reinforce a story or theme and enrich the worship experience. For example, Old MacDonald had a farm can be altered to “Old Man Nash had an ark.”

Action songs are effective because children enjoy gross-motor activities. To achieve maximum effectiveness theactions need to relate to the lyrics and the lyrics need to reflect the underlying message you are trying to impart to the children. Since music is a persuasive medium and the children will likely remember the lyrics, choose songs that are scripturally sound (Choun & Lawson, 1993). For the children because they are often taught.

**Songs**

The Bible gives many examples of the use of music to praise God. Psalms 33:1-3 says:

**Good people, cheer God! Right living people sound best when praising. Use guitars to reinforce your Hallelujahs! Play his praise on a grand piano!**

**References**


**During the past decade there has been an increasing focus on Occupational Health and Safety issues—and with good cause. The responsibility of an organisation to provide a safe environment for its workers and community is recognised and acknowledged as important.**

Organisations are required to establish a procedure for efficient monitoring and documentation to track the process. Relevant safety checklists are developed; and supervisors appointed—sometimes as a full-time paid position. All staff members are required to maintain their area to safe standards. Employees are delegated to check certain areas on a regular basis and report any potential hazards. They are also required to add their signature and the date to validate the document. Checks are made regularly and frequency—and documented. OH&S becomes part of the inspections of the organisation during the accreditation process.

This focus is also necessary for the safety of our school communities. Every teacher recognises the responsibility of having other people’s precious children in their ‘duty of care’. This responsibility is acknowledged and supported by the school with appropriate resources and time (admittedly, not always as well resourced as we would like). The response—the OH&S process—is intentional. We dare not leave it to chance. Neither do we take it lightly. Issues are addressed promptly and efficiently.
Every day as you enter the classroom, close the door and turn to face your children, you are about to create something that will last longer than your lifetime; a legacy built from the bricks of your memory.

The legacy you leave

We tend to remember our teachers because what they do touches the soul of who we are and what we become. This is why Jesus speaks so strongly against those whose influence leads children to sin. Ironically, the teachers we remember most clearly are often the best and the worst. These recollections are usually vivid. It is no different for our students. Each day they are forming an opinion of us that they will carry around for the rest of their lives.

How would you like your teaching to be remembered? Would it be as a ‘good’ teacher or as a ‘great’ teacher? Or, might it be as an ‘exceptional’ teacher? If you were to overhear discussions about your teaching, or if you were to visit a website on which you were being discussed, what would you want to be said, or written?

An exceptional teacher is not the product of chance or an accident of birth; an exceptional teacher is developed.

Developing teachers with blunt tools

I believe that most schools endeavour to support and develop teachers so they might become exceptional teachers. Unfortunately, many of the tools we have used are neither powerful or effective. As a result, many principals and senior staff find themselves frustrated when professional development does not lead to a highly polished teaching force.

In-service training carried out in isolation might, at best, allow teachers to carry one or two ideas forward into teaching practice. While there may be small adjustments in practice, ideas formed in isolation are unlikely to generate significant change in teaching practice. As a result, teachers may not be empowered to move forward and become exceptional teachers.

A more effective approach to formalised professional development is based on the assumption that there is one set of procedures that works for all teachers. In this model, teachers are seen as a single entity rather than as a group of individuals. Because teachers are at different stages in their careers, information and skills that might be appropriate for a novice may be inappropriate for a teacher with more expertise.

Appraisal is promoted as a professional development opportunity that encourages reflection on practice. Unfortunately, all too frequently, appraisal focuses on compliance while masquerading as development. It is a ‘one-size-fits-all’ exercise. In addition, the manner in which appraisal is conducted creates an artificial environment where abnormal rather than normal practice is evaluated. Teachers may tweak the paperwork or do a late-night planning session to make sure they have a model lesson to ‘show off’. Therefore, what is observed is not necessarily the norm. In situations such as this, feedback is given, but its effectiveness must be questioned.

Training, rewards, meetings, performance appraisal, mentoring, and observation all have a place in improving practice (Bodaken & Fritz, 2006), but they are limited.

Is it any wonder that the blunt tools we are using do not produce the changes in practice we hope for? How can schools and teachers come together to develop exceptional teachers who provide exceptional education?

Research reveals the bottom line—teachers require direct, differentiated, sustained assistance. They need a process of evaluation and feedback which expands over time, appropriate to the stage of their career, and in the context in which they perform.

Where the real power lies


Interventions at the structural, home, policy, or school level is like searching for your wallet which you lost in the bushes, under the lamppost because that is where there is light. The answer lies elsewhere—it lies in the person who gently closes the classroom door and performs the teaching act—the person who puts into place the end effects of so many policies, who interprets these policies, and who is alone with students during the 4 minute walk-through.
It should be noted that none of these implies a judgment on practice. It is about seeing what is. Often what is seen develops a picture of learning in the classroom. Leaders and teachers alike can get a sense of what is really happening. From observing others, teachers will, more often than not, find themselves reflecting on their own practice and effectiveness in their own classrooms.

A Walk-through is not:

- an assessment or judgment of a lesson,
- an assessment or judgment of a teacher’s performance,
- a written appraisal,
- data from which to give immediate feedback.

The Walk-through protocol

Take nothing with you. Paper suggests evaluation. Don’t make appointments. You want to “see it as it is”, not as it is set up for you. Enter quietly and make no eye contact with the students or the teacher. Be as close to a fly on the wall as possible. There may be a need to ask about learning in step 2 but do this in a way that will keep the fly-on-the-wall illusion.

The Five Steps

These five steps may seem daunting at first glance, however, through strategic, well-trained observation, they should take a maximum of four minutes (sometimes less) to cover in a classroom. As you spend your time in the classroom, use your observations to focus on the following areas:

Step 1: Student Orientation

Where are the students focused before they see you?

This question identifies how the students are being taught and managed in the learning process. Were they focused on the teacher, on individual work or on group work, or were the students not particularly focused? None of these foci are good or bad within themselves. They are simply an indication of what is happening in a room. Over time, for example, it might become apparent that a teacher prefers only one style of teaching. This would then be cause for further investigation and discussion to explore why it is the preferred practice.

Step 2: Curriculum Decisions

These questions help focus on curriculum.

What skill / knowledge / content / strategy are students learning?

It is imperative that an observer is able to identify what is being taught. If someone coming into the room cannot detect what is being learnt, then chances are there will be students having the same difficulty. This observation is also a powerful way of identifying if a teacher has planned a lesson. It what is being taught is consistent with the long-term plan, chances are that the teacher is prepared.

How do I know students are learning?

Answers to this question may appear obvious; however, attending and focus do not necessarily indicate learning. Are the students ‘busy’ or are they actually learning. Learning is demonstrated by an ability to describe, define or explain what is being learnt or by giving thoughtful responses—not merely attentiveness. It may be necessary to ask students what they are learning.

What level of thinking is the teacher taking the students to through teacher talk, questions, board work, student activities, or worksheets?

This question focuses on the level of thinking in Bloom’s Taxonomy. Is the work mostly knowledge and comprehension or are the students using higher levels of thinking.

Step 3: Teaching Decisions

Three questions help focus attention on the teaching decisions being made.

What do great teachers do that this teacher is not?

While the question may sound judgmental, it is not. It is a question that supports reflection on the observer’s knowledge of teaching and what may have made the lesson more effective.

How is the teacher incorporating school-wide initiatives / thinking in teaching?

This question confirms the rigour of school-wide annual goals and targets and the extent to which they are taken on board by teachers. It also helps to keep the school-wide culture consciously in the minds of teachers as they are observing.

How does the teacher cater for non-routine students or learning?

This provides an opportunity for considering the students and situations that are outside what would normally be part of the school programme.

Step 4: Use of the Environment

How is the teacher using the room to deliver the curriculum and to enhance student achievement?

Consideration here is given to what displays are on the walls, who has done the work and the purpose and value of it being there. It explores decisions that have been made to enhance learning through the environment as a key teaching and learning resource. A well-intentioned, positive classroom environment can do a significant amount of the teaching.

Step 5: Health and Safety

What obstacles / barriers exist which could cause harm or injury to the student / teacher?

This question asks the observer to notice any factors that may impact on safety in the classroom.

Further Dialogue

When the observation is finished, take a few moments of reflective time to write up what was seen. This data will form the basis of later discussions. The entire process is designed to encourage reflection.

Teachers need the opportunity to enter into quality professional dialogue and receive appropriate feedback. The difference between good practice, however, through strategic, well-trained observation, they should take a maximum of four minutes (sometimes less) to cover in a classroom. As you spend your time in the classroom, use your observations to focus on the following areas:

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Teaching & Professional Practice

“Let’s all stamp. Let’s help Ella stamp out her behaviour problem!”

Elva Fitzgibbon
Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Avondale College, NSW

Introduction

Behaviour management or discipline can sometimes be the cause of graduate teachers leaving education. A former student teaching in a tough NSW school told me that she had accidentally hit on a new discipline tool—the mobile phone.

She was an early childhood teacher with a kindergarten class and found playground duty hard-going. One day when a six-year-old boy was deliberately non-compliant and verbally aggressive to her, she pulled out her mobile phone and pretended to video him saying, “Let’s get this accurately so we can look at it and properly talk it over later.” This had a lightning strike effect on the boy and his mates. A week later she saw them chasing each other in the playground with the sort of body language that said, “You had better watch out over later.” She telephoned me to discuss the ethics of this sort of approach and chat generally about behaviour management. I reminded her of some of the most commonly used strategies. During the conversation, she realised that in the heat of the moment she tended to fall back on just a couple of favourite strategies, even though they may not be the most sound.

We need to be reminded of the fact that we are only human and so, thank goodness, are the children. A good sense of humour, fun, genuine love and positive messages can work wonders.

Teachers, especially in early childhood settings, can make use of all the strategies that follow. The strategies have a variety of terms but the techniques are similar. They are given here in a general order from mild intrusion through to major intervention. Teachers should mix and match strategies according to their personal knowledge of a child, and the relationship dynamics of the child, peers and class.

Rules and cue systems

Pre-school and school are often the first time children encounter formal rules. Never assume that they really understand all the rules. Teach the rules and expectations, don’t just expect them. Rules should be made visible with each class or group acting out the rules or breaking them.

Digital cameras have made it easy to make a rule card with pictures of the current children doing the right thing. If a child has problems with rules or has difficulty interpreting the meaning of a rule, break it down into little steps and take photographs for each. You can then scaffold learning by displaying the steps on a felt or magnetic board or turning the pictures into a social story for the child to read at home or school. Children on the Autism spectrum benefit from their own illustrated and laminated booklet of rules.

Use a copy of the cue card to talk to a child who has broken the rule. The card helps to minimise conflict by providing a focus point that is between the adult and child. Adding a space where the child can draw what went wrong and how they will handle it next time encourages the child to think and talk about what happened.

Along with rules, teach the negation sign of a circle and bar. This will minimise misunderstandings like the following: A pre-schooler pointed to a no bicycle sign and said, “Mum, we’re not allowed to draw lines on our bikes.”

Overlooking

The child should be aware that you are aware; however, planned ignoring is suitable for minor difficulties where children may ideally sort it out between themselves. The teacher’s presence gives security and moving closer while looking pleasantly firm will have an effect. Making a comment that you “didn’t quite hear that” may give a child time for second thoughts and allow the child to regroup to a better attitude or action.

Positive affirmation

Try to give a child who has behaviour difficulties praise when they are doing something right. As Christian educators, positive affirmation should come naturally. I love the phrase, “Catch them being good.” Build up the child’s self esteem with love and attention as this will reduce the poor behaviours that often arise from a lack of self worth.

A handy tip is to praise a child sitting next to a child doing the wrong thing. The desired behaviour will often be taken up in an effort to elicit similar praise.

When giving a request or command, always use a child’s name with a warm tone, pause for effect, smile and then deliver the request. The little pause and kind voice strengthens the direction.

Puppet power

A class puppet or favourite toy can be used as a means of giving directions to the class or an oppositional child. Children prone to argue or say “no” will often co-operate when a puppet gives an instruction or explanation. The puppet can act as a third person between you and the child and provide a channel through which humour or drama can be used to diffuse the situation.

A child having a tantrum once kicked over a bicycle and resulted in the class and tantrum child going into fits of laughter. Every teacher must develop their inner actor. Puppets can also be used to rule play situations such as bullying, and model ways to deal with this.

Repeat—rephrase (even sing)

Why do we raise our voice a notch and harden it when we tell a child something the second time? It is a bad habit. A more successful technique is to repeat the direction, consciously making the tone warmer and adding a “please”. You can then indicate that you assume the instructions will be followed by saying, “If you can do that—that’s great”, and move confidently away.

If it’s needed, rephrase the direction. We often over-estimate children’s receptive language abilities. Singing instructions works well with children who have a language disorder, who are on the Autism spectrum or who are oppositional. Music is hard to resist and a happy, impromptu song like, “Let us put the toys away, Jamie is putting the toys away, Kelly’s putting the toys away—everything is tidy now”, will be received as non threatening, especially if it ends with a ‘thank you’ chorus.

Dynamic distraction

If you can act, sing and rhyme, you should be able to distract like an expert, just add enthusiasm. Distraction works really well with very young children. I observed a teacher in a pre-school with a group of children who had coughs and runny noses and were generally out of sorts. He was making paper planes and having plane races when a child started a tantrum. Another teacher distracted the angry, stamping child by saying to the surrounding group, “Let’s all stamp. Let’s help Ella stamp out her anger.” This led to music being put on for stamping, then marching, with Ella leading the parade. Once the behaviour problem is redirected, you can talk to the child at a time when they are more receptive.

Offer assistance

When you are met with a confrontational manner or negativity from a child, it is often due to feelings of frustration or distress. If you can bypass the anger being expressed and show genuine empathy, you may diffuse the situation. Help, offered in a genuinely caring voice, is often far for an outraged child to resist. Help may be offered in the form of picking up the mess of a project gone wrong, gently back patting while saying nothing or offering assistance with a task.

Knowing a child well and how they normally react is the key to managing the situation and helping the child feel better. You should acknowledge feelings more often and remember to always address the feelings, not the fight. Once the feelings and opinions have been listened to and the child’s perception of the problem has been acknowledged, an offer of assistance is usually acceptable to the child.

Ball out

This is a cool off opportunity before anything happens. However, it is important to acknowledge the child’s feelings before giving him or her time to walk with an adult, get a drink or some other activity. Having a cool off bean bag in a secluded spot teaches children that we all need space to get over bad feelings at times and that you are prepared to help them avoid acted out behaviour. One teacher I observed used a mini trampoline and would work out with a child how many jumps he or she would need in order to get rid of angry feelings. You could also give a child crayons to draw their feelings or the situation bothering them. Discussion can follow up on this later.

Postpone the fight or task

When a child is non-compliant to your face, you can reduce tension by partly agreeing with them. For example, to the child who insists that James took something of his the day before, say “You may have good reason to be angry with James, but I want you to have that truck back on his desk when we go in from recess.”
Podcasting in the classroom: A case study

Peter Beamish
Dean, Faculty of Education, Avondale College, NSW

Joshua Brown
English / History teacher, Macquarie College, Wallsend, NSW

The world is changing. Many students now fill their world with mobile phones, text messaging, MP3 players and computers that they use for social networking. They have really become the iPod generation. Due to the ubiquitous nature of iPods, and other mp3 players, digital music is everywhere and podcasting has become a mainstream activity of the web 2.0 age.

Introduction
The term ‘podcast’ is a combination of the words broadcasting and iPod (Newberry, 2006). For the uninitiated, a podcast is an audio or video file that is usually made available on the internet for users to download. Many different programs can be downloaded as podcasts. Any television or radio program can be transmitted as a podcast, as can any class, lecture, performance, or event. The extensive nature of podcasting today may be exposed by a search on Google of the word podcast. This search recently returned 152,000,000 hits. Apple claims that there are thousands of free podcasts available on iTunes.

As an educational tool the use of podcasts in the classroom is similar to other computer-based technologies. Podcasts can be used as a resource created by others, a resource created by the teacher, or as a project created by students (Preston, 2008). But can podcasts be used to implement quality learning experiences in the classroom?

Current research shows the single most important determinant of student achievement at school is quality teaching (Whelan, 2005). In considering quality teaching and learning it is important to stress that educational effectiveness for all students is dependent on the provision of quality teaching by competent teachers who utilize effective teaching strategies (Rowe, 2006). The effectiveness of using technologies like podcasting in the classroom does not rely so much on the technology itself but on the ways it can be used to deliver a quality learning experience. The NSW Quality Teaching Model details ‘generic qualities of pedagogy that have been successfully applied in a range of school contexts and are shown to lead to improved student learning’ (NSW DET, 2003, 4-5). These qualities are categorised into the three dimensions of intellectual quality, quality learning environment, and significance for the student.

One way that these dimensions can be operationalised is through the use of constructivist learning activities. Constructivism is the dominant paradigm in education today (Rowe, 2007). Most constructivists would agree that all knowledge is actively constructed and organised in networks that are increasingly more complex and abstract, and that constructed knowledge is under an almost continuous state of reorganisation and restructuring. The main pedagogical implication of a personal constructivist perspective is that learning can be facilitated by teachers who challenge student inferences, and to experience cognitive conflict.

The question that now arises is how to best implement a constructivist approach to teaching and learning in the classroom? Marc Prensky (2001) suggests that today’s students are digital natives due to their exposure and immersion in the digital media of the day. For these students, significance, a key aspect of the NSW Quality Teaching Model, is often related to the digital age and the use of digital media. The use of computer technologies in the classroom, therefore, may provide the answer as they have been shown to be an effective way to implement constructivist pedagogies and enhance student learning (Drennan, Kennedy, & Pisarki, 2005; Preston, 2008). The creation of a podcast is a valuable task because it is a real world skill; it provides an authentic task for students; it is an ideal means to immerse students in the process of inquiry; and it gives students the opportunity to research,

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Learners need to be actively involved, to reflect on their learning and make inferences

There are no bad children, only bad behaviours.
The current study

The current case study followed the path of the PICTL project. A classroom teacher, pre-service teacher, and university formed a partnership to implement a constructivist podcasting project in the classroom.

Podcasting was utilised as a learning tool in a classroom of 30 year nine students. Although there was variation in levels of use, 100% of participants in the case study indicated that they use the internet at home. Prior to having completed the podcast at school, 73% of students specified that they had engaged in web 2.0 uses of the internet through the uploading of content they had created.

The students were divided into groups that contained between four and eight students. Each group worked collaboratively with the teacher to choose an appropriate topic within their present history unit. The students then began to develop their own podcast by researching the topic and creating the actual podcast. This was completed in class over a three-week period.

Throughout the podcast project, student data was collected using three different data collection measures. Students were given a knowledge pre-test prior to the start of the podcast activity, a knowledge post-test after the completion of the podcast activity, and an attitudinal survey.

Overall, the results of using podcasting in the classroom were positive. Generally, students in the podcasting class benefited from a quality learning experience through the use of web 2.0 technologies. In addition, the pre-service teacher formed a good partnership with the teachers at the school. This was illustrated when he was asked to run a professional development session for all the staff at the school.

The podcasting project helped students to acquire knowledge in the area in which they were working.

Students also had an overall positive attitude to the use of technology in the classroom and many saw it as increasing the relevance of their learning experience. This case study supports the suggestion that web 2.0 use in the classroom enhances student learning, and that it can be used by teachers as they implement the NSW quality teacher model in their classrooms.

Conclusions

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References


emerging from a "mighty longing after God"?

Breathing, bag boys and bottom-line essentials

11 God's opulent love. To love. All of us would attest to the importance of loving essentials precious to Him. It is integral to the "everything relationships. We see an array of synonymous words in our advertising material—for we do applaud their importance. We all would concur that, yes, people matter most, but when push shows us into a corner, we need to stand up and support the system of the heart. The exaltation of the person was also needed to be supported. Education has been some time to experience the diminishment of the human spirit.

Lanelle Cobbin
Curriculum Specialist, Education Department, New Zealand Pacific Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

It would appear that the 20th century, for all its scienti-fi- cal and technological amazements…was a century in which we watered down our own humanity, turning wisdom into information, destiny into DNA—making it increasingly diffi-cult to pass the gift on. I need to be an agent who can become a "special character" in this declaration, "Christianity is the greatest gift we can give. What really matters in my relationship with Him. Of the innumerable qualities He possesses, the hallmark and most astounding one is love. How did that come to be? Why is it that we are so often scathingly honest—it has happened far too often.

1. I like to think of it as the essence of God into my relationships. I must be an agent who can express that love in my transactions with my own family members, with my students, and with the world. That must be my goal. It is through this process of loving others that God yearns to be glorified. He wants us to love the people we are with. He wants us to love the very people we are; and not only that, but even against what we ourselves sometimes believe.

Fortunately there has been a recent trend to attempt to "reclaim the integrity of teaching and learning so that it can once again become a process in which the whole person is nourished."

The resultant story is that it can be accomplished. It can be achieved. [Photography: Lanelle Cobbin]

It's a dazzling reality. Do we know it in our fondness and our gestures? Do we know it in our words? Do we know it in our actions? Do we know it in our values?

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The resultant story is that it can be accomplished. It can be achieved. [Photography: Lanelle Cobbin]

It's a dazzling reality. Do we know it in our fondness and our gestures? Do we know it in our words? Do we know it in our actions? Do we know it in our values?
to one where nearly 80% of its graduates went on to become Poor Students. Early the following year, she was reading Shakespeare! When the real Mr. McKenna was asked what the bottom-line essential difference was, he declared it to be that he had initiated a culture of "institutionalized love." Not a bureaucratic formalization of love in a clinical, regimented sense, but rather a total permeation of love into the culture of the school—so that it became not only what they did, but who they were. Love came to thoroughly define them at every level of school life and in every action. Yes, it was tough love at times, a love that invited belief in students and set boundaries for them. But it was real and it was transformational.

More recent powerful films like The Freedom Writers only reinforce the exceptional power of caring relationships.

This is a kind of incarnational love—where love invades people. It is loving-from-your-bloodstream—allowing the experience of every person in your school to be sustained with its life-giving benefits. It is breathing in God through personal connection and then breathing Him out to those around. Perhaps this is the reason Gillespie reiterates again and again with the latest Value-genesis report, that it’s not what you do, it’s how you do it that makes all the difference in Adventist Education.

Collin Prentice, eminent former School Principal and CEO of World Vision in New Zealand is another embodiment of this incarnational love. His experience as principal of both an affluent middle class school and a low-decile, challenging school attests to the power of loving relationships and high expectations in school cultural change. His journey is littered with stories of students whose lives were profoundly impacted by his kindness and identification. He was available. He noticed. He learned names. He jogged along with the detention kids on the famous ‘Prentice run’. He affirmed through countless handwritten cards. He cared enough to expect their best. He loved them into greatness, and it all poured from His relationship with God. Needless to say, environments were transformed. The veracity of such a notion is also being embraced in the wider community. In the commercial world, Kevin Roberts, CEO of Worldwide, Saatchi and Saatchi and the Ideas Company claims, "Business revolution is changing all the rules in the marketplace. How consumers feel about you—their emotional connection with you—is what determines success. This emotional phenomenon is changing everything.”

Roberts believes that by building respect and inspiring love, business can move the world. This emotional connection through the expression of value and care is also the reason eminent hotel chains such as the Ritz-Carlton commit to escorting you to your destination rather than simply offering directions. This is an expression of worth and value—in you.

Johnny the bag boy—loving with skin on

Barbara Glanz adds her voice to the chorus in her book. She tells of Johnny the bagger—a 19 year old Down syndrome, supermarket bag boy, one of 3,000 service providers who attended her customer service training session. In her presentation, she encouraged them to leave their personal 'signature' on their job through a loving act to those they served. Such an act would leave a warm memory and encourage customers to want to return. Her words excited Johnny, but he wondered how he could possibly do that—after all he was just a ‘bag boy’. After much thought, he had an idea—he would find a ‘thought-for-the-day’ and sign his name on each one. His Dad helped him enter it on the computer and then print out copies on small cards. He handed one to every customer with an enthusiastic, “Thanks for shopping with us.” A month later, the store manager shared with Barbara how Johnny’s line was three times longer than any other checkout. The addition of more cashiers made no difference—they all wanted Johnny’s ‘thought for the day’. People who used to shop only once a week declared they would now come in every time they went by—just to get Johnny’s special thought. A few months later, the store manager again shared how Johnny had transformed the entire store. Every department had thought of ways of making loving memories. The floral department would pin unused or broken flowers on an elderly woman or little girl. Everyone had so much fun creating the memories. Needless to say, their customer-base increased significantly, and how much joy along the journey!

The challenge

In Ellen White’s opinion, “the strongest argument in favour of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian”! It’s love. It’s an irresistible reality. It’s transformational. It’s the magnetic pole that pulls the needle on our compass toward Godliness. To love is to answer the call spoken by Christ Himself, “Love one another as I have loved you.” It is the essence of sanctification, discipleship, ‘living in the light’, and “walking the talk;” the nucleus of the ‘fruit of the Spirit’, ‘letting your light shine’ and ‘feeding His lambs’.

So what love-memories could we plant heart-deep in the lives of those in our care this week?

It’s a question worthy of regular focus. And in the grappling and mulling, let us not forget:

When we create deep connections with our students and between our students—that’s love.

When our inquiry of ‘performance’ consciously appreciates others’ strengths—that’s love.

When we do the unexpected random act of kindness—that’s love.

When we make learning transformational, touching the heart and the soul with things that matter—that’s love.

When we arrange successes for our students—that’s love.

When we celebrate the successes of others—that’s love.

When we follow through with promises—that’s love.

When we don’t let them give up on themselves—that’s love.

When we look beyond the behaviour to the thoughts and feelings that are motivating it and deal with those—that’s love.

When we see what we really mean and really mean what we say—that’s love.

When people really do matter most—in everything—that’s love.

This is not a touchy-feely invitation. It’s a solid, indisputable commission from the God of the universe. It isn’t a new message, but it is a new day, and in our humanity, it’s a thought we need to hear again…and again…and again. So go on with the deepening of God’s breath now through personal connection, and then breathe Him into all your encounters—just for today. In a very real sense, ultimately, you are the special character of your school. You are the agent of God’s breath in the life of your classroom. Breathe Him in, breathe Him out…breathe Him in…breathe Him out… For all the meaningful memories that will really matter to those around you come directly from Him. In Him we live and move…and breathe and love. Now that’s bottom-line-essential, very special character. TEACH

Endnotes

1 This statement in various forms appears in the Integration deal of agreement between the Ministry of Education and Seventh-day Adventist Schools in New Zealand.
3 Source unknown.
5 Ibid, p30.
6 Rob Bell explores this concept in the Nooma DVD, Breathe.
7 Joel Barker is a business visionary. Unsourced quotation.
8 Matthew 28:16-20.
10 Ibid., p.15.
Why parents are so bossy
School as a service

Don Dickins
Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Business and Information Technology, Avondale College, NSW

Introduction
This article looks at the nature of schools from a services marketing perspective and uses this perspective to understand what happens in schools.

First, a couple of short stories
After leaving the school where he had attended from kindy to year ten, Jason decided to return for a visit a couple of months into the new year. He arrived in the playground at recess time and was greeted by past friends and younger students who knew him well and sought to talk with him.

The new school principal, noticing a stranger at the centre of a lively group of students, approached Jason and asked if he had checked in at the school office to receive a visitor’s ID pass. To which Jason responded, “I’m not a visitor, I belong here”.

A strong sense of belonging can develop over many years and can be a very powerful influence in the minds of both students and parents. On the other hand, the reverse is also true. Feelings of alienation can grow out of poor decisions by administrators, as the following account demonstrates.

A fairly small, private high school in a large Australian city needed to accommodate an intake into year 11 from several other schools. The smaller feeder schools only went to year 10 so their students needed to migrate to a school that offered year 11 and 12. To make allowances for the extra students, the school opted to accommodate only the best academic students of the composite group. The school decided to cut the less academic of its students by ‘dropping’ its poorer performers. Many of these ‘culled students’ had been at the school from year 7 through to 10 and were, no doubt, with their families and friends, loyal supporters of the small school. Many of these students had parents and friends who had also been to the school or had associations with the school in some way. The students were devastated to be asked to leave.

In addition, resentment for the new comers built as they represented the forces of social disruption. That was nearly 20 years ago. Neither the parents and their friends nor the students and their friends have forgotten. They still tell the story of betrayed loyalty. The school never again had the problem of too many students.

Why they think they own the school
Schools are more than a ‘community of scholars’ or learners, teachers and interested others who embark on an interactive journey of discovery. The school is the equivalent of the neo-lithic village, a microcosm of the ‘global village’ where everyone knows something about almost everyone else.

School employees are often confronted by a parent (or student) who acts as if they own the school. They act and talk as if they know more about the school and how it should be run than the school administration and teachers, and, in short, think they own the place.

Kevin Roberts, CEO Worldwide, Saachi & Saachi in his book, Lovemarks, gives an insight into this issue. He discusses brands, products and services that have developed a loyal and supportive clientele where the relationship has gone beyond the normal relationship – a loyal and supportive customer has a valued brand or trademark. He says, “Lovemarks are owned by the people who love them” (Roberts, 2004, p.133). Considering the length of the relationship that parents have with their child and school communities, is it any wonder that schools have become ‘lovemarks’ to their constituents?

Schools are more than mere brands, services or products. They are ‘owned’ and experienced, if not ‘loved’, by their constituents.

What are the factors that contribute to these powerful feelings of ownership? The answer probably lies in some of the following observations:

- The relationship between parents, students, the school and wider connected social groups is shared, observed and seen as ‘semi-public’. These relationships are often the object of much discussion and critical assessment by individuals within these groups. Judgement over perceived fairness and propriety of school actions and events are closely scrutinised and widely discussed.
- The relationship between the parent and the school is multi-faceted in that it involves joint care for social and academic adjustment, and emotional, creative and physical development of the student in the school and home context.
- The relationship with the school is multi-layered in that parents deal with staff operating a serious business within a hierarchical organisation. The school principal, deputy, department heads, and teachers to other school personnel, canteen volunteers, transport workers and classroom volunteers. These relationships are scrutinised and assessed by the school community.
- Long-term relationships often span up to thirteen years, the life span of school attendance for a child. Parents often form lifelong friendships centred on common activities and experiences with the school and child as the focal point.

Parents have strong emotional bonds with their children and are emotionally involved in the school experience of their child. Because of their parental role (especially when the child is young), they use their position of experience to make numerous value judgements on behalf of the child.

Parents place huge investments of time, effort, emotion and money into the child and his or her experience at school. Consequently, most parents are very engaged in their child’s response to the experience of school.

Since parents and students know and interact with the administration, teachers, other parents and their children, they form networks of various types. As a result, they develop different levels of loyalty, affinity, and friendship.

During the school experience, parents (and students) play multiple roles and have multiple points of contact with the school and the community it serves. Parents can be found on the school’s board of management; sitting outside the principal’s office with a recalcitrant offspring; helping to run the canteen, library or transport system; listening to junior students read; helping with class homework and participating in much more.

The school’s relationship with its stakeholders is multi-layered, intertwined and incredibly complex.

Ownership and loyalty
Strong relationships lead to feelings of loyalty and feelings of ownership. Loyalty is an assertion, a response to a positive relationship, while ownership is a state of mind that empowers one to hold, manage and control. Ownership turns relationship management around so that the consumer wants to become more involved, has feelings of custodianship and protectiveness and is empowered to develop a stronger relationship.

More about services ownership
Schools provide education, not counted in terms of ‘goods or chattels’ but as a service. Service has been defined as “a deed, a performance, an effort” (Rathmell, 1966). Now think of the nature of services and how it leads from a growing sense of belonging in school participants to a strong sense of ownership by this same group.

Services and schools
In making sense of what happens in schools, some understanding of services marketing will be helpful at this juncture.

Services have four generic characteristics that pose difficulties for the customer (the student) and the service provider (the school). According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1985), these characteristics generally have been:

- Intangibility: Education is an experience, a service, it cannot be packaged.
- Heterogeneity (variability): Each student will have different needs and expectations of their educational experience. The school will respond with varying degrees of flexibility to accommodate choice of curricula, extra-curricula offerings, and teaching and learning styles.
- Perishability: Services, like education, cannot be saved and inventoried, making supply and demand difficult to synchronise. Education takes place within a context of ‘real’ time; it cannot be stored, rolled up or stowed away for a more convenient time. Education cannot be taken down from the shelf and given to the next customer who wants to be educated.
- Simultaneity of production and consumption: The student arrives and consumes the educational experience as it is produced in the school.

There is a fifth characteristic that is often overlooked but which can be added to this list of service challenges.

- Ambivalence of ownership: The customer gets an experience but not the ownership or the means to produce the experience. Often the only tangible evidence of ownership of an education is a framed diploma or an improved performance in a number of skills.

Because customers are in the ‘service factory’ and participate in the ‘manufacture’ of the service, they often have an intimate knowledge of the process, and develop powerful feelings of loyalty and ownership.

Ownership in schools
Schools are very dynamic social and cultural systems that exist to foster ‘education’: intellectual,
Educational Administration

academic, social, cultural, emotional, physical and spiritual development. Because of the intangible nature of services, the protocols that are derived from them are often learned and negotiated from a position of power by school administrators and from a position of uncertainty and unfamiliarity by parents and students.

The uncertainty in the nature of ownership on the part of customers can lead to conflict that often centres on the diverse agendas that the stakeholders have for their participation in the education experience. The outcomes desired by principles, administrators, teachers, students and parents are not always well aligned.

Although they participate on many levels, neither the parent nor the child owns any part of the school. However, they feel they have ownership rights because they have contributed to the activities of the school on many levels.

Difficulties with a strong sense of ownership

There are some difficulties that come with a strong sense of the feeling of ownership by stakeholders: parents, relatives, friends, students and their friends. The stakeholders want to set agendas, control aspects of the school, have their say, be listened to and be taken seriously. These are generally appropriate and legitimate demands but they need to be carefully managed.

The need for management of feelings of ownership

Schools where the sense of ownership by stakeholders is strongest are probably more successful at ‘educating’ than those where the feelings of ownership are low. However, successful schools have clearly defined roles, strong organisational structures and strong leadership that defines the different stakeholder roles. Stakeholders need to know what parts they can own, parts where they have shared ownership and areas where they have no ownership.

This being the case, the relationships between stakeholders need to be carefully managed. Feelings of ownership strengthen when stakeholders feel that they can set the agenda in their area of concern and that they have some control of what happens to them and the people and things that they are interested in. On the other hand, lack of feelings of inclusiveness, loyalty, ownership, or being able to set the agenda, produce feelings of frustration and indifference.

What to do?

What should a school administration do about this issue of school communities wanting to own and then ‘boss’ the school?

• The first thing is to recognise that this is a natural and legitimate feeling from your stakeholders.
• Keep the lines of communication open and current so as to avoid pressure building, problems going unresolved or battle lines being formed.
• Be prepared for frequent discussions over ‘turf’—who should be doing what and when? Set up robust arbitration systems to resolve any disputes.
• Clearly define areas of responsibility so stakeholders can hold onto their turf and feel comfortable and empowered in the contribution that they make in their specific area or role.
• Give stakeholders roles that match their capabilities and feelings of ownership so they can feel that they are contributing.
• Recognise the value in both cooperative ownership and private space.
• Schools are a group enterprise: parents and relatives, students and their peers, school teachers, assistants, committees and the principal. All these people have a part to play in the operation of a school. A school administrator’s role is to facilitate the synergies for success.
• Roles should be set democratically or in a representative way with appropriate boundaries like job descriptions, organisational diagrams and flow charts. When the boundaries for stakeholders are delineated, they can feel free to manage their arena and can be constrained to the role.
• Principals need to acknowledge that they cannot run every aspect of the school by themselves and that they need to generously share the responsibility, where appropriate.
• The school will run best if principals and school administration share their vision and empower others to contribute through well-defined structures.

You have heard the old cliché, ‘Rome wasn’t built in a day’, neither was your school. It takes a lot of cooperative effort by a lot of cooperative people to build and keep a school functioning effectively. Like Jason (in the initial illustration), your stakeholders will consider your school a ‘lovemark’ and say that they ‘belong here’. Use this phenomenon to build your school.

References


For Information contact:
Mr Owen Ellis NZPFU Education Director Ph: 04 2625629 email: the.adventist.org.nz
For current vacancies, check out: www.adventist.school.nz
Surviving the first year
What helps principals last the distance?

Marion Shields
Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Avondale College, NSW

Abstract
This research study investigated the induction experiences and perceptions of a group of novice principals in a national, Christian, independent school system. Semi-structured interviews were used to generate discussion, elicit experiences and present recommendations about providing support for novice principals. The study found that eight of the nine principals experienced difficulties with role clarification, administrative issues, financial management, time management, and the isolation in the principal's position. The initial shock in the role, policy development, lack of leadership training, staff relationships and information overload were also serious issues for the group. From both the literature and the interviewees', perceptions and comments, recommendations for systemic improvements are made regarding the needs of newly appointed principals.

Introduction
The role of the principal
The role of the school principal involves the leadership and management of a school community, as well as a departmental focus in complexity. In the context of the novice principalship, schools have been described as complex, high-pressure, difficult to master and intolerant of beginner's mistakes (Lashway, 2003). Lane (2000, p. 99) described modern, western principalship within the context of its society:

Principals have a mandate to improve student achievement, maintain a safe campus and keep pace with a constantly changing environment against a backdrop of violence in schools, technological revolution and increasing workloads.

The first year or so can be the most difficult time for a novice principal who lacks experience and is often only just beginning to develop the range of skills that are necessary to manage such an enterprise (Dares & Male, 2000; Sackrey & Walker, 2006). Allison (1997, p. 39) is one of many writers to comment in detail on the difficulties principals face, emphasising the constant pressure of the principalship:

School principals face very busy and highly unpredictable work days with many individuals and groups competing for their time... many principals are overwhelmed, constantly under fire, and unappreciated... confrontation, conflict, and compromise are constants which principals face on a daily basis... they are becoming increasingly faced with more pressure, more aggression, more change, and more conflict than ever before.

Effect of change
Upon appointment to the principalship the change in relationships can be a very difficult to face, emphasising the constant pressure of the principalship:

Orientation and induction
Orientation, here defined as the initial introduction to the position of principal at a particular school. Information about the school in general, its ethos, strengths and challenges as well as particular information about the staff, students and parents is provided. In addition, a wide range of documentation such as academic results, policies, strategic plans etc., would be expected to be shared with a newly appointed principal to assist in their orientation to the position. Orientation is usually managed by local school and School Board personnel.

In contrast, the process of induction, by which the principal undergirds intentional learning experiences to develop the necessary skills of educational leadership and management in situ, occurs over a longer period of time. Further, while induction programs may have local input, there is usually a systemic contribution from within both state and private systems. Induction is particularly important because while devolution of authority continues throughout Australian education systems, the complexity and intensity of the principal's role is increasing, and "more than ever before" is being required of principals (Hewitson, 1996, p. 20). Given the legal accountability this devolution brings with it, the urgency for immediate competency upon appointment is very apparent.

Purpose of study
Induction of beginning principals in Adventist Schools Australia (ASA) schools had not been previously studied and so this study set out to investigate their experiences and whether these were comparable with those reported in the literature. Previous research studies about novice principals (Dunning, 1996; Dares & Male, 2000; Aiken, 2001; Bush & Jackson, 2002) have provided suggestions for improving the quality of induction. In this study the participants' own perceptions of their needs and suggestions for induction improvements were also explored in depth. The difficulties they experienced were studied to determine if these could have been avoided with specific induction activities. The data thus gained was used to formulate practical recommendations for improvement in the induction of beginning ASA principals.

Fewer and fewer teachers wish to move into the principalship and worldwide, education systems are finding it increasingly difficult to fill leadership positions (Barnett, O'Mahoney & Miller, 2002; D'Arbon, 2004). The complexity of the role and the lack of support from employing bodies contribute to the situation that Barnett et al., describe as a "loomng crisis". Did the principals in this study feel a lack of support in their naviti? An earlier investigation of the experiences of teaching principals in NSW found that within ASA schools, the turnover of principals was higher than for the corresponding state or Catholic groups (Murdock, 2003). Murdoch also found that little induction was provided for the ASA principals in the specific locality he examined.

Specific issues for beginning principals
In studies of beginning principals from both Australia and overseas, similar difficulties and themes are found again and again. These are very briefly addressed here:

Shock
Dares and Male (2000, p. 95) described shock as: "The culture shock of the transition" and wrote: "nothing could prepare the respondents, both American and British, it seems, for the change of perceptions of others or for the intensity of the job."

Administrative and financial issues
Some novice principals in businesses with a high degree of administrative detail and financial responsibility required for their management. A very common difficulty for novice principals in Australia and internationally is learning to handle the core administrative and financial management of a school—hundreds of small pieces of information, routines and processes together with hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Social and professional isolation
Many principals feel quite isolated and anxious in their role as leader of a school, particularly where they may be inexperienced and not have a network of experienced colleagues to whom they can refer for advice in difficult situations. As a result of this major change in their professional lives, many felt isolated, overwhelmed and disenchanted" with their new position as principal (Aiken, 2001, p. 147).

Relationships with staff
Up on appointment to the principalship the change in relationships can be a very difficult adjustment for beginning principals. From the role of colleague, friend and confidant to the role of supervisor and manager for those same peers or teachers at another school, creates a major change in relationships. The cohort of workplace upon whom they once relied for daily support and collegial advice is now gone, and novice principals find they have to establish a network at a new level. This new network is usually outside their own immediate locality, necessitating travel or distance communication. At the same time they have to develop a passive working relationship, albeit at a different level, with their current teaching and ancillary staff. Described by Beeson et al. (1992, p.37) as the "most persistent theme" for the new principals, relationships with staff covered a wide range of aspects of human resource management such as socialising, managing conflict, and balancing supervision and support.

Information overload and insufficient time
Often, in attempts to provide the beginning principal with useful information, these efforts become an additional difficulty because of an information overload and lack of time to address the material properly.

Time management
Not only do principals find they lack time to attend to all the information they need to master instantly, they report that the whole area of time management is a common concern (Dares & Male, 2000). Many principals have moved from a "set-time-table" classroom to the principal's office where the day can often be described as "chaotic and fragmented" (Caldwell, 1992, p. 36). Learning to adjust to rapid and unexpected changes, as well as the need to...
prioritise and delegate in order to accommodate work is a major shift in thinking and behaviour.

Policy and curriculum reviews and development
Policy and policy development are the frameworks upon which school management operates. Educational policy is more than mere rules; it provides guidelines and safety nets for professionals working in the field of education. Policy review and development, however, may be pushed aside in order to accommodate the insistent demands of day to day operation, as was felt by all of the eight principals studied by Beeson et al. (1995).

Leadership
Leadership can be described as the core business for school principals, and yet it is sometimes ignored as a topic for study and training in favour of the management aspects of the role (Biggs, 1992; Bowman, 1996).

Management aspects of leadership
Dunning’s 1996 study of primary principals in Wales, revealed that the sampled principals held generally negative perceptions about the adequacy of the training provided and their preparation for specific management tasks.

School and community issues
The dimension of parent politics was noted by the majority of principals in the study by Bowman (1996) including the need for conflict resolution, group decision making skills, the development of rapport with parent groups and understanding the norms and expectations of the school community.

Student discipline issues
Principals may find student discipline to be a major concern (Daesh & Male, 2000; Beeson et al. 1992); however, this was not a common experience in the research literature.

Communication
Principals want to spend time meeting with staff but do not want to impose on their busy teachers (Beeson et al., 1992). Beeson’s study also reported that many principals made use of printed news and information bulletins to both inform and seek input. These recurrent, specific issues for beginning principals and how often they were reported in the 13 studies reviewed are illustrated in Figure 1.

Issues associated with induction
Irregularity and inconsistency of induction programs
Induction programs have experienced some specific difficulties. Daesh and Male (2000) noted that some support/induction programs for new principals in Britain were not funded beyond the first year and soon disappeared. Even those programs that were approved through legislation were passed without the provision of sufficient funds, which accorded with similar experiences in Australia (Shields, 1997). Inconsistency in induction programs, geographically and over time, was also pointed out by Bowman (1996) as a major concern.

Induction needs within the private education system
Within the private education system, induction programs are a relatively recent development. Fontaine (2001) conducted research into the experiences and perceptions of seven beginning principals in Catholic Schools in Western Australia. The principals considered an induction program to be essential; that a formal structured handover between outgoing and incoming principals was needed; and that mentoring and networking programs needed to be in place. Clearly, the needs felt by their state school colleagues are replicated in the private system.

Delivery of induction programs and professional development
Government Education Departments and Independent School Systems have been offering professional development for principals in areas of management and leadership for some time, often in the form of seminars. However, it is doubtful that seminars are the most effective way of delivering these learning experiences, particularly when the learning relates as much to practices and beliefs as to information or facts. The research literature, according to Robertson (1990), shows that principals want learning to be structured in particular ways, not only to meet their knowledge needs, but also to conform to adult learning expectations. Adults need to know why they have to learn something, and they learn more effectively when the material is presented experientially and in a problem solving format. Further, adults appreciate learning material of immediate importance and it is important for them to be respected for their prior knowledge (McCabe, Ricciardi & Jamison, 2000).

Understanding the principles of adult learning has caused a shift from the lecture and rote approach used in the past to a focus on the cognitive processes that go on behind overt behaviour. Cognitive perspectives explore the way individuals organise their knowledge (described as schemata) and then how that knowledge is translated into action (Leithwood & Hallinger, 1993). The concept of metaphor has been used to gain further insight into the use of schemata (Dana & Pitts, 1993). For example, the deliberate focus on examining metaphors used by the principal and then purposefully changing them through continuous interaction between the principal and the researcher, alter the direction of practice, was a successful strategy. If principals see education and the storing of information in the brain as a factory warehouse to be accessed as needed (a common metaphor), then lessons and metaphors used by principals in order to accomplish change in their practice. The authors go on to say that many of these workplace metaphors have become so ingrained in professionals’ thinking that they have, as it were, become invisible and, therefore, professionals are unaware of the need to change their thinking.

The benefits of an interactive learning experience between a novice principal and an experienced person (researcher or veteran principal) were mentioned by Barth (1995, p. 68). He noted that difficult times, which he described as being ‘in hot water’, actually provided an excellent opportunity for personal and professional growth for the principal, providing that there was helpful, non-judgmental assistance and guidance through the process of reflecting on and improving professional practice.

The concept of reflective thinking, particularly where this is mediated, facilitated or guided by a third party, may be one of the most useful ways of developing the covert thought processes mentioned by Leithwood and Hallinger (1990), and thereby addressing the daily problems which principals have to manage. Several research studies have reported that beginning principals have found reflective thinking, and discussion of issues with colleagues to be particularly helpful for developing and shaping their thinking about professional practice (Robertson, 1992; Daesh & Playko, 1994; Ginty, 1995; Bowman, 1996). It is not surprising therefore that mentoring is becoming an increasingly important ingredient of induction programs (Aldisby & Hackmann, 2006; Hall, 2008).

Hall’s 1993 study used problem solving and reflection, which required the learner to “constantly and consciously draw links among formal knowledge, recommended actions and predicted outcomes” (Hall, 1993, p. 341) thus providing a bridge from theory to practice.

Comparing apparent contradictions in research by Male (2001), which reported on the benefits of deputy principalships and internships and Hart (1990) which proposed a more theory-focused approach, it would appear that the experience of an internship, acting or deputy position, gives beginning principals a sense of familiarity with the routines of administration and therefore less shock when actually faced with the role. However, this does not necessarily mean that their professional practice would be at the level that it might attain if experiences were coupled with reflective thinking and problem solving based on current theory.

Another approach that has proven effective in assisting principals to reflect and to integrate theory and practice is that of cohort grouping (McCabe et al., 2000). Often university course linked, this grouping provides support and encouragement for the participants, leads to improved participation, creates academic performance opportunities for group and individual reflection and discussion, and facilitates social bonding that continues beyond the particular project or program (McCabe et al., 2000). Cohort grouping developed with a new group of principals has the potential for both professional development as well as personal support.

An important conclusion from the consideration of cognitive perspectives in relation to the provision of induction programs is that for novice principals, the need is to provide time and opportunity, even challenge, to engage in reflection, practice and further reflection to achieve improved outcomes in professional practice. It is essential that professional development for the newly appointed principal include a practical application of theory time to reflect and an appropriate person (i.e. a colleague or researcher) with whom to reflect.

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Method
The subjects included nine principals who were in the second, third or fourth year of their principalship in ASA schools (Primary and K-12) throughout Australia.

A semi-structured interview approach was used because it would permit a number of different issues to be addressed. The advantage of the semi-structured interviews was that while the interviewer is leading the process of obtaining information from the interviewee, there is sufficient freedom in the approach to permit the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee’s responses as well as to follow leads as they emerge (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989).

Data collection was by face to face and telephone semi-structured interviews based on a series of questions which had been mailed to participants prior to the interview. A finding of the 1992 study by Biggs was that supervisors tended to “serve up” induction programs, but not “ask the inductees” what they felt they needed most. To address this gap, the questions in this study were designed to elicit the principals’ own perceptions of what an induction program should contain, their reactions to frequently used professional development strategies and modes of delivery, the strategies and activities they had found helpful or ineffective, and their overall conclusions regarding ideal induction programs for principals in the future.

The questions were deliberately kept at a fairly general level in order to have the subjects suggest their own ideas. Response, interest and empathy were demonstrated by the interviewer; however, there was a conscious attempt not to lead the questioning but to see whether the interviewees produced information similar to that recorded in the research literature and to each other. Hence, while some interviewees did not mention a particular aspect that is found in the literature, or which was mentioned by a colleague, it cannot be concluded that this experience did not occur for this particular interviewee, but rather that it did not leave such a strong, lasting impression within the interviewee’s recollections and beliefs that they felt impelled to mention it in the interview. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and then analysed.

Results
The transcriptions were examined for similarities and emerging themes. The emerging themes were then compared with findings in the literature and additional issues that the principals in this cohort considered important were noted. Ten common themes emerged from the data, representing issues of concern to the beginning principals in the current study; these are shown in Figure 2. Time management, administration and finance and role clarification were the three highest ranking of the 10 key issues for the novice principals in the current study, with nine out of a possible nine responses. Figure 3 demonstrates the similarities between the principals in regard to the common issues they experienced.

Clearly, there was great similarity in the perception of important issues between the principals themselves, except for Principal 5, who had moved into the principalship from a previous role in government administration and had received leadership training.

From Figure 3 it is clear that all of the nine principals (100 per cent) commented on issues associated with role clarification, difficulties with administration issues, financial management, and time management. Most principals (eight, or 89 per cent) commented on the isolation they felt in the principal’s position. Seven or 78 per cent, talked about the shock they experienced on initial appointment; the need for, and the time spent, on policy development; and the lack of leadership training. Six principals or 67 per cent, regarded issues with changed staff relationships as a serious concern for them. Five of the principals or 56 per cent, spoke of the problem of information overload with all of the material they were trying to master and four, or 45 per cent mentioned insufficient time to attend professional development and training, including sessions with a mentor. It must be noted that these comments were made spontaneously and not as a result of specific questioning or probing by the interviewer. The majority of principals in this study did not receive a formal induction program during the first year of their principalship. Two had been able to participate in the recently established, two-day ‘New Principals’ Conference’, which they greatly appreciated, but they expressed a desire for more interaction with participants both during the conference and again, later in their first year. When commenting on professional development they had experienced in their first year, a minority expressed frustration that they had not had much input into decisions regarding professional development activities, including the...
The novice principals wanted more interaction during the conference program as well as ongoing support for networking.

New Principals’ Conference, nor had they been successful in finding their perceived strengths and weaknesses, or their perceived professional development needs.

On the other hand, most of the novice principals spoke very positively about the support they had received from their local Education Director in the field and it was clear from these comments that the Education Director had become a definite mentor for some.

Communication difficulties and community difficulties were, according to the literature, significant issues for novice principals; however, the latter was not mentioned by the interviewees in the present study and the former, only briefly. A possible explanation is that the principals in this study were all Seventh-day Adventist church members themselves, in charge of Seventh-day Adventist schools with a proportion of the student population (although not all) also Seventh-day Adventists. This means that they would be likely to interact with the church/school community and see each other regularly at church services and social activities on weekends, in fact, they may have known each other for some years, fellowshiping and joining in church programs together. This does not mean that they would not have disagreements and misunderstandings from time to time however, it is likely there would be much closer relationship between the principal and the parents than might be found in a state school.

By contrast, the principals in the literature review did not have issues with role clarification or insufficient time to attend professional development programs, as mentioned by the novice principals in the current study. A possible explanation for this is that state education departments have addressed policy, calendars of returns, expectations of the principal, generic bureaucratic requirements, and mandated professional development programs for the longest time of them than has been the case in ASA schools. ASA schools have been in the main, fewer and smaller than state schools (in 2008 there are 51 ASA schools in Australia) and the corresponding educational bureaucracy, and policy making have not developed to the same extent.

Conclusions and recommendations

The comments made by all principals in this study were extremely helpful in identifying strengths and weaknesses and current support mechanisms available to ASA novice principals. With regard to their beginning experiences and induction, the principals in this study believed that while most of them had not received a formal induction program, the recent innovation of a New Principals’ Conference was most valuable and should be continued and expanded to address the main issues that novice principals would encounter such as very specific training in budget management, time management and role clarification. The novice principals wanted more interaction during the conference program as well as ongoing support for networking, possibly through cohort grouping. A formal link to a mentor (possibly more than one, within and outside ASA) was also perceived as a valuable professional development option. These principals placed great value on the regular principals’ meetings held in their state on a monthly or quarterly basis, although those who were geographically isolated regretted their inability to participate. None of the principals had been formally linked to a mentor, which a principal would have appreciated, however, they did speak highly of their local ASA Education Directors and appreciated the support they had provided.

Today’s principals need to ‘hit the ground running’, preparation programs, appointment of mentors and facilitated induction programs are critically essential for their survival, enjoyment of the role and excellence in outcomes for all members of the school community.

Recommendations regarding the induction of principals in Adventist Schools Australia

1. That newly appointed principals undergo a mandatory orientation program which includes time spent at the school meeting staff, students and significant school community members before actually commencing the appointment.

2. That novice appointees are provided with a complete, formal handbook from the previous principal with mandated, detailed information on the school calendar, procedures and practices, sources of information, finances and personnel.

3. That novice appointees are linked to mentors as soon as possible, both within the ASA system and beyond, if possible. Online support through the local conference education director working with the national education office is needed. Further, that time and costs for meeting with mentors are budgeted.

4. That the local Education Director facilitate visits of the novice principal to comparable schools.

5. That novice principals are encouraged to use the ASA website and its resources, and further, that these be broadened to include pro formas for recurring school administrative tasks.

6. That regular monthly administrators’ meetings include an opportunity for this section so as to cater for those unable to attend because of geographic isolation; alternatively, provision of a financial subsidy to enable attendance.

7. That the current two-day conference for new appointees (held in term 1) include a pre-conference survey to determine levels of leadership knowledge and experience and that the conference be extended to provide an opportunity for a further two-day professional development towards the end of term 3.

8. That most presentations at the New Principals’ Conference and at other P.D. events be offered in a workshop mode to encourage reflection and networking.

9. That the current New Principals’ Conference include a health and stress management component, and a workshop on the relational aspects of the principaship, the changes that are likely to occur and the best ways of managing these.

10. That from the New Principals’ Conference, a formalised network between each particular cohort of novice principals be generated.

1. That new professional development be provided or facilitated at a local level by ASA Education Directors (e.g. through the Independent Schools Association) in the area of leadership and related skills; and that this be delivered through a workshop format incorporating seminar, discussion, reflection and group problem solving.

12. That serious consideration be given to developing a ‘Principals’ Handbook’ in an easy to read, handy reference style. TEACH

References


The mechanics of Intelligent Design—good enough to teach?

Ewan Ward
Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Science and Mathematics, Avondale College, NSW

Abstract
Considerable debate has taken place in the last two years over whether or not Intelligent Design (ID) should be taught to high school students. This paper examines some of the basic features of ID as set out by its major proponents. It also outlines the arguments of detractors who would argue that ID is not science, but religion or creationism in disguise. This is also noted that while the complexity, functionality and apparent purpose of biological systems may have the appearance of being designed, other explanations exist.

Introduction
Judging by the rapid accumulation of books, articles and websites over the last ten years or so the Intelligent Design (ID) argument has certainly made its mark on the scientific community. As will be made evident later, discussion has spilled over into the public arena and is used by a variety of conservative Christian groups as an argument against evolutionary theory. In addition to debates raging in the USA on the teaching of ID in schools, in early 2005 when Australian Federal Minister for Education, Brendan Nelson publicly stated that he had no problem with the teaching of ID alongside evolutionary theory in schools, he further added that it should not replace evolutionary theory but be offered as an alternative.

This sparked lively discussion among several groups in Australia including scientists, educators and school administrators. Professor Michael Archer (Dean of the Faculty of Science, University of New South Wales) instigated a public letter on behalf of scientists and school teachers denouncing the proposal. This letter appeared in many Australian newspapers on October 20, 2005 further fueling the controversy. A common major objection to ID in this context is that it is not science but simply religion (or creationism) in another guise and has no place in the science class. Three years later, how should we approach the controversial topic of teaching ID in schools?

Core features of the contemporary intelligent design argument
ID, as a way of looking at the complexity of living organisms and their components, was developed and championed by Michael Behe, a professor of biochemistry at the organized complexity book, Darwin’s black box. ID examines the detailed complexity observed in biochemical systems and structures. Coupled with recent advances in biochemistry and molecular biology, ID proponents use this staggering complexity to challenge naturalistic evolution as an explanation for the existence of these systems and structures. On the other hand, many ID adherents believe in conventional scientific time scales and in evolution as the major player in producing the current diversity of life forms. It is worth noting that while ID describes complexity, it offers no explanation for the development of the systems it studies.

ID has been used by various groups and in a variety of ways to argue for an intelligence behind the universe. In some spheres this is the Christian God of the Bible, but many religions and other groups such as the New Age movement could also be sympathetic to ID. At least for some ID proponents, the existence of a designer is not inferred, evidence of design is the goal of all investigations.

Arguments from design are not new. In the early 1800s, Anglican clergyman William Paley presented an irreducibly complex system cannot be produced directly that is, by continuously improving the initial function, which continues to work by the same mechanism by slight, successive modifications of a precursor system, because an irreducibly complex system that is missing a part is by definition non-functional. An irreducibly complex, biological system, if there is such a thing, would be a powerful challenge to Darwinian evolution. Since natural selection can only choose systems that are already working, then a biological system cannot be produced gradually it would have to arise as an integrated unit, in one fell swoop, for natural selection to have anything to act on.

However in recent years, as judged by most scientists, including many sincere Christians, this central element of ID has been successfully challenged. As will be discussed later, mechanisms accounting for the evolution of so called irredicibly complex systems such as bacterial flagella have been described.

The detection of design
The work of Bradley and Thaxton in the years just preceding the publication of Behe’s work, Bradley and Thaxton noted that some classic design arguments used to argue for the existence of an intelligence behind the universe can also be explained by natural causes. The complex organisation observed when snow flakes are examined microscopically is often used as one such example. These authors observe that the snowflake’s structure is nothing mysterious or supernatural. It arises by the natural process of dendritic growth that accompanies the phase change of H2O from liquid to ice (see below).

From this, it is apparent that at least for some parts of the natural world the appearance of design can clearly be explained by natural processes. These authors also suggest another type of observed order on the basis of information theory. Information theory was first developed during the 1940s at the Bell Telephone Laboratories. It describes the science of mess transmission using either a real language or symbolic one such as Morse code or for the biochemist, even the genetic code found in the DNA molecule. While the first type of order (for example, snowflakes) can be explained by natural physical and chemical laws, the second type is not a result of anything within the matter itself. It is in principle opposite to anything we are forming naturally. This kind of order does provide evidence for intelligent causes.
These authors use Mt Rushmore (where the faces of four American presidents are carved into a cliff face) as an example to illustrate the second kind of order. When one observes the formation from many different angles the conclusion can be reached that they are indeed modelled on human faces, because of the nature of the carving, one can conclude that an intelligence was the cause rather than some sort of natural process.12

Bradley and Thaxton suggest that complex structures are specified by large amounts of information. In order to produce complex structures like Mt Rushmore a lot of organised instructions are required which contrast with the random activities of erosion. This type of reasoning was a basic forerunner of many ID arguments and was then extended to include biological complexity.

The illusion of design

Understandably, many have reasoned that the biological sphere shows complexity of structures that in principle resemble Mt Rushmore. However, critics of ID have pointed out that even though living organisms and their various components may look like they are designed, there is no scientific way of determining whether they are the result of intelligent causes. Examining an existing functioning biochemical, anatomical or physiological system that may have arisen through a naturalistic (or even theistic) evolutionary process or resulting from an act of special creation will still appear to be designed simply because it functions and fulfills a purpose. In other words one is not able to tell from examining the inferred design detail of a system or structure how that particular system or structure came to be. Even atheistic evolutionists who have serious objections to the design movement in general insist that nature resulting from the pressure of natural selection will appear to be designed. Richard Dawkins states in his book, The Blind Watchmaker, that: “Biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose”13 and natural selection is the blind watchmaker, blind because it does not see ahead, does not plan consequences, has no purpose in view. Yet the living results of natural selection overwhelmingly impress us with the appearance of design as if by a master watchmaker. (They) impress us with the illusion of design and planning.14

The work of Dembski

A more well-known pioneer of the ID movement, William Dembski, has proposed an analytical method for detecting design. He claims that design is actually empirically detectable. In other words, there are well-defined methods that, on the basis of observed data, are capable of reliably distinguishing intelligent from undirected natural causation of a given system or object. Dembski has postulated a three-stage explanatory filter for detecting intelligent design (Figure 1).11

According to Dembski, if an event or observation is affirmed at the final layer of the filter, then one can be justifiably inferring that the event involved design. The explanatory filter asks questions of that event or object in the following order: Does a natural law explain it? Does chance explain it? Does design explain it?

According to Dembski, if there is a high probability of explaining the existence or operation of a given system then natural law is the best explanation. For example, if there is a high probability that when a suspended object is released, it will fall to the earth according to the law of gravity. If the answer to the first question is no, then one can move comfortably to the second question. If there is a good probability of chance explaining the system under study, then let it be so. But if the probability of law and chance fail to offer an explanation then one can assume the best explanation is one of design. This is especially true of specified, small probability events, for example producing an information rich molecule like DNA, with a specific base sequence, from a random pool of nucleotides.

Dembski has further developed this model and argues that an intelligent cause is responsible for an effect (or object) if it can be demonstrated that the cause is both complex and specified. Using written language as an illustration, he indicates that a single letter is specified but not complex. A long sentence of randomly jumbled letters is complex, but not specified, while a Shakespearean sonnet is both complex and specified.15 In other words, a meaningful sentence and one composed of jumbled letters are both complex, but only the meaningful sentence is composed of letters deliberately arranged in such a way that a pattern corresponding to intelligible English is recognised. He argues that specification implies purpose, and this is the product of intelligent design. One could easily apply such an analogy to the conversion of substrate to product molecules in a series of dependent enzyme-mediated reactions; the pattern of components in the sequence is deliberately arranged for a given purpose and thus exhibits both complexity and specification. In other words, the sequence makes biochemical sense. In fact, such an analysis could be applied to a sequence of nucleotide bases in DNA, a sequence of amino acids in a protein, or a host of other examples in biochemistry or molecular biology. While design is inferred according to Dembski's criteria, the mechanisms accounting for the development of such systems cannot be determined.

Dembski has since refined his arguments and suggests that in addition to complexity and specification contingency needs to be established.

Contingency ensures that the object in question is not the result of an automatic and therefore unintelligent process in its production. Complexity ensures that the object is not so simple that it can be explained by chance. Finally, specification ensures that the object exhibits the type of pattern characteristic of intelligence.15

One could consider such automatic or unintelligent processes as being the physical or chemical laws of nature leading to snowflakes (the first type of order observed in design suggested by Bradley and Thaxton). This is also reflected in the first stage of Dembski’s explanatory filter, where law may best explain the occurrence of a given event. Dembski makes the point that in his application of the term complexity, it also describes a form of probability. He suggests a relationship between complexity and probability:

Complexity and probability therefore vary inversely: the greater the complexity, the smaller the probability. If yes is the answer, the event is specified its cause is best explained in terms of design. For example, producing a molecule like DNA, with a specific base sequence, from a random pool of nucleotides is a complex event and therefore happens by chance. If no is the answer to this question, the event is not specified and thus its cause is best explained in terms of design. For example, a Shakespearean sonnet is both complex and specified.

Thus increasing complexity can be equated with decreasing probability, so that highly complex and specified events become increasingly improbable. Evolutionists who have serious objections to the design movement in general insist that natural causes can explain the occurrence of a given event. Dembski makes the point that in his application of the term contingency, it also describes a form of probability. He suggests a relationship between complexity and probability:

Events therefore happen either because they were caused by other events or because they happened spontaneously. The first of these is called “necessity”, the second “chance”. For the naturalist, chance and necessity are the fundamental modes of causation. Together they constitute what are called “natural causes”. Naturalism therefore seeks to account for intelligent agency in terms of natural causes.14

Dembski makes a credible attempt at adding rigour to design arguments. In conjunction with
A further challenge to faith results from the use of ID by some as a type of proof of an intelligence behind the universe. While, as noted earlier, many ID advocates stop short of speculation on an intelligence behind the universe, many do not. If believers have attached their last vestiges of hope that God could find a place in human existence through ID theory, and that theory collapses, what then happens to faith?  

ID and Christians  
Francis Collins, author of The language of God, a devout Christian and long-time head of the Human Genome Project, is not surprised by the readiness of some evangelicals to embrace ID. He sees this as a backlash against those outspoken evolutionists who insist only on an atheistic platform with respect to evolutionary processes. However, he notes that it is hard to readily accept ID may find their faith jeopardized as ID arguments crumble:  

"Collins learns that those who do readily accept ID may find their faith jeopardized as ID arguments crumble."

If believers have attached their last vestiges of hope that God could find a place in human existence through ID theory, and that theory collapses, what then happens to faith?  

ID and scientific method  
Collins shares the concern of many thoughtful Christian scientists with respect to the scientific validity of ID. Unfortunately, ID lacks a fundamental characteristic of sound scientific theories—the ability to predict other findings and hence the ability to prompt further experimentation.  

As mentioned, ID describes complexity of existing systems and structures but does not speculate on mechanisms that bring them into existence. ID is a discipline that is based on observation, experimentation and the development of theories, which are in turn tested and modified where necessary after further testing and experimentation. Thus science may be considered a self-correcting endeavor. However, ID, while being essentially descriptive of complexity, can't really be tested in a scientifically rigorous manner. It is simply not possible to do "design experiments" as one would perform 'science experiments'.  

The core of ID, irreducible complexity, has also come under scrutiny and the irreducible complexity of many biological structures is now being questioned as science fills in the mystery surrounding them. "suggesting that ID proponents have made the mistake of confusing the unknown with the unknowable, or the unsolved with the unsolvable."  

Bacterial flagella have been used as a prime example of irreducible complexity. But considerable homology exists between the structural components of bacterial flagella and these of bacterial type-III secretory systems.  

Flagella secrete the protein flagellin in order to construct the flagellum using the same components and mechanisms by which type-III secretory systems secrete proteins (the rod and ring complex) that allow the pathogen to evade the body's defenses. Rather than being uniquely irreducibly complex, flagella may be thought of as specialised type-III secretory systems.  

For many scientists (both theist and atheist), ID's failure to offer explanations of mechanism means that it is a less than viable alternative to naturalistic evolutionary theory when it comes to explaining the origin and development of life on earth. Arguments raised by the ID movement generally tend to be from the negative. "Things are just so complex I can't imagine natural evolutionary mechanisms accounting for this". This type of reasoning comes close to a 'god of the gaps' type of argument where unknown steps in a process are ascribed to God's activity. Such positions can then become untenable if advances in scientific knowledge offer explanations. As science develops and new theories and explanations fill in the knowledge gaps, God is squeezed out of the picture. Further, many ID purists do not have a problem with concepts related to directed or theistic evolutionary processes producing complex biochemical systems that then may be analyzed for design.

Evolutionary convergence  
Evolutionary convergence is an example of how developing scientific thought may fill in the gaps in scientific knowledge and suggest an answer to ID's challenge to evolution being unable to produce complicated biological systems and structures. Paleontologist and 2005 Boyle lecturer, Simon Conway Morris has considered and further developed the concept of evolutionary convergence in considerable detail. In evolutionary terms, homology refers to the situation where a particular biochemical, anatomical or physiological feature is observed in different species with common ancestral descent. However, where the same or very similar feature is found in quite unrelated species it is regarded as evolutionary convergence. Evolutionary convergence suggests that evolutionary mechanisms seek the same solution to similar problems existing in the evolutionary eye to smell, echolocation and even intelligence.  

Morris' book Life's solution: the incredible variety of life on a lonely planet is full of detailed examples of evolutionary convergence. According to Morris, this convergence may be the result of a type of molecular programming in molecules leading to complicated biochemical structures exhibiting a tendency to combine in converging ways. For Morris, these restricted pathways of evolutionary development supplement what he sees as the insufficiency of natural selection alone. Driven by a type of molecular pre-programming, anatomical and physiological structures develop, with intelligent life as the inevitable end result. These restricted converging pathways give rise to many of the recurrent biological themes found in many diverse species. He is convinced of the  

Uncanny ability of evolution to navigate to the appropriate solution through immense hyperspaces of biological possibility.  

The anthropic principle  
It is interesting to note that Morris' views on evolutionary convergence resonate with the anthropic principle which suggests that the universe appears fine-tuned for life in terms of such diverse features as gravitational attraction, strong and weak nuclear forces, the existence of atoms, the properties of the water molecule, and the nature of the earth's atmosphere. The universe appears just the way it should in order to arrive at the development of life. For further contemplation of the anthropic principle the reader is directed to books such as The Goldilocks enigma by Paul Davies or Michael Denton's Nature's destiny: How biology reveals purpose and meaning in the universe.  

Denton, author of Evolution: A theory in crisis (a major challenge to naturalistic evolutionary processes), examines the fitness of a wide variety of essential factors for life as we know it on this planet. These factors range from the carbon atom to the very interesting idea that humans are uniquely adapted for the use of language by Denton as the essential ingredient for the development and advancement of technology. Denton suggests that given the complexity of the universe and its constituents, organic evolution would have to be the result of some kind of directed program rather than a consequence of random undirected processes. He posits that the complexity of organs such as eyes and lungs argues against current undirected Darwinian evolutionary mechanisms. Denton concludes that the entire universe, from molecules to galaxies, is uniquely tuned and perhaps programmed for one purpose, the development of carbon-based life with humankind as its eventual climax.

Collins warns that those who do readily accept ID may find their faith jeopardized as ID arguments crumble.  

In Australia there is no mention of ID in either science or religion school curricula. Furthermore, as in most other countries, senior school curricula are already bursting at the seams and there would be a significant challenge to find a place where ID might be legitimately included. Recent international developments would indicate that senior school syllabi might be well on the way to distancing themselves from including ID as any part of a formal science class in schools.
Perhaps the most controversial public debate concerning the teaching of ID in schools took place in the District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, December, 2005. A law suit was filed by parents of students against the Dover Area School District that required ninth-grade biology students to be read a statement that indicated ID offered an alternative explanation for the origin of life when compared with Darwin’s view.1 Expert witnesses in the area of science and religion, such as Professor John Haught, successfully argued that ID is not science and that advocates of ID share a kind of religious confusion with scientific ideas, and they tend together to propose that this should be wedged into the science classroom.

The court ruled against the Dover School Board on the grounds that ID was not science and cannot uncouple itself from its creatorism, and thus religious antecedents... as stated, our conclusion today is that it is unconstitutional to teach ID as an alternative to evolution in a public school science classroom.2

In the United Kingdom the interaction between science and religion is taken seriously in school science. The Science and Religion in Schools Project (funded by a John Templeton Foundation Grant) was launched in April 2002 and the first materials were published in 2006.3 A particular strength of this project is that the importance of dialogue in curriculum development is well recognized.

Any successful work in this area must involve cooperation and discussion between university experts and experienced school teachers.4

In the US science and religion is taught from primary school through to high school and curriculum materials are being well developed5; but it is noteworthy that ID does not appear to feature in the curriculum materials developed by this innovative group. Advice is offered by the Science and Religion in Schools Project with respect to the inclusion of ID in school science curriculum.

In 2007 the Department for Children, Schools and Families issued guidance on the place of creationism and intelligent design in science lessons. This was clearly in response to the concern of some in the world of science that creationism and intelligent design were being presented as scientific theories; as opposed to philosophical or theological positions in their own right. The DCSF guidance states that there is no place for teaching about intelligent design or creationism in Science but that these theories would be covered in Religious Education, Citizenship and History, with a clear emphasis on RE as the main place for such discussions.6

And further, with respect to the teaching of ID in religious education classes:

If it is not possible to present intelligent design or creationism as scientific theories in science then teachers should not present them as scientific theories in religious education.7

The experience of the international community of educationalists and scientists would suggest a higher degree of caution be exercised with respect to notions of integrating ID into school science or even religion curricula.

Conclusions

In keeping with present international trends it would be inadvisable to include ID in school science curricula on the basis that ID has been deemed to be unsound. Caution should also be exercised concerning the introduction of ID into school/religion curricula if it is being presented as a type of scientific theory.

Given the global interest in ID in recent years as a way to point an intelligence behind the universe, there may be a sense of disappointment that ID has not measured up to expectations. Yet there are other more rigorous avenues that may be explored. The anthropic principle (the fine tuning of the universe for life) may be used as a vehicle for the investigation and teaching of complex scientific phenomena to students. For example, students may be guided in a problem based learning approach when studying the fine tuning of physical and chemical constants, gravity, nuclear forces, the structure of the carbon atom, the water molecule, or the make up of the universe. All have a long history of scientific investigation and rigour, and even the study of the history of their investigation and elucidation teaches a student as much about how science developed historically as it does about the phenomenon being studied. The anthropic principle seems a much more persuasive argument for those looking for evidence of the work of an intelligent cause behind the universe.8

The next volume of TEACH will include an article discussing a form of the design argument which is more widely accepted by Christians.

Endnotes

2 The full text of this letter may be found at: http://www.science. unsw.edu.au/news/2005/Intelligent.html.
5 Ibid., Darwin’s Black box, 39.
6 Ibid., 42-44.
7 Ibid., 69-73 and 74-97.
8 Ibid., 69.
10 Ibid., 205.
11 Ibid., 203.
12 Ibid., 204.
13 Ibid., 204.
15 Ibid., 21.
20 Ibid., 139.
21 Ibid., 130.
22 Ibid., 133-134.
24 Ibid., 214.
27 Ibid., 327.
32 Ibid., 195.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., 187.
35 Ibid., 188.
38 Ward and Hancock, “Intelligent design: The bioethical challenge to Darwinian evolution” 21.
41 John Haught and Adam Shapiro, “Intelligent design: The bioethical challenge to Darwinian evolution” 21.
43 A particular use of creationism and ID in schools was the Science and Religion in Schools Project (funded by a John Templeton Foundation Grant) was launched in April 2002 and the first materials were published in 2006. 43 A particular strength of this project is that the importance of dialogue in curriculum development is well recognized.
44 The full text of this letter may be found at: http://www.science. unsw.edu.au/news/2005/Intelligent.html.
47 Ibid., 327.
Dealing with historical movies in the History and English classroom

Daniel Reynaud
Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Avondale College, NSW

Abstract
Movies based on historical events can be of value to the teacher of History and English. Unlike documentaries however, they are not used as much as they might be in the History classroom, because as essentially fictional texts, they pose problems of interpretation for the historian. Given a correct understanding of how history and cinema interact, and how the cinema differs as a historical source from conventional records, the History teacher can make the most of movies as texts that reveal so much what happened in history, but rather the importance of the event to later generations. Senior English teachers, who face the challenge of teaching the nature of representation in various texts, could also find a better understanding of history and cinema useful. Movies are sources that allow the student to observe issues of bias, representation, and interpretation, and they have the added potential advantage of being texts that are intrinsically interesting to students.

Introduction
Historical documentaries are common in the History classroom, an under-used potential resource is movies based on historical events. Senior English teachers have a slightly different challenge in meeting syllabus needs on the nature of texts in different genres and media, especially in the Advanced course, section C, Representation and Text. Historical movies have the advantage of offering a compelling narrative which can engage the interest of young History and English students in ways that written texts or conventional pedagogic methods might not. However, historical movies present a number of issues which must be understood and addressed before their benefit can be maximised in the classroom. The primary concern of movie makers is the box-office; their films must work as cinematic entertainment first, to which the demands of history must be subjected, or run the risk of producing a worthy but dull movie. Cinema itself has particular codes and generic limitations which shape the nature of its historical dialectic. Despite the problems, historical movies can be a very rich resource for History and English teachers who know how to use them. To make the most of historical films, we need to consider the relationships between three areas: history, fiction, and film.

History and fiction
David Lowenthal's book The past is a foreign country contains the best concise coverage of the issues of history and fiction. In the chapter Knowing the past, he argues that the past is alien—the foreign country of his metaphors. Both the historian and the fiction writer give us access to the past by making its foreignness familiar, by explaining it in terms of the present, and by giving it structure and shape. Contrary to the claims of some historians, who set themselves up as telling the truth, their work can never simply record the past; it always provides a construct of the significance of the past. This involves a process of selection of evidence and a weighing of value, as such it always involves interpretation. This reality has not stopped the writer's own perspectives, ideology and inherent biases. Historians undertake a selective shaping, clarifying, tidying and elucidating in order to provide a coherent knowledge of the past. This is always done through hindsight, through giving the past a structure and significance which was not there when the events were happening. Inevitably, the historian orders the past according to the framework of the present. Thus each age writes history according to its own concerns. This of course removes the notion that history is an absolutely true record of the past. It does, however, give some light on the past, and approximates the truth.

The debate between historians over the nature of history has continued, especially as post-modern approaches have shaken the certainty that perhaps influenced older writers. Some scholars have emphasised how the boundaries between history and fiction have been far less distinct than historians might have acknowledged in the past. Hayden White, for example, argues that history is essentially the same as fiction through history's use of genre types

and narrative frames which impose on history a fictive ordinariness, and purposelessness absent in the events themselves. Others, like Noel Carroll, have countered White by insisting that while historians select and shape using literary conventions, their work is different from the creation of fiction. Because of the need for historians to remain faithful to standards of external and (relatively) objective evidence that they uphold, their work is still distinct from that of fiction writers who set themselves up as telling the truth. Fiction writers are free to invent or ignore characters, motives, and events as best suits their purpose. Novelists may recreate the past without the obligation to be fair or objective. This subjectivity allows fiction to explore elements of the past that a historian cannot properly contemplate—the hidden and unrecorded, particularly of motive and character. Arguably, the historical novelist offers more in some respects than the historian, because the novel brings the past to life. Historians may dispute the implication that they do not bring the past to life, but they must concede that they work within tighter constraints than novelists, for whom invention is a legitimate resource.

Like history, written and cinematic historical fiction speaks to the present, but uses the past to address contemporary issues. There are four motives for moving present issues into the past. The first is to use the past to authenticate authority in the present, in much the same way as successive recent Australian Prime Ministers Paul Keating and John Howard have evoked the Anzac Legend to legitimise their actions or policies. The second is more subtle, exposing unacceptable present truths through the safety valve of a setting in the past. The third is an escape into nostalgia, seeking a lost golden age, again in the manner of Howard evoking Australian values that he feared new generations might be losing, and the fourth is the search for origins to discover the foundations of a civilisation or culture, as with many of the brashly nationalistic Australian period films of the 1980s. These motives imply an engagement between the novel or the movie and national myths, with the text acting either to affirm or deny the validity of the myths.

As documents addressed to the present, historical fiction and documentary film are indicators of what a nation's culture and values for their own times. Hence a study of historical fiction film offers useful insights into the myopic significance of those events for the culture that upholds them. As we have seen, the relationship between history and fiction is often problematic. Many works of historical fiction and film inhabit a grey area between the discipline of historians and the art form of expression of fiction, a territory that Lowenthal terms “fiction”. He describes it as a compromise that claims the virtues of both without accepting the limitations of neither. He notes the tendency for television history to indulge in this, claiming adherence to the facts while freely inventing, adding perceptively that “visual images are more convincing than written accounts”. The power of fiction lies particularly in the popular belief that history is the facts, the objective truth, the reality of the past. By imitating history's fidelity to detail and authenticity, fiction is able to pass off its inventions and ideological stances as truth.

Truth, realism and film
Film and television present a particular difficulty in this area, because of cinema's habitual imitation of reality. In the first instance, the camera mimics human eyesight by recording events in a way that is similar to how we see them in real life. The camera does this by its very nature, as opposed to painting for instance, where the artist is not bound to record a literal image of the subject. The authenticity of film is further heightened by the use of realist cinema codes such as realistic sets and costumes, chronological time, and editing techniques, which cloak the constructed nature of film in a naturalistic disguise. This reality is so persuasive that some war journalists, for example, have measured the reality of actual combat by how closely it corresponded to what they had seen in movies. Further, film may appear real because it offers an emotional world that viewers can relate to. Even melodramatic soap operas or non-naturalistic cartoons may be rated realistic by viewers who recognise their own personal conflicts in the heightened drama of television. The problem is that films often appear as unmediated reflections of the truth, whereas in fact they always construct a truth. Contrary to popular belief, the camera always lies. It always takes a point of view, and influences through what it reveals or leaves out of the frame. Lighting, camera angle, shot size, film stock and other technical aspects further add bias to the apparently objective image. To make the most of historical movies, we need to identify what version of reality they construct, and by what means filmmakers authenticate that reality.

Historical films go one step further in identifying themselves as truthful. Fiction films characteristically anchor themselves to some referent, some cultural
code such as genre which allows us quick access to the general characteristics of the western, for example its iconic snap-shot shooting heroes, are widely recognised, regardless of their lack of correlation with reality, but few, if any, consider the correlation with reality.

The history film, however, uses a referent of a different nature. By borrowing the trappings of filmmaking must ensure that their events generally known to have happened in the past, historical films use as their referent something external to the creative processes, something that existed before the movie. Therefore audiences tend to give an objectivity and actuality that genre codes cannot match. The existence of genre codes depends entirely on the literary and cinematic fictions of writers and filmmakers, but the past exists as cultural and historical capital, regardless of and independent of the arts (although it survives in popular consciousness through the mediation of historians and artists), and this independence lends considerable authenticity and realism to the historical film.

The nature of documentary films helps us understand the issue of referents more clearly. Bill Nichols argues that the external referent separates fiction from documentary, saying that the fiction film bears a mimetic resemblance to reality, whereas the documentary is perceived more as a replica than a likeness. “Instead of a world, we are offered access to the world.” He states that the filming of a death in a documentary means that an actual death took place; in fact not just a death, but the death that was portrayed. A death in a fiction film, however, indicates an event that has only occurred within the discourse of the film. In making a distinction between the metaphor of fiction and the indexical nature of documentary, Nichols quotes Jerry Kuelav as saying:

At the heart of documentaries lies truth claims, and these claims are based on arguments and evidence. Did Khrushchev ever lose his temper in public? If so, him banging his shoe on the desk at the U.N. may not convince everyone; film of Telly Savalas wearing the Order of Lenin and banging a desk on the set at Universal City will convince no-one.2

This is only partly true, for what needs to be remembered is that Telly Savalas, while not the index of truth, still bears a closer relationship to the historical world than another fiction film which might have been produced by a Soviet President that never occurred. Because Khrushchev actually banged his shoe, Savalas’ performance has greater historical potential than the fictional character. Savalas is a much stronger signifier of the actual than the metaphors of most fiction films, which is what makes historical films so powerful and persuasive as history. So, in using movies in the classroom, we need to reach the largest possible number of students used to authenticate their view of history.

Hence, historical fiction films blur the distinction between fact and metaphor to varying degrees, but the apparent truthfulness of a film depends to a large extent on the relationship it constructs between the historical world and its story. Historical dramas range across a spectrum from factual to fictional, and the film can offer multiple readings of a single event by showing it through the eyes of various witnesses, a technique which is growing in popularity in fictional film, but is yet to have a big impact on historical movie making. Perhaps its best recent incarnation is in the two films of Clint Eastwood, Flags of our fathers (2006) and Letters from Iwo Jima (2006), which offer empathetic American and Japanese perspectives on the battle for the island in 1945.

Some historians are annoyed at the simplifications of film history, but this overdoes the fact that the various media have different strengths and weaknesses in communication. The moving image is relatively weak in conveying abstract ideas, such as class conflict, but can express with great emotional power a particular instance of that conflict through a narrative revolving around individual characters. Hence film’s tendency is always towards the particular, rather than the general. The manner in which films generalise is through the portrayal of individuals who act as representative types already familiar to the audience, usually drawn from well-known genres or national mythology. These particular characters, through their mythic associations, implicitly embody a generalisation. So, when using historical movies, we need to identify the use of types, and their mythological origin, and what generalisations they stand for.

Another problem for historians is what is perceived as the errors that films perpetrate. As we have observed, the very nature of film means that it must be read as fact. Historians trained in the written word constantly evaluate what is said and are unfairly critical. Will be repelled, not informed. The consequences of this may be quite sobering to an academician: it is that whatever the writer wishes to say ought to be said in the equivalent of a fifteen-minute lecture. There is no way around this. If he tries to say more his audiences will understand less.3

Film’s principal mode of communication is through its images; historians trained in the written word constantly evaluate what is said and are unfairly critical. Furthermore, the high cost of film production means that filmmakers must ensure that their products do not stray too far from the facts. Filmmakers make what they think will sell, and often draw their subject matter and their perspectives from popular literature. If this is at the expense of thorough research and historical accuracy, then so be it. In the end it is the producer who bears responsibility for the failure of the film; historians rarely face up to the consequences of film and television. It is true that historians often have to accommodate the financial considerations of book publishers, but historical works can be published economically, often with grants of a few thousand dollars, to specialised audiences in a way that is virtually impossible for the cinema. Even fiction can be published relatively cheaply in comparison to the multi-million dollar budgets of the average movie.

Besides, cinematic histories are not about conveying information but about sharing some of the passion and enthusiasm of the producer for the subject. Movies are not intended as precise historical documents, and for historians to worry about ‘mistakes’ is a mistake itself. Often a factual error is deliberately used to create an appropriate mood, as happened in the 1969 movie The Battle of Britain, where a Luftwaffe officer gives a Nazi salute instead of a military one. The effect transformed an otherwise dull scene by highlighting conflicting ideologies, but famed German ace and historical advisor General Adolf Galland stormed off the set in protest at the travesty of the facts. In any case historical films should not be watched for the history they purport to show, but for what they can tell us about the values of the society that made and watched them.

The problem of historical accuracy still exists, however, for while teachers may recognise the tenuous relationships between history, film, and truth, students are often not so discriminating. As we have seen, filmmakers adopt many strategies to make their films more credible, and when these are overtly or implicitly given the label of ‘truth’ or ‘true story’, they are often read as being true in every respect. A university tutor commented to the author about how difficult it was to get her first year students to read about the Gallipoli campaign—they felt they already knew the facts because they had seen Peter Weir’s film Gallipoli.

Similarly, distinguished journalist Sir Simon Jenkins took issue with four popular historical films of the late 1980s and early 1990s, Shadowlands. In the name of the Father, JFK, and Schindler’s list, for he felt that only dressing the historical figures as they were in life and dressing the films as films, and acknowledged the right of filmmakers to invent, and the power of ‘ falsity to tell [its] own sort of truth’, but deprived the way...
in which “the film business should no longer be able to tell a lie from a truth”. His argument was with filmmakers who say, as the director of the name of the Father, Jim Sheridan, did, “I can’t draw conclusions, I can only put the facts as I know them”. Jenkins added: “But he puts facts that he knows to be untrue”, then listed the distortions the film made. His opposition was not to filmmakers distorting, but to those who then insisted that their films were still the truth, rather than acknowledging them to be fictional re-presentations of historical events. His argument was that, by passing off distortions and outright inventions as reality, these filmmakers used the same techniques they so often deplored in the villains of their films—using lies for political and personal advantage. This is a valid point. Films that deal with factual topics are dishonest if they adopt strategies that conceal their constructed nature and fictitious elements. It is no point arguing the right of literary constructs to manipulate and invent if they have passed themselves off in the guise, not of fiction, but of truth, really and fact. There is, of course, no problem with films taking an ideological stance; in fact, not only is it virtually unavoidable, it is one of the key functions of fiction to raise moral, ethical and philosophical issues. The problem is when filmmakers and promoters insist on the objectivity of their portrayal, that their philosophy and morals are the only truth on the subject. In using historical films in a teaching context, we need to ask what claims to truthfulness they make, and how and how these claims are received by their audiences.

Conclusion
In effect, the most valuable use of historical movies is not so much as documents about the events, but as documents about the significance of the events for the culture that made the films. American movies about the Civil War or the Vietnam War may be poor sources of fact and chronology, but they are fascinating testaments to the attitudes of Americans towards those conflicts at the time the films were made. Similarly, films about the convict era or Gallipoli reveal more about why these events are important to Australians than they may tell us about the actual period. The teacher of History or English will ask students to consider the attitude of a movie to its subject. What interpretation does it offer of the event? How does it connect the issues of the past with current concerns? Older historical movies often reveal shifts in social attitudes. Compare for example the representations of gender roles and ethnic minorities in earlier films. They offer revealing evidence about historical change. Movies also offer interpretations about the emotional significance of events, which history frequently lacks the evidence to discuss. Films invite us to ask: How did this event affect people emotionally? Most of all, discerning teachers can use movies to motivate students to interrogate the evidence, to question why a particular representation emerged. As part of the syllabus requires students to investigate issues of bias and representation, and question the nature of evidence, films can be a stimulating way of studying potentially dull historiography and textuality. Oh, and one last word: as documents, movies can also be a lot of fun.

Endnotes
5 Lowenthal, 229-231.
7 Nichols, 115-116.

References
Service learning in India

Jason Hinze
Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Avondale College, NSW

Introduction
I have always enjoyed trying to do two things at once. Watching TV while ironing, talking on the phone while driving (hands free of course), and eating breakfast while reading are three recommended combinations. It feels great to be able to combine two tasks that compliment each other. In fact, at times, you would be considered a little strange if you were to do one task without the other. Ironing, by itself, is mundane, using your mobile in a stationary position is contradictory, and I am yet to see anyone reading the Weet-bix packet at a time other than during breakfast. Some things are meant to be done together. As we are discovering at Avondale College, ‘learning to teach’ and ‘service learning’ is another such pairing.

“Service-Learning is often defined as an approach to teaching and learning in which service and learning are blended in a way that both occur and are enriched by the other” (Jeffrey, Anderson & Kevin, 2001). For the past two years a group of pre-service teachers studying at Avondale College have chosen to complete one of their practicum requirements in schools in India. This option forms part of a new Service-Learning initiative offered in the Faculty of Education. This initiative gives education students the opportunity to gain practical teaching experience in a school where their skills, educational background, and willingness to serve are appreciated.

On June 21, 2008, a group of nineteen people, seventeen students and two lecturers, boarded a plane from Sydney to Calcutta, then travelled to the remote town of Both Gaya in northern India. The plan was to place the pre-service teachers in one of two schools that had been set up for poor and orphaned children who would otherwise have no access to education. The local teachers in the schools had no training and little teaching experience. Having the pre-service teachers work alongside the local teachers created an exciting learning opportunity for all involved. Not only were the school students exposed to new ways of learning but the pre-service teachers and local teachers learned about creating a learning environment and facilitating learning. There is no doubt in my mind that we were able to have an impact on the schools and community we went to serve. Presently, the two schools have a combined enrolment of over two hundred students. Without the support of the Avondale College pre-service teacher groups, the schools would most likely be closed. The pre-service teachers (this is the second year of this project) have been able to serve this community by going there to offer practical assistance and support; in addition, they’ve also raised money to purchase resources for the schools. In the two years that I have been leading this project, I have seen the schools change, the teachers develop and most importantly the school children grow as a direct result of the time and support that the pre-service teachers have provided.

Despite the fact that the impact on the local school and community was beyond what was expected or even hoped for, this has not been the focus of the memories shared by the pre-service teachers, their students, and communities. The plan was to place the pre-service teachers in one of two schools that had been set up for poor and orphaned children who would otherwise have no access to education. The local teachers in the schools had no training and little teaching experience. Having the pre-service teachers work alongside the local teachers created an exciting learning opportunity for all involved. Not only were the school students exposed to new ways of learning but the pre-service teachers and local teachers learned about creating a learning environment and facilitating learning.

To our trip to India revealed the need that exists in the world today and, more importantly, the responsibility we have to answer that need.” (Sandra Bastos)

We learnt about the value of education
“I will never forget how grateful and eager to learn these kids were. It made me realize the great need for education in the world. The world needs help.” (Krystle Fisher)

“Today was amazing, I left school feeling like I had accomplished something great!” (Ashleigh Bell)

“Even through they tell you all your life how valuable education is, you never really understand this until India. Knowledge and education is such a revered and treasured commodity there. Students are just bursting to know more, to learn about the world and to become something better. I felt so privileged to be able to share with them the knowledge I have, to inspire them to learn more, to show them a God who cares.” (Jess McNeill)

“Seeing a school with so little, where the students want so much to be helped, reminds me of the value of education. We take this gift for granted every day of our lives.” (Elsye Taylor)

We learnt about teaching effectively
“For me it was exciting to see how the kids’ enthusiasm to learn grew and grew the more they were exposed to knowledge and strategies. It was so rewarding and it reminded me what being a teacher is all about … I still can’t believe they thrashed us in cricket.” (Kristin Neerincx)

“I learnt today that teaching can not happen without trust.” (Jessica Merchant)

“No day so far has followed the exact plan I mapped out; however, it has emphasised the importance of being flexible.” (Kaylee Robbie)

“I realised that if I just have fun, they learn so much better. Obviously we’ve been told this over and over but I saw it in action today.” (Jessica Merchant)

“I have learnt with that little patience, creativity and love anybody can learn.” (Emma Keegan)

“Today seemed extra challenging for some reason. The kids seemed to be really restless and rowdy. I learnt, through the struggles of using a translator, that good teaching is not just content, it’s more about how it is delivered.” (Kaylee Robbie)

“I learnt the importance of allowing the children to show their work to others. It gives a sense of accomplishment to the students.” (Josh Smith)

“I’m finding the lack of resources and computer access frustrating but it is making me so much more appreciative of the privileges we have in Australia.”

While I am struggling a little bit now with planning my lessons, this experience will make me more creative and resourceful as a teacher.” (Kaylee Robbie)

“Yesterday we had the students stick craft materials onto the shape of numbers. Today we integrated Mathematics into Physical Education. The kids appeared to really enjoy the classes and were able to learn in a fun way. It really is well. We are getting better at integrating a range of different subjects into one lesson.” (Patrice Pate)

We learnt about teaching students from a different culture
“This trip has helped me understand more of Indian life and culture and how different other cultures can be. This will make me more culturally aware and accepting in my own classroom.” (Kaylee Robbie)

“We are all equal — no matter who we are or where we live or what we do.” (Ashleigh Bell)

We learnt about the value of service
“Seeing all the poverty in Calcutta was a really big eye opener for me. When I teach back home I will be really intentional about making sure my students are aware of how fortunate they are. I would also like to instil in my students the value of service and selflessness so that my students can make a difference in the world that we live in.” (Kaylee Robbie)

We learnt about how to love
“Even through their poverty, they showed such kindness and love and were the highlight of my trip.” (Andy Matthes)

“Bright orange garlands were thrown around our necks and all the children stood around, singing a welcome song. For the last two hours, I was showered in petals, my skin touched and pulled and children climbed all over me. It was a truly humbling experience.” (Mikaela Prout)

For the first 17 years in Calcutta, Mother Teresa worked as a Geography teacher and then as a Principal at Saint Mary’s High School. Like all great teachers, she had the ability to combine the art of teaching with the act of service. From my experience with this project, learning to serve is an integral part of effective teaching and I can think of no better tool for creating effective teachers than giving them the opportunity to teach, serve and learn all at the same time.

This sentiment was summed up by Mikaela Prout, one of the pre-service teachers, when she wrote, “India is amazing, the teaching experience was worthwhile and personally, it has changed my life!”

Reference
Potential plus
Why orphans matter to teachers and their students

Brad Watson
Lecturer, International Development Studies, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Avondale College, NSW

Introduction
What can Australian and New Zealand school students and teachers learn from a relationship with a small orphanage in rural Cambodia? Would it be inspiring and fascinating or tragic and depressing? Would students be interested and engaged or would it make extra work for busy educators already overwhelmed with the realities of classroom management, curriculum and extra-curricular activities? These are questions I recently asked staff in five schools and the answers were surprising. Unanimously, without hesitation, they indicated that their schools had already adopted an orphanage, were considering doing so or would welcome the opportunity!

Unfortunately, teachers may not realise the magnitude or urgency of the problem of orphan care. By the year 2010 it is estimated that South Africa alone will have an orphan population largely due to HIV and AIDS of approximately two million.1 In Sub-Saharan Africa double orphans are disproportionately disadvantaged in terms of school attendance, nutrition, mental health, and personal security and mental health. HIV orphaned children experience significantly more stigma, and may experience more depression, anxiety, post-traumatic reactions and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms than other orphans.2

The Children on the brink report3 is highly critical of institutional orphan care models and these criticisms should be considered when entering into sister-school arrangements between Australian schools and orphanages in other countries. The report argues that: traditional residential institutions usually have too few caregivers; children are more likely to miss out on affection, attention and social connection; children are more likely to be segregated by age and sex; and that institutional life tends to promote dependency rather than autonomy.

Of concern to teachers will be criticisms in the report above that for orphans in institutional care, transition away from institutional life can be difficult; social and cultural skills may be undeveloped; children may be isolated from important social security nets; long-term vulnerability of children may increase; and children may lose access to family land and resources. In addition, the cost of care per child is substantially higher than family care, consuming resources that could be used for many more vulnerable children in less formal models.

Given the overwhelmingly negative perception of institutional care models for orphans, governments and aid organisations have become more intentional in supporting models that are perceived to avoid the pitfalls listed above. Schools wanting to offer support to orphans should do so too. International Children’s Care (ICC) Australia, is a small, Christian child sponsorship NGO based in Victoria and affiliated with ICC International. Their innovative ICC Village model of orphan care is based on groupings of family homes in which house parents (usually a married couple) model family life to a maximum of twelve children of mixed age and sex, on a campus with up to ten homes. ICC Australia promotes a broader development approach in which their homes and centres increasingly act as a hub for community development activities (a lighthouse). Only as a last resort—when avenues for family support, foster care and community placement have been exhausted—will a child enter ICC Children’s Homes. Dean Beveridge, the CEO, writes “The emphasis is to keep the child in the highest level of care.”

Phillip Lodge, a teacher at Chairo Christian School in Victoria, is enthusiastic about his school’s ongoing sister-school relationship with an ICC orphanage in Cambodia and is also a board member of ICC Australia. Having personally volunteered at the school with his wife and children (teaching English), he passionately supports fundraising and points to the success of ‘Middle-Fest’ an annual small business event run by students from which a share of profits are used to provide playground equipment for orphans. Amongst other benefits, he notes that his own teaching has been enriched, student self-esteem and community spirit have been generated, and students have been inspired by the orphan children and their stories of survival and hope. A regular newsletter is circulated to parents and Phillip points out that ‘poverty is also featured in integrated thematic units of study in the 5-6 and 7-8 courses, in Bible, English and Humanities’.

Interview
The following transcript consists of extracts from an interview with Merilyn Beveridge, International Program Manager for ICC Australia in the Asia Region. Merilyn is especially pleased with the sister school arrangement with Chairo and hopes other schools will participate in similar exchanges.

Given the stringent criticism of institutional models of orphan care, and ICC’s classification as an institutional model, it was appropriate to ask the difference and about cost-effectiveness, sustainability and philosophical positioning.

Brad: Merilyn, you have been involved with ICC since it was established in Asia in 1991. Given the strong criticism that exists of traditional orphan care models, what makes ICC’s orphan care model unusual?

Merilyn: That’s valid. We believe that children need care in a family environment so we don’t place children in impersonal dormitories. Instead, as a lighthouse. Only as a last resort—when avenues for family support, foster care and community placement have been exhausted—will a child enter ICC Children’s Homes. Dean Beveridge, the CEO, writes “The emphasis is to keep the child in the highest level of care.”

Brad: There has been a lot of doubt about traditional orphanage and orphan care models in recent decades. Do children miss out on affection, attention and social connectedness if they are placed in a traditional orphanage?

Merilyn: Yes, that’s valid. We believe that children need care in a family environment so we don’t place children in impersonal dormitories. Instead, as a lighthouse. Only as a last resort—when avenues for family support, foster care and community placement have been exhausted—will a child enter ICC Children’s Homes. Dean Beveridge, the CEO, writes “The emphasis is to keep the child in the highest level of care.”

Brad: A common criticism is that institutional care can create dependency, making it very difficult for some children to reintegrate into society when they leave.

Merilyn: Yes, that’s valid. We believe that children need care in a family environment so we don’t place children in impersonal dormitories. Instead, as a lighthouse. Only as a last resort—when avenues for family support, foster care and community placement have been exhausted—will a child enter ICC Children’s Homes. Dean Beveridge, the CEO, writes “The emphasis is to keep the child in the highest level of care.”

Brad: It is said that one weakness of institutional care is that it isolates children from important social security nets. How do you respond to that?

Merilyn: That can be true. In our ICC Australia program we ensure that the children are engaged in activities associated with the wider community. We also endeavour to keep them connected to their home communities wherever possible. However, we need

“Teachers may not realise the magnitude or urgency of the problem of orphan care”

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true education”. While some might contest the character, I would agree with Lady Nancy Astor who once said “Real education should educate us out of self into something far better.” A busy teacher, it provides the sort of richness for which the best education is known.

Brad: What benefits do you see in sister school programs where students and teachers form a relationship with teachers and orphans in a developing country? Is that something you would like to see more of? For example, I was recently talking to Leyton Heise, Chaplain at Avondale Schools. He mentioned an Avondale Schools initiative to adopt an orphanage in Cambodia and get year 12 students to visit for a life-changing service experience instead of flying to the Gold Coast for a holiday or schoolies week after the HSC.

Merilyn: Yes, a sister-school relationship can be a good thing, especially for your students. There does need to be some training and negotiating if students visit orphans, so they are not exploited. What we do is not cheap but the quality of care is very high. We often operate elementary schools on the site to ensure the children have added support in gaining good foundations in education. They also have access to a farm and a library and can participate in the traditional training aspects, which add to the cost.

Brad: Is the cost justified when you could help so many more children in community care programs?

Merilyn: We think so. But there is also a pragmatic consideration. Our donors expect high levels of care and we can provide that in the ICC Villages. More and more students and staff are aware of the pitfalls of institutional care. Remember that the benefits all rule. Having said that, our house parents and students need to know that impacting on one life is enough. Martin Luther King famously said “Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education”. While some might contest the idea that a teacher and wondering if service does build character, I would agree with Lady Nancy Astor who once said “Real education should educate us out of self into something far finer; into a selflessness which links us with all humanity.”

Linking a school to an orphanage in a developing country is one way of linking students, unsustainably, to the needs of humanity. Although it represents extra work for a busy teacher, it provides the sort of richness for which the best education is known. 

Endnotes:
1 Desmond and Gow, 2001, p.5
2 UNICEF et al., 2004, p.3
3 Ibid.
5 IRIN Special Report, 2008.
6 Subbarao and Coury, 2004, p.39
8 Lodge, 15.09.2008, personal email.
9 Ibid.

References:
“What am I doing here?”
Teachers share their passion and vision for teaching

Linda Versteynen
Teacher Wellington Adventist Primary, NZ

10 reasons I teach...
1. Because I love it
2. To make a difference in their lives
3. To show them what Jesus is like
4. Because God loves children
5. Because it gives me an opportunity to keep them growing towards Jesus
6. Because I’m passionate about children’s learning, and seeing them progress
7. Because children are fun, open, transparent and real
8. Because they teach me about life
9. Because it is rewarding
10. Because they are a mirror and quickly show me my character.

This year God has shown me new things about what it means to be a teacher. After working in state schools for the last seven years, I’ve seen a wide range of teaching styles and techniques and have grown in ways I never thought I would, mentally, spiritually and professionally. But the thing missing was Jesus! Now that I teach in a Christian school I can talk about Him as much as I want. I love how their faces light up when we do—the spontaneous comments they make and their simple truths about Him.

The children teach me so much about what it means to know God and be connected to Him. I pray that my teaching will always reflect God’s love in action and words. My main objective for teaching now is to draw children close to the love of God, to teach them He is real and powerful and that He cares for each of them. I praise God that my motives for teaching have changed—that it’s not just about ploughing through curriculum and never-ending assessments.

I am pleased to say that the reason I’m at Wellington Adventist School is because of Jesus. I consider it a privilege and a huge responsibility to teach His kids. May there be less of self in my room and more of Him. I seek answers, wisdom, knowledge and strength from God so I can do the enormous task put before me. It is only by His grace and saving power that I live. May my life, teaching and whole character be patterned on the Master teacher, Jesus Christ.

I commit every plan, conversation, smile resource, meeting, interview, song, drawing and dance into His hands. May my teaching be effective, authentic, relational and thoughtful of Jesus.

Moments that make it all worthwhile...
1. When they say powerful and spiritually discriminating truths about God
2. When they get what you are teaching and are motivated to share what they know with others
3. When they teach other children
4. When they laugh at themselves
5. When they get excited about what they have learned
6. When you see progress
7. When they hug you and say ‘I love you’.

Angelia Reynolds
Teacher, Balmoral Adventist School, NZ

I don’t remember why she asked the question—perhaps her lecturer had set it as an exercise for her first practicum or maybe she herself was curious. Any way, there it was, ‘What ten qualities should a great teacher possess?’

I had never made such a list before, so on a summer’s evening, I took some time to reflect on those qualities that I felt would be essential for a teacher to be and to practice.

My ten qualities of a great teacher
1. A deep, living relationship with the Master teacher—Jesus
2. A genuine love for her students
3. A passion for her work
4. An eye set on the ‘big picture’—kids for life
5. A desire to constantly improve herself as a professional
6. An open, honest and teachable spirit
7. Creative flair
8. Orderliness
9. A desire for personal excellence from herself and her students
10. A beautiful smile—on the lips and in the eyes.

What do you think? How does this list compare with your own? What would you change? Our lists will always be unique to each one of us. The qualities you choose for your own list will be benchmarks for you to work towards, ten points to ponder and reflect on. These goals will help you keep your head above the curriculum-driven frenzy that can, at times, eat us all alive.

I find teaching a hugely exciting and demanding mission; it keeps me growing exponentially as a professional and as a person. Why not grab a pen and paper now and in the quietness of your classroom, create your own list. Go on. It will be worth it.

Janese Cameron
Teacher, Palmerston North Adventist School, NZ

What inspires me
Knowing I am an incredibly valuable masterpiece because God created me that way, blows me away. It is His grace that makes me priceless.

He gives me the passion to go to school each day. His willingness to work through me (a broken vessel) amazes me. I can only try to do my best and let Him do the rest.

As a teacher, I endeavour to bring joy into my classroom by using humour, having fun times with my class and allowing the children to pray for each other every day. Thus, we are creating ‘golden moments’ to be remembered forever.

It inspires and motivates me to see the gains made by students who have struggled with their learning—I love those magic moments when they ‘get it’! The huge things students are special too. As they run to embrace me, I can’t help think of the children running to be with Jesus. My prayer is that they get to meet Him and see Him through my eyes.

Kevin Petrie
Principal, Hamilton Adventist Primary, NZ

The secret of success
There are numerous things for which we require constant reminders. In our household you’ll find teenagers receiving verbal refreshers to brush teeth or take a shower. I suspect we adults are no better. God Himself patiently reminds us of lessons He intended us to learn eons ago.

A little while back, my year 7-8 class became involved in discussing ‘human ways’ vs. ‘God’s ways’. The students were given a number of scriptural scenarios, then asked to provide common sense, logical, ‘human solutions’. For example: An axe head falls into the water. The students were adamant that, given long enough, they could have found it. How about the pot of poisoned stew? Well throw it away, of course! As for the well with bitter water—dig a new one.

Jokes were often repeated to highlight that God’s ways are often not the human ways. For example, the parable of the sower. The parable is about human ways of sowing a field. God’s ways are often different from what humans think will happen. But the message is the same: He is the One who brings forth the harvest in His own time.

Consider it a privilege and a huge responsibility to teach His kids.
Contribute to a world view that is positive and responsive. It is a great sourcebook about having high standards, aiming for excellence and making education relevant and exciting. The Essential 55 probably should be compulsory reading for all those entering parliament!

The essential 55 rules begin with:

When responding to any adult, you must answer by saying “Yes ma’am” or “No sir.” Just nodding your head or saying any other form of yes or no is not acceptable. (Rule 1)

“Obvious!” you say? Yes, of course, but how often is this rule actually articulated in classrooms, particularly within the middle school years?

Rule 42:

When we return from a trip, you will shake my hand as well as the hand of every chaperone. You will thank us for taking the time to take you on the trip, and you will let us know that you appreciate having the opportunity to go. I am not concerned with being thanked; I am concerned with teaching you that it is appropriate to show appreciation when someone else has gone out of his or her way to help you.

Yes, the 55 rules are commonsense and basic, but, if consistently applied, they have the capacity to transform school communities. The Essential 55 are timely because...
Reflections, Impressions & Experiences

Blog of a beginning teacher
Braden Blyde
Secondary english teacher, Prescott College, SA

She was looking for a job, and I, being the supportive husband was serving as research assistant. We searched hard through the seemingly ever-shrinking font; our finger tips becoming stained with the black ink of fruitless labour.

To be honest, my mind had been wandering for quite a time. I'd been thinking about school again. Sunday morning, cup of tea and steaming toast in hand and my mind was still trapped in the classroom.

The job ads had me cornered. They screamed at me. They interrogated me, “How are your students being prepared for these opportunities? What are you doing that will get them into these roles?”

I had no comeback. “We read novels” or “I teach them how to spell and how to construct sentences” just didn't seem to cut it.

While she continued to search for the perfect position, I began philosophising about job ads and teaching. I had to get honest about myself, my classroom practice and even my profession.

We can't teach all the specifics these jobs require—not even the fundamentals. There is not time in the day, or space in the curriculum. There are too many niche markets to even attempt it. Instead we search for skills and knowledge that are broadly applicable. “We are generalised instructors”, I concluded. “We work to till the soil, to prepare it for the seed planters and waterers of university lecturers and inspired mentors.” This realisation made me feel good—my work was essential in preparing students to tackle these bold ‘position vacant’ headlines. I was suddenly warmed, but it could have been from the hug I had received as she passed by.

I could hear the whispers of the tabloid pages, but there were more discoveries to be made this Sunday morning. I returned to the job ads and looked harder, looked closer, looking for my influence, my answer to these concise ads.

As I looked I came to another realisation. Most of these ads weren't calling for knowledge or specific skills, but attitudes, habits and character. It's not what a potential employee has in their tool bag that counts, but who the tool bag is wrapped around.

Statements such as, “willing to take on a challenge”, “works co-operatively in a diverse team environment”, “able to work unsupervised” and “has an eye for detail” filled each section from Accounting to Sales.

Again I was taunted by the pages in front of me. “What are you doing to build these traits in your students? How is your study of Shakespeare, your explanation of onomatopoeia, your 1000 word essay due in two weeks building great, influential employees?”

I savoured the warmth of my second cup of Bushels as I thought. In staffroom discussions we often commend (or lament the lack of) commitment, resourcefulness and drive of students. But how much time is spent explicitly, or at least intentionally, teaching these values and habits?

If this is what employers are looking for in candidates, am I doing all I can to prepare my students? Are the twenty-five young minds and hearts in front of me growing into people that will be successful and happy in the work place? Or am I simply filling their tool bags without building the owner?

The thoughts were getting all too deep for the time and the day. I closed the paper and searched for a distraction, the foot long lawn caught my eye as I passed by the kitchen window (a dutiful husband will wash his own dishes after all—even on a Sunday morning) reminding me that the backyard needed some attention.

It wasn't until later that evening that the haunting questions of the morning paper returned. Was I really building my students’ future success? Was my approach to teaching focusing on the head, while neglecting the heart?

We snuggled up as the sun sank low over the steel stacks and warehouses of the Port Adelaide marshland and turned to the scriptures to close the day. Seemingly possessed by infinite wisdom (in addition to beauty), she turned to Micah 6:8 and my musings began to solidify.

She read, “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

“As a Christian teaching in a Christian school, this is the selection criteria I want my students to meet”, I thought. She smiled, somehow confirming that she had understood my silent struggles.

There was no mention of active voice, subjectivity or motifs (or titrations, factorisation or meiosis). God is seeking workers who practice justice, mercy and humility—the characteristics, attitudes and habits of success—not necessarily the skills we usually measure in schools. Funnily enough, the employers placing the ads in this morning's paper were after the same thing.

I went to bed a changed teacher. We will still read the novels and still analyze poetry, but tomorrow my classroom will be different.

She has a job now. I still read the job section every Sunday. The lawn needs mowing again.
Increase your professional performance.

Continuing professional development is no longer an option for teachers but an essential requirement. In recognition of the need for teachers to continually improve their skill set, professional teacher education bodies now mandate that teachers engage in life-long learning.

Why not consider a postgraduate degree as part of your on-going professional development? All subjects are presented in a Christian framework with flexible program delivery to meet your needs and lifestyle.

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