As a teacher, I have always believed that learning on site is a valuable experience, so I enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to join a study tour that took me to the Holy Land. This, I believed, would give me first hand experience that would enable me to bring my lessons alive. In addition, as a religious studies teacher, I have often encountered misconceptions about biblical places and events among my students, and decided to use this opportunity to do some ‘myth-busting’ of my own.

By conducting an informal survey of students from years 7–12 regarding their perceptions of archaeological issues and the Bible, I was able to confirm that there were some misconceptions. I was particularly interested in my students’ perceptions of events relating to the life of Jesus Christ. Their responses revealed the following:

- there were a number of misconceptions about events in the life of Jesus;
- students were, in some cases, quite ignorant of the culture and environment of the stories we teach in Religious Studies; and
- most students were genuinely interested in the events of the Bible.

This led me to the following conclusion: In order for students to engage with the content of a Religious Studies class in a potentially life changing manner, more attention needs to be paid to facilitating an understanding of the culture, environment and people of the Bible, so as to ensure the greatest opportunity for a heart understanding of the principles of the event. For this reason, when given the chance to participate in the study tour of Bible lands, I grasped it, keen to learn how to bridge the gap between perceptions and reality that my students demonstrated. While student responses to the survey questions demonstrated a disparity in views, knowledge and understanding in each of the areas covered in the survey, the locations of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Messiah were of particular interest to me, and were included on my study itinerary.

Very few of my students actually understood what the term ‘Biblical archaeology’ meant when they were first confronted with it. When told that Biblical archaeology is the “science of excavation, decipherment, and critical evaluation of ancient material records related to the Bible,” there was only more confusion. Consequently, I defined it as, “Digging up ancient places where it is believed that events from the Bible occurred, for the purpose of understanding the culture, people, climate, events, etc. of the past.” Students expressed a variety of views as to the relevance of archaeology, with one Year 12 student stating that, “If I wanted to do a Bible study, it would be handy to know the context in which the book was written and how the surroundings and the people who it was intended for behaved, so we could interpret a meaning that is relevant to us today.”

Before leaving on my study tour, I asked my students, “What do you know about the location of the death and burial of Jesus?” About 60% of students gave accurate responses, including facts (sealed tomb in a garden outside the city walls), names (Joseph of Arimathea, Golgotha) and the most important fact of all; “He is not buried! He is in heaven!” The other 40% of students held misconceptions which included place (crucified on Mount of Olives, buried in Gethsemane), time (died during the time of tax payment) and fallacies about the geography and nature of the tomb.

The majority of students were vague about the details but knew some of the basic information surrounding the event. The misconceptions about the place of Jesus’ death and burial held by 40% of students appeared to be generally inconsequential in the big picture. That being said, when I visited the two popular proposed sites of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem, I was confronted by the idea of ‘Does it even matter?’ There were quite a few students who strongly felt the same when asked how important it is to them to know the actual location. One student declared, “The fact is that the event occurred, and that we are saved. If we were meant to know the exact location, we would have been told in the Bible.”
What does the Bible tell us?
While the exact location of the crucifixion of Jesus is a matter of conjecture, the Bible tells us that Jesus ‘suffered outside the city gates’ (Jn 19:20, Heb 13:12), it was accessible to passers-by (Mt 27:39, Mk 15:21,29–30), and that it was observable from a distance (Mk 15:40). The location of Jesus’ burial is also debated, with Scripture showing us that Jesus was buried by someone/s He knew who was probably wealthy, namely Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (Mt 27:57–60; Mk 15:43–46; Lk 23:50–55; Jn 19:38–40), that the site was in a garden near the place of crucifixion (Jn 19:41), that He was laid in a ‘new tomb’, ‘cut out of rock’ (Mt 27:60; Mk 15:46; Lk 23:53; Jn 19:41), and a large stone was ‘rolled’ in front of the tomb (Mt 27:60; Mk 15:46; 16:4; Lk 24:2; Jn 20:1).

Our group’s visit to the two main proposed sites of Jesus’ death and burial raised as many questions as it answered, but it was still an amazing experience to ‘walk where Jesus walked’. Since the 4th century, the traditional site is where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands, which is located in the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. The Garden Tomb, which is located further north of the Old City, has been popularised predominantly by the Protestant arm of Christianity, since the 19th century. It is argued that both sites meet the criteria for the location of the tomb of Jesus.

What did I see?
Church of the Holy Sepulchre (CHS)
The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is difficult to visualise as the possible location of the death of the Saviour of the world. It is sited in “a crowded sector of the Old City of Jerusalem”5, but despite this, is a site held sacred by many, and is the preferred site of biblical scholars for the tomb of Jesus. Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Syrian, Coptic and Ethiopian faith traditions each hold and maintain a portion of the structure. Within the church, pilgrims can visit the alleged location of Jesus’ death, the stone where he was laid in preparation for burial, and the tomb where he was laid. Questions of authenticity mixed with general bewilderment as I moved through the clutter of candles, incense, altars and shrines of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. According to Robert Ousterhout, it is no wonder “General Charles R. Gordon proposed an alternative site for the Tomb of Jesus, the so-called Garden Tomb, located in a tranquil spot outside the wall of Jerusalem’s Old City.”6

The Garden Tomb
Due to scholarly dispute in the 19th century over the validity of the claim that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was the actual site of Jesus’ death, Otto Thenius suggested an alternate site for Calvary (Golgotha) in 1842, a cliff face with the apparent eyes and mouth orifices of a skull visible for the discerning eye. It was not until 1867 that a tomb was located within what was perceived to be a garden
setting, and was labelled, ‘The Garden Tomb’ of Jesus. This site has become a popular site claimed by Protestant Christians. There is now a bus station at the base of this cliff. It is clearly outside of the city walls, and was evidently within a garden of a rich landowner, with a cliff with a skull configuration. For all appearances sake, it conforms to the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ crucifixion and burial. What’s more, in the peaceful garden just north of the Damascus Gate, pilgrims pray and contemplate with more ease than the crowded Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Despite these recommendations, the age of the alleged tomb of Jesus is under question, as it does not fit the ‘new tomb’ concept of the Gospel accounts.

The interesting thing is that when I visited the Garden Tomb in July 2009, the guide did not state emphatically that it was the site. In fact, Reverend William White, who is the Honorary Secretary of The Garden Tomb Association, asserts that “We [the association] should want to emphasise that our ministry in this place is more concerned with the theology of Christ’s resurrection than with the archaeology of Aniatha’s Tomb.” The mission of the Garden Tomb Association, since 1893, has been that the “Garden Tomb be kept sacred as a quiet spot, and preserved on the one hand from desecration and on the other hand from superstitious uses”.

While I was there, I was deeply moved by the atmosphere of the setting and the lengths the caretakers had gone to ensure a deep spiritual experience for all who enter. Most poignant was participating in the service of Communion while within eyesight of the potential tomb of Jesus. The peace and solitude were overwhelming, in contrast to the mad hustle and bustle of the streets of Jerusalem just a few metres away.

It was difficult not to make comparisons between the two locations we had visited on the same day; however, my heart connected with the Garden Tomb on a deep level, while my head could see the logic of the location of the Holy Sepulchre. Jeffry Chadwick sums up my reaction to the challenge I faced on this day.

The most remarkable thing about the tomb is that it is empty. He is arisen. We need no shrine to know of the reality of the resurrection.

Conclusion
Walking in the footsteps of Jesus was an amazing experience that has enhanced my ability to bring the Bible alive in the classroom. I would recommend that all teachers participate in a study tour relevant to their own discipline. For me, this experience has highlighted that, as a teacher, I need to take into account the various stages of faith development of my students, their various learning styles and unique interests and personalities. It is with this in mind that I endeavour to ensure that students are provided with a more complete picture of the stories of the Bible, including any relevant archaeological information. By building a solid foundation of the culture of biblical times, students are in a better position to understand the principles of Scripture. That being said, it is more important to bring students to a heart understanding of Christ’s redemptive love for them, than it is to argue the particulars of an actual physical location of an event in time.

What of my quest to find the authentic burial site of Jesus? It was impossible to draw one solid, black and white conclusion from my visit to the ‘tombs’ of Jesus. The danger with knowing the exact location of various holy events in the Bible was articulately raised by a Year 11 student in the survey, “People may even start worshipping the ground at the place the event happened. People may start to care only about when and where and not the significant symbolism.” Visiting the Holy Land was a life changing experience for me, one that will always be with me. I can now better understand Pixner’s statement, “Five gospels record the life of Jesus. Four you will find in books, and one you will find in the land they call holy. Read the fifth gospel and the world of the four will open to you.”

Endnotes
2 Do I care about biblical archaeology? 2009. This is the survey I wrote for students to complete online.
3 It is important to note at the outset that while all students at Avondale School study the life of Jesus in detail in Years 7 and 9, there are students who are new to the school, and the current curriculum does not address the specifics of location and archaeology of the last days of Jesus.
4 Do I care about biblical archaeology? Student Survey.
7 Sacred Destinations, ‘Garden Tomb, Jerusalem’.
10 Ibid.
12 Do I care about biblical archaeology? Student Survey.
It’s overwhelmingly wonderful having a grade five student’s arms wrapped around your waist as they say, “I love Jesus”, it’s challenging when a year 11 student says, “but you don’t really believe all this” and satisfying when another in the same year says, “God is awesome”.

This is the core of Christian education and is of particular concern to a school chaplain.

Experiencing the shift from secondary teaching to chaplaincy has been enlightening. The boundaries and directions of the syllabus disappear and in many ways the way you fulfil or create your role is dependent initially upon the culture of your school (what they expect, what they allow). Every chaplain functions uniquely and relates in different ways to students.

The trouble with chaplaincy, and the beauty of chaplaincy, is that you don’t get to fill out a register of work, or measure the value of the time you spend with a student in sick bay, or with a teacher on a walk around the oval. Each day starts with a prayer but the plan for the day and the reality of the day sometimes have very little in common.

As a former teacher, I understand the need to consider the timetable and the fact that teachers are heavily loaded. As a chaplain, I understand the need to support staff, all staff, because the giving nature of their work can leave them drained and, at times, spiritually worn.

I also realise that for some students, the school is their first opportunity to know anything of God. In this case, everyone on staff is representing Him, thus making consistency across the school a vital goal. Throughout the day, “coincidences” make me aware that God is very interested in everyone on campus. This heightens my awareness of the importance of the faith-commitment of each staff member as they are in a unique position to have an impact on students.

For seven years, I worked at a rural Christian school where the ministry of staff was integral to the existence of the school. The questions in the initial interview went a little like this, “Do you attend church”, “Could your minister sign this slip to indicate you are a regular attendee?”, “Do you believe in a literal six-day creation?”, “What does the term ‘salvation’ mean to you?” A number of similar questions continued from the principal and relevant heads of department. Later that evening, the parent board also asked questions about my Christian experience. To me, the interview process demonstrated particular care in the appointment of staff.

This school did not have a chaplain. All staff—administrators, receptionists, maintenance staff and teachers—met together each morning for worship and prayed together as they prepared to minister to the school’s 600 students.

A move to Newcastle in 2008, allowed me to take on the role of school chaplain. My current school provides the amazing opportunity of weeks of spiritual emphasis, Bible studies for a large number of students, camps and retreats, and unique opportunities for worship and connection with God.

However, as student numbers increase in many Seventh-day Adventist and Christian schools, and as the numbers of students who know nothing of Christianity outweigh those that do, the chaplaincy role each staff member fulfils needs to be constantly reaffirmed. The historical role of the Seventh-day Adventist minister / teacher is being lived out on many campuses. Teachers are taking Bible studies, providing worships, befriending and caring for students.

It is wonderful to have school chaplains; the hundreds of Bible studies alone justify employment. However, chaplains alone cannot affect the lives of all students. We need to constantly acknowledge and support the minister / teacher within each class. It may be that the chaplain’s role becomes skewed towards spiritual coordinator (as well as a Bible study, chapel and events organiser) as all staff are established and affirmed as the faith warriors of a school—and employed with that as part of their passion for teaching. 

We need to constantly acknowledge and support the minister / teacher within each class.

Karen Muirhead
Chaplain, Macquarie College, Wallsend, NSW
Equipping the school chaplain: A reflection

Arthur Patrick
Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Avondale College, NSW

Wilf Rieger’s “Chaplaincy in Christian Schools” (TEACH vol 3, no. 2, 2009) rivets the attention of parents, students, educators and supporters on the potential for enhanced pastoral care within the educational process. It also offers a plethora of starting points for the extended discussion that is required amongst educational stakeholders if the “identifiable types of needs encountered in schools” are to be met. Stimulated by the proposals outlined, this short reflection focuses on one facet of a pervasive issue: the equipping of school chaplains.¹

The chaplain, according to the proposed generic school chaplaincy policy, “plans, organises, and implements a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities, events and projects, to achieve the pastoral care goals of the school”. A demanding set of personal qualifications are enjoined, plus “a recognised tertiary qualification in theology, counselling or education (or a combination of these) from an accredited tertiary institution,” as well as “relevant practical experience” (p. 28).

A proposal
This proposal is for at least some school chaplains to be trained in an interdisciplinary setting by undertaking Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) as an elective during their first degree or as part of a continuing education process during their employment. While at first glance this may seem like a call to bridge a significant chasm, there are cogent reasons why the school chaplain will benefit from such an experience. CPE brings participants into supervised encounter with living human documents in order to develop their pastoral identity, interpersonal competence, and spirituality; the skills of pastoral assessment, interprofessional collaboration, group leadership, pastoral care and counselling; and pastoral theological reflection.²

The active listening that is at the core of process-based CPE assures the client of a morally credible chaplain.

Such a short definition of CPE needs to be clarified by a broad understanding of its goals and methods. CPE aims to develop a clear and growing sense of pastoral identity, enhance professional competence, integrate theology and the practice of ministry, foster spirituality and build ethical awareness. These and related goals are pursued by “a graded, competency-based curriculum” that builds a sense of responsibility and emphasises constructive reflection through verbatims and case conferences, assisted by contemporary technologies. Seminars and personal growth groups extend the impact of these methods, but at the core of the process is the unique role of specially-trained supervisors.³

From scripture and theology to experience
One of the great affirmations of Scripture is that deity understands humanity. God, according to an Old Testament poet, is a father who has compassion on his children, knowing how we are formed (Psalm 103:13–14, NIV). The New Testament exults: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling amongst us” (John 1:14). According to Brian Hebblethwaite:

“The significance of the doctrine of the Incarnation in Christian theism is very great. The gap between God and man is here held to have been crossed from the side of God, who by making himself known within the human world in a life of dedicated self-sacrificial love overcomes the vagueness characteristic of religious awareness generally and makes possible a much more personal and intimate saving knowledge and experience of God for the believer.”²

If the Incarnation, as in Hebblethwaite’s argument, presents a “morally credible God”, the active listening that is at the core of process-based CPE assures the client of a morally credible chaplain. Thus, a trustful relationship is developed and enhanced, the innate capacities of the person experiencing pastoral care are respected, and the individual becomes an active participant in the process of growth or healing.

A personal history
A fragment of history may be needed to explain the development of CPE and my particular engagement with it. I arrived at Christian Theological Seminary (CTS), Indianapolis, United States of America, in 1972, with two freshly minted graduate degrees, an MA in Systematic Theology and a Master of
Divinity, plus an abiding confidence in counsellor-centred pastoral therapy. Rather like some famous counsellors of the era, I regarded the ideal counsellor as an expert able to convey to the receiver of pastoral care the life-changing data capable of facilitating whatever development or change may be required. It was with this attitude that I attended the pastoral counselling lectures of Dr Lowell Colston, a specialist who trained in Chicago under Carl Rogers.

Under the impact of Colston’s analysis of human capacities and how best to unlock them, beginning with depth-knowledge of the client derived from their own words, my approach began to change. More than that, as a Doctor of Ministry candidate, the seminary channelled me into a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education offered in a Methodist Hospital. Such training began with the candidate wearing the white coat of an orderly, mostly wheeling patients to their various appointments, meanwhile writing verbatim accounts of conversations and sharing these with a small group of peers under skilled supervision. Then came the main phase of the training when the student presents as a chaplain, writes verbatim of interviews and discovers in small-group interaction with peers and supervisor just what patients are saying and the nature of the chaplain’s communications.

When our family sailed to the US in 1967, I was completely unaware of CPE; by the time I flew back to teach ministerial students in 1973, it had already leapt the Pacific Ocean. For the next eighteen years, there was opportunity to cherish the ideas and experiment with them in an educational setting. Then, appointed to lead a team of chaplains in a large hospital, at last I was in daily association with a group of people who had undertaken CPE and were ministering effectively to people in crisis. During the next five years, I visited perhaps fifteen thousand patients. I recall the most challenging interactions as occurring when nursing staff anticipated a death might occur. During the most demanding week of my hospital chaplaincy, I was called to attend ten deaths and, of course, a number of these events were followed by requests to conduct funeral services. Interactions with dying patients in their last hours were often minimal due to such factors as the need for pain control; the communications with staff and families at such times were often exceedingly rich in quality, especially when we were together for extended periods (often during the night-time hours) as the life of a loved-one ebbed away.

It was during those five years of chaplaincy that I engaged with the New South Wales Council for Clinical Pastoral Education and realised how effectively the training I had received in the United States was now established in Australia.

CPE training
Robert Leas pictures the recent world status of CPE.

CPE is international today, with clergy and graduate students in theology coming from a number of countries throughout the world along with the certification of international clergy. CPE has grown in 80 years to include over 3,300 members that make up the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, with some 350 ACPE Accredited CPE Centres, and about 600 ACPE certified faculty members (called CPE Supervisors). There are about 118 Theological Schools as members, and 21 Faith Groups and Agencies who are partners with ACPE. The model of education that CPE represents is a vital part of theological education today.5

As may be expected, the history of CPE in Australia is also readily available on the Internet, together with lists of the many locations where training is currently available. This process-based education thrives in a wide variety of settings—it has potential for any place where people need pastoral care. Trained counsellors are aware that there are multiple approaches to the task of people-helping. To ponder Rieger’s insightful document, in the light of my experience in education and chaplaincy since 1973, leads me to the conviction that it is high time that more school chaplains were exposed to the CPE that is likely to enrich every aspect of their service to students and staff.

It would be sad indeed if those who implement the pastoral care that Rieger so well describes failed to consider what Clinical Pastoral Education may offer those chaplains who deliver programs that build “a community of hospitality” where children and youth identify with a larger group, and a “hospitalable life where there is empathetic listening and genuine concern”.6

Endnotes
1 The options for effective training in Australia are rapidly developing; see, for instance, http://chaplaincyaustralia.com/content/view/77/113/
3 Observe Thornton’s expression of these goals and methods and reinforce the ideas from recent, ongoing sources such as Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling and Reflective practice: Formation and supervision in ministry.
6 I thank Cheryll Bird, a CPE supervisor, for her comment made on a draft of this reflection that includes the quoted words. Bird also fittingly emphasises the crucial role of the “morally credible God / chaplain” for children / youth with a trauma background; e-mail, Bird to Patrick, 25 February 2010.
Visible learning
A book review

Cedric Greive
Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Avondale College, NSW

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


Introduction
This book by John Hattie has been 15 years in the making and has pulled together information from “over 50,000 studies” involving “many millions of students” (Preface, p. ix). While you would expect that conclusions based upon so much data should be warmly welcomed, this book has created some controversy in the education world. Hattie did not deliberately set out to do this. His book is not a ‘how to’ exercise. It has simply reviewed the literature noting those factors that promote student learning and those factors that have little or no effect on student learning. Those most disturbed by the book have been the proponents of teaching methods found to be ineffective. These issues will be addressed later in this review.

The book examines a comprehensive list of factors that potentially could influence student learning. These have been grouped into the following categories: student characteristics, home characteristics, school environments, teacher characteristics, factors related to the curricula, and specific teaching approaches.

The base data reviewed by Hattie have not come directly from individual studies, rather they have been drawn from over 800 meta-analyses. A meta-analysis is a procedure that combines the results of a number of individual, statistically-based studies into a single set of results that represent them all. All of the component studies included in a meta-analysis must be conceptually alike in that they all focus upon the effect that the same interventions or treatments have upon a particular response measure (in this case, student learning).

Background information
In using the meta-analysis technique, Hattie employed Cohen’s d statistic to compare the size of the effect that different interventions had upon students’ learning. An effective intervention (treatment) implemented with an experimental group will mean that the ‘after-intervention’ distribution of scores measuring learning will be separate from, and greater than, the corresponding ‘before-intervention’ distribution of scores. The more effective the intervention, the greater this separation. Usually the change in ‘before’ and ‘after’ distributions in learning scores for the experimental group is compared with the corresponding change in scores of the control group. Now, Cohen’s d statistic asks the question, “So, the change in mean scores is not chance, but does it really mean anything?”

The d statistic is defined as the ratio of the difference in the mean values of the ‘before’ and ‘after’ distributions to the pooled standard deviation (Howell, 2007). In other words, as the before and after distributions separate from each other, the difference between the mean scores become greater and hence the value of the d statistic rises.

As the two distributions separate and the d statistic rises, the percentage of non-overlap of distributions also rises. Table 1 indicates that as the d statistic increases, the corresponding correlation coefficient (r) also strengthens. This indicates that as the ‘before’ and ‘after’ distributions get further apart, the rank order of the students, according to their scores in both distributions, become more alike. Hattie chose the value of 0.40 as the lower limit of a significant effect size. This value indicates a change in the response measure (student learning) that, while being small, is both clearly discernable and, given a sufficiently large number of participating students, unlikely to be a chance result. As the d statistic rises above the 0.40 limit, the size of the effect of the intervention strengthens.

Factors affecting student learning
While this description of Cohen’s d statistic is technical, it is important background knowledge because Hattie uses it to compare the various effects on learning that differing educational factors have. The following discussion highlights the results for all those factors for which the d statistic exceeds the 0.40 limit set by Hattie.
Learners’ personal characteristics
Collectively, the strongest factors influencing learning are those pertaining to the students’ own characteristics. Here, the first two factors speak to student-readiness in that students need to be developmentally prepared for learning (d = 1.28) and they need to have a sufficient combination of background knowledge and skills in order to successfully approach a new learning task (d = 0.67). The next four factors indicate that successful learning occurs among those students who combine a healthy mix of self-knowledge (d = 1.44), self-concept (d = 0.43), personal motivation (d = 0.48) and willingness to concentrate and persist (d = 0.48). Two characteristics that have little effect upon learning are personality (d = 0.19) and gender (d = 0.12).

The final three characteristics relate to early development. Low pre-term birth weight is related to developmental stressors before birth (birthweight to learning: d = 0.54). Factors such as maternal illness, malnutrition and substance use (including alcohol and tobacco) all impact upon prenatal development and continue to delay cognitive development into the later years of life. However, appropriate and non-stressful early intervention programs (d = 0.47) and quality preschool programs (d = 0.45) do have positive effects on learning that flow on into the later years.

Students’ homes
Hattie’s book reaffirms a long held understanding that successful students tend to come from homes of higher socio-economic status (d = 0.57), homes that support and value education (d = 0.57), and homes in which parental involvement in education is significant (d = 0.51).

Essentially, these factors have to do with the nature of the home-learning environment. For example, the kinds of learning resources in the home, parental support for schooling and that unstated but pervasive expectation that students will make an effort in their schooling.

Family structure does not have a significant effect upon learning (d = 0.17). This includes sibling order or marital status of the family. This does not mean that children are unaffected by the trauma of family breakup, but does mean that once the family situation settles, the learning of children from single-parent homes is largely indistinguishable from that of other children. Finally, the presence or absence of television is unrelated to student learning (d = 0.18).

School and classroom organisation
In general, as schools get larger, it becomes economically easier to acquire resources that promote learning. The critical size for schools appears to be about 800 students. When this number is exceeded, student learning does appear to begin to decline. In general, students learn more efficiently when working in small groups (d = 0.49) and when involved in micro-teaching (d = 0.88). Finally, gifted and talented students appear to learn best when judiciously accelerated (d = 0.88).

Those factors that do not appear to have a major influence upon student learning include: grouping students according to ability (often called streaming; d = 0.30); the general size of classes (d = 0.21) and multi-grade classrooms (d = 0.04).

Table 1: Cohen’s statistic matched to the percentage of non-overlap of scores and correlation between ‘before’ and ‘after’ scores for the response measures*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohen’s d statistic</th>
<th>% non-overlap of scores</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient (r)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>Weak but not likely to be a chance result provided n is large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>Weak to moderate not a chance result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>Moderate and definitely not a chance result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>Moderate to strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>Strong to very strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>Very strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Table includes a synthesis of information from Hattie (2009) and Coe (2002).
• manage their classroom in an effective manner (d = 0.52),
• exhibit characteristics that engender classroom cohesion (d = 0.53),
• create and use positive peer influence (d = 0.53),
• employ the strategies of quality teaching (d = 0.44),
• develop appropriate and pleasant relationships with their students (d = 0.72),
• expect their students to learn (d = 0.43),
• avoid labelling students (d = 0.61),
• demonstrate teacher clarity (d = 0.75),
• are able to sequence questions appropriately (d = 0.46),
• continue to undergo professional development (d = 0.62).
These characteristics are not unexpected.

Curricular contributions
The first and major grouping of curricular factors that influence learning are connected to the development of reading skills. These involve strategies related to:
• improving visual perception (d = 0.55),
• improving vocabulary (d = 0.87),
• phonics instruction (d = 0.60),
• repeated reading (d = 0.67),
• teaching for comprehension (d = 0.58),
• using reciprocal teaching (d = 0.74).
Reading strategies that were not found to be useful in improving reading skills included whole language (d = 0.06).
Teaching strategies aimed at reducing cognitive load were found to improve mathematical skills (d = 0.45). Cognitive load is reduced when an individual ceases to see elements of a problem as discrete units, but rather sees them as related components within the problem setting (Sweller, 1999). This has to do with pattern recognition and the ability to restructure a problem state into a form that is consistent with a theory driven solution path.
Other unrelated activities that successfully promote learning include teaching social skills (d = 0.40) and outdoor and adventure programs (d = 0.52).
For young children, tactile stimulus programs promote learning (d = 0.58) as do play programs (d = 0.50).

Teaching approaches
Contributions to student learning that flow from teaching activities involve aspects of planning, instructional approaches, teaching for self-learning, providing specific resources and feedback and finally, ensuring that practice is spaced.
Aspects related to teacher-planning include:
• setting goals with students (d = 0.56),
• matching instruction to learning styles (d = 0.41),
• employing methods of formative evaluation (d = 0.90).

The second point relates to the deliberate rotation of modes of instruction so that over a period of time most students will have an opportunity to learn in their favoured style. Formative evaluation requires the teacher to collect information about the current levels of student interest, understanding and skills and rearranging the learning unit to suit this immediate situation.
Instructional approaches that promote learning included the use of strategies involving:
• direct instruction (d = 0.59),
• advance organisers (d = 0.41),
• concept mapping (d = 0.57),
• mastery learning (d = 0.58),
• a variety of cooperative learning approaches (d = 0.41–0.59),
• teaching for problem solving (d = 0.61),
• interactive technology (d = 0.52).

Hattie’s findings also indicate that students can be taught the skills for self-learning. Those aspects of teaching that relate to skilling students for self-learning include:
• the use of peer tutoring strategies (d = 0.51),
• teaching metacognitive strategies (d = 0.69),
• teaching study skills (d = 0.59),
• teaching students to use strategies of self-verbalisation and self-questioning (d = 0.64).

Finally, the provision of worked examples (d = 0.57), adequate feedback (d = 0.73) and the use of spaced versus massed practice (d = 0.71) was also found to be associated with student learning.

Elements of Controversy
Constructivism is a movement that has grown out of an understanding that students create their own meaning for new information or skills from the interaction between their prior knowledge and memory of past experience and the new experience or information (Driver, 1983). This meaning-making process is covert and teachers have no direct access to it—they can only influence it. Conceptual change can be provoked by providing students with a judicious mix of experiences that challenge their current understandings and new information (Chinn & Malhotra, 2002). However, conceptual change takes place in the cognitive arena of the students’ minds and the degree and nature of change can only be inferred by changes in their output.

Some constructivists carry this view of the nature of conceptual learning forward to argue that since students construct their own understanding, classroom activities, particularly in science and mathematics, should almost exclusively employ inquiry techniques (Bauersfeld, 1995). Those of this persuasion have been aroused by some of Hattie’s findings and conclusions.
Table 2 compares approaches favouring direct instruction with those that involve student-centred inquiry procedures. Hattie presents the view that the strategies employed by the ‘Teacher as activator’ are more successful than the strategies employed by the ‘Teacher as facilitator’. Those supporting a tight constructivist approach are quick to point out that he has not included the qualitative studies that indicate that students enjoy and benefit from investigative approaches. While the quantitative studies involve forms of testing student knowledge, the qualitative studies involve observation of student activity and exploration of the change in the nature of their ideas through interviews (Hackling & Prain, 2008).

It would be a travesty if teachers responded uncritically to Hattie’s information and retreated from the excitement of discovery procedures into the ‘chalk and talk’ methods of yester-year. There is much to be gained by running judiciously planned and carefully structured inquiry lessons. Particularly if skilling students for self-learning is, as Hattie suggests, so successful. In addition, there are important outcomes that are achievable through student inquiries. Even so, the literatures on expertise and problem solving suggest that successful student-inquiry and successful problem solving approaches mainly occur among mature students who have acquired a critical mass of systematic knowledge and understanding in their field (Feltovich, Prietula & Ericsson, 2006; Kirschner, Sweller & Clark, 2006). School students, and particularly primary students, lack this systematic knowledge. Further, it is difficult to create a systematic knowledge among immature students through the sole use of inquiry methods that involve minimal structure. What is needed is a mix of delivery processes that include guided, hedged and scaffolded inquiry procedures and the development of a systematic knowledge through the use of direct instruction and worked examples.

Conclusion
The mark of an important book is not necessarily that it gains universal acceptance. Often good books spark vigorous debates. They set people thinking. Based on this, Hattie’s book is important. TEACH

References


BOOK REVIEW

Inside I'm hurting: Practical strategies for supporting children with attachment difficulties in schools

Karen Price
Learning Support teacher, Avondale School, Cooranbong, NSW

One size fits all is often the catch cry you hear in schools. The students won’t think it’s fair if I treat one student in my class differently, is the other common fallacy in education today. As both a teacher and therapist, Louise Bomber writes for busy teachers who want to make a difference in their students’ lives and make inclusion a reality for their students with attachment difficulties.

Each chapter gives practical strategies in bullet point lists for easy reference and useful chapter summaries. The book is loaded with examples, which are indicated in italics to make it easy to locate what you need as a teacher.

Inside I’m hurting re-affirms teachers of the good teaching practices they are already engaged in, and strengthens these strategies for the best possible outcomes for children who are hurting on the inside. She answers the hard questions like, How do I treat one student differently to the rest? and Why won’t my program work for everyone, all the time? Bomber explains how to support the hurting child in both recovery and learning adaptive responses to trauma.

The author emphasises that small steps are taken but are intentionally planned for by collaborative, supportive teams.

Bomber quotes Bowlby (1951, p. 114) as saying, “Children are not slates from which the past can be rubbed by a duster or sponge, but human beings who carry their previous experiences with them and whose behaviour in the present is profoundly affected by what has gone before.” Children are not unlike you and I. Our personalities and experiences are all different. We expect to be treated according to our talents and fears, and children are no different. They deserve for themselves, what we expect for ourselves!

Reference


A tribute to Eric Alfred Magnusson (1933–2009)
Lynden Rogers
Dean of the Faculty of Science and Mathematics, Avondale College, NSW

It was Principal, W G C Murdoch, who in 1950 encouraged the young Eric Magnusson to study at the Australasian Missionary College, now Avondale, and arranged for him to take the external BSc degree from London University. This was at a time when it was otherwise impossible in Australia to obtain a recognised degree outside a university.

Eric took his BSc in June 1953. Within a few years he was back at Avondale with two PhDs, providing pivotal leadership in the new Science Department from 1961–1970, after which he became Principal.

Both as scientist and principal, Eric pursued a long-held dream—the academic advancement of Avondale. The initial challenges he faced included recruiting staff and upgrading their academic qualifications. When access to London science degrees closed, Eric used his strategic connections to set Avondale on its first tentative steps toward the official recognition of its courses. The large range of fully accredited degrees which Avondale offers today’s students has grown out of his vision.

After 10 years as Avondale College Principal, Eric returned to full-time science, firstly at the ANU Research School of Chemistry and later at the Defence Force Academy, where he retired as Associate Professor, and with which he was still associated as a Visiting Fellow at the time of his death.

Over this period of time Eric took a keen interest in the comprehension of forensic science by criminal court jurors, not only publishing in this area but supervising research students. He also participated strongly in the children’s drug education magazine, One Jump Ahead, published over 12 years by his wife Nainie, for which she was awarded a medal of the Order of Australia. It was for such contributions to society that he was honoured in the Peoplescape display on the lawns of Parliament House.

Over four decades Eric also tried to help his Christian community face difficult issues relating to faith and science, an area in which he held a keen interest.

In what can only euphemistically be called retirement, Eric maintained research in theoretical chemistry in addition to his forensic work, as well as working as an industrial consultant. He also continued to serve Avondale College: as chairman of various Accreditation Committees, stand-in Academic Vice-President and as visiting science lecturer. Students quickly became aware of Eric’s vast conceptual grasp of quantum physics and chemistry.

He was physically active, completing a number of Sydney City to Surf races. He also insisted on taking up new challenges, such walking through Cradle Mountain in winter in his mid 70s!

One of Eric’s most endearing legacies was his ability to mix comfortably with all ages. His friends ranged from College contemporaries right down to current students, truly a rare achievement.
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