



Windows into Children's Thinking

BIALIK COLLEGE, EARLY LEARNING CENTRE JOURNAL 2017

Bialik. *Be your best.*



Bialik College

From the Principal of Bialik

Shalom Kehilla,

I always begin my letters to parents with the Hebrew phrase above. It is a communal greeting, and includes the word kehilla, which means community. It is not just a statement of welcome, the theme of the 2017 year in the Bialik College Early Learning Centre; in contrast to writing 'Dear Parents' or 'Dear Students', Shalom kehilla is a recognition that we all play different, differing and important roles in developing our community cultures.

A teacher, for example, may also be a community leader, a parent, a sports participant and a writer. A parent may themselves be a teacher, a business leader, a charity supporter and a traveller. In biblical times, they recognised that people were more than themselves. People were introduced not just as their names, but also as the son or daughter of someone else. I, for example, would have been called not just Jeremy, but instead 'Jeremy Son of Terry' – not a solitary individual but someone who is part of a wider community and representative of a family and network, not just of myself.

All of this is a recognition that, to quote the metaphysical poet John Donne in his poem No Man Is An Island: "every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main."

When you are welcomed into the precious pages of this *Windows into Children's Thinking* journal, you are also welcomed into a communal endeavour. A school is not simply a group of individuals, but a community in which all are treasured as individuals and equally nourished as a 'part of the main'.

In an educational context, what this means is that we are not siloed educators, teaching in isolation and presenting a one dimensional persona. We are complex organisms and we are part of a wider complex network.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the beautiful Bialik College Early Learning Centre. The beauty of our ELC is not in the building – lovely though it is – but in the children, their relationships, and their learning journeys.

Every day they live the reality that this year's theme, Welcome (or indeed Shalom Kehilla) is a communal statement, and that learning, progress and growth are communal endeavours.

I hope that you enjoy your next and colourful steps along this wondrous journey, and that this journal, together with our *Windows into Children's Thinking* exhibition, support your travels.

B'Shalom



Jeremy Stowe-Lindner
Principal

From the Head of the Early Learning Centre

The concept of 'welcome' became the catalyst for our whole ELC investigation during 2017. Any concept or idea we have involves choices. An important consideration with which our educators begin is the motivation behind those choices. Why are they choosing to research a particular aspect of their work? Jill McLachlan and Clare Britt in their book 'Unearthing Why' discuss how we spend time focussing on the what and how of our experiences. What will we do tomorrow? How will I teach that concept? How much time should I allow for that activity? How will I respond to that child? And while they acknowledge the importance of these questions they suggest that there is a place for relooking at the deeper question of 'Why' educate in the first place.

Through observation, analysis and reflection the educators constantly considered why they did what they did. For us research is considered a strategy, a response to curiosity and doubt. The research is part of our everyday practice. It provides the possibility for critical thinking and constructing new knowledge.

As adults, we first tried out the idea we were bringing to the children. We predicted and anticipated ideas as well as developed some questions. This research and planning by the adults both prior and throughout the investigation was critical to its success.

As with most opportunities offered to the teachers in the ELC they embraced this idea, at first with many questions but as always with a willingness to support the ideas. While every teacher in the ELC based their investigation on 'Welcome', in each classroom this looked different and that is the strength of 'listening' to our children.

The investigations in this journal have taken place during 2017. What follows are not investigations in their entirety, but rather small vignettes, part of the process, from each level, as well as cross class groups in the Early Learning Centre. The investigations may have spanned a few weeks, months or even a year and some are still ongoing. Each investigation is documented through the recording of discussions and reflections by the children and their teachers, and through photographs and other languages. **"How complex are children's ways of building knowledge, therefore how complex are the ways of capturing it."** (Reggio Emilia)

The documentation allows for reflection and revisiting by the teachers and the children who were part of the investigation or by another group of children or teachers. It will reflect the many languages the children use as they describe their theories and make sense of their world such as the written, spoken and expressive languages.

"Successful dialogues do not presume answers or outcomes but are an exchange of thoughts and feelings, which allow for the possibility of change because one mind experiences another mind".

Mary Hartzell

In this journal the children's words are italicised, and many of the articles are prefaced by their own words.



Daphne Gaddie

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The conventions in this book

A number of styles have been used throughout Bialik College Early Learning Centre Journal 2017 – 'Windows into Children's Thinking' to designate different voices.

Serif Italicised Font

Indicates the voice of a child

Serif Bolded Font

Indicates the voice of an adult



To access digital content of exhibitions



3 Year Old Kinder

Welcoming the Unknown



“

At the beginning of the year observations of our new group revealed the children’s great interest and knowledge about nature.”

Given that this year the whole ELC is exploring the concept ‘Welcome’, we decided to *welcome the unknown* into our classroom. New relationships, experiences and discoveries were about to begin. According to Loris Malaguzzi the choice of investigation to undertake is based on the teacher’s observation and listening to the children as they “**continuously suggest to us what interests them and what they would like to explore in a deeper way**” (Loris Malaguzzi)¹.

We all agree that wondering and questioning are key factors in meaningful learning. We can easily relate to Jill McLachlan who says that “**learning to wonder, wondering out loud and wondering together are powerful ways in which curiosity and desire to research phenomena, such as Nature, can be encouraged in young children**” (Jill McLachlan)². (Fig. 1)

Being surrounded by nature and natural resources provides unlimited benefits to children. The excitement that nature brings to children’s lives; the fresh air, apples growing on trees, leaves falling on the ground, all add to the motivation to inquire, wonder, form and test theories. All senses become engaged when children interact with the natural world (Condie Ward)³. (Fig. 2-3)



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

From the beginning of the year we went for walks to visit the school apple garden. This successful experience encouraged us to listen to the children further and to plan regular visits aiming to use their interest and sense of wonder in nature. Prior to each visit we discussed our goals for the outing and predicted what we might see?

Can we go and check on the apple trees?

Maybe the apples fell off?

Maybe the trees grew bigger?

'Outdoor nature spaces change both gradually and suddenly and sometimes unexpectedly. These changes bring an element of surprise and wonder to children's experiences' (Kerry Rogers)⁴. We continued our weekly visits to the apple tree garden for two months. The children were genuinely interested in the concept of **change**.

On our return from each visit we (children and teachers) discussed and shared our observations. Great attention was given to listening to the children, helping them to listen to each other and documenting their ideas and wonders. Then we (teachers) identified key words in the children's statements and used them to shape more questions to deepen the learning.

There were no apples on the trees... there was only one left...

Maybe the possum ate the apples...

Someone hide the apples away, under the tree...

When it was windy the apples fell off...

If the tree will grow really big the apples will come back...

In five weeks the apples will come back...

This is not an apple tree anymore, now it's a leaves tree...

We decided to investigate further the concept of *changes in nature*.

Does nature change?

Autumn changes...

The rain doesn't know how to change...but the sun knows...

God changes the weather...

If the trees don't know how to change they will find out... (Fig. 4-5)

Some things change and others don't. What stays the same?

The leaves on that big tree don't change...

The fog doesn't change, it's always the same...

Red leaves are red leaves...

Winter changes...

There are zero leaves on that tree and it's going to stay zero...

The big tall tree (gum tree) never changes...

How come some things never change?

Because some trees just planted like that...

Only the leaves know if they need to change, the tree doesn't know...

In winter the flowers and leaves change because they freeze...

Old things change...

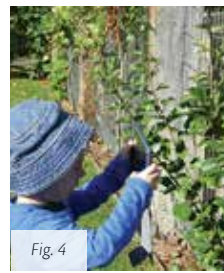


Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

Old friends change because you had them in your old day care and now they are not there any more... (Fig. 6)

Along side the children's interest in the apple trees, we also looked at other natural resources (flowers, leaves, sticks, seeds, and trees) and started to wonder about:

Changed vs. Unchanged (Fig. 7-8)

Some things change but not if it's protected like the inside parts of the flowers...

The flowers will only change if they are back on the tree because that's how things change in nature...

The outside of the flowers may change to anything but not the inside because the inside is protected by the outside, same as the stem is protected by the leaves...

This flower cannot change or maybe yes but not very fast...

If there were no more leaves, the tree would stay like this forever and ever...

But it won't be nature any more...



Fig. 9

Using photographs, drawings and written notes, both children and teachers have documented this investigation. The intent was to provide an opportunity to share not only **what** children do but also **how and why**. Documentation, as suggested by Carla Rinaldi, is about the “**shared meanings that children have with other children and the opportunity for others to see that part of children’s learning that is often invisible**” (Carla Rinaldi)⁵. (Fig. 9-10)

In addition to the walks to the apple tree garden, flowers, leaves and sticks were collected and brought into the classroom for the children to observe over time. The outdoor and indoor experiences connected in reciprocal relationship, involved preparation for each outing including planning, forming theories, questions and goals setting. On our walks the children observed, tested their theories and documented their findings. We shared and discussed each experience and made logistic decisions in reference to the evidence collected and brought inside. Our outdoor and indoor learning became one.

These sticks were painted by the stick men like the flower guy painted the flowers...

The flowers get their colours from the trees...

I think the bees came inside overnight and drank from the yellow...

The pink went inside the flower and turned brown...

I think the flower is going to die, there is not much pink any more...

Our investigation evolved from the children’s great sense of wonder about nature and its changes. “**The children become active constructors of understanding and us (their teachers)... teach children to question deeply, to learn authentically and to think critically**” (Jill McLachlan)⁶.



Fig. 10

Our group conversations became deeper and more detailed as we proceeded. We often used close observation methods for noticing details in objects (e.g. sticks or flowers), sharing thoughts about them in small or large group conversations and documenting children’s wonder and desire to find out more about it.

I wonder if this leaf will stay like this or will it go back to green?

When this bit broke off, is this because the leaf tried to get off the table to go back outside?

I wonder if the leaf could go out of the room and then the brown colour will blow away?

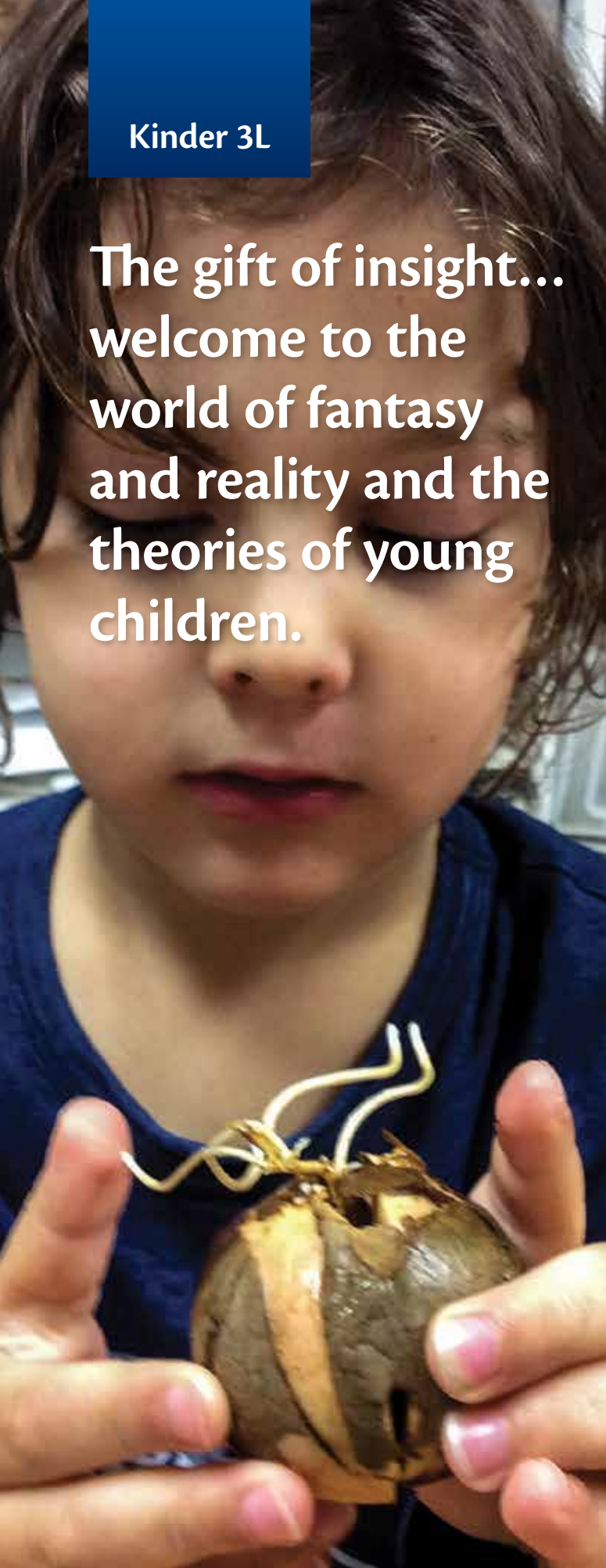
The language, which the children used, their engagement and motivation to participate constantly surprised us.

The ability to make connections, the use of prior knowledge, precise language, imagination and creative thinking are only some of the dispositions displayed by the children through this four month long investigation. The importance of learning the difference between questions and statements results in the children’s discovery of the power of questioning. This is believed to open many doors through the search for meaning, for each of these children, for now and for future encounters.

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The gift of insight...
welcome to the
world of fantasy
and reality and the
theories of young
children.



“

I know it is an avocado pip but when is the chicken coming out?”

What is that?

What do you think it is?

An egg!

So began a journey of reality and fantasy one Friday afternoon.

Lunch one Friday included a bowl of mashed avocado in a bowl and the chef had decided to place the avocado pip in the centre. Why? Most probably to keep it from going brown. (Fig. 1)

On seeing this the child asked the question – *what is that?*

“One of the most important things teachers can do is to become students of their students’ thinking, to become curious inquirers into the workings of their students’ minds as they grapple with problems and develop in their understanding of ideas.

In this way, teachers become inquirers, questioners, and researchers opening up a window into the rich and sometimes mysterious world of learning and, by extension, teaching.” Ron Ritchhart¹.

In the book *How children learn* John Holt² refers to children’s theory of mind helping children learn to predict what one person thinks or feels about what another person is thinking or feeling.

Look Lindsay, it is an egg, a plant egg, because it has a skin.

Look, something is growing out of it.

I think it is a dinosaur egg.

Many of the conversations took place when they reflected on their thoughts throughout the day in different areas of the kinder.

We decided to set up two provocations initially, as a point of interest. We placed 8 avocado pips in small containers with water in the studio, and we also brought 3 avocado pips to morning discussions for the children to feel, smell and touch. (Fig. 2)

I know that this is an avocado egg because it is the same shape as an avocado.

It is a kind of dinosaur egg.

The dinosaurs brought them into here a long, long time ago.

Pips come out of the avocado. Triceratops came out of the egg.



There is no such thing as a dinosaur because a long, long, long time ago there was a bang and then a disaster came and a meteor bumped into planet earth.

Yeah, they runned away

No, the lava came out of the volcano.

We provided books about eggs, seeds and dinosaurs to see if the children would make connections. The engaging in dialogue is a key component when working with children as it is that opportunity to talk to them about their ideas and explore possibilities. (Fig. 3)

In her book *The Apprenticeship in Thinking* Barbara Rogoff (1990) writes that according to Vygotsky's theory, children's participation in communicative processes is the foundation in which they build their understanding. "As children listen to the views and understanding of others and stretch their concepts to find a common ground, as they collaborate and argue with others, consider new alternatives, and recast their ideas to communicate or to convince, they advance their ideas in the process of participation. It is a matter of social engagement that leaves the individual changed."³

The dinosaur eggs are starting to hatch. (Fig. 4)

The dinosaurs live in the jungle.

No, they live in the forest.

No they don't, no they don't. When they are in my garden they just have long teeth. There wasn't enough food and there was too much poop. The dinosaurs made poop.

You know the dinosaur eggs in the studio, well sometimes dinosaurs live in seeds and sometimes they have tails and beaks. Then the lava came and turned to dust, and the dinosaurs slowly turned and then they did that. The lava came on them and turned them into skeletons.

"The wider the range of possibilities we offer children, the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experiences. We must widen the range of topics and goals, the types of situations we offer and their degree of structure, the kinds and combinations of resources and materials, and the possible interactions with things, peers, and adults." (Loris Malaguzzi. *Hundred Languages of children*, ch.3, by Carolyn Edwards (1993)⁴

The avocado has a shell.

It has a skin.

An avocado is inside the avocado.

There is a crack. Maybe a dinosaur, a monster one will come out of the crack. (Fig. 5)

One is pointy and one is slimy.

It was becoming evident that there was going to be a discussion about the "eggs" as well as some interest in dinosaurs or "other egg laying animals."

One child insisted from the beginning that *they were avocado pips*, but in the same discussion said *I know that they are avocado pips but when is the chicken coming out?*

This was the intriguing point of entry for us. How could we continue the conversation without disrupting their theories or thoughts?

We decided to let the conversation run, we encouraged the children to hypothesize, test their theories, and we met with the children in small as well as large groups. We began to document every conversation we heard. It became clear to us that the children were theorising, whatever they knew, had heard or simply thoughts with which they were grappling.

I know the pips have been cracking. Because they are eggs, because I was in the studio. I just know they are pips from the avocado. I just know.

They are plant eggs. Dinosaurs hatch from different eggs.

The eggs are cracking from the avocado.

What makes you say that?

My theory is when the dinosaurs hatch from the dinosaur eggs, I crack them with my finger to see what is inside. The dinosaur gave them to me to show everyone.

Different dinosaur shaped eggs hatch into dinosaurs.

There are also flying ones.

Dinosaur eggs come from trees.

Dinosaurs love to climb up trees but they can't because they have feet and hands and claws.

The avocado comes from my tree.

Inside the avocado you can find a pip. The real dinosaur eggs, the inside of dinosaur eggs is a baby dinosaur.

“Magic weaves in and out of everything the children say and do. The boundaries between what the child thinks and what the adult sees are never clear to the adult, but the child does not expect compatibility. The child himself is the ultimate magician. He credits G-d and lesser powers, but it is the child who confirms the probability of events. If he can imagine something, it exists. Wally’s Stories.” (Vivian Gussin Paley.) 1981.⁵

The children’s theories continue to develop, the debate and uncertainty shows in the conversations they are having. The realists are convinced that they are indeed avocado pips, yet something will hatch out of them.

That is not going to be a dinosaur because a plant is growing out of it.

I think a dinosaur will come out of there because it is round and little and snugly.

Let’s keep them warm so they are ready to hatch.

Look, the eggs need to be warm so my hands warm them up, like a blanket.

These are dinosaur eggs. That one is cracked. The dinosaur made it crack.

Children see the world as a whole, mysterious perhaps, but a whole none the less. They do not divide it up into airtight little categories, as we adults tend to do. It is natural for them to jump from one thing to another, and to make the kind of connections that are rarely made in formal teaching.

According to John Holt **“children make their own paths into the unknown, paths that we would never think of making for them. Curious children do not let their learning box them in – it leads them onto life in many directions. Each new thing they learn makes them aware of other new things to be learned. Their curiosity grows by what it feeds on.”**

“Children use fantasy to make sense of reality, make a mental model of reality that works. Because they have so little experience this is hard to do. They have to invent imaginary pieces to fill the gaps. Young children do not wait until they have all the information and experience to make a coherent and sensible model of reality. They have to make sense of it right now. Their fantasy grows out of reality, connects to reality, reaches further out to reality. Keeping their curiosity “well supplied with food” doesn’t mean feeding them, or telling them what they have to feed themselves. It means putting within reach the widest possible variety and quantity of good food.” (How Children Learn. John Holt. 1983)⁶.

The children’s conversations have continued as the avocado pips continue to transform.

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Fig. 5

“If we really want children to thrive we need to let their connection to nature nurture them”

Claire Warden¹

“

Welcoming nature as a tool for research, investigation and learning, we wondered how natural resources would inspire the children’s thinking.”

How did a discussion about our natural environment lead us to think about twigs and sticks as a provocation for richer deeper investigation? An important element that we considered was welcoming the children as co-constructors of our research.

As a teaching team, we noticed the children seemed to be looking intently at their outdoor playground. (Fig. 1) Children naturally create a deeply rooted connection to the earth and nature, and are able to connect to it in a variety of ways. As Claire Warden² says, “**They see the detail in it, they listen to it, they move with it.**”

Reflecting on this, we called an ‘outdoor meeting’ with the class. (Fig. 2) “**Children need to be heard in a space where they are comfortable, in order to really reflect their capacity and level of thinking**” (Claire Warden)³.

We asked the children what they would like to see or have in their outdoor area, posing some questions and challenges ...

Flowers and butterflies

Sticks

Rocks

A beanstalk

Leaves and lots of rainbows

A little pony

Snakes

Turtles

What was interesting to note is that all their requests focused on something natural. One child’s suggestion of the inclusion of sticks resonated with the group. Reflecting on this idea we knew that this could offer further opportunities for learning. We wanted to support the children to explore and think about nature and natural materials around them.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

One of the educators had a collection of special sticks that had been an accumulation over a number of years. These sticks became a catalyst for discussion and imagination.

We looked at the sticks and the children noticed the differences and similarities, the sizes, colours, texture. As they took a stick they looked at it and compared it to themselves – which was taller, which was shorter the stick or themselves. Some even insisted they were definitely taller than the stick even though we could visually see that the stick was taller. The children naturally made comparisons, predictions, tested ideas and shared discoveries as they observed and handled the sticks...

I know he wanted sticks in the garden

Some have light parts that are not connected

Some smaller, some bigger

Some are thick and some are thin

Some can be sharp

Not a similar colour

The other one is a little bit taller

Ashley is a little bit down and the stick is a little bit high so the stick is taller than Ashley (Fig. 3)

This conversation highlighted the fact that, **“Children learn through similarity based inference where observations of similarities and differences lead children to create ideas such as frameworks of understanding.”** (Claire Warden)⁴.

The children offered various hypotheses about the sticks ...

Fire, trees, we can make a shark

I think that we could make a star, a necklace – we can cut the branches

A house

We could make a house with people in it

We can make a chimney

A volcano with fire

A bench

A bunkbed



Fig. 4

We explored further possibilities outdoors with the sticks outdoors as we reflected on a statement by Mark Church⁵, **“An idea that is developed and put into action is more important than an idea that just exists”**

The children collaborated in small groups, making decisions on creating different structures using sticks and wire. Discussion is a vital element in the collaborative processes. We are supporting the children in building upon their ability to apply critical thinking to their learning. With the children's prior knowledge of natural materials, two groups gathered what they thought they needed to create their anticipated structure. Children used the fork of a branch as a support for another branch. (Fig. 4)

The educators listened to the children and documented the conversations and actions between the children and the materials. We observed new relationships being formed, children collaborating, listening to one another. As Dr. Ron Ritchhart⁶ said, **“Learning is a consequence of thinking. Learning and thinking are as much a collective enterprise as they are an individual endeavour”**

We noted the complexities of the children's placement of these materials and their thinking behind their decisions. Each group approached the materials in a different way. We shared photos and conversations that had occurred with each group, and this furthered both their and our research and projections.

We have seen how implementing authentic STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) experiences provokes richer, deeper thinking that is linked to the real world. By using STEM, we provide a platform for our children to revisit and investigate ideas, problem solve and think of creative solutions.

We observed them developing their theories about construction, strength and stability, using sticks and logs to build sculptures. With 'hands on' investigation the children have begun to formulate ideas about these complex physics concepts.

Tell us what you were thinking of when you put the wire and sticks together...

The wire helped it to stand up so it wouldn't fall down in the wind.

We need one that has a lot, that has two. You need more sticks.

The children realised that they needed three sticks tied together with wire.

It's balancing

It gives it more energy

It's stronger

It needs to have space so it could balance

As a part of our research the children broke into small groups to build houses out of sticks. One group decided their house needed four points and should be connected by single rows of wire. When they tested their theory by letting go of the four points of their house, it fell down. This highlighted that there was a flaw in their design! Why did it fall over? What makes a house strong and stable? Each child was then invited to plan and design their individual ideas of what they thought a stable house would look like.

As everyone drew they discussed their theories. It was during this time that a child commented ...

The house stays strong with the sticks, two that are straight and lines that go across like an H. Maybe that will help the sticks stay up. (Fig. 5)

The children, together with the educator, decided to test this theory and worked collaboratively to see if interconnecting sticks would stabilise their house. However, the children could see that the structure still remained unbalanced. The educator suggested that maybe the rest of the class could help solve this problem and offer suggestions on how to make the house stable.

An important aspect of this research was using drawing to organise ideas and make their thinking visible, thus supporting the development of thinking cultures that underpin research and learning.

The addition of sticks to our environment has provoked discussion about how natural materials can be used to create sculptures. We examined the work of contemporary artists such as Andy Goldsworthy, who uses natural materials in natural shapes and forms. **“His skill is not just to ‘touch nature’, but to touch the chords of desire for the natural world in people.”** (William Malpas)⁷.

We projected Andy's structures on our Smartboard as well as displayed them around the classroom. These were wonderful provocations for the children to use the language of drawing to capture what they observed... *a mountain, a road, what the panda eats (bamboo branches) a nest, a tunnel, a roundabout, a hole where the animals go to sleep.* Like Andy, the children used natural materials including tree stumps, pebbles and sticks to create their own sculptures. The children continued testing their theories of balance, creating shapes and designs, using symmetry and patterning. This work was more individual, with intense focus and very deliberate thinking processes. (Fig. 6)

“Revisiting ideas over long blocks of time support children to see that the process of thinking and learning is full of experimentation and adaption.” (Claire Warden)⁸. Welcoming the natural world into our space, we have moved from indoors



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

to outdoors and back to indoors using our sticks as an initial provocation, then adding other natural materials to challenge the children's thinking. This has created new and different learning opportunities and experiences. Our work with sticks continues, albeit in a different direction but nevertheless remaining true to the fact that **“Nature offers ‘magical moments’ to deepen learning in a way that is closely connected to the child.”** (Claire Warden)⁹.

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4 Year Old Kinder

‘Welcome’ to differences and similarities

“

‘Who am I’ may be represented as a concept of what I know about myself and how I share this. How others see me and how others represent themselves..”

The focus of our Victorian Early Years Learning and developmental framework curriculum is underpinned by the understanding of oneself in relationships with others; by the experiences we encounter with others and how this shapes us. It states, **“Each child at the centre of the Ecological Model is unique, active, and engaged in their own learning and development within their local context, shaped by their family, culture and experience”**.¹

These concepts were explored within groups of cross class Kinder 4 children at the beginning of the year. One of the main intents of coming together in these groups was for children to gain further experiences with children from other classes and in turn share greater points of views and understandings.

The children in these groups were not as familiar with each other as they were with the children in their own class.

Reflecting on the groups’ comments about the concept of **what ‘welcome’ looks like**, provided an understanding of what it means to welcome ‘same’ and ‘different’. The children listened to and viewed the picture story book ‘I’m like you, you’re like me’ (Lindy Gainer)², which explores the uniqueness of the individual and the value of the group. The story highlights diversity of families and their traditions, children’s interests and what make their friendships and connectedness.

This session followed with a discussion on what is the uniqueness that makes ‘me’ and connects ‘me’ to others. Using direct observation of themselves, the groups explored a new material; that of charcoal which is by its very nature is open to interpretation and change. It is not like a pencil with a definite mark, nor a texta that decorates easily. Rather charcoal invites the evolving as well as accidental experiments. Perhaps with a brush of a hand or a finger a mark may soften or disappear as a new layer appears. Charcoal can redefine, similar to the bolding of a font, to emphasise a statement; not in a provocative manner but rather directing the viewer to look and wonder. The children explored different lines, shades and tones to emphasise one feature about themselves even though no colour was used. (Fig. 1)

The groups viewed and discussed paintings of self-portraits and others about place which were featured in an exhibition this year at our National Gallery of works by Vincent Van Gogh; the masterpieces exhibition titled ‘Van Gogh and the Seasons’³. It is not uncommon for some to share their dislike for these paintings due to the choice of colours and style. This opinion was also shared in the picture book ‘Camille and the Sunflowers’. (Laurence Anholt)⁴. What was highlighted in this story was the underlying message by a father to his son that **“people often laugh at things that that are different, but I have got**

a feeling that one day they will learn to love Vincent's paintings"

(Laurence Anholt)⁵. The semi fictional story illustrates that people do not always accept differences, nor try to understand. It begs the question, how does this impact on who we are and how we welcome others?

I posed the question: **What does 'welcome' look like?**

Welcome to the world it's very nice for you to come

Nice people make it a good world.

And trees and houses.

Using clay to develop their ideas, some of the suggestions of the children included:

You need to have a smile on your face, wave your hand, and show them with your hands that you want them to come in to your house or kinder.

Look, I have made a human welcoming.

During these sessions, another focus was to explore new materials and skills to support the children's thinking.

What does the expression 'a human welcoming' mean?

The children shared how they might welcome someone new to their kinder. They suggested both verbal and nonverbal gestures. The beckoning of their hands indicating 'come with me', holding another hand, their facial expressions and welcoming verbal expressions.

They continued to offer examples represented in clay building onto their skills in manipulating this material as well as lending skills to each other. In thinking about the cooperation within the group it was suggested that in creating the 'human welcoming' each child could make one element; the legs, the arms, the head, the body to share with the group.

The group then used these elements to assemble the 'welcoming human'. They added facial expressions and body gestures. (Fig. 2-3)

Reflecting on the groups comments about the concept of what 'welcome' looks like, the group discussions seemed to focus on the welcoming of people through expressions and body language. They created models of people welcoming each other.

To broaden the concept the question was posed, **how can the environment be welcoming?**

We discussed with the groups their favourite places that they found welcoming. Some spoke about going to a park, for others it was the beach. This led to a discussion about the seasons and the feelings of people during the different seasons. When looking out of our studio window the children spoke about the trees with yellow and orange leaves. Some shared that not all trees look like this; some trees still had green leaves. Following a walk to these trees, the students collected some of the fallen leaves and returned to the studio. A discussion ensued about colours and emotions. Are some colours more welcoming than others are? Alongside these conversations, the students' interest transferred to the qualities of the leaves and the categorisation of them. What was the same and what was different? This appeared organic as each child placed their collection on the table; some ordering by colour, shape and or size. This rich scenario added to our focus. (Fig. 4)



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

It was at this time that the children noticed dark shapes, namely shadows, as they walked through the school grounds whilst observing the leaves and their colours. This was a provocation, which was planned to begin outside and then revisited back in the studio. (Fig. 5)

Although the students had progressed through the threads of this investigation, it was important to highlight change, differences and how one's approach to this could be positive for both themselves and others. Perhaps taking a risk into the unknown.

As the children ran across the field trying to jump into their shadows they commented on the coolness when standing in the shadow and the size and shape in the different positions they stood in. How was it that a shadow was on the wall and the ground at the same time? The trees had a shadow, as did the fence and the buildings...

There were many mysteries to uncover or to be curious about.

The children drew about what they had seen and what they understood.

To add to their discoveries and theories the story 'The Black Rabbit' (Philippa Leathers)⁶ offered another encounter. The children were ready to predict the context of the story from looking at the cover design; some children stated that the illustration of a black shaped rabbit was a shadow, others were emphatic that this was indeed a large black rabbit.

This was a journey of a small white rabbit who cannot seem to rid itself of the 'big black rabbit' and was finally relieved when it found refuge in the deep dark woods. Two eyes appeared in the dark and the small white rabbit was convinced that this was the return of the black rabbit (as were the children in this group), and so the small

white rabbit ran out of the dark woods. The black rabbit reappeared as did a rather large wolf that began chasing the small white rabbit. The unexpected twist in this story took the students by surprise. As the white rabbit felt destined to be pounced on by the wolf, the wolf ran back into the forest when confronted with the large black rabbit, which was in fact the small white rabbit's shadow.

What is it about a shadow which can prove to be both a scary proposition and yet an opportunity to explore and welcome the unknown.

'The Black Rabbit' story evoked mystery, anxiety as well as unexpected protection.

What understandings were shared in the groups?

The children explored their own shadow and created different scenarios using a drawn image of themselves in different light sources. This was filmed and narrated by the groups. Together their understandings focused on uncovering a sense of wondering and curiosity and, in turn, the welcoming of the exploration.

And so this investigation now became narratives where the children were giving their own experiences encountering shadows. A recurring focus was of shadows occurring in the night time.

What do you think you know about shadows?

You can see your body because it's black.

If it's black you can't see yourself. You are you and the shadow is the shadow.

The moon can make a shadow.

Your shadow can be in front of you, beside you and behind you.

When it's dark you can make different shadows with your hands.

I am not sure about the moons, are they normal? If a moon can find a sun they can swap if they want to. Some days sun and some days moon.

Sometimes the moon is a circle and sometimes it is a half.

Your body... if the sun and you are walking your body can make a shadow.

Moons can be a quarter or a half.

Or a whole.

Same sun shapes.

Sometimes the moon is half and the invisible circle when it is daytime. Half the moon at night and a full circle is coming.

I don't agree. At night I have seen a half too, not a full moon. And I have seen a full moon.

You can see the shadow of your own body only when it's light.

When it's night there is a tree shadow, only a little bit of a shadow. If it is night it is the shape in the night.

The children explored the equipment in the studio that included laptops, a data projector and an overhead project. **What made a shadow?** (Fig. 6)



Fig. 6

One could continue down the path exploring the science of light. However the groups seemed to enjoy creating scenarios of encounters with shadows.

'The Night Box' (Louise Greig)⁷ was a story which captured the students' imagination. It danced the line of maintaining imagination whilst at the same time it embedded information about light and time. A key would open a small box to release the night and contain the day. When the night was 'tired' it returned to the box and the day reappeared. What was life at night compared to life during the day? The eloquent and sometimes poetic phrases were discussed amongst the children and acted out. The acquisition of new vocabulary was another vehicle for the children to refer to when explaining similarities and differences.

As a culmination of this path of inquiry into the concept of welcoming, the groups created short films. Painting scenes and recording their voices they wanted others to understand their findings, possibilities of what could be and the back and forth of fact and imagination.

One of the children's stories, 'The Dream' echoed the children's thinking about what could be possible as the night unfolds. A child dreams of *an owl who takes him on his back to see the world at night. He looks down and sees the whales and their shadows in the sea. You*



Fig. 7

do not need to be scared. Your shadow is dark but it is just you and other things. (Fig. 7)

At this time, as educators, we reflected and evaluated the directions this investigation had traversed but had also meandered. I use these terms as the fluidity of the children's discoveries and applications should continue to be uncovered at certain junctures. The welcoming of the unknown is important to keep alive and to motivate us, both children and adults, to want to explore, meet new challenges and welcome differences as we collaborate with others and seek others opinions and research.

In the story, 'What do you do with an idea?' (Philippa Leathers)⁸. It explores the options that an idea can be shared and developed or it can remain as an idea. The character in this story is a golden egg shape with legs and a crown, representing 'an idea'. This character follows a boy everywhere, although the boy does not encourage it to do so. The boy tries to hide it for fear of what people would say. The boy decides however to grow the 'idea' and to enjoy having it around. The 'idea' says to him that "it is good to have the ability to see things differently." And so reminding us that 'I am who I am because of others around me'. It encourages us to not always seek the known but risk seeking the unknown.

I have ideas when I am outside.

Be brave and welcome the unknown and the opportunity to know more.

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“Peace is a feeling that lives in our hearts.

Peace is happy, calm, rested, kind and proud”



“

If we are to reach real peace in the world, we shall have to begin with the children.”

Gandhi

“Young children have a right to a safe and secure childhood which allows them to explore, think, do and be surrounded by respect and care. It is only with safety and security that young children can achieve their full potential as they learn to live and grow in the world around them.”¹

This year ‘welcome’ has been an umbrella theme in our ELC. We questioned whether the word ‘welcome’ has a positive connotation to it? What do the children understand from this word? *It means come and join in. You got to be happy and smile when you welcome someone. If you look sad then people will think you are not happy to see them and then they will not feel welcomed. One of the children said we welcome peace in our class. We sing a song ‘Salam’ for our Shabbat every Friday morning in our class. The children learnt that it is an Arabic word which means peace. ‘Peace’ is a greeting or blessing in many cultures, it welcomes others. Different cultural traditions contain similar approaches to peace. In Hebrew Shalom Elec hem means peace upon you. We asked the children what is peace? Where can we find peace? Peace is a feeling that lives in our hearts. How do we welcome peace? Do we need peace just in our class? We need peace for the whole world. What would peace look like? I would draw a circle because the world is a circle and we need peace in the world.*

The concept of peace for me is a calm feeling which comes from respect for myself and for others. If I don’t experience calm within myself I believe it is very hard to be peaceful towards others.

Is peace more than the simple tranquility desired by many in the world? Is peace about justice and respect for everyone’s basic rights? **“It is important to understand issues of equity, diversity, peace and respectful practices for creating a peaceful and respectful community.”²**

We asked the children when they feel peaceful:

When someone listens to me

When I am in a quiet place

When I am listening to the music at rest time in kinder

Under the tree in the park,

When we light the Shabbat candles and the lights are off in the room

When we are quiet

When we don’t fight it is peaceful

When you are nice to others you will feel peace in your heart

When I sit on my bed and read a book to myself

Where do children’s understanding of peace come from? In their relationships with other children and adults? When they observe

those people interacting with each other? **“We think children’s everyday interactions build an understanding of peace, to experience what it feels like to be respected, welcomed, listened to, to share, to have others share with them and how conflicts are resolved with minimum compromise”**³

One of the children brought a story book titled ‘In my Heart’ by Jo Witek to share with the class. This book is about feelings, describing different emotions with different coloured hearts.⁴ (Fig. 1)

The children wanted to draw a love heart and then colour it.

I don’t know how to draw a love heart?

I will help you.

The bottom of the heart is pointy.

The heart looks a little bit like a triangle.

It is wide on the top and has two bumps.

Helping my friend to draw, makes me feel peaceful and happy.

During these discussions the children felt that peace is a happy and calm feeling. **“Maintaining a commitment to a peaceful and respectful community is not always easy. It is important to remember why teaching peace to children is important and to use the inspiring moments of each day to transform some of the challenging moments.”**⁵

To further extend this focus we spoke about the importance of listening to and reading each other’s facial expressions. We used flash cards of facial expressions to describe emotions such as happy, angry, proud, calm, peaceful and worried. Each week the children decided which emotion they would like to draw. (Fig. 2)

Working on one emotion each week, the children and teachers sat together and discussed how they would draw a face with a particular emotion. This involved highlighting the facial expressions. Their drawings were then shared with the whole class. This highlighted the importance of using different mediums such as drawing to recognise facial expressions when dealing with each other. We asked the children if they could describe different emotions with different colours.

When I am peaceful my heart is red.

My heart is like a rainbow. (Fig. 3)

The children were genuinely interested in sharing their drawings of their hearts with the class. We wondered how we could further share their understandings of these hearts in other ways. A wooden heart that was a size of a child’s palm was passed around to the children during our morning circle. Interestingly the children discussed the feel of the wooden heart. (Fig. 4)

It is heavy that means it is full of feelings

It is warm

It has lines

It is made of wood

It is smooth that means it is happy



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

If it was bumpy then it would mean that it has a sore and the heart is not happy

Can we make a love heart with clay?

Using the clay children encounter some challenges:

This is a very hard work

I don't think I can do this

I can help you

First you need to take clay that is not very big or small

Then you need to roll it like a ball on the table to make it smooth.

We want a smooth heart not a bumpy one

Then we press the clay on the top to make two bumps

The heart shape has to be wide on the top and narrow at the bottom

Using water makes the clay smooth, also makes clay shine.

If it is hard work you keep trying and that's how it will become easy and that's how you learn.

We also used wire to make 'love hearts'. The children's families were given the opportunity to make a heart and add these to our hearts made in the classroom, thus connecting our class community in peace. Each heart was a symbol of our strength; that we are many but we are one; we are all different but are united as one. (Fig. 5 & 6)

"It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it." (Eleanor Roosevelt)⁶.

As we continue our journey of peace, this investigation is certainly helping the children to understand feelings that live in our hearts:

When it is quiet it is peaceful.

When it is peaceful I can concentrate what I am doing and I like that.

"Let us more and more insist on raising funds of love, of kindness, of understanding, of peace. The rest will be given" (Mother Teresa)⁷.



Fig. 6

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Why are the butterflies so quiet?



“

Because they need us to make more noise and to dance with them.”

My love of nature and passion for the outdoors is known and welcomed by the children in my class. We have often used many of the beautiful and inviting outdoor spaces that are part of our school.

Our school kitchen garden is one space that has played a special part in the lives of the children in our group. It has created opportunities for long, rambling walks and conversations about nature as we head towards the garden. We have observed and documented changes in the kitchen garden as the seasons have come and gone, and we have welcomed the chickens as new friends as well.

As a team of educators, we discussed how we would consider the word ‘welcome’ and the different possibilities it created in our ELC. We considered the word ‘welcome’ in the context of welcoming the kitchen garden as another space or ‘third teacher’ where the children’s explorations could lead them to new discoveries and theories about the world.

At a recent conference, Mark Church, spoke about a metaphor of finding your piece of driftwood; something that appeals to you and that you could keep and use at another opportunity.¹ I collected many pieces of driftwood from that conference and from other sources.

Carla Rinaldi writes, “**In sum, today we see much more emphasis on children’s relationships with nature and the outdoors, and on the relation of living plants to the emotional and physical nourishment of human beings. We see explicit elements to bring the outside in and take the inside out... where children investigate plants, the sea, the air, and consider the future of the earth.**”²

She also goes on to define teacher research as “**An attitude and an approach in everyday living—not only in schools but also outside of them—as a way of thinking for ourselves and thinking jointly with others, a way of relating with other people, with the world around us, and with life. The teacher researches these questions: Why? What happened? What does it mean? What else could happen if...?**”²

How would the children enter a relationship with a space that was already very familiar to them?

How would the children move within these spaces and what gestures, emotions and words did they use to describe these spaces?

Which aspects of the kitchen garden would be most attractive to them?

How would the children represent these spaces?

What tools, routines and technology did we feel would best support our research and documentation?



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

What role would technology play in facilitating and supporting the children's thought and theories about the garden?

The children were previously interested in picking fruit and vegetables for cooking experiences. With our new research questions in mind we re-entered the garden. (Fig. 1-2)

The children walked on the paths noticing the flowers in bloom, the creatures they could see and hear.

After some time, we brought them together and asked, 'What did you see? What did you think? What did you wonder?'³

I think the flowers taste like broccoli!

I think there are lots of hiding spaces.

Why are there lines in the wood?

Why are the butterflies so quiet?

I wonder why the owls are here?

We then asked the children to "Step Inside" one aspect of the garden;

I am the tree with all the blossoms. I'm telling everyone that spring is coming.

I am a butterfly with big wings. I like going to the flowers to collect nectar.

I am a chicken. I like going 'buk, buk' and laying eggs.

I am this flower. I am a bit spiky and I look a bit like a spider.

Loris Malaguzzi writes "**Children need the freedom to appreciate the infinite resources of their hands, their eyes, and their ears, the resources and forms, materials, sounds and colours.**"⁴

The children's reflections and discussions about their encounters with the garden gave us the opportunity to support their thoughts and theories in multiple ways.

Some children were interested in looking closely at the plants, flowers and grasses in the garden. Their curiosity was stimulated further through using microscopes to view what they had collected. The children had been looking at leaves and feathers in the classroom, and so bringing the microscopes to the garden was a natural progression to this. (Fig. 3)

Some children drew by observation whilst other children used iPads to document their images. (Fig. 4)

Some children noticed the quiet and silence of the garden. They felt this needed to be changed. The children wanted the noise to be themselves:

Why are the butterflies so quiet?

Because they need us to make more noise and to dance with them.

We need to dance in the garden.

We need to pretend to be the bees and the butterflies and the owls so they can see we are friendly.

A small group of children who were interested in pursuing this equipped themselves with musical instruments and others wore



Fig. 5

their dancing clothes when they returned to the garden. When the children played the instruments, they danced and changed into bees, snails, owls, chickens and birds.

Whilst discussing and reflecting with a colleague about the footage of videos of the children dancing and dramatizing, further questions were raised:

What Apps could we use to support the children's curiosity to create noise and movement for the garden?

How could we use the children's images and theories about the garden in another context?

How could we record the children's stories and excitement about their encounters with the kitchen garden?

We have many resources available to us in our school; science learning tools, digital technology, and colleagues with knowledge and experience. To answer these questions I utilised these resources and met with colleagues in different areas to access different learning tools.

The children used two Apps to create imaginative stories. (Fig. 5)

Some children experimented with sounds using musical instruments and body percussion to create the noises of the kitchen garden, and the sounds that the butterflies need to flourish.

A space was created where images of the kitchen garden and video footage of the children in the garden were used as a backdrop on our interactive white board. An assortment of instruments, plants and photos were positioned in the same space, all to stimulate and provoke the children's imaginations and ideas:

We need instruments to help us make the noise.

The shakers sound like the bees buzzing and collecting their nectar.



Fig. 6

You start with the triangle, that's the butterflies flying. Now it's the chickens' turn. I play the bells... (Fig. 6)

Together with the children we reflected on all these encounters and wondered how we could collect them to create a tangible memory for these children and for the new children in this classroom next year. What celebrations would we create that could share the beauty of the garden, the creatures we encountered, and the stories of the children about this journey?

Maura Rovacchi, an atelierista from the city of Reggio Emilia in Italy comments; **"Aesthetics is the thread that connects the real world and the imagined world of children and adults. It connects our sentiments and feelings, our logic and reasoning together. Education gets its life from life."**³⁴

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Images:

1. Looking at the blossoms on the tree
2. Looking at plants closely through microscopes
3. Looking at a leaf through the microscope
4. Drawing by observation
5. Using iPads to create stories
6. Recreating the sounds of the garden

Kinder 4M

If you think you will
have imagination



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

“

What is our imagination, what is its importance and for what purpose do we have imaginary thought? Imagination is an intangible element in us all. Can we make our imaginations visible and can we ‘welcome’ others into our thoughts?”

A dictionary definition for imagination is “the ability to form a picture in your mind of something that you have not seen or experienced; the ability to think of new things”. To see things beyond reality.

According to the children in Kinder 4M it is simple as:

If you think, you will have an imagination

They view their imagination to be mainly in their head but also in their heart:

It is in your head and you can feel it in your heart too. (Fig. 1)

Do these children understand the power they hold in their heads and hearts? We need to acknowledge this power within the child and that children have the right to be active participants in their own lives and their communities, as supported by the United Nations Rights of the Child (Britt & McLachlan)¹. Albert Einstein is quoted as saying **“Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world”** (Kolbe)², acknowledging the importance of an imagination in us all. (Fig. 2)

You can't see your imagination, it's in your brains, you never know.

We researched the brain to see if we could find our imaginations. Does it physically exist? We looked at a scan of the brain that we researched from the Internet. The children decided that the *swirly bits* in the middle are where their own imagination resides. Research by the Department of Psychology and Brain Sciences, at Dartmouth College, partially supports the children's theory. It is believed that the brain does not have a specific area allocated to imagination, but the imagination works through a “mental workplace”, a neural network that likely coordinates activity across multiple regions of the brain (Nordqvist)³.

The research conducted by the children is supported by the research of Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist. Vygotsky states **“the brain is the organ that combines and creatively reworks elements of this past experience and uses it to generate new propositions and new behaviour”**. He also states that **“this creative ability, based on the ability of our brain to combine elements is called imagination”**⁴. This then defies the dictionary definition of imagination being made of new ideas. Imagination is made of new ideas taken from a collection of memories.

This is also supported by the Reggio Emilia approach of **“memory as offering the possibility of transformation; creating a place of finding yourself; constructing opportunities for the social construction of knowledge”** (Giamminuti)⁵.

Could we test this hypothesis? Are the ideas the children see in their imagination a collection of past memories put together in new ways?

The children began by closing their eyes and reflecting on what they could see. What colours can you see? What colour is your imagination? (Fig. 3)

Light blue and dark blue, silver and gold because they make me feel happy in my imagination.

Pink, red and purple. I also have some orange and blue.

Green.

Red pink and pink make red.

I choose pink. I see your heart beating and your imagination too.

The sky is pink when it is getting daytime and the clouds are pink. I see pink.

If you cannot name the colour what else can you call it?

It is strawberry ice cream colour.

Cucumber colour. Cucumber colour is dark green and inside is light green.

Reminds me of tomatoes as red is nearly pink.

The names the children gave their colours supports the Vygotskian theory of memories being reworked to create imaginative ideas.

The children were then offered the opportunity to mix the colours they could see in their minds, the colours of their imaginations.

To make pink we need red and white.

Purple is coming up on the top, blue on the bottom.

All the colours mixed will make a rainbow (Fig. 4)

Allowing the children to give their words dimension and to make visible what they were seeing in their minds, honours the words of Carla Rinaldi in *Reimagining the Child* when she says, **“A child is always open to what is new and different. A possessor and builder of the future, not only because children are the future but because they constantly re-interpret reality and continuously give it new meaning”** (Rinaldi)⁶.

The children of Kinder 4M had made connections with past ideas and knowledge and re-interpreted them into their own imaginative thoughts. The children were then given the opportunity to develop the shape of their imagination, providing another dimension.

They were presented with a black and white headshot of themselves and a black fine liner with which they could create a connection with their own image and a relationship with their imagination.





Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

“Through art, children make connections between ideas, connections between symbolic thought and visual representation.” (Britt & McLachlan)⁷

Again there seemed to be a collection of past memories recreated into new ideas.

There is a puppy, a dog house, a chicken, a nest. Chewing gum wrapper, a cough lolly and a cough lolly wrapper.

A basketball player, a soccer player, a sheep eating carrots, a bunny rabbit, a pizza and 2 flags.

It's a party around my head. (Fig. 5)

There is humour, beauty, joy and poetry in the children's descriptions of their imaginations and as Vecchi states these are an integral and important part of knowledge building⁸.

The children have developed verbal descriptions of their imaginations interwoven with the graphic language of mark making to give deeper thinking to their ideas. Their imaginations were also incorporated into the languages of wire and clay.

Again using the image of themselves and their own drawn representation of their imaginations.

These are all the little pieces of my imagination and inside they are attached together. (Fig. 6)

This child's description of his wire worked imagination is almost a scientific reflection of the actual structural neural network in our brains thought to be our imaginations (Nordqvist)⁹

The children were then asked the question of how can we show people, beyond our classroom, our imaginations? How can we 'welcome' them into our thoughts?

When you welcome someone that means you're letting them in.

We can draw imagination altogether. We can draw so they can come to us in our imagination. They can go inside our imagination.

The children were then offered a combination of their own images on one large piece of paper. They were invited to draw if and when they felt like it.

We'll do it together as our pictures are there. (Fig. 7)

The children decided on small groups that would work together at any time, encouraging them to think for themselves. This gave them the freedom to make decisions of when and where their imaginative thoughts occurred (Grant)¹⁰. Joining with their peers in collaborative ideas and making them visible. Showing us their ideas, their imaginary thoughts and allowing us to try and understand their thinking. As Loris Malaguzzi said in 1979 **“If you don't show me how can I understand?”** (Giamminuti)¹¹

Your imagination is so important 'cause it gives you ideas and it helps you learn about stuff you don't know yet.

It's huge.

Are we any closer to quantifying the importance of imagination? Maybe not but we have been privileged to be welcomed into the thought processes and ideas of these children, into their imaginations. Perhaps the power of the imagination is something we will have to leave to our imaginations...

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Prep

Welcoming perspectives



“

This democratic view of others, such as families and citizens, as interlocutors is enabled by a perspective which favours process and search for meaning over product and certainties.”

This year the Early Learning Centre embraced the umbrella theme of 'welcome'. As the Prep children entered a new and welcoming environment they were asked the question, what does 'welcome' look like? They painted their thinking and shared their understandings (Fig. 1).

Shaking hands and you say 'welcome to my house'.

Welcoming in the house to use the fire-place.

Welcoming your baby from the tummy.

This initial dialogue demonstrated the different points of view within our community and commenced a collective inquiry into the 'welcoming of perspectives'.

In her book 'Dancing with Reggio Emilia', Stefania Giamminuti writes, **"Creating a space for shared research is essential to building a community of learners, where the rights of the children, parents, and educators are honoured."** Along this line of thought, our Prep space became the initial provocation for a rich collective inquiry into the idea of 'welcoming perspectives'. As a result of the children's curiosity about the outside, our class started to collect many little and big natural objects. With a keen interest, the children explored making many representations of these objects from a single perspective.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

These opportunities not only allowed the children to initially engage with the idea of 'what is a perspective', but they were also able to demonstrate their growing abilities to document their learning and make their thinking visible through the 'the hundred languages of children'³. The children explored a multitude of materials – grey led pencil, charcoal, paint, iPads – to create representations of natural objects from a single perspective (Fig. 2-3).

Our class inquiry developed further after reading 'Circle' by Jeannie Baker⁴ in a soundscape of birds and breeze. Inspired by Jeannie Baker's illustrations, the children used fine liner and pencil to capture the perspective of the godwit bird flying through the air. What an opportunity for opening new dialogues about greater perspectives; developing language of space such as *birds eye view, point of view, horizon, close, near and far*:

I am low in the sky. I can see houses but not lots of houses because I am so close.

I am very high. I can see the whole of Melbourne and my flock is underneath me.

I am up in the sky. I can see birds, the lights of the city, the waves, star fish and shells.

Following, immersed in our thinking about the earth, one child posed a question to the group, *If the earth is always turning, how come we can't feel it?* The children developed their own theories.

If the earth spins very fast that means it is going to be night time and day time very fast.

If you are waiting in a car when the lights are red, how can you stay at the same place that you are on? You are waiting and the earth is spinning and your car keeps still.

How come when you are on an aeroplane and you look down the earth is flat like the mat?

The children thought more deeply using water colours to represent the earth from the point of view of an aeroplane or a rocket. They also compared real-life near and far view points by sketching the

ELC building from different perspectives (Fig. 4). The children's conversations started to thread the metaphor of the visual perspective to the personal perspective. As our class community developed a deeper trust and understanding of comparing perspectives, they, too, started to show a growing understanding of what it means to welcome each other's points of view.

If you don't learn from each other, when you grow up you won't know anything.

A conversation is making a plan together.

You can learn from one another because we can teach each other.

Giammiunti highlights the importance of rich dialogue in the Reggio Emilia school space. **"Pedagogical documentation was born from a democratic yearning to create a forum for dialogue; to re-conceptualise the school as a transparent space/place for adults and children to encounter each other, to debate, to agree, to disagree, to share, construct, and de-construct knowledge."**⁵

Accordingly, as the year continued, the children took their understandings of 'welcoming perspectives' to develop more intricate skills in establishing effective learning dialogues, which we called 'building ideas'. In Deb Curtis' educational research on 'The Art of Awareness' she highlights the value of thinking together. She writes, **"... we can recognise the opportunity that hearing different experiences and new points of view gives us, even if we are uncomfortable. It is an opportunity to expand our thinking and our humanity."**⁶

Returning to metaphors, the children started this new thread of inquiry into 'building ideas' by creating buildings made by wooden blocks in small groups. This was inspired by one of the children's observations about what a conversation looks like:

You have to listen to what people say. Because if you don't listen you may do something that they don't want you to. You might mess it up. Like if you were building a building, it will be messed up.

The children consolidated their learning by writing three observations, two questions and one memory of the experience. During one reflective conversation, the children shared answers to the questions, what do you notice about developing one idea with many friends and what do you notice about developing one idea with even more friends?

Yesterday our chat was a bit complicated because we all wanted something else. Today was different because all of us were understanding what we said. It was not tricky like yesterday and people were not left out.

If the group is smaller there are less ideas and then you don't argue.

I noticed that the children's observations focused primarily on 'what we said' as opposed to 'what we heard'. How can we build ideas by welcoming listening? The children developed a classroom routine encouraging 'building ideas' by throwing a ball of wool to one another. After each time we reflected on the process, what does our web of wool tell us?

It is showing a lot of thinking, a lot of talking and a lot of brain exercises.

It shows how big our conversation is.

It means that we had a class community talk.

All of us had similar ideas and connections.

It was like we were sharing our ideas in a different way, so they were the same and connected, but different.

This shows us that if people have nearly the same idea to you, you can learn from them.

I wondered, can we listen more if we simply don't speak? How can we grow as deep thinking learners by engaging in a conversation without speaking? 'We revisited our initial question, what does 'welcome' look like?' This time the children individually designed a colour, a symbol and an image using the iPad app Art Set to represent their thoughts. Then, the children used their design as inspiration to paint collectively on a shared canvas in the studio- 'a space for shared research' as a non-verbal 'forum for dialogue' (Fig. 5-6).

And so, brush to canvas, our inquiry develops; we continue to build ideas together, to link theories, to welcome each other's perspectives, to grow by listening, to develop integral learning skills and to 'expand our thinking and our humanity'.

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Fig. 4

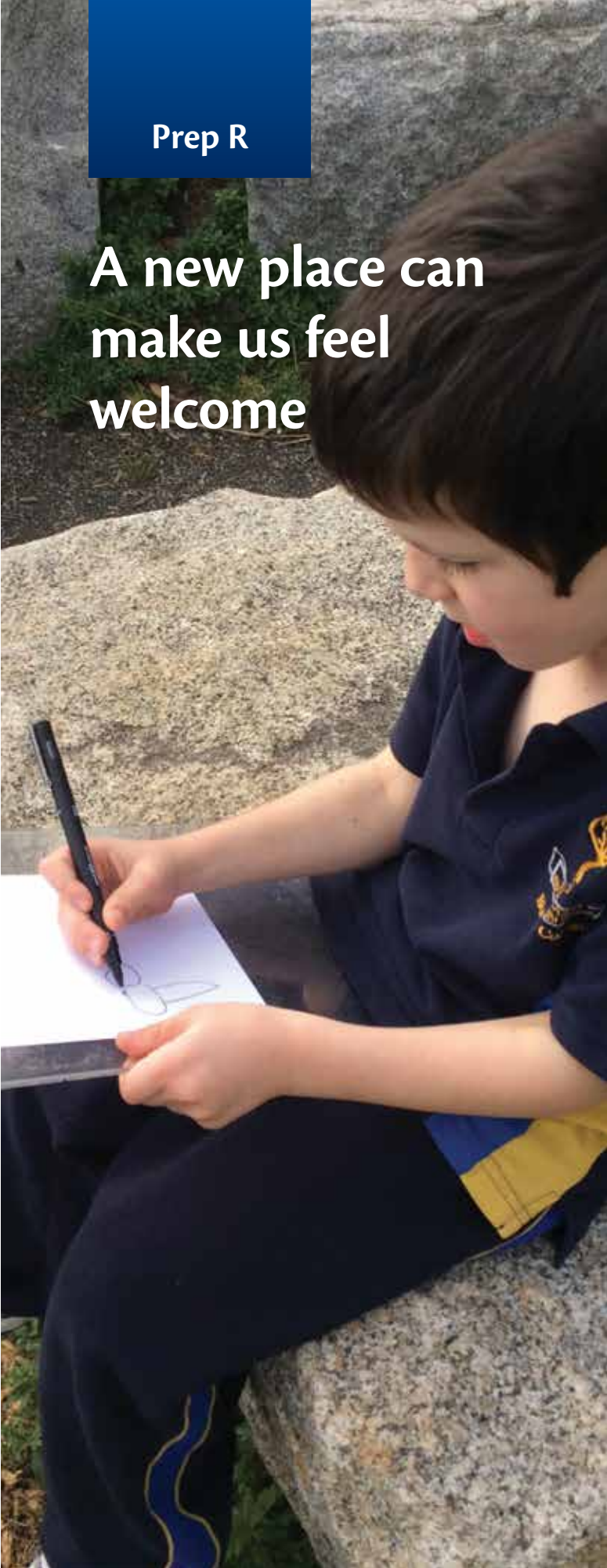


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

A new place can make us feel welcome



“

At the beginning of the year when we looked at our 2017 ELC umbrella theme ‘Welcome’ one of the questions that came to mind was, does the creating of an environment that is welcoming foster learning, positive relationships, deep level thinking, respect and creativity?”

We wondered whether the environment would play an important role in how a new group of children interacted with each other and the adults around them. Would it play a crucial part in how the children learnt, thought, created, experimented and evolved?

In his book ‘Intellectual Character’ Ron Ritchart looks at the environment as being one of the eight cultural forces that impact on the learning and thinking of students. He also speaks of how the way the environment is set up and used can facilitate thoughtful interactions.¹

With this in mind we chose to focus on how the children felt about the environment within our school, both inside and outside. We began by walking around the school and watching how the children responded and interrelated with each other and the spaces they were in. When we came upon the area outside the main school library we noticed a distinct shift in the children’s interactions and reactions towards the space and each other. There appeared to be an increase in the children’s energy, an air of excitement as well as a sense of freedom. They asked if they could remove their shoes and socks, ran around joyously and began to explore all the nooks and crannies and other aspects of this space. The children named it their ‘special place’ and would ask on many occasions if they could visit the ‘special place’, have lunch there, listen to stories or have time to explore there. We reflected on how this area seemed to have had a profound impact on all the children in our class. Every one of them delighted in having the opportunity to go there. What made such an impact on them? Was it the undulating grassy area, the wide open space, the places within the space that they could explore? In order for us to gain a greater insight into the children’s thinking we asked them what makes this place so welcoming to you?

I like this place because you can play in it, you can go on the rocks and you can look at the trees. The grass feels soft and it’s fun to run in it with no shoes and socks. I feel good here because the sun’s out, you can watch the butterflies and hear the birds. It’s a quiet place and I feel calm.

This place is welcoming to me because it has beautiful things like lovely rocks, secret places to go to, you can hide in those places and they’ve got



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

flowers in it. I feel happy here because I get to relax and it's a peaceful place because it's quiet. (Fig. 1-3)

This evoked in us the feeling that this particular environment seemed to speak to the children, welcome them and in turn invite them in, to explore, reflect, relax and interact.

Stefania Giamminuti states that 'Much like a story written on sheets of paper, made up of words connected to each other to make meanings, so an environment is made up of connected elements which predispose us to our doings and sayings.'²

What feelings and emotions did the 'special place' arouse in the children and why? What did these feelings and emotions look like to them?

The welcome place makes me feel calm inside and when I am calm I see things that are special to me like love hearts because I love the place, wavy soft grass because it makes me think of softness, and butterflies because they give me a peaceful feeling. I used lots of colour because colour makes me really calm.

The welcome place makes me think of the tickly, soft grass so I painted swirls because that makes me think of tickly. The feeling of tickly makes me happy. I did different sizes of swirls, big swirls are when I'm really happy and having fun. (Fig. 4-6)

We thought about how we could create spaces inside that would welcome the children and invite them to belong. A sense of belonging and feeling welcome is important for children and presents itself in different ways for each child. **"Children need places to watch from and hold back in, places in which to hide and seek things and places which enable them to pause and reflect."**

Could we create an environment within the classroom that made the children feel the same way or would giving the children more time in the 'special place' enhance the children's thinking, learning and relationships both with the environment and each other?

In order to make an informed decision we asked the children what would make our classroom space more welcoming.

I chose a guinea pig because they are really calm and you can play with them and they would make our classroom more welcoming because when we have no-one to play with you could sit by them or play with them or talk to them.

I chose rainbow colours because everyone likes colours and colours would be welcoming because they make us feel happy.



Fig. 5

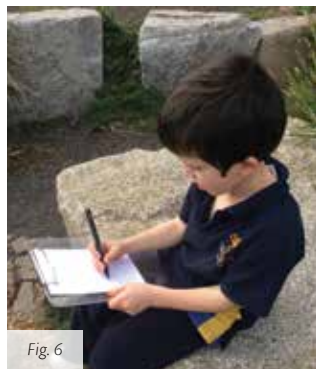


Fig. 6



Fig. 7

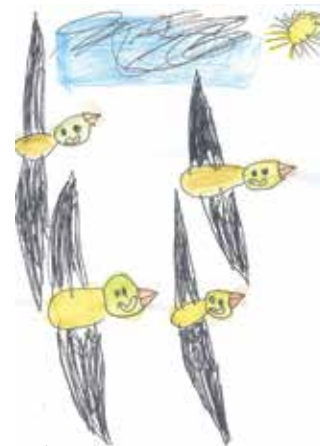


Fig. 8

The more we listened to the children's conversations and looked at their drawings and reflections the more apparent it became that the outside spaces seemed to have a magnetic pull on the children. We visited the 'special place' when it was cold and windy, when the grass was wet and when it was hot and sunny. The children always seemed to delight in being there and feeling the wonder of the space. They noticed the changes that occurred due to the changing seasons, the colour of the leaves, the beginning blossoms, the sounds of the birds, the beauty surrounding them. This natural area offered them a stimulus that looked beyond the surface, which enabled them to become emotionally and personally involved in what was around them.

Using the 'step inside' routine as a provocation we asked the children to think about one aspect of the space and to use all their senses describe it and then explain why they chose that particular aspect.

I am the sky. I see people playing in the playground, grass, trees, butterflies on flowers, teachers, clouds, Bialik College, animals, the sun. I hear the wind, birds, flapping of butterflies' wings. I smell the children, the sun, birds, flowers. I feel the wind blowing, hotness from the sun.

I like being the sky because it makes me feel happy.

I chose to "Step Inside" the sky because I can see everyone and everything.

I am a flower, a daisy, I am yellow, brown and green. I see bees flying around, butterflies, kids running around or playing with balls, birds flying, kids chatting or playing, teachers chatting. I hear bees buzzing, butterflies tapping on my petals, children screaming and jumping, balls being bounced and thrown. I smell different kinds of foods, honey. I feel the sun and the wind, the wind makes me cold and the sun makes me warm.

Being a daisy makes me feel happy especially because it is sunny.

I chose to "Step Inside" a daisy because I like flowers, they are pretty and they make me feel happy. (Fig. 7-9)

'Young children have a natural connection to nature that connects them to a space that they visit and get to know. Nature offers 'magical moments' to deepen learning in a way that is closely connected to the child. The ability for children to immerse themselves fully in their space, gives a freedom of thinking that allows a flow to take place.'⁴



Fig. 9

This seemed to ring true with the children in our class. They appeared to be at peace in our 'special place'. They looked at things more closely, revisited areas within the space and kept on finding more and more that captured their imagination and gave them that freedom of thinking.

So where to from here? This was my next question. My thoughts were, how could I utilise this space more often? How could I use this area as our classroom/learning environment? Knowing how important the environment is as another teacher, which fosters the children's engagement, deep thinking and curiosity, I wondered if this 'welcoming special place' could be another tool in the children's learning and thinking?

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A community of Learners



“

Ron Ritchhart, when speaking about a group, says **“What makes a group is not thinking about us as individuals but as a collective group.”**”¹

So as the new Prep year began, our umbrella topic of “Welcome” was a perfect entry point in relation to how our group would evolve into a collaborative and supportive class community.

When unpacking the word “Welcome” we saw how the children considered inclusion as an essential part in creating a feeling of welcome.

It means come on in anywhere you haven't been and someone will introduce you.

It can be that you are welcoming someone special into your life.

If you don't welcome someone in they don't come in. They don't feel that you want them to be there.

If you want to welcome somebody, you welcome them into the game or whatever you are doing. You introduce how to play, or how you do it. (Fig. 1)

We saw how acceptance within the group necessitates learning from each other through collaboration.

You can welcome somebody into your class.

When someone helps you, you feel welcome.

The children discovered a variety of keys in the studio. Their curiosity to find out what the keys were for, who they belonged to and which locks could be opened led to the analogy of a key unlocking many possibilities, linking the idea of welcoming and gaining access to feelings, ideas and imagination. (Fig. 2)



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

The key opens my heart. Chloe Rose has the key to my heart. When she opens my heart we are friends and rainbows come out because it is clear. (Fig. 3)

The key is to the world and houses and people are in the world. The key is what makes the world be here. I am the holder of the key.

We noticed that a sense of belonging and connection had many aspects but one central idea was that it depended on acceptance within a group.

When the children were asked what a group means to them we gained insight into their understanding of this concept.

A lot of friends together.

A group is a big pack, if someone is missing then they miss out on what the group is doing.

The children considered how a group works.

Team work, lots of people help out.

You need to listen to what your group is telling, don't be bossy.

You need to wait your turn.

Good manners, don't be silly and don't fight.

Telling people that their ideas are good and important.

“When young children in learning groups explore ideas together, they seem to operate according to two instinctive points: a strong sense of justice and the preservation of an atmosphere of pleasant cooperation.” (Mara Krechevsky)²

Collaboration, respect and recognition can determine the cohesive entity of the collective group.

Perhaps the questions we needed to ask were;

How can the learning and thinking of the group be enhanced?

What can help the group to further thinking and learning from each other?

In a team when I am playing footy. I am good at passing to other people. That's important in a team.



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

Being a good listener means you know what other people are saying and you can understand how they think.

We found that recognising one's strengths and feeling confident to share these skills with others made it possible to further the goals of the group. (Fig. 4)

Somebody good at Maths could make a chasey game fair by making teams equal.

“By planning and working in a group from a very young age, children learn to make effective use of collaboration strategies that make thinking together productive: negotiating skills, flexible thinking, listening to the ideas of others, humour, and building on ideas that come from the group.” (Mara Krechevsky)³

We felt it was important to look at other groups beyond the classroom environment in order to gain further understanding of how groups collaborate. This led us to investigate an insect colony.

The children met in small groups discussing, drawing and writing what they know about ants.

They posed questions and wonderings they had about ants.



Fig. 5

Is there a queen and a king ant?

Do ants stay together because they don't want to get lost? (Fig. 5)

The children here seemed to be asking if there was perhaps a hierarchy in this group/colony.

They also seemed to consider the feeling of security, felt when belonging to a group.

After watching two videos about ants, the children shared their observations.

Ants work as a team like we do.

People build houses as a team and ants build houses together. (Fig. 6)

We help each other pick up things and ants help each other to pick up things.

They don't want to get lost and they all help each other to get food.

Ants work together as a team to share food.

We noticed that the children observed how a common goal serves to unite the group. They recognised the team effort needed to reach their goal, which would benefit the group as a whole.

I saw an ant carrying a spider. The ant was just lifting the spider by himself; he was encouraging.

He was doing it by himself and he was getting fit and strong. When all his friends would see they would be very proud of him because he was doing it by himself and he was encouraging.

The individual achievements of the ants, recognised by the children, helped to create a sense of inclusivity and acceptance within the group. The individual was valued and was more likely to be accepted within the group as a valued contributor.

So the ant carrying the spider tried one way and another way to get the spider to move.

I think the ant persevered taking the spider.

By trying to get it again and again.

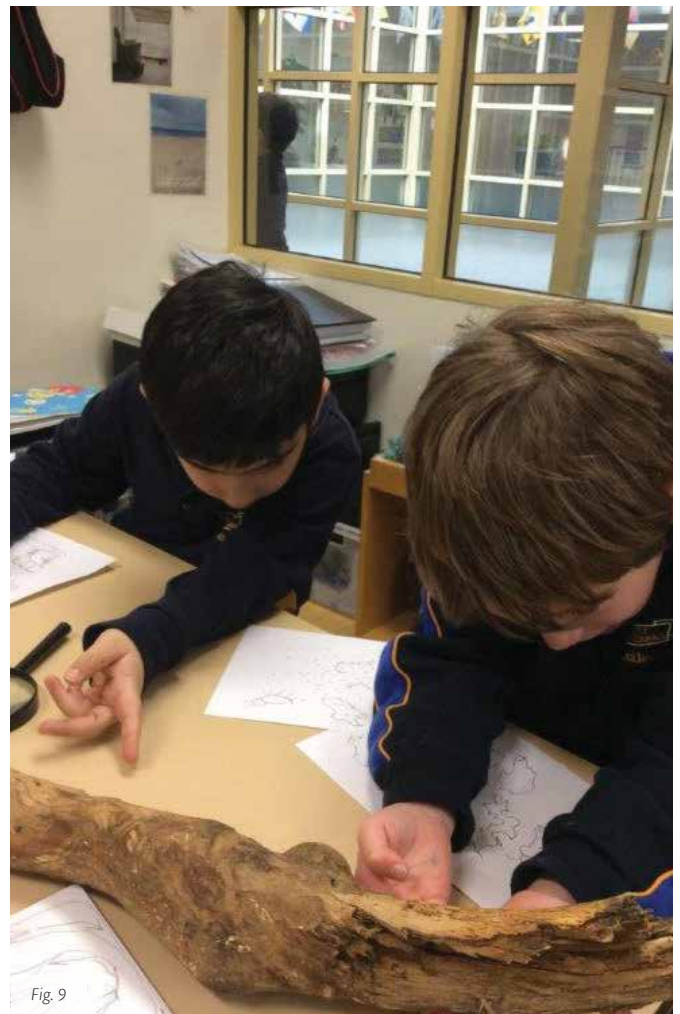


Fig. 9

The children's thinking reflects the values that are revered within their learning environment and how perseverance is not only encouraged but also celebrated by them.

“Becoming a group and forming a group identity are integrally tied to what individuals and the group as a whole come to know and understand.” (Mara Krechevsky)⁴

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Images

Fig. 1 Welcoming the group into a game of chess.

Fig. 2 Linking the idea of welcoming to keys.

Fig. 3 Linking the idea of the key to friendship.

Fig. 4 Recognising ones strength and feeling confident to share these skills

Fig. 5 Noticing and discussing how ants follow each other.

Fig. 6 Similarities between ants and people working as a group/team.



Year 1

What do I know about myself and what do I know about myself in relation to others?



“

This was an investigation to uncover how this concept would encompass some of the different languages to convey the students thinking and add to their knowledge and skills from their inquiry into how others may see the same provocation from different perspectives using the same materials.”

Most of these students had been together for two years and prior to this, many had been in the same kinder class for two years. In some ways, they knew each other well. However, the purpose of this investigation was to deepen questions by stepping inside their thinking; looking at different angles and being open to welcoming others views.

Artist Alexander Calder's use of wire in making portraits has been described as giving “... **viewers the ability to see and reflect on the different aspects of an individual. The portraits, some of which are suspended from the ceiling, moving and playing with the shadows on the wall, seek to illuminate aspects of the subject's personality, as Calder understood them, not definitely define it.**”(Childs, A.A.)¹

What might be 'behind a story' was the direction of the Year 1 cross class investigation. In some ways, for the students, what was not visible gave rise to discussion of what could have been and why. In this instance, the line of wire told a story but the negative spaces also did. Exploring and revisiting graphically what the students thought and sharing ideas was now to be challenged by new research questions for them that may not have an expected outcome; both verbally and with the use of materials. (Fig. 1)



Fig. 1

The students and teachers participated in a live streaming session from our school theatre with the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) during the David Hockney exhibition. The exhibition featured 700 works from the artist over the last 10 years. The exhibition highlighted the breadth of skills and interests of Hockney including portraits, self-portraits, still life compositions and landscapes. What captured the students' interests was watching the progression of his drawings recorded on an iPad showing how the images formed and came alive. Hockney describes this process using an iPad as **"like an endless sheet of paper on which an image magically appears"**.² These works also gave the effect of painting and furthered the students' understanding of the limitless possibilities one can explore to develop and share one's ideas.

During the planning of this investigation there was the intent that a thread would develop and culminate in the tradition of leaving a memory from this class level; somewhat of a gift to the ELC and those students entering after they had left.

From our forays into these experiences and the students' use of iPads to draw, paint, photograph, record and create their own documentation including the Book Creator app, the element of design and planning became more evident and was inspired by Hockney who used it in such an innovative way. (Fig. 2)

It was a series of 80 paintings depicting portraits of 80 friends and acquaintances of Hockney, each seated in the same chair that provoked thinking amongst the children about the concept of a chair and the relationships we have with it.

Concurrently an exhibition of innovative chairs was at the NGV that explored **"the significance of chairs as markers of design evolution and as objects embedded with meaning, expression, experimentation and utility"**. (NGV)³ These unique chairs created during the period 1980-2016 offered both creativity, imagination and functionality. The boundaries as to what constituted a chair and what were the expected prototypes were debunked here. A whimsical chair titled 'Fiona Blackfish' by Porky Hefer was on display, a large killer whale where perhaps you might dare to sit inside the cavernous mouth. The designer explored a **"continuous fascination with human-size nest environments and suspended furniture works"**. Another chair titled 'Red Rose chair' had petals that seemed to engage you to sit for a while. (NGV)⁴

In reflecting on the chairs in the ELC where our students use stools that are varnished and neutral in colour and have the opportunity to be moved and reorganised depending on the group formation. This fits with our pedagogy, which lends itself to not being fixed to an idea nor 'to one's seat'.

During a term break, the students and their families were asked to think about a favourite or specific chair in their home, or at a relative or friends house, photograph this and write about it.

Does one think about being in relationship with a chair? Some do, as read in the responses sent in from the students and their families.



The 'welcoming' chair

What is it about a chair that talks without speaking? Whose memory is imprinted yet open to making new memories, whose shape defines the past and can reshape for the future.

This chair is from my family, it came from my grandparents...

It has changed colours with the families...

This is my mother chairs where she sat and fed me...

Each child in my family has sat on this chair and now my brother sits on it. Sometimes I still do.

What more do you know about this chair?

The students shared their photographs or drawings of a chair that had some importance to them or their family. Using a thinking routine, 'think, pair, share' students gained further insights about each other's chairs and their family's story. (Fig. 3)

In asking the students to 'step inside' one element of their chair it offered insights beyond the visible as they became that part of this chair by sharing thoughts, feelings and observations; attributing a living element of what it could be to them and others.

I am the spinning part of the chair; it can spin up or down.

I am the backrest. Without me, the chair would not be comfortable.

The picture book 'Oi Frog' by Kez Gray⁵ offered a humorous story about the seats that creatures could sit on. "and that all animals have their special places to sit!" Together with its songlike rhyming, the students chorused the rhyme they anticipated would follow in subsequent pages. This added a literacy focus on the text type and a discussion about the dilemmas that the main character presented. Which seat was suitable for which creature and why? The illustrations also heightened the students' anticipation of the problems the characters could encounter and suggestions were offered. We were fortunate that two subsequent books by the same author namely 'Oi Dog' and 'Oi Cat' were published this year. What did the right seat for the right kind mean? These books provided a play on words that twisted and flipped meaning and reality. The frog, dog and cat each took turns in making the 'rules'. "From now on, dogs sit on logs not frogs", said the frog (Kez Gray)⁶

During this investigation, underpinned by the notion of 'welcome', which aligned with the ELC umbrella focus, the students continued to observe how others project their ideas using a range of mediums from the past and present. If we look at 'welcome' beyond the word, beyond the perfunctory greeting although important in social

interaction and cohesion, we can ask what other triggers elicit and engage introspection, reflection, participation and collaboration.

Isabella Gaetani Lobkowicz wrote, **“It’s curious how many designers design chairs, so many chairs, but nobody seems to think about the characters who are going to use them. I liked the idea that by slightly modifying the legs, back rest, seat I would be able to fit it to the person who’d sit on it. What does the perfect chair for the thinker look like? The enthusiastic, the undecided, the worrier etc. What does the perfect chair for the thinker look like?”**⁷

The whimsical chair designs from this author engaged students with humour. When one looked at each chair design, you had to relook, as what the eye and brain saw required reconfiguring.

Two legs of two chairs linked to each other was entitled ‘The Friendship Chair’. These metaphors prompted further observations of chair styles and the people who created them.

The students became acquainted with other artists throughout history whose work included the subject matter of chairs such as a series of paintings by Vincent Van Gogh. Chairs offered memories of a time and place. Suggested discussion points offered to the students included; What do you see? Where do you think the chair is? What makes you say that? Commentaries of a Van Gogh painting and that of a chair by his artist friend Gauguin state that the two paintings may have represented the contrasting temperaments and interests of the two artists.⁸

The students remarked on the materials that the chairs were made from as depicted in these paintings. Chairs that could have been made of materials from the local area such as flax and wood. In addition to the materials that may have been used to construct these chairs, the students continued to view and discuss the different styles and mediums used to illustrate the designs of these chairs. Other examples include a chair painted by artist Edgar Degas which one might presume, through his painting techniques, could be made from a velvet covering and a carved wooden frame. Another sketch of a chair using only a lead pencil focused on the folds and pleats and a depression in the cushion seat. In addition, who knew that a rocking chair had such a vast history of size, shape and decoration beyond the action of rocking.

“Since Antiquity, chairs have been utilised across diverse cultures and universally understood as a ubiquitous part of human culture. These are objects designed for use as seats of power, discourse, commerce, rest and domesticity. Their intended purpose, linked with their long roots in tradition, encode chairs with great social and cultural meaning.”⁹

Links to the quality of chairs and ourselves was referred to in the story **“The Lucky, Plucky Chairs”** by Rolf Fehlbaum. **“Like humans, chairs have a back, arms and legs and one might even say that all good chairs have a personality”**¹⁰

The students viewed a set of four seats and a table designed by Nicole Monks and titled ‘Nyinajimanha’, meaning sitting together. **“At an exhibition of her work on opening night, visitors were invited to sit around the ‘Nyinajimanha’ set of table and chairs and have a “yarn” – a clever word play on chat (yarn) while knitting (with yarn). The shape of each stool is a rounded U-shape, typically used**

in Aboriginal art to symbolise a person sitting because it resembles the shape made on the ground when you sit.”¹¹

The students had been exploring the different Indigenous Australian languages groups, and comparing the Australia map that was on the wall outlining the states of Australia and as represented on the Australian flag. They looked at a language group map noting how many groups there were across Australia.

Together with this information they began to explore how the terrain and its people could be represented such as Nicole Monks’ furniture. At a recent lecture by Senior Curator, Indigenous Art, NGV, Judith Ryan stated, **“There is no predictable form of Indigenous art. The artists like to experiment with new materials and look at the history and politics; ancient and modern design and stories belonging to country.”**¹²

When asked to explore these stools and table by Nicole Monks and using a thinking structure for deeper understandings we encouraged relooking and further comments. The students described what they saw, thought and wondered. Did the seats and table reflect some of the symbols they had seen within Indigenous paintings from a particular area?

Did you know the stools in the ELC have been here for more than nineteen years? What have they seen and heard? Who has sat on them? Who or what made those marks on the chairs?

The students listened, curious to hear about the longevity of the existing stools and their history.

New stools are welcomed into the ELC.

New stools arrived in the ELC. They were made of wood, not varnished or painted, they were waiting.

Each group carefully examined one of the stools as it was lifted onto the table. Did we see a quiver, a tremble? The students looked at them with what seemed like great respect as they carefully laid the stool on its side looking underneath as to the method by which the curved legs were attached. The grain of the wood was evident. The students passed their hands over the surface. *It’s smooth, not shiny.*

They would be the new stools to welcome the new children to the ELC as well as current students who would be entering new classes in the centre.

The students again thought about one aspect of the stool to ‘step inside’. Interestingly some students focused on the contribution their element of the stool could make.

I am the screws that keep the legs attached and make the stool strong.



Fig. 4

I am friends with the other legs. (Fig. 4)

The students admired the new stools and spoke to each other about *not sitting on them yet*.

The tradition for the Year 1 level has been to leave a gift every year as a memory of who has been there and their learning during this time. We proposed that the new stools could be a welcome gift from the Year 1 students who were leaving the ELC to progress to the primary school. The students embraced this idea. Each stool would capture, in a painted design, each group's thoughts about the concept of welcoming and what they felt was important for the incoming students to know.

Each student thought about a colour that would represent their idea together with a symbol and, lastly, what image they thought conveyed their message. Firstly, the students created individual designs for the stool. Then each group of students discussed their written, drawn and painted concepts.

At a further revisiting of these designs, the groups were asked to vote on the placement of the symbols for the stool design and a final group design was completed. This created a meaningful debate for students to verbalise the significance of their symbol for the new students as well as gain agreement on the position and size of the symbol on the stool. (Fig. 5)

Although one of the outcomes from this investigation would culminate in the Year 1 students presenting a 'welcoming' stool to the new classes, there continued to be an interest in the elements of design and purpose as we revisited the breadth of understandings during this investigation. This included ideas that a chair could be functional and yet innovative, it could be a metaphor, it could reflect a particular place and time, and it could be constructed with materials not commonly associated with a chair. Most importantly, the chair could be a statement about people, families, culture and history. The students were asked to think about the design of a chair they felt would consider all of these attributes. What would the design reflect? Who would use the chair? What materials would be required for its construction? The students had at their disposal resources to research these questions whilst in discussion with others in their group.

One could view this as a singular task although its purpose was also to uncover what the students now thought about the concept of 'welcoming'. This endeavour appeared to reignite the idea of designing something that would be a purposeful contribution for others, as the groups discussed what they believed were the needs or wants of the person they were designing the chair for. A grandfather, a grandmother, a parent? Another student proposed a design of a chair for their dog who was very much part of their family. Some designed a chair for themselves or a chair with a friend. A chair that could transform and provide ice cream and drinks and transform again with the press of a button to fly away to other parts of the world. A chair became a bed, a table, one that gave massages, a back scratcher.

This investigation grew the concept of mindfulness. Listening to others thoughts and designs and celebrating with them their innovative ideas, often with humour attached to their imaginative and wishful inventions.



Fig. 5

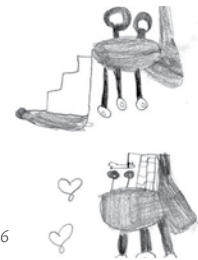


Fig. 6

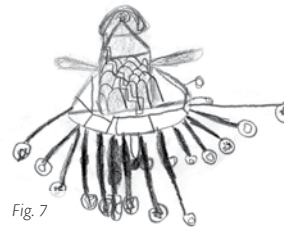


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

One student returned after thinking about his design said *I am changing the cords, it will not use electricity but a power pack of solar panels that you can take outside for 5 minutes and it will give you an hour of energy.*

The discussions during this investigation had engaged the students attention about the use of materials for different purposes; not only learning about what a material could do but where was it sourced and the way it displayed a specific colour, pattern or texture. (Fig. 6-7)

This investigation has indeed raised many questions, explored many languages including literacy, numeracy, digital and graphics. It has not been in isolation of one or another language and perhaps as a result of these explorations we could consider the following statement that befits the purpose of our intent in our curriculum and with regards to the future, **“The choices we make especially now can directly or indirectly influence an enormous chain of events which in turn could have a negative or positive impact on our planet and on our lives.”**¹³ (Fig. 8)

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We began our investigation this year with the provocation of 'Welcome'



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

“

Initially the children shared their thoughts of what 'welcome' meant to them. Many of the children drew and discussed buildings or a place when they spoke of what 'Welcome' meant to them.”¹

I felt welcome when I came into this class.

My Mum welcomes new people into our house when we have Shabbat.

Daphne welcomes people by showing them around our school.

We decided to further investigate a common place to the children – our school. We began by looking carefully at the entrance of our Early Learning Centre building. We asked the children how they felt as they entered the building. Did it make them feel welcome? If so, what was it that made them feel welcome? (Fig. 1 & 2)

There are so many windows. I think it is so people feel welcome to look into the classrooms.

I see Pam, Mandy and Julia. They make me feel welcome.

We continued by looking at other areas of the school and wondering if they were welcoming spaces. One of the areas the children looked at was the Kitchen Garden. The children became particularly interested in this space and we went back to visit it several times. They showed interest in the different plants that were growing in the space and wondered if they too could grow some plants of their own. The children began to document their wonderings.

When do you need to stop watering the plants? Is it the same for all plants?

When do the plants die?

Do the bugs help or hurt the plants?



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

On one visit, we met with Kitchen Garden Educator, Julie. She was able to pass down her knowledge by answering some of the children's questions. With this new knowledge, the children started to feel more confident in their ability to grow and harvest. (Fig. 3-5)

The children began tending to their own garden in the Early Learning Centre. They watched with excitement and wonder as the plants grew and changed. We used this garden as a provocation for a range of learning experiences in the classroom, including literacy, mathematics, social understandings and science.

Stephanie Alexander, an expert in gardening education, cites the benefits of having young children involved in growing and harvesting a range of plants.

“Gardening encourages cooperative effort, awakens understanding of landcare and water management, provides considerable boost to self-esteem and offers opportunities for physical education.”

We began to wonder if the children were making connections with their prior learning to their present learning.

Current research suggests that there is **“growing evidence that learning is about making connections - whether the connections are established by firing synapses in the brain, the ‘ah ha’ experiences of seeing the connection between two formerly isolate concepts, or the satisfaction of seeing the connection between the abstraction and a ‘hands-on’ concrete application”**.²

In the latter part of Term 2, the children harvested their vegetables. They decided as a group to sell the vegetables. They would use the money raised to buy new seedlings to continue their garden the following term. The rich learning experiences continued as they prepared for their stall. Some children practised being shopkeepers and learnt etiquette as well as the mathematics behind using money. Other children researched an appropriate price to sell the vegetables. We looked online to see what other competitors were

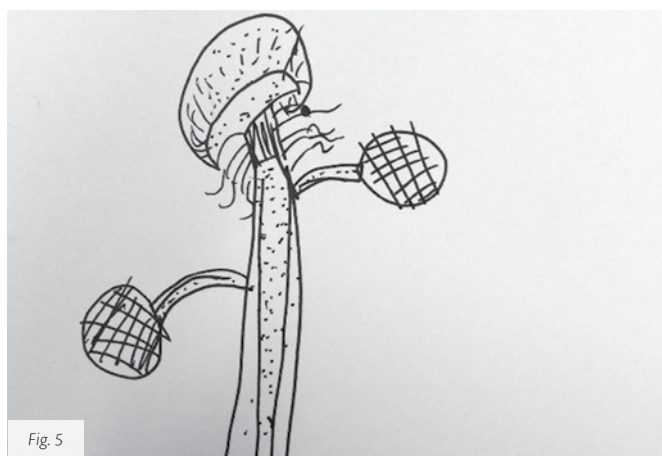


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

selling them for and thought about a competitive price for our vegetables. Another group researched packaging for our products. We compared different boxes and packaging and thought about what would be most attractive to our customers. (Fig. 6)

After the stall had concluded, one child asked what we would do with the money we raised from our next harvest. In small groups, the



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

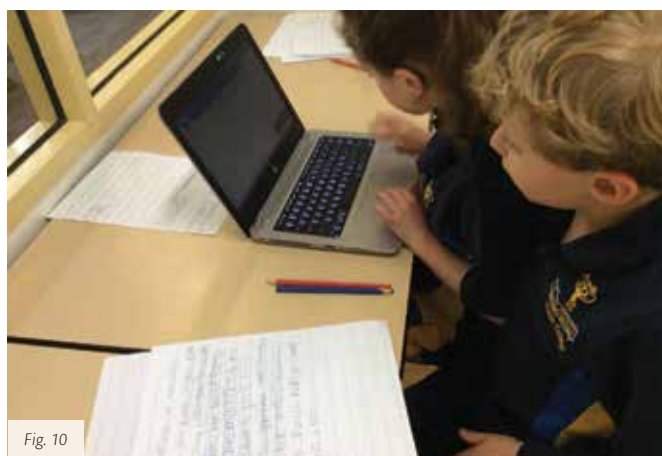


Fig. 10

children discussed what would be the best use of the profits. One group concluded that they wanted to give it to the next class who would use the gardening box. It was clear that they children wanted to pass on the joy and learning that they had experienced with the garden box to the learners of the future. After much discussion, we concluded that we would only have a small amount of money to pass on to buy new seedlings but we could pass on knowledge to the next group. (Fig. 7-9)

Let's tell the Preps, they might be interested. They will love exploring the garden like we did.

Let's pass the knowledge on.

We discussed the ancient Chinese proverb, "Give a Man a Fish, and You Feed Him for a Day. Teach a Man To Fish, and You Feed Him for a Lifetime." We asked the children what they thought would be more valuable to the Prep children, the knowledge or the new seedlings?

They all agreed that both were important but without the knowledge of how to learn they could not continue learning.

I think we need to give them both.

They began to see how important it was for them to pass the knowledge and experience on to the future learners. Some children saw it as their duty.

If we don't tell them about the gardening they won't know how interesting it is. They could miss out.

The garden should go from Year 1 class to the next class. It is like passing from one generation to another generation.

Each group in the class have now chosen a slightly different path on how they will support the future learners. One group have decided to consult some 'experts' about which plants would be best for the new group to plant at the beginning of the year.

If we just give them the information, they won't know how to find out more. Let's teach them how to do it themselves.

They saw the value of teaching the future learners to question and research rather than just teaching them facts. (Fig. 10)

Another group wanted to involve the Prep children in their learning. They thought that showing them was the best way for them to learn. An experience was more valuable than telling them. They began to invite the other children to help them track the growth and changes of the different plants.

Showing the Preps will get them excited about the garden like we are.

In the coming weeks the children will officially hand over their garden to the future learners. We wondered if they too will experience the same rich learning experiences that our group did. Will their experiences be deepened because they too will make connections with their learning from the past group?

Without time,
nothing will end
and nothing will
start new



“

We began a year together exploring the concept of ‘Welcome’. What does it mean to feel welcome? What does ‘welcome’ look like to our families and at our school?”

When posed with the question, **How does the ELC welcome us?** the children began to closely observe the environment around them. Starting with the entrance to our school and the ELC foyer, they noticed different aspects of the environment that made them feel welcome. The ideas of the children were captured through their observational drawings, which highlighted the significance of the mosaic murals, the trees near the entrance and the building names above the doors. This led us to explore deeper into the school, noticing the other environments around us and considering, how certain spaces welcome us. (Fig. 1) The children began to contemplate, **what are the purposes of these environments and how does the purpose influence how we use that environment?**

We created our own vegetable garden, which gave the children the opportunity to take responsibility for their own environment. The Victorian Science Curriculum focuses on children identifying and describing the changes to **“living things and things in their local environment”**. Children are encouraged to analyse their observations and represent their **“ideas about changes in objects.”** As the plants developed, we took a scientific approach



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

to observing the changes in our garden bed. As we watched the plants change, we measured the length of our plants over time. We discussed the changes we observed. (Fig. 2-4).

What changes did you notice?

The leaves of the lettuce were bigger and the height was starting to grow. The leaves were spreading.

At the start, the peas weren't big enough to stand up tall. They were facing down. Now the peas are facing up.

I noticed that every day I see it, it grows a little bit.

I noticed that some of the leaves are now purple.

The children began to notice the passing of time through the growth in our plants.

Coinciding with the Bialik 75th Heritage Exhibition, the investigation switched focus to look back at time. The children visited the exhibition and explored its displays. (Fig. 5)

After this visit, the children considered the questions, **what buildings were here before Bialik moved here? What might have this place looked like in the past? What might have been here before Bialik College?** (Fig. 6)

It was a forest with kids playing in it. I was connecting to the video that we watched about the ELC being made. When they were digging in the ground, I thought I saw roots.

I think before the school was made there were just lots of trees. There were apples in the really tall trees and birds were helping their babies.

I think there was a synagogue there.

I think there was a house or, maybe it was two houses that they needed to knock down.

It was a footy stadium because they are usually big just like our school.

Through watching our plants grow and our exposure to the Heritage Exhibition, our conversations led towards the concept of time. The children considered what they knew about time.

Even if you don't have clocks or watches, time will still go past. We don't need clocks for time to work. Time already goes by itself. But clocks help us see the time, they don't make time go.

If we didn't have clocks we would be asleep for the whole day.

Sometimes when we look at the clocks it makes us think that the clocks gives us the time and make the time move but the clocks don't actually make the time move. We make the time move and time moves by itself when the clock moves.

In Israel at the top of the world past the equator line in the earth, its different times. And we don't really know what the time is but if we went there we could figure out the time. So when its morning in one country it could be night in another country. So like in Israel when its morning for us they would only be going to bed. And when it's our bedtime they will be playing awake.

Without time nothing will end and nothing will start new.

If we wouldn't have time we would be doing the same thing for ever and ever.

A question began to reveal itself to us that encompassed the wide range of children's ideas and thinking. **How do things change over time?**

Time is the measure of 'events in the past, present and future.'²

When children are given opportunities to explore the past, they **"develop their knowledge and understanding of how the past is different from the present."**³ By engaging in investigations about the past, children can begin to make informed decisions about the future.

A group of children took responsibility for further investigating the questions, **what might have been here before Bialik College?** As a group, we discussed how they could get accurate information that answered their questions. We brainstormed ideas of possible experts that could help us gather information. We concluded that we should contact the local council to see if they had any relevant resources, as well as contacting the school archivist to see what information the school already had about this area before the school was here. The children worked on developing their questioning in order to receive the information they wanted.

Can you give us some information of what was here before 1942?



What was here before Bialik?

Do you have anything like an old map or pictures to show us? (Fig. 7)

Many of the children had also acknowledged that we rely heavily on clocks and standard time throughout our daily lives. They recognised that without clocks, we would have difficulty knowing when to complete tasks and attend to school and work. This led to the children wondering about animals and time. If humans use clocks to know when to eat, sleep, wake-up and so forth, how do animals know when to do these activities? **How do animals tell the time?**

I think water animals use the colour of the ocean because as the night comes the sea will get darker.

I think they use the size of the moon. Every night the moon changes. It is because the earth moves around. Every night the moon changes its shape but it is always the same moon that you see.

The animals know what year or month it is because of the shape of the moon.

The animals know the time because of what colour the moon is. Blood is 46 years, red is 2 years, blue is the normal moon and shiny is 100 years.

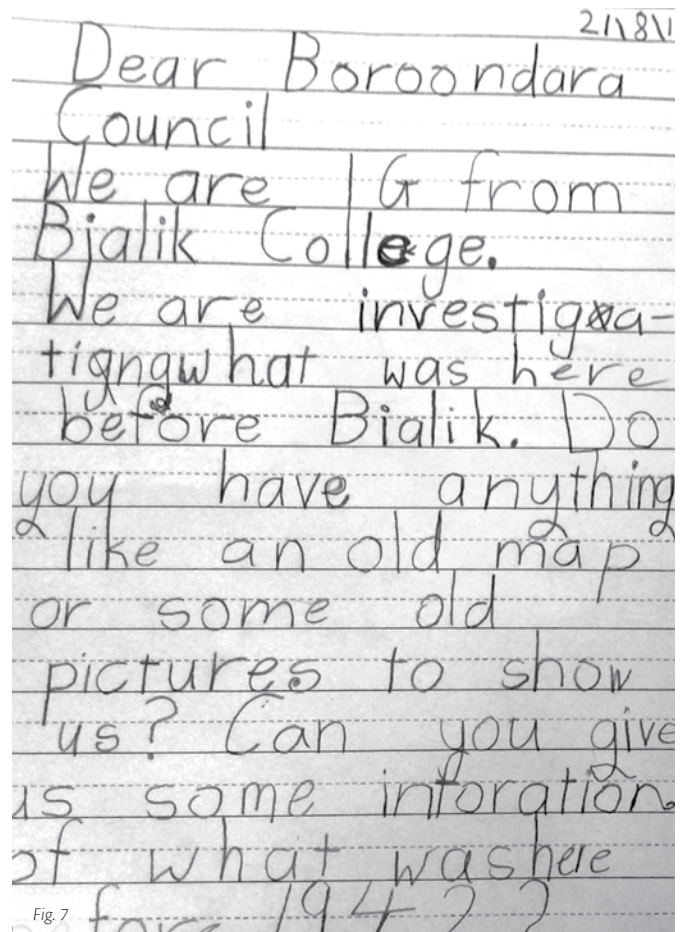
The children were confident that the changes in the moon allowed animals to tell the time. This led a group of children further to investigate the phases of the moon.

When the earth spins, you see a different angle of the moon so it looks different.

The moon or sun don't change shape but they change sizes. When the moon is closer the moon is bigger and we can tell it is night time. When the sun is closer we can tell it is day time. Every day sometimes it's the same, sometimes it's not.

To test their thinking about the phases of the moon, the children observed the shape, size and colour of the moon every night. They recorded their observations through drawing to analyse and compare the changes that were occurring over time.

As our investigation continues, we too explore the passing of time and our shared wonderings.



How can we record time passing?

I wonder how Bialik will change in the future?

How can we welcome the future?

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Images

- Fig. 1 Noticing the environment around us.
 Fig. 2 Measuring the changes in plant growth.
 Fig. 3 Observational drawing of plant growth.
 Fig. 4 Observational drawings of plant growth.
 Fig. 5 Visiting the Heritage Exhibition.
 Fig. 6 Painting - What might this place have looked like in the past?
 Fig. 7 Children's letter to local council.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts



“

This year began with a strong provocation: the simple statement of ‘Welcome.’”

What did this statement mean to a group who had already spent the previous year together? Had we felt welcomed when we first came together? Did we feel welcome in this new year even with the same group of friends? To assist us with the answers to these questions, we investigated what it was that gave us the feeling of being welcome.

I felt welcome in Prep because my teachers helped me feel welcome.

I felt welcome this year because I knew everyone.

We asked our parents what welcome meant to them....

“When someone says good morning to me when I’m entering the school every morning, this makes me feel really welcome.”

“The big foyer where everyone gathers.”

“Clever teachers, curious people, celebrate Chagim, include everyone.”

“It’s when we all belong.”

As the children had been welcomed in a physical sense when they first encountered the ELC, we went to investigate how the ELC and the wider school environs had cast the feeling of being warmly welcomed upon arrival.

I like the colours. They make you feel welcome because they are bright.

The doors open for you.

The children felt that because the doors automatically opened when you came to the entrance it was as if the building was welcoming you straight in. (Fig. 1-2)

The understanding that the physical environment of our school, as well as the surrounding nature, had the potential to connect us further as a group led us into several visits to our school kitchen garden. Here we interviewed the children and the teacher who oversees this beautiful space. We concluded that we could add to the feeling of being welcomed in the ELC by planting a small vegetable patch for our class that would also enhance the area we occupy while at play. (Fig. 3-4)



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

We wanted our class to feel as though they were participating in welcoming others to the land. The concept of belonging to rather than owning the land is one that we can learn from our First Peoples who believe we need to respect and care for our land and in return it will look after us.

I felt that the Melbourne Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG) would offer many wider experiences with nature and so, with a colleague, I explored the many opportunities the RBG offered. We decided that the children may well feel as inspired by this space as we were and we organized a class visit. On our arrival the children were 'welcomed to country' as part of a Tanderrum ceremony conducted by Ben, the Indigenous educator. Throughout the ceremony Ben emphasized the need for caring and respecting nature. The RBG educators then discussed planting and soil with us and gave our children the opportunity to plant, to work with worms and to explore parts of the gardens. Continuing the theme of being welcomed by natural spaces, the magnificent gardens entranced us as we investigated their splendour. The bamboo forest, the large trees and the beautiful pavilions caused us to reflect on how the canopies they provided embraced us.



Fig. 5

What do you think a canopy might be?

A kind of aboriginals land

It's something that's up

It's RBG in aboriginal

I think it's a layer of leaves on the top part of the tree (Fig. 5-6)

The various enormous canopies exuded many feelings and drew us into their sphere. They welcomed us to this place where we felt content and at home. Through my research, I realised that metaphorically, what one canopy can do, many canopies working together can only enhance. Our class is made up of wonderful individuals, yet it is the sense of welcome we feel when we are together and the sense of belonging that gives us our strength and our determination to learn, to be curious and to care for each other and our space together.

On returning to school I posed the following questions...

How do you feel when you are under a canopy?



Fig. 6

I feel relaxed. I really like it.

It gives you shelter and it protects you from the sun.

Can you think of any other ways you have these same feelings that are not from a place?

Your thoughts

When I draw

Listening to music

When I'm with my friends and my family.

Tell us about how your friends make you feel.

I feel happy and calm because he's nice to me, a good friend.



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

He's a tall friendly person who makes me happy and we definitely laugh a lot.

We do funny stuff together. She's really thoughtful and kind hearted.

The metaphor of more canopies together having a greater impact and being able to achieve more became a metaphor for the way the children feel together as a cohort, how they feel welcome and at ease in this group.

As Dunn, Cutting and Fisher state **'having friends helps children transition into new school contexts more easily'** (cited Garvis & Pendergast).¹ Research shows **'children in the early years have strong friendships and understand the value of friendship'** (cited Garvis & Pendergast).² (Fig. 7-8)

Over this time together I came to agree with Frank Gehry's premise that **'the whole can be greater than the sum of its parts, that we all have something to put in the pie to make it better and that the collaborative interaction works.'** (cited Ledgerwood & Miller)³ The feeling of connectedness amongst the children through a sense of feeling welcome and at ease with their peers begins with respect for each other and respect for nature. Growing and being responsible for their own vegetables has supported this.

Listening to music was also suggested by several children as promoting feelings similar to what they have felt under a canopy. To this end we introduced the class to the music of Dr. Gurrumul Yunupingu, acclaimed as the most successful Aboriginal Australian musician to date. He sang stories of his land both in Yolngu languages such as Gälpu, Gumatj or Djambarrupynu and in English.

The children's responses were unanimously of calm and wonder.

It was kind of emotional, like sad

It makes me think about who I love

It reminded me of the past

I was very relaxed and it was peaceful for me

'Gurrumul's life and music comprise an invitation to his country, his culture and their unexplained mysteries' (Dwyer).⁴ While listening

often to his song 'Wiyathul' and then drawing how they felt when they listened to this haunting tune, it led the children back to considering our Indigenous people and how they hold full respect for the land. They are custodians of this great country as are we. The children investigated one version of the "Dreamtime"; about mythical creatures which looked like half plant and half animal who were on the earth to tell the Indigenous people the rules of living. These creatures then disappeared into the earth. One of these main rules for living is respect, respect for each other and our land. The Indigenous people feel nature welcomes us here and allows us to enjoy her benefits and her hospitality and so in return we must show her respect and gratitude.

This is the final year that our group will be a cohort. As a parting gift and to leave our 'mark' on this space, together we will create our own canopy, one which can be left as a provocation and a resource for the next group to enter our welcoming space. Each one of us will contribute an illustration explaining how we have been sustained by similar feelings to that which the tree canopy exudes. As a teacher of this remarkable group of children, I realised that the feelings, planted like seeds at the beginning of our significant journey together have engendered strong, supportive friendships, a true respect for nature and the beginnings of an initial knowledge and appreciation for our First Peoples and our land. Gazing up, taking in the canopy and all it has made us feel, has sparked our curiosity...**what next, what awaits us?**

As the African proverb says, 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together'.⁵

References

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2. Garvis, S. & Pendergast, D. (2017). *Health and wellbeing in childhood*. 2nd Ed. Port Melbourne, Vic: Cambridge University Press, 157.
3. Ledgerwood, A. & Miller, R. (2012). *New again: Frank Gehry*. Interview Magazine. [online] Available at: <https://www.interviewmagazine.com/art/new-again-frank-gehry>.
4. Dwyer, M. (2013). *A superstar in any language*. The Sydney Morning Herald. [online] Available at: <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/a-superstar-in-any-language-20130510-2jcyb.html>
5. Common knowledge.

3 Year Old Kinder

Kinder 3G

Welcoming the Unknown

Suri Alon, Dylan Berkovitch, Mika Feldman, Milla Fried, Noa Fuchs, Zac Goldberg, Sunday Grosman, Evie Haworth, Alma Hechtman, Louie Israel, Noah Kirszbaum, Adelaide Klepfisz, Sasha Kuzmicich, Jack Lew, Leo Reid, Ruben Sable, Isaiah Seeman, Adam Skalicky, Abbey Somerville, Blake Swart, Harry Zimmet

with

Gali Sommer, Pazit Landau, Megan Jay, Deb Nirens, Sandy Sher, Robyn Winograd, Aliza Deutsch.

Kinder 3L

The gift of insight...

Libi Ben Artzi, Zion Cao, Eden Fuchs, Lexi Furman, Mai Golan, Oscar Herzel, Toby Levy, Mika Opatovsky, Guy Peretz, Ella Rodenski, Eliza Roitman, Harvey Rozenchwajg, James Ryan, Zara Sher, Ben Shulman, Ness Shurman, Sunshine Stimson, Mayan Sztrajt, Aaron Vainberg, Maayan Wolkenberg, Noam Ziv

with

Lindsay Miller, Adi Barzilay, Yael Shaul, Mandie Teperman, Bella Besser, Zia Freeman, Anne Budlender.

Kinder 3J

"If we really want children to thrive we need to let their connection to nature nurture them"

Lani Blecher, Scarlett Bram, Noa Brod, Ashley Cocks, Ethan Dodge, Joseph Dunne, Ruby Fink, Aerin Goldberg, Nathan Goldberg, Chloe Israelsohn, Ilan Kamien, Amber Kamil, Ilai Kapper, Ari Landau, Jasper Moszkowicz, Max Naphtali, Charlie Nussbaum, Allie Pura, Aiden Rosenbaum, Elliot Segal, Ayala Tal, Asher Voskoboynik

with

Judith Blumberg, Ayana Shavit, Di Thornton, Bella Besser, Anne Budlender.

4 Year Old Kinder

Kinder 4 Cross Class

'Welcome' to differences and similarities

Kinder 4E, Kinder 4M, Kinder 4R

with

Helene Oberman and Kinder teachers

Kinder 4R

"Peace is a feeling that lives in our hearts. Peace is happy, calm, rested, kind and proud."

Gia Altman, Noah Burman, Zac Burns, NoahEydlish, Stella Fink, Adele Fisher, Sonny Gelbak, Kai Glazer, William Holzer, Eve Israelsohn, Miller Janover, Ash Landau, Noah Meltzer-Burns, Charlie Mooseek, Maybelle Razbash, Alice Rom, Ben Sheezel, Nathan Tian, Zadia Wodak, Nate Zukerman

with

Ranjna Najat, Tamar Herman, Margaret Todd, Chisanthi Georgalas, Nikki Kausman, Zana Kovaceska

Kinder 4E

Why are the butterflies so quiet?

Daniel Apter, Gaia Bennett, Matthew Braun, Luca Dahan, Emily Firestein, Wilbur Gauvin, Yoav Hanuka, Amalya Kalbstein, Ethan Kedem, Zeke Logan, Olivia Lurie, Liora Reider, Clover Rogers, Ariel Rosenbluh, Alexandra Samuel, Alexia Scher, Hannah Seidner, Charlotte Sham, Jay Weiskop, Lexi Whine, Gaia Zohar

with

Elise Rotstayn, Miri Sheffer-Watson, Julia Levine, Chris Georgalas, Robyn Winograd, Aliza Deutsch.

Kinder 4M

If you think you will have imagination

Jude Beggs, Leo Blashki, Coco Dvir, Rocklan Fischl, Lielle Galon, Alexis Helfenbaum, Sophie Li, Noam Lifszyc, Gabe Mac, Ava Marks, Ted Marks, Sara Mazer, Dan Meren, Coby Pura, Alon Rushiniak, Aiden Serry, Alexa Sormann, Sasha Southwick, Olivia Susman, Nadav Sztrajt

with

Megan Miller, Danielle Cohen, Rosemary Barry

Prep

Prep Z

Welcoming perspectives

Miles Auster, Idan Ben Artzi, Mia Birnbaum, Dalia Blecher, Ashton Burns, Pia Dabscheck, Jasper Fink, Sidney Gauvin, Hadar Golan, Finn Joachim, Jacob Kirszbaum, Rose Leighton, Eden Peretz, Milan Perry, Levi Roitman, Camilla Ryan, Milla Serry

with

Zoe Winograd, Irit Fichman, Mandie Teperman, Bella Besser.

Prep R

A new place can make us feel welcome

Jacob Aldworth, Eyal Bart, Nadav Fuchs, Natalie Grossman, Sam Held, Matiya Israel, Ezra Janover, Mia Kallenbach, Sienna Kamil, Shiraz Kapper, Zahava Lall, Jake Lichtenstein, Poppy Lust, Alicia Mackin, Carmel Rom, Aurora Shapiro, Joel Skalicky, Angus Somerville

with

Roz Marks, Desre Kaye, Robyn Winograd, Aliza Deutsch

Prep L

A community of Learners

Remy Asseraf, Idan Ben-Eliezer, Chloe Berkovitch, Danielle Brod, Michael Davidoff, Hila Golan, Mason Goldstat-Joffe, Jonathan Kotler, Chloe Levy, Amira Pinczewski, Arki Rettig, Louis Rom, Eli Segal, Jordan Shapiro, Hudson Solomon, Ariel Tal, Tiffany Yeruslimsky

with

Linda Baise, Naama Dadon, Nikki Kausman, Zia Freeman

Year 1

Year 1 Cross Class

What do I know about myself and what do I know about myself in relation to others?

Year 1G, Year 1R and Year 1K

with

Helene Oberman and Year 1 teachers

Year 1R

We began our investigation this year with the provocation of 'Welcome'

Milla Altman, Harlow Birner, Amelia Bram, Abbie Dodge, Rosie Fink, Gemma Gunn, Orli Hansen, Tommy Holzer, Zoe Israelsohn, Hardy James-Wurzel, Jack Jolson, Zabi Kalbstein, Frida Kallenbach, Maddy Nussbaum, Sam Reider, Geffen Shoshany, Jesse Snyder, Ben Wilson, Nicholas Wrobel

with

Rachel Machlin, Naama Dadon, Deb Nirens, Sandy Sher, Anne Budlender.

Year 1G

Without time, nothing will end and nothing will start new

Rafi Adeney, Sunny Bornstein, Itamar Goldberg, Ava Harris, Ido Hartman, Noah Herszfeld, Nimrod Horn, Gisele Hunter, Luca Meltzer-Burns, Zaiden Moszkowicz, Jasper Rogers, Alexandra Ryan, Liam Shabat, Allegra Vainberg, Hazel Wodak

with

Georgia Toniazzo, Desre Kaye, Deb Nirens, Anne Budlender, Sandy Sher

Year 1K

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts

Eve Akoka, Ava Beggs, Toby Burman, Ilil Dagan, Ashley Degen, Maayan Falkov, Yarden Fridman, Bella Furman, Olivia Gaspar, Archer Gelfand, Nathan Goldberg, Mason James-Wurzel, Amelie Kohn, Luke Lambert, Zac Landau, Austin Lee, Lielle Liderman, Ebony Mahemoff, Omri Schildkraut, Ori Tal

with

Kathleen Georgou, Irit Fichman, Anne Budlender, Sandy Sher





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