



THE PYP INCLUSIVE

Issue 40

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Travelling the PYP Journey

Welcome to Issue 40 of *The PYP Inclusive*. Wow! What a milestone! Thank you to all current and past contributors who have helped make this a significant publication for not only the Victorian PYP network, but for networks and individuals globally.

As is always the case, there is much to inspire. I am always amazed at the diversity and richness of learning for students that is evident in the articles.

Matthew, from Rivercrest Christian College, provides good food for thought when thinking about essential agreements; Kim, from Guangzhou, shares some highlights on seizing the moment with international mindedness; and, Helen, from Kingsville Primary School, talks about the positive effect on her thinking about teaching and learning after attending a *Making the PYP happen* workshop.

Laura, also from Kingsville, explores the immersive experiences that connect their Foundation students to the key concepts and Foundation teachers at Plenty Valley Christian College continue the conversation by exploring key concepts through an inquiry cycle. In a second article by Laura, the use of primary resources with her students is examined and their capacity to assist students to form more sophisticated questions to develop their research skills as a result is highlighted.

Learner agency is given a profile by Jacqui at Kingsville. She discusses the

power of the transdisciplinary skills (now known as approaches to learning) and the way using them deliberately has supported her students to understand what they mean as well as to identify how their understandings are developing.

Market Day in Year 5 at Benton Junior College shows the power of action resulting from working mathematically and in English in a unit about business supply and demand. The power of action is further highlighted in a second Year 5 unit by the students of Benton Junior College.

As you can see, lots to devour! Enjoy!



*To go fast, go alone;
To go far, go together.*

African proverb

What's happening around the network

Essential agreements and the Pygmalion effect

As PYP educators we are asked to not only teach knowledge, skills, attitudes, concepts and action, but we are also charged with the task of developing internationally minded learners. This is not an easy task. As Todd Whitaker once said, *'the best thing about being a teacher is that it matters, the hardest thing about being a teacher is that it matters every day'* (Whitaker, 2012). One of the most effective ways I find of bringing the IB mission statement to life and making it accessible to younger students is through the classroom essential agreement.

As educators much of what we do is about human potential, it is about uncovering students' current levels of understanding and cultivating a climate where we can foster growth and learning. It is about what students are capable of. If we look closely at the IB's mission statement, we notice that it is phrased as a goal, a visionary statement, an aim, an encouragement.

*The International Baccalaureate **aims** to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.*

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

*These programmes **encourage** students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right - Taken from the IB website.*

International mindedness can't be forced upon students. It must be carefully and purposefully explored and developed. Similarly, the IB learner profile attributes cannot just be stuck up and laminated on classroom walls and expected to become part of how learners perceive and act in their world. What educators can do is inspire their students to be more, to be better and to see learning as a journey, not an end product. We can encourage a climate that celebrates growth and potential.

In order to fully understand the impact of a teacher's expectations on students, let me diverge for a moment

to the ancient Roman poet, Ovid. Centuries ago, Ovid described 'Pygmalion' a gifted and talented sculptor, who had the unique ability to look at a piece of marble and to see the potential trapped inside. He was able to see the masterpiece hidden within. This idea formed the basis of one of psychology's most interesting research studies, titled 'The Pygmalion Effect'. In 1968, Rosenthal & Jacobson conducted a study that looked at the impact of teachers' expectations on student outcomes. Their team completed academic testing of students and then reported back to the teachers that certain students were deemed to be 'late academic bloomers'. These students would be more likely to academically bloom in the next few months. Their teachers believed they had potential.

At the end of the experiment, Rosenthal & Jacobson's (1968) team completed testing and noted that the students who had been labelled as 'academic late bloomers' had indeed bloomed. They had shown significant academic progress and made gains that were not expected of them. The twist came when the researchers shared the results and noted that there was no such thing as 'academic late blooming', the test was a fabrication. The only variable that had changed was the teacher's mindset, the view that these students had more potential than before. This idea of 'self-fulfilling' prophecies and positive expectations has a long history, including recent research by Kuklinski & Weinstein (2001) which supported the notion that teacher expectations can have a positive effect on students' learning in the junior years.

Rosenthal & Jacobson's (1968) experiment highlights the powerful role a teacher plays in setting classroom expectations and how they impact on student engagement and learning. If we apply this idea to classroom essential agreements, we have an opportunity to create a powerful document that can be used to encourage, inspire and motivate students.

Classroom essential agreements are pivotal in giving all students a voice and a sense of ownership in how the class culture is developed and maintained. Yes, an essential agreement can be a form of behaviour management; however, it can also help shape the possibilities of what will occur in your classroom. In order for an essential agreement to be meaningful, it should be

What's happening around the network

Essential agreements and the Pygmalion effect

written from the students' perspectives, with the onus on the language being from them. It should be a collaborative effort, in which the teacher scaffolds learning, rather than controlling it.

The agreement should be positive and personal, related directly to the students who are in the classroom. Ideas should be phrased with sentence starters such as, we will...in our class... we are striving to... By framing the agreement in a positive manner, students are reminded of their potential and what they are all working towards. It should speak not of basic rules, but more of the kind of people students want to be. The kind of students who strive to be internationally minded.

So I encourage you to reflect on your classroom essential agreement by answering these simple questions.

- Is your essential agreement written by the students and for all the students?
- Is your essential agreement positive, personal and about student potential?
- Do your students, and you, read your essential agreement and see it as a list of rules, or a way of being?

References:

Kuklinski, M.R. & Weinstein, R. S. (2001). Classroom and developmental differences in a path model of teacher expectancy effects. *Child Development*, 72, 1554-1578.

Rosenthal, R. & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Whitaker, T. (2012). *What great teachers do differently: Seventeen things that matter most*. New York: Routledge.

Matthew Scott
 Pastoral care coordinator
 Rivercrest Christian College
 Victoria
 Australia



What's happening around the region

Seize the moments with international mindedness

As teachers, we all know when a unit has really taken off with a bang and when it has been a huge success and we know when a unit was a bit uninspiring for us and for the students. The former is the case for a unit of inquiry in the Year 3 classes at the Guangzhou Nan-fang International School (GNIS) in southern China. GNIS is a candidate school awaiting the results of its recent IBPYP verification visit. It has a mixture of new and experienced PYP teachers. The make up of the Year 3 classes includes students from India, Sweden, Chinese from Hong Kong and Macau, Trinidad, Australia, Canada, Iraq, USA, Russia and Ethiopia.



The teachers quickly found that most of their students already had a good grasp and understanding of why we communicate. Because there were different nationalities and languages (Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Swedish, Hindi, Spanish, Russian and Tagalo) in these two classes, students were more curious and interested in finding out how their friends communicate with their friends in and/or out of school. They wanted to learn some key phrases and words that they could use to communicate with their friends in their mother tongues. The unit gained momentum and quickly snowballed into a whirlwind of parents as guest speakers who came in and talked about their languages and taught the children simple words and phrases.

The transdisciplinary theme for the unit was, *How we express ourselves*. The planning for the unit included the central idea, 'A variety of signs and symbols facilitate local and global communication.' The key concepts of function, connection and responsibility and the related concept of communication were addressed in the learning engagements throughout the whole unit. The unit started off with different types of provocations to find out what students knew and didn't know about what communication is, how we communicate, why we communicate and what forms of communication there are. They conducted many learning activities using a variety of strategies and tools such as Think-Pair-Share, sorting, reading stories, brainstorming, creating word wall displays and sharing their personal experience.



What's happening around the network

Putting the pieces together

After working at an IB school for 2.5 years, I was given the opportunity to attend the *Making the PYP happen* workshop in Melbourne in April this year.

During the workshop we were required to display all the characteristics involved in being an internationally minded person. We were stretched to our limits as inquirers, we were risk takers and communicators, we were using our social skills to form network relationships with teachers at other schools and we reflected on our learning journey throughout the three day workshop.

The workshop taught us about the five essential elements and the foundation upon which every IB school is built. Through cooperative learning tasks and independent reflection, we grew as educators in the understanding of what is at the core of our teaching practice:

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.
(*Making the PYP happen*, 2009:2)

As PYP teachers, we must ensure that our teaching reflects this mission statement; to look at the bigger picture. It is not about memorising facts, but rather knowing how to locate information, not about teachers telling the students what to think or how to think, but to encourage creativity and open mindedness, and certainly not about teachers telling students what to learn, but rather to scaffold their inquiry skills so that they become confident and independent inquirers.

With all that in my PYP backpack, combined with my teaching experience, I was able to 'put the pieces together' between the essential elements and most importantly, to be reminded of why working in an IB school is so rewarding and fulfilling and why it resonates so perfectly with all of my teaching values. We are not only teachers, but we have a part in shaping our future leaders – the kind of world citizens who are able to make a change in the world. Piece by piece.



Helene Lissmyr
Classroom teacher
Kingsville Primary School
Victoria, Australia

What's happening around the network

Immersive experiences to connect to the key concepts

Under the transdisciplinary theme, *Where we are in place and time*, our Foundation students have begun inquiry into the central idea, *'Family histories can help us understand how the past is different from the present.'* Our key concepts for this inquiry are connection and change. To help our young inquirers gain better understanding of what these key concepts mean, the Foundation team ran different immersive experiences in each of their classrooms which each class rotated through.

Christie showed us how to make cubby houses and play a clapping hand game. Jacinta taught us how to play games, including marbles, pick-up sticks and bingo. Monica showed us how our clothing has changed, looking at eras of fashion from the '50s through to the '90s. Sam played us music and taught us how to do the *Heel and Toe Polka*. It was such a rich learning experience that generated some interesting wonderings.

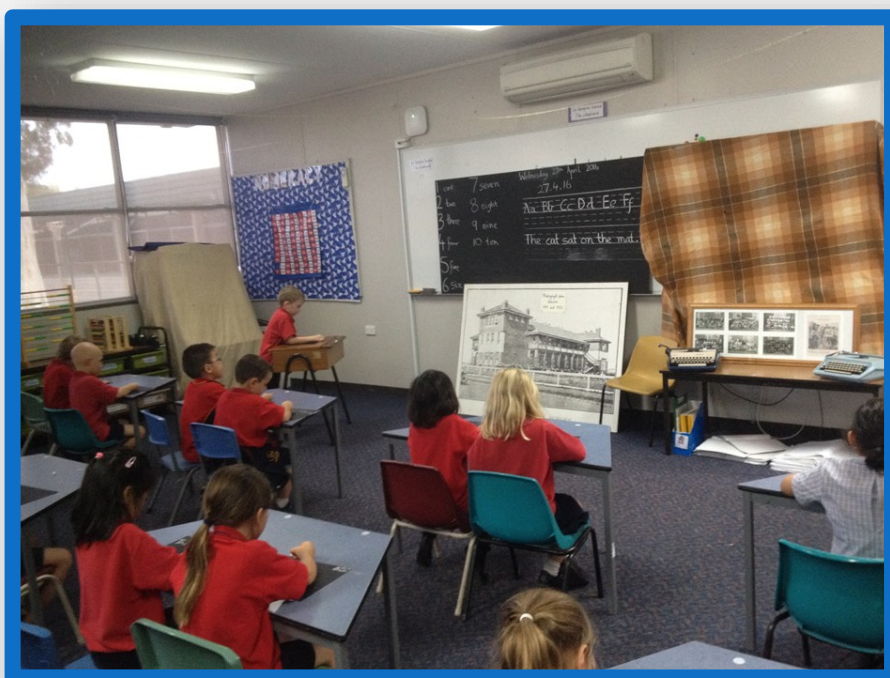
In each classroom there was laughter and excitement as the students explored so many new things. However, in one classroom there was a rather different experience. Once we travelled through the time machine, we were transported back to a classroom from the 1920s.

Gone were the colourful displays, tables in groups, and smiling teacher. Instead, they were replaced with desks in rows, all colour taken away, a big blackboard, and a very strict Ms McCray ready to teach us how to write. Everyone decided they think schools have changed for the better.

These different room rotations enabled our students to not just see or hear how a variety of things have changed over time, they got to experience it. Through these experiences they have been able to make connections between how something like school has changed so drastically over time, and how some games they play today are similar to games that their grandparents used to play.

The next stage in our inquiry will be using a variety of primary resources (personal artefacts and stories from family members) to help build our knowledge. I am excited to see what we will learn from each other's families and what new wonderings our students will want to explore further.

Laura McCray
Foundation teacher
Kingsville Primary School
Victoria, Australia



What's happening around the network

Developing and understanding the inquiry cycle at Foundation level

Throughout the first term of the Foundation year, at Plenty Valley Christian College, the children have been investigating the inquiry cycle through their initial unit of inquiry. Our central idea was; 'Every day I can learn about who I am and what I can do,' with the key concepts of connection and responsibility.

We decided to adopt an inquiry cycle at this level, to incorporate three key elements - tuning in, finding out and taking action.



The concept of responsibility: Tuning-in phase

To introduce the concept of responsibility we commenced our unit with a guided play afternoon. The children had fun 'tuning-in' whilst engaging with, and demonstrating their understanding of responsibility in a number of different dramatic play settings. We examined what it means to be a responsible painter, garden-er, shopkeeper, carer, builder and cook.



Following this afternoon we discussed what it means to be responsible at school and at home. The children suggested that it means:

- To be kind to our friends, brothers and sisters
- To help our mums and dads
- To help out and do the right thing!

The concept of responsibility: Finding-out phase

During the finding-out phase we went on a 'responsibility hunt' around the school. The children asked various members of our community about their role in the school. They also questioned the importance of these roles being fulfilled in a responsible and diligent manner.



The concept of connection: Tuning-in phase

We then revisited the tuning-in phase to introduce the concept of connection. Due to the abstract and unfamiliar nature of this concept, we found that it became the major focus of the unit.

The children spent a guided play afternoon, investigating connections that are clearly visible in toys. The children enjoyed playing with Lego, marble runs, train-sets, wheel and cog pieces, dominoes, PVC pipes, cup constructions, tower blocks and making paper chains.

What's happening around the network

Developing and understanding the inquiry cycle at Foundation level

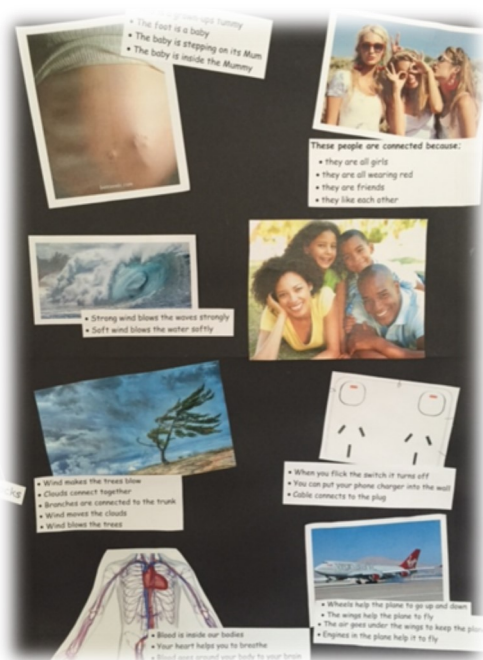


The children then brainstormed their thoughts on what a connection is, or what it means to be connected. Their ideas included:

- Sticking together
- May not stay stuck together
- Joining
- Helping
- Working together

The concept of connection: Finding-out phase

We wanted the children to gain an understanding that some connections cannot be physically observed, but seen only through an effect. We looked at a number of photo provocations to stimulate curiosity. The children worked in groups to hypothesise and discuss possible seen and unseen connections. Their thoughts were then scribed and collated by the class teachers.



The children developed an understanding that within our Foundation community, we are all connected to each other. As a result, each of us needs to take responsibility for the function of our community. In essence, the children learnt that connection and responsibility are integral components of a healthy and thriving community.

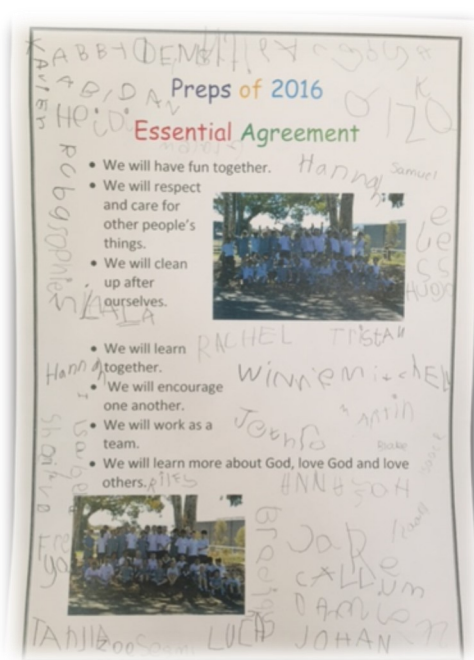
Taking action

As a result of the exploration of these key ideas, the children took action by developing a Foundation community, essential agreement. This was made particularly meaningful because the children had deeper understandings of the way in which they are connected and responsible for each other.

In conclusion, we found that having the inquiry cycle clearly visible throughout the unit meant that the children could visually follow their learning journey. This also kept the teachers accountable in scaffolding the children and the direction of the unit.

Foundation teachers

*Plenty Valley Christian College
Victoria, Australia*



What's happening around the network

Developing learner agency

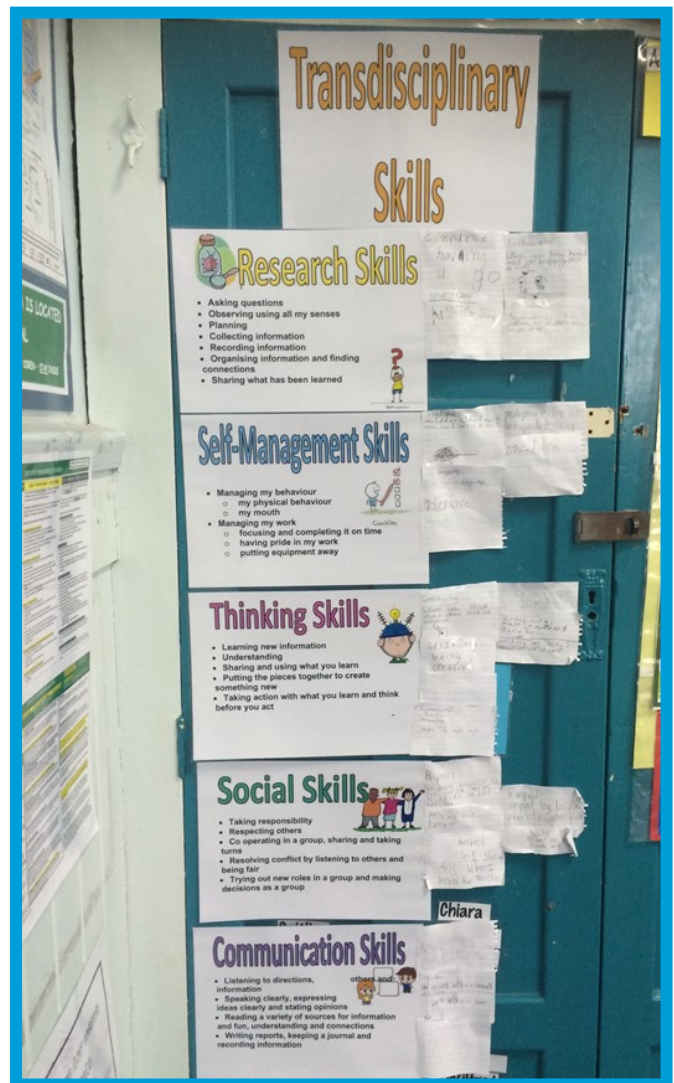
In my second year of working within the Primary Years Programme (PYP) at Kingsville Primary School, I have been searching out ways to more effectively integrate the elements of the PYP in my day-to-day practice. I was lucky enough to have a colleague pass on some posters she had developed of the transdisciplinary skills.

In my first year of the PYP I had found the transdisciplinary skills as another set of language and ideas that I needed to juggle. This year; however, I have come to recognise the integrated nature of the skills and their innate value in assisting me to articulate to my students what is valued and what is 'success' within the classroom. With my newfound appreciation for the transdisciplinary skills, I set out to integrate them into my practice, to augment my students' learner agency.

When I first introduced the transdisciplinary skills into my classroom of Grade 2 students they were vaguely aware of their meaning, but not really valuing what I so greatly appreciated as an educator.

Since displaying them, we constantly reference the development of each skill group across all of our learning areas. Prior to this, I was weighing heavily on the PYP attitudes to encourage and support student behaviour towards their learning. With these student-focused displays, I am able to clearly identify a skill group and utilise it to support students to value the skills that scaffold their learning and the choices that they can make about their learning. Furthermore, the skills demonstrate their transdisciplinary nature of learning within the classroom and beyond.

At the beginning of our last unit of inquiry, as a team, we planned on front-loading student learning, repeatedly modelling research and recording skills as a whole class exploration. During each of these sessions, I was able to reference the skills that students were developing as a continuum of learning, a continuum that they can constantly be building upon as they develop as a learner.



The transdisciplinary skills posters in our room.

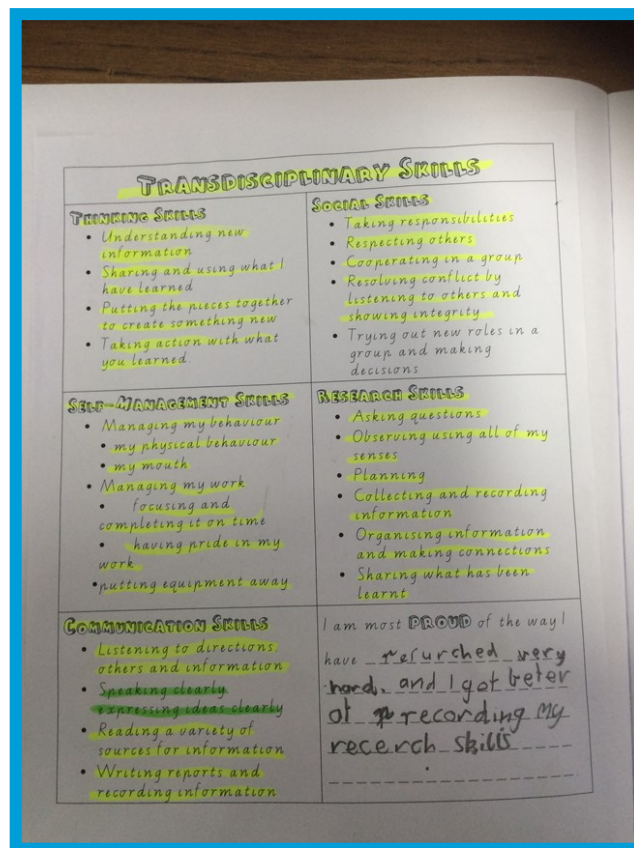
What's happening around the network

Developing learner agency

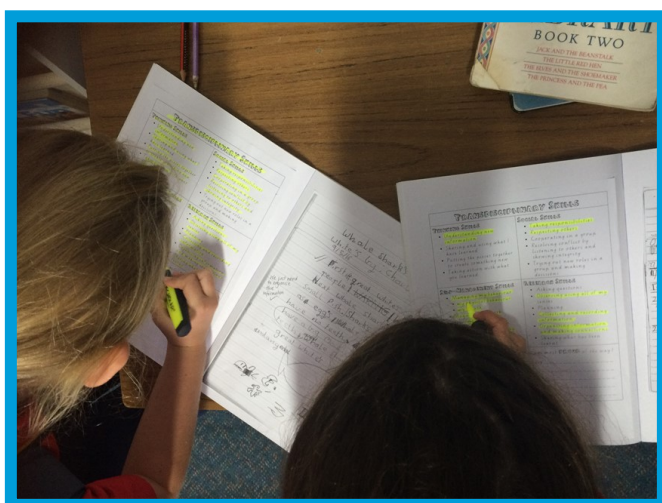
Midway through our unit, when students were beginning to branch off into independent inquiries, I developed a transdisciplinary skills rubric that mimicked the displays we were using everyday in our classroom. At first, the students were overwhelmed by the page of text, but with highlighters in hand we documented the skills we had developed. I could see their faces light up, as they were able to highlight dot point after dot point, marvelling over their own success so clearly and recognisably displayed before them. It was a great conversation starter as students began to reflect and justify when they had developed a certain skill and how they would be developing it further. Furthermore, students were able to predict their use of skills within the timeline of their inquiry and look forward to the opportunity of marking them off.

Breaking the transdisciplinary skills down with the students, not only assisted the students in understanding exactly what they meant, but they provided the framework for me to articulate students' skill building in an effective and simple way.

With the assistance of my transdisciplinary skills posters, I have watched my students move away from an understanding of success within inquiry as knowledge or content driven, to valuing the building of skills for their futures as life-long learners.



A student sample of the transdisciplinary skills rubric with his reflection



Students highlighting their transdisciplinary skills rubric

Students went through the skills and described when they used them and what attitudes they showed when building these skills.

Jacqui Leslie
Year 2 teacher
Kingsville Primary School
Victoria, Australia

Editor's note:

Whilst Making the PYP happen identifies **transdisciplinary skills**, the language has changed to **approaches to learning (ATL)**. The five skills of research, self-management, communication, thinking and social remain the same. There is now alignment of these approaches to learning skills across a continuum of learning from K-12. Use of either terminology is acceptable until the release of PYP: Principles into Practice, in 2018.

What's happening around the region

Conducting research in Foundation—Using primary resources

Children in the early years are natural inquirers. They want to know how everything works, why it is that way, or how it came to be? While there are so many fascinating questions our students bring with them each day, they need some guidance and support to help them conduct research, particularly in their first year of school.

As part of our *Who we are* inquiry, the Foundation students have been hard at work investigating the central idea of *'the choices we make can affect our wellbeing'*. As part of this inquiry, we have been learning about the different ways we can research and find information about our wonderings.

During the investigation stage of our units of inquiry, we always encourage the children to try to use a primary resource. A primary resource provides direct or firsthand evidence about an event, object, person, or work of art. Examples of primary resources can include historical and legal documents, eyewitness accounts and results of experiments.

We discovered that an excellent source for primary resources was our own families. Students went home and asked their family members about their wonderings and came back to class to report back what they had uncovered.

Some wonderings that the students inquired about included:

- How do you make friends?
- Why do we need/want friends?
- Why do we have to eat vegetables?
- What good choices do people make to be healthy?
- How do you keep a friend for a long time?
- How can you be friends with people when they speak another language?

A wealth of knowledge was brought back into the classrooms. It was a delight to see so many people getting up and confidently speaking to their classmates about what they had learnt.

Another primary resource we found in our community was Fiona, a mum from one of the Foundation classes.

Fiona came in and spoke to us about how making healthy choices can have a positive effect on our wellbeing. We learnt that exercise can help us feel better and help to make our bodies strong. Fiona also ran a Metafit session, teaching children some different exercises. Boy, were we all exhausted after it! It was a great way to spend the afternoon and we are very thankful to Fiona for coming in to help us with our learning.

Having these hands on and personal experiences helped our young inquirers to take ownership of their research and learning. We saw them confidently asking questions to help them gain a deeper understanding of what they wanted to learn. Through learning about primary resources and how to use them, our students were able to form more sophisticated questions and develop their research skills.

Laura McCray
Foundation teacher
Kingsville Primary School
Victoria, Australia



What's happening around the network

Year 5 Market Day at Benton Junior College

Under the transdisciplinary theme of **How we organise ourselves**, the children in Year 5 at Benton Junior College, Mornington, have been inquiring, with enthusiasm, into the central idea, **"A successful business depends on supply and demand"**. We opened the unit with a guest appearance by a local business owner, who explained how he and his wife had to come up with a plan to convince the bank to lend them money to start their business, as Choc Top vendors. The children used this as inspiration to design their own business plans to create a successful stall at our annual Afternoon Market. Throughout the unit they have had to learn **how to be part of a team**, to **listen to the ideas of others**, to **deal with disappointment** when the consensus of the groups goes against them, to **use their powers of persuasion** to achieve their goals and to make sure **everyone in their group does their fair share**.



Working Mathematically

Each student made two prototypes and surveyed the school community to get an idea of popularity and potential pricing of their products. At this point they had to be objective and decide on making the products which were going to provide the best return on their investment. Resilience was required to overcome some disappointed entrepreneurs. Survey data was used to calculate how many items they needed to make and what their predicted profit would be. This was a great opportunity to use iPads for some graphing and data analysis. Market Day is an example of a 'real life' situation for financial mathematics with plenty of opportunities to make change and calculate totals.

What's happening around the network

Year 5 Market Day at Benton Junior College

English in Action

We visited Main Street Mornington Market, where the children interviewed stall holders about their products and aspects of supply, demand and marketing. Observations by the teachers, parents, members of the public and stall holders made us proud of our confident, polite and articulate young business people.

Each child wrote a persuasive presentation suggesting which charity the market profits would go to. The standard of the speeches was amazing and the choice between the six finalists was a tricky one. After a secret ballot the choice was made and it was **decided by consensus of the group** that the market profits would go to the **RSPCA!**



Making the items for the market provided an opportunity for some procedural writing. Having experienced some unforeseen explosions of flour and paint in the classroom during our 'making sessions' gave the children some ideas for how to include suitable warnings in their instructions!



STOP PRESS
Market Day
Amount raised...
\$1328.15!

*Year 5 teachers
Benton Junior College
Victoria, Australia*

What's happening around the network

Taking Action in Year 5

Our central idea was **'We improve our relationships with others when we understand their perspectives and the rights and responsibilities of all.'** Our inquiry investigated how we value and accept the diversity of cultures and perspectives. Guest speakers were invited to the school. Mrs Nolene Cooney was one of our guest speakers. She told us about the **Uthando** (which means love in the Zulu language) **Project** which encourages people of all ages to take action by making dolls for the children of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa.

If you would like to become involved please check out the site www.uthandoproject.org

These children don't have any other toys, so receiving a doll would be very special indeed. The dolls are used to help children deal with grief and loss. There are 1.5 million children under the age of six and each one would love a doll of their own! Some of our boys and girls were lucky enough to be given a doll kit to make their own doll. Zoe (below) made this doll, which will soon be winging its way to a lucky child in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa.

What a super way to take action! Great effort!



Year 5 teachers
Benton Junior College

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The PYP Inclusive is published by the Victorian PYP Network up to four times a year.

"The Victorian PYP Network seeks to model and foster the ideals and philosophy of the IBO through its actions and the provision of information, meetings and professional development opportunities that promote professional learning and encourage communication between members." (March 2006)



PD OPPORTUNITIES

30 September—2 October 2016. Yokohama, Japan

Making the PYP Happen in the classroom, cat 1
Making the PYP Happen in the classroom in the early years, cat 1
An introduction to the IB programme standards for administrators new to the PYP for the early years, cat 1
An introduction to the PYP curriculum model in the early years, cat 1
Assessment, cat 2
The exhibition, cat 2
Concept-based learning, cat 3
Reading and writing through inquiry, cat 3
Role of mathematics, cat 3
Literacy, mathematics and symbolic learning in the early years, cat 3

Refer to the events calendar at www.ibo.org for further details.

Victorian PYP Network Committee 2015-2016

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