



Commissioner for Children and Young People
Western Australia

2011
**THINKER
IN RESIDENCE**
Unlocking Creativity



Report of the 2011 Thinker in Residence
Unlocking Creativity

Prepared by Paul Collard

Thinker in Residence 7 to 18 November 2011
For the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA



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Commissioner's Foreword

I established the Thinker in Residence as part of my statutory responsibility to promote public awareness and understanding of important matters which affect the wellbeing of children and young people in Western Australia.

The 2011 Thinker in Residence – Unlocking Creativity was a resounding success with several hundred people, including 140 children and young people, involved in the 41 separate events of the two-week program.

The first Thinker, UK expert in creativity and education Paul Collard, provided the Western Australian community with an international perspective of what can be achieved by providing opportunities for children and young people to participate in creative and cultural experiences.

As this report identifies, creativity can significantly boost the wellbeing of children and young people, including their confidence, motivation, resilience and educational achievement across the curriculum.

This first residency highlighted in particular the successful Creative Partnerships program in the UK which has been delivered to hundreds of schools on behalf of the UK government.

A key recommendation of this report is to establish a pilot project in WA built on the strengths of the UK program.

Research shows that sound investment in creative education today delivers social and economic benefits many times the value of the original outlay in the future.

Creativity is also important to successful business and enterprise, and, according to Rio Tinto chief executive Iron Ore and Australia Sam Walsh, arts and culture programs help cultivate creative, smart-thinking and flexible employees of the future.

I thank the partners who supported and worked with my office to deliver the 2011 Thinker in Residence, and also the many people who attended events and contributed by sharing their views and knowledge.

I encourage all of those concerned with the wellbeing of children and young people to consider this inaugural Thinker in Residence report and play their part in unlocking the creativity of our youngest citizens.



Michelle Scott
Commissioner for Children and Young People WA

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

This report was prepared following a two-week residency as Thinker in Residence in Western Australia at the invitation of the Commissioner for Children and Young People Michelle Scott. It is intended to consider the potential impact of nurturing creativity on the wellbeing of children and young people and to make recommendations as to how this could be achieved.

The 2011 Thinker in Residence program was established as the first in a series of residencies initiated by the Commissioner, each exploring a different issue impacting on the wellbeing of children and young people in Western Australia. The first residency was designed to turn the spotlight on the role of creativity, culture and education as a way to engage and improve their wellbeing. The program builds on the Commissioner for Children and Young People's work to date in the areas of arts, innovation and education as tools to foster the skills and potential of younger West Australians.

Paul Collard from Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) in the UK was appointed as the inaugural Thinker. His residency ran from Monday 7 to Friday 18 November 2011.

In particular, this residency considered the following questions:

Developing creativity: how are culture and the arts being used across the education curriculum and what potential do arts and culture education programs have in improving the wellbeing of children and young people?

Growing creative industries: how well are the arts, culture and education systems raising awareness among children and young people of the creative industries and looking at opportunities for them to work in this area?

Preparing for the world: to what extent are cultural opportunities being offered to children and young people to support and enable them to build relationships and work with different countries, including those in the Asia-Pacific region?

The residency was designed to assess the local circumstances in Western Australia, both its strengths and challenges, while at the same time drawing on international research, knowledge and experience. It should be stated from the outset that the residency was for a relatively short period and reflects the impressions gained during this period as well as drawing on available data, written reports and policies provided by relevant departments.



Commissioner for Children and Young People WA Michelle Scott and 2011 Thinker in Residence Paul Collard

2. Creative and cultural opportunities for children and young people in Western Australia

The report considers the current situation in Western Australia. It reviews the various policies and strategies in place and concludes that they articulate a clear vision for a rounded, creative and culturally rich education.

However, a number of concerns about the delivery of the ambition are identified. The increasingly narrow focus of the metrics used to assess progress run the risk of diverting schools from a focus on a rounded education. The scale and reach of the interventions that have been designed to help roll out the creative and innovative strategies appear to be small in scale and reach and thus unlikely to contribute to systemic change. In many key areas there appeared to be insufficient data to effectively inform decision making. This was particularly important in relation to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) findings which gave grounds for significant concern about the high level of inequity and low level of interest and confidence being shown by Australian students.

The section also raises questions about the level of support that a focus on creativity and culture might have in the wider community. It concludes that opportunities to engage in cultural and creative activities are not widespread.

3. Talking and listening to children and young people in Western Australia

The report commends the Commissioner for Children and Young People for her work in collecting robust data about children and young people in Western Australia, in particular for her work in consulting them directly. It proceeds to identify a number of issues of importance that arose from the consultation workshops with children and young people that were led by Western Australian artist Paula Hart.

It was striking that students were determined to score themselves highly in creativity and wellbeing assessments that were administered in the workshops. This was often in stark contrast to what the same students had already told the workshops leaders about themselves. This was very different to the experience CCE has had in administering the similar assessments in other countries. The report considers why this might be.

Children were quick to grasp the definitions of creativity. In schools with better than average attainment, the students displayed a confident familiarity with the language of creativity. Most students were able to articulate why creativity was important to them and their futures.

Teachers however found it difficult to evaluate the creativity of their students because there was so little time in the school day for children and young people to display it.

In contrast, there was difficulty grasping the nature and importance of the creative industries. Beyond those schools with a specific focus on culture and creativity, students were reluctant to consider employment outside a fairly narrow and traditional spectrum of jobs.

There was a consistent pattern of interest among children in learning an Aboriginal language. The report links this with their natural openness and creativity in embracing diverse cultures and sees this as a positive aspect of children and young people in Western Australia.

4. What is creativity and why is it important?

The report briefly considers the literature that analyses and defines creativity, before presenting a set of definitions which could underpin an approach to creativity in education. The definitions of creativity the report proposes are built around 5 key 'habits of mind': imagination, discipline, persistence, inquisitiveness and collaboration. It then considers why creativity is currently attracting so much attention, highlighting the five key arguments that are usually made. Firstly, the 'habits of mind' described above unlock access to most aspects of modern life including both the arts and science and underpin success in most areas important to human beings including relationships and employment. Secondly,

the unlocking of creative potential in everyone is central to the modern democratic narrative. It appears to equalise the promise of individual fulfilment in ways in which traditional education and the redistribution of wealth is perceived to have failed. Thirdly, creativity is seen as a vital ingredient in the future economic success of the developed economies, where innovation is considered to depend 'on individuality and being open to thinking in ways that involve challenging social and other norms'. In this sense, creativity is seen as a means to ensure that individuals, and thus, nations remain competitive and that businesses are successful. Finally, creative skills appear to be central to nearly all gainful employment in the developed economies, where jobs that do not require these skills are becoming increasingly rare.

5. Does education need to focus on creativity?

The report considers the need for change within the education systems of the developed economies. It analyses data from the OECD showing that there is an inverse relationship between test scores and interest in the subjects studied. The situation is the same for self-confidence, with high scoring students revealing low levels of self-belief. As the predictor of successful progression in Science is interest and confidence, the low levels of interest and confidence being shown by students is a significant failure of the education systems.

The report also considers the evidence that shows that for some time education is increasing, rather than reducing, social inequalities and that wellbeing and feelings of competency reduce dramatically among children and young people as they progress through education. This section of the report concludes that the need for change is urgent.

6. What evidence is there that a focus on creativity delivers measureable educational benefits?

The report then considers the evidence that exists to argue that a focus on creativity delivers measureable educational benefits. Drawing on the evidence collected by CCE from evaluations of the Creative Partnerships program, the report shows that robust independent evaluations of the program have shown that a focus on developing creativity has succeeded in:

- raising attainment
- engaging disengaged parents
- improving attendance, and
- enhancing teaching skills.

1. Craft A, 2008, 'Tensions in Creativity and Education: Enter wisdom and trusteeship?' in Craft A, Gardner H and Claxton G (eds.) *Creativity, Wisdom, and Trusteeship: Exploring the Role of Education*, Corwin Press.

The report quotes extensively from reports prepared by the UK Government's school inspection service, Ofsted, which shows that the program has been most successful in the most challenged schools and has succeeded in re-engaging even the most disengaged students.

This section concludes with references to a major analysis by accountants PriceWaterhouseCoopers which showed that the program's return on investment to the UK Treasury is estimated to be £4 billion, or £15 for every £1 invested.

7. Where next for creativity in Western Australia?

The report recommends that Western Australia should build on the ambition and excellent practice which already exists, to develop a sustained, long term intervention in schools focussing on unlocking creativity in children and young people.

It outlines the characteristics of such a program, suggests the partnership that would need to be established to oversee it, discusses the nature of the organisation that should host the team delivering it, outlines the opportunities it would provide for the cultural and creative sector to be involved, lays out what would need to be

achieved to launch the program in schools in January 2013, identifies the scale of budget that would be required and defines the intended impacts of the program.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

The report concludes with a summary of the key recommendations:

- A significant 4-year program supporting the unlocking of creativity in children and young people is established.
- The system for assessing progress in education reflects the ambition to provide a rounded education.
- Better data is collected to support the formulation of policy in key areas of cultural and creative participation.
- More is done to help the wider community understand the importance of creativity and the creative industries.
- Professional development and training for teachers is offered when new approaches are being applied in the classroom.



Artist Paula Hart conducts a workshop with students from Bertram Primary School

1. Introduction

This report was prepared following a two-week visit as Thinker in Residence in Western Australia at the invitation of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, Michelle Scott.

The 2011 Thinker in Residence program was established as the first in a series of residencies initiated by the Commissioner, each exploring a different issue impacting on the wellbeing of children and young people in Western Australia. The first residency was designed to turn the spotlight on the role of creativity, culture and education as a way to engage and improve their wellbeing. The program builds on the Commissioner for Children and Young People's work to date in the areas of arts, innovation and education as tools to foster the skills and potential of younger West Australians.

Paul Collard from Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) in the UK was appointed as the inaugural Thinker. His residency ran from Monday 7 to Friday 18 November 2011.

It was agreed with the Commissioner that the residency would address questions in three areas:

Developing creativity: how are culture and the arts being used across the education curriculum and what potential do arts and culture education programs have in improving the wellbeing of children and young people?

Growing creative industries: how well are the arts, culture and education systems raising awareness among children and young people of the creative industries and looking at opportunities for them to work in this area?

Preparing for the world: to what extent are cultural opportunities being offered to children and young people to support and enable them to build relationships and work with different countries, including those in the Asia-Pacific region?

The program for the residency was intense. It consisted of over 40 different events which made possible discussions, reflections and conversations with more than 600 adults, children and young people in Western Australia. Although meetings and visits were mainly focussed around Perth, one full day was spent in Albany.



2011 Commissioner for a Day Codee-Lee Down and Paul Collard

In addition to this program, an extensive array of policies, strategies, evaluations, case studies and statistics were gathered and considered prior to, during and after the residency.

This short residency program, even with the associated reading, could not provide the basis of a comprehensive assessment of the role of culture and creativity in the lives of children and young people in Western Australia. However, it is hoped that it has highlighted some of the key issues facing them and suggests how these could be addressed.

2. Creative and cultural opportunities for children and young people in Western Australia

The residency began by exploring the extent to which the creative potential of children young people was being developed in and out of school. The strategies and policies established by the Department of Education (DE) and the Department for Culture and the Arts (DCA) articulate a clear vision for children and young people, and stress the importance of a rounded education with a focus on developing their creativity.

The **Classrooms First** strategy makes clear that the DE is aware of the need to focus on a rounded education:

*Student achievement does not only refer to academic success. We want our schools to produce well rounded individuals who possess social and personal competencies and so our measures of success will encompass these outcomes as well.*²

The **Creating Value** framework which underpins the work of the DCA places creativity at the heart of the department's ambitions:

In supporting the development of our unique cultural personality, we will give priority to projects and programs demonstrating imagination and innovation, and those that contribute to the artistic development, debate and experience of the Western Australian community.

*Acknowledging that creativity is the driving force of the arts and culture sector, we will encourage artistic risk taking and the exploration of new forms of creation, preservation and dissemination of work. Our programs will foster new talent whilst also valuing the experience and knowledge of established practitioners.*³

It goes on to define the DCA's four intended outcomes as being:

- creative people
- creative communities
- creative economies
- creative environments.

The partnership between the DE and DCA is framed by the National Education and Arts Statement produced

by the Arts and Education Ministers of Australia working together which :

*...aims to foster creativity and innovation in Australia's schools and sets out a path to achieve this shared vision... This draws on a body of research linking school-based arts participation to increased learners' confidence and motivation; leading in turn to improved school attendance rates, academic outcomes, life skills and wellbeing.*⁴

The partnership between DE and DCA is delivered through the **Creative Connections** program to which both departments are signatories. This articulates a broad vision of the importance of the arts, stressing the need for both education in art and education through the arts. It aims to:

*...demonstrate the contribution arts and culture can make to the remaining six learning areas (Health and Physical Education, Languages, Mathematics, Science, Society and the Environment and Technology and Enterprise)*⁵

So there is a declared commitment by both departments to fostering creativity in schools and a clear acknowledgement of the benefits this brings for children and young people in all areas of their learning.

During the residency, there were also opportunities to discuss individual programs and projects that have been delivered with and for children and young people in Western Australia and supported by the DE and DCA.

Western Australia has many passionate, effective and committed creative and cultural practitioners who are delivering high-quality work. Particularly impressive is the work of such major cultural institutions as the Perth International Arts Festival and the Western Australian Museum, as well as organisations such as the Awesome Festival, FORM, Barking Gecko and Community Arts Network WA. These are strong foundations on which the community can build.

However, there are a number of aspects of the implementation of the overall strategies for the cultural and creative engagement of children and young people which cause concern.

2. DET Classroom First Strategy <<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/classroomfirst/detcms/navigation/the-strategy/>>

3. DCA Creating Value – An Arts and Culture Sector Policy Framework <<http://www.dca.wa.gov.au/About-US/our-policies/creating-value/>>

4. National Education and the Arts Statement - <http://www.cmc.gov.au/sites/www.cmc.gov.au/files/National_Education_and_the_Arts_Statement_-_September_2007_0.pdf>

5. Creative Connections: An Arts in Education Partnership Framework 2010 – 2014 <<http://www.dca.wa.gov.au/DCA-Initiatives/arts-in-education/creative-connections-partnership-framework/>>

2.1. Measuring what you value

It is important that education systems give equal weight to measuring all the things they value and not merely those things that are easily measurable.

All education systems in the developed world have seen distortions in educational planning and delivery brought about by a reduction in the range and quality of the metrics being applied. Where approaches to measurement are very narrow there is a risk that school strategies become focussed on scoring highly in those aspects measured at the expense of other areas of student development.⁶

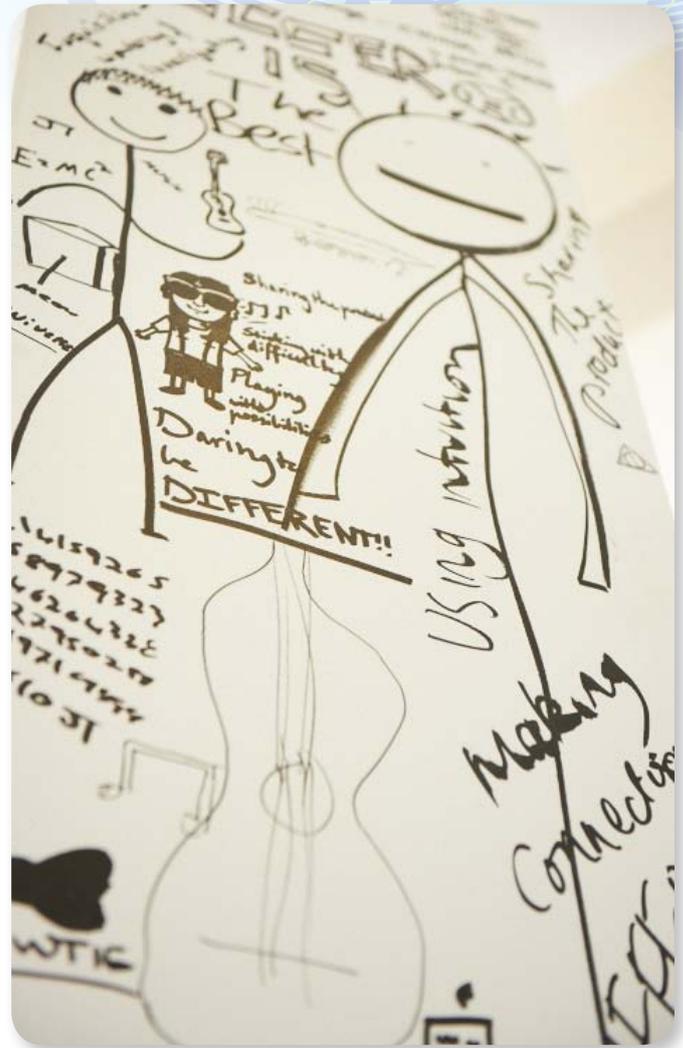
Secondly, it will always be assumed that not only are you measuring what you value but that you only value what you measure. The absence of clear systems for measuring all aspects of student development will give out the message to the education sector and beyond that these are the only things that those responsible for managing education value in education.

A focus on creativity and innovation needs to have clearly defined measures of success which are understood in the classroom and valued in the community and their introduction needs to be accompanied by effective professional development supporting the new approaches being applied by teachers. A desire to reduce the bureaucratic burden on teachers is not incompatible with the need for a broad range of measures in a successful and innovative education system.

As Classrooms First makes clear, the DE is considering how the reviews of school should be improved and suggests:

The reviews will be reduced and focused more on the standards of student learning and behaviour'⁷

It is important that in implementing this approach, the system continues to respond to the need to develop rounded individuals.



Columns created by students who participated in the Thinker's school workshops

6. For a fascinating and devastating analysis of the impact of narrow metrics on a young person's education read Thomson P, Hall C and Jones K 2010 'Maggie's day: a small-scale analysis of English education policy', *Journal of Education Policy*, 25: 5, 639 – 656.

7. DET Classroom First Strategy <<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/classroomfirst/detcms/navigation/the-strategy/>>

2.2 Scale and reach of existing interventions

The scale and reach of the interventions that have been designed to help roll out the creative and innovative strategies appear to be small in scale and reach.

The School Innovation Grants at DE is a welcome initiative. But in 2011 it was only able to support 12 projects in 28 schools – out of almost 900 schools in Western Australia.⁸ While the learning from such projects will be disseminated across wider communities of schools, the potential for this scale of intervention to lead to wide-reaching systemic change is limited. It does not communicate to the sector in general that innovation is a significant priority.

Creative Connections has similar limitations. In 2011 it was able to support one project with a budget of \$100,000 and six with budgets of \$30,000.⁹ This is welcome investment, and the quality of work supported through this program appears to be universally high. But the scale and reach of the program at this level of

investment will not enable many young people to access these opportunities or bring about any long-lasting change in the nature of opportunities available for young people.

The limited scale of these interventions compounds the impression gained more generally during the residency that the range and scale of the creative and cultural interventions in school left most young Western Australians with a limited range of opportunities, while beyond schools the opportunities were very infrequent. The schools selected for workshops during the residency tended to be those with a high arts content to the curriculum. Discussions held in workshops with both young people and adults, and discussions which took place in other meetings, while not statistically representative, strongly confirmed the impression that these schools were not typical and that the level of general access to the arts and culture was not high.



Paul Collard delivers one of his many Thinker presentations

8. School Innovation Grants <<http://det.wa.edu.au/classroomfirst/detcms/navigation/innovation-in-our-schools/>>

9. Arts in Schools <http://www.artsedge.dca.wa.gov.au/4_artists.asp>



2.3 Quality of evidence

Generally, the evidence gathered for consideration as part of this residency was not able to give much insight into the cultural and creative life of young people in Western Australia, whether in school or out of school. It was hard to tell whether this was an accurate reflection of the data available, or that better data was available but difficult to access. Examples of the limitations of the data include:

- Published DE data appears only to distinguish between three subgroups when assessing data; boys vs girls, those with English as a second language vs those for whom English is a first language and Aboriginal vs non-Aboriginal children and young people. A more nuanced assessment of the attainment levels of children from different socio-economic and ethnic groups would seem to be essential. The OECD analysis extracted from PISA¹⁰ looks at the 'slope' of test results by socio-economic background in each of the countries that participate in PISA. A flat 'slope' shows that the difference in academic attainment of those from lower and higher socio-economic groups is minimal and thus attainment is not heavily predicated on background. By contrast a steep 'slope' indicates that class is the determining factor in academic attainment. In the OECD figures, Australia has one of the steepest slopes, suggesting the problems of inequity in educational outcomes stretches beyond the Aboriginal community. This impression of inequity of educational outcomes in the broader community was certainly confirmed in the workshops with children and young people that were undertaken as part of the residency. There were marked differences in the levels of engagement and participation in the workshops between children from different socio-economic backgrounds. This does not seem possible to discern from DE figures and may conceal a much wider issue in educational attainment in Western Australia.
- As the OECD points out, interest and confidence determine progression and the analysis drawn from the 2009 PISA data¹¹ shows that while the average test score of young Australians students places them near the top of the international league tables, their interest and self confidence are near the bottom. This would no doubt be a matter of concern to those implementing educational strategies in

Western Australia, but this evidence does not appear to be readily available to them from their own sources and is certainly not frequently discussed.

- The main source of information on the cultural engagement of children and young people in Western Australia is the Australian Bureau of Statistics¹² survey which is conducted nationally, but from which subsets are available regionally. However, the focus in this research is on the participation of children and young people in after-school lessons in dance, drama, music or singing. As a result, music lessons dominate the answers. 37 per cent of young people reported they had participated in some sort of arts activity, of which well over half reported learning to play a musical instrument. The approach to measuring participation in the arts used by ABS appears to be modelled on that used to measure engagement in sport, which defines engagement as the frequency with which children and young people attend formal sport training sessions each week. While this might work as a proxy for engagement in sport, particular when such formal training sessions are so widely available in Western Australia, the same approach does not give a balanced view of the cultural life of young Western Australians. Given that there are far fewer opportunities for children and young people to engage in formal cultural activities than formal sporting opportunities in Western Australia, this approach will inevitably under-report the cultural activities of young people. Anecdotal evidence from the workshops with children and young people suggested that in the absence of formal activities there is a high level of self organisation. This is well documented in the wonderful Awesome Festival film *Punmu Stories* which chronicles the activities of a group of self-taught Aboriginal musicians in the outback writing and recording an album. It is not clear that they would have indicated to the ABS that they were involved in cultural activities at all. More should be done to establish accurately the level of activity, need and demand, especially if one of the key aims of the DCA's strategy is to improve the quality and range of facilities for cultural creation and consumption by and for young people.

10. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development 2010, *PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background: Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes (Volume II)*, OECD. For more explanation see pp 32-33

11. Avisati F 2010, *Effective Teaching for Improving Students' Motivation, Curiosity, and Self-Confidence in Science* OECD, presentation to Education for Innovation: The Role of Arts and STEM Education, OCED/France Workshop – Paris, 23–24 May 2011

12. Australian Bureau of Statistics 2009, *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia*, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4901.0Main+Features1Apr%202009?OpenDocument>>

2.4 Support for culture and creativity in the wider community

Questions arose during the residency about the extent to which the value of culture and creativity, so powerfully stated by the Education and Arts Commonwealth and state ministers in their statement (see page 18) is supported or well understood in the wider community in Western Australia.

For instance, during the workshop with students at John Curtin College of the Arts, participants were asked to reflect on the extent to which their peers and friends outside school understood or supported their decision to attend an arts-specialist college. This provoked one of the most intense discussions during which students reflected that, almost on a daily basis, they had to defend their decision to attend such a school. Their peers outside school regarded it as a waste of time, argued that attendance at the school would undermine their career progression as it would result in no usable qualifications and could not see how attendance at the school would prepare them for employment after education. The students and the staff rebut these views effectively with well-articulated and evidenced arguments and the views rebuffed are clearly misguided. The fact that the school teaches the full range of subjects, and that it achieves the fifth-highest scores in measures of academic attainment among all the state secondary schools in Western Australia, was insufficient to overcome the prejudice towards the arts that was being reflected in the comments of the young people beyond the school. It would suggest that in the world beyond the specialist art colleges and the cultural community, the enthusiasm expressed by ministers for creativity and culture is not widely shared and understood. If Commonwealth and state ministers accept the importance and value of culture and creativity, as they have clearly indicated that they do, there may be significant work to be done to get this message out more widely. It will be difficult for initiatives in this area to receive the support and prioritisation they need without greater buy-in from more people in Western Australia.

In summary, there is a concern that despite the avowed intentions of the strategies for the creative and cultural development of children and young people in Western Australia, their successful delivery is being slowed by:

- the risk that the system of evaluation does not appear to strongly value a rounded education
- a level of investment in new ways of working which is too low to lead to real sustainable change
- the absence of robust data to support the formulation of policy in key areas
- an absence of support in the wider community.



One of the columns created by students who participated in the Thinker's school workshops

Feedback from participants at the creative industries workshop:

"Paul's ideas to implement creative programs in schools would be life changing. I have worked as an art therapist in schools with small groups and have witnessed the flowering of confidence and problem solving skills on a small scale, through creative expression and acceptance of its potential for the growth of young minds."

"I hope this information and knowledge is not kept within professional walls; that (it) reaches parents as well so they can develop a new set of expectations that they commit to support."

"It would be great to hear how this concept can be transferred within the workplace, allowing others who manage young people to be open to innovation and creativity."

3. Talking and listening to children and young people

The residency also considered the views of children and young people, both in relationship to their creative and cultural life and their broader sense of wellbeing. In this context, the work of Commissioner for Children and Young People to improve the quality and range of data available concerning children and young people's wellbeing provided an important framework.

The Commissioner has commenced a major project to monitor and report on the wellbeing of Western Australian children and young people. There are three reports which comprise the Framework:

- *Profile of Children and Young People in Western Australia* – This profile contains a range of socio-demographic information based on existing research and data.
- *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* – Children and young people's wellbeing will be measured under eight domains – Material Wellbeing; Health and Safety; Education; Family and Peer Relationships; Behaviours and Risks; Subjective Wellbeing; Participation; and Environment.
- *Building Blocks – Best practice programs that improve the wellbeing of children and young people* – A compilation of best practice and promising programs that are evidence-based and enhance the wellbeing of children and young people across the eight domains described above.

The Wellbeing Monitoring Framework has been informed by an extensive research project conducted in 2009. The research was commissioned to find out what children and young people considered was important to their wellbeing and helped them 'live life to the full'.

This research has resulted in the report *Speaking Out About Wellbeing - The views of Western Australian children and young people*. Nearly 1000 children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years from across Western Australia participated in the research. A loving, supportive family, good friends, fun and activity, a safe environment, a good education, acknowledgement and trust were among the major factors identified as essential to living a full life. The Commissioner uses this research to advocate on what government, not-for-profit agencies, the private sector and the wider community can do to better support children, young people and their families.



Students from Bertram Primary School record their thoughts on the column during their workshop

To explore in greater detail the attitudes of children and young people towards culture and creativity, a series of workshops were conducted with children and young people from a wide variety of backgrounds and stages of development as part of the residency. The workshops were devised and led by Western Australia-based artist Paula Hart. She explored a range of issues with children and young people according to the workshop brief, agreed to between Paul Collard and the Commissioner's office.

These workshops generated a rich and compelling range of insights into the lives, ambitions and understandings of the young people who participated. It is impossible to assess how representative the views expressed were of those of children and young people more generally in Western Australia, but there were some clear issues identified on which it would be worth reflecting. This is particularly because there were some important differences and similarities which arose when comparing the responses of those in the Western Australia workshops with those that have arisen when CCE, the organisation of which the Thinker in Residence Paul Collard is CEO, has commissioned similar workshops elsewhere. CCE always consults with children and young people as part of their work. The key issues that are worth reflecting on are listed below.

Case study - *Haircuts by Children and Children's Choice Awards*

In 2010 the Commissioner for Children and Young People sponsored two projects involving children's participation in the Perth International Arts Festival (PIAF). The Commissioner supported Toronto-based company Mammalian Diving Reflex's production *Haircuts by Children* as well as their Children's Choice Awards

Mammalian Diving Reflex is a remarkable and creative company who devise work which challenges our thinking and engages audience and participants in new and unusual ways. Their work frequently reaches beyond the boundaries of traditional theatrical convention, creating situations that reach out to their audience in new and surprising ways.

In the case of *Haircuts*, Year 4 students, after a few hours training by a professional hair stylist, gave free haircuts to volunteers from the audience. The project asked adults to trust children in ways in which they didn't expect, making the adults quite vulnerable. Vanity, fear of being hurt and nervousness at the public nature of the haircut all contributed to creating an atmosphere of some risk for the adults. This was a light hearted, fun but challenging example of using the arts to shift the balance of power, in this case between adults and children.

The Children's Choice Awards put children at the centre of the festival as official VIPs and judges. The nine to 11 year-olds had red-carpet treatment at PIAF events and then critiqued the shows on a blog and created inspiring award categories. Awards they

chose to make included: The Show that Made Me Dance the Most, The Singer with the Best Pitch, and Most Shiny Dress.

The award for Best Role Model was presented to Antony and the Johnsons because, in the words of the students, "he followed his dreams and other people might want to be just like him in the future. He loves music, and you can tell by the way he plays the piano."

The two projects – *Haircuts by Children* and the Children's Choice Awards – are wonderful examples of the arts facilitating children's participation in what is too often considered the 'adult' world. *Haircuts* promotes children as competent and creative members of society and challenges adults to put their trust in them by having their hair cut by kids. The Children's Choice Awards establishes a children's jury whose members are given the opportunity to express their opinions about the best aspects of the festival. The perpetuation of the idea of an 'adult world' stifles young people's voices and renders children invisible. It is underpinned by a belief that children are not capable of making informed decisions or having a knowledgeable point of view. This limits us as a society because we miss out on unique perspectives informed by a young person's thoughts and experiences.

The company worked with students at Roseworth Primary School in Girrawheen where principal Geoff Metcalf proudly states the experience was life changing for the students.



A student from Roseworth Primary School cuts the hair of Sergeant Merv Lockhart ~ Photo by Tony Wilkinson

3.1 Overstating the positive

Two assessment tools were used during the workshops in Western Australia which CCE has used elsewhere. One tool provides students with the 5 creative 'habits of mind' discussed earlier in this report, comprising a series of definitions of creativity. These definitions provide an accessible language through which to discuss aspects of creative behaviours. During the workshops, the students discussed these definitions and considered the extent to which one of their group displays these 'habits of mind'. The second tool used was a questionnaire on wellbeing, in which the children are asked to rate how they are feeling on a range of indicators (I feel valued, I feel listened to, I feel excited about what might happen in my life, etc). In each exercise, the students were asked to express their views by giving their opinion a score - with 5 being very inquisitive or very valued and 1 being the opposite. To a remarkable extent, unmatched when these tools have been used elsewhere, Western Australian students would consistently give themselves the highest possible score on every indicator. What struck Paula Hart and Paul Collard in observing this, is that the score they gave themselves was often in sharp contrast to what they had just told the workshop leaders about themselves. Students who in discussion would admit to having a poor ability to 'stick with difficulty' would award themselves a 5 when asked to score this. Young people who had just recounted to us personal stories of considerable trauma in which they admitted that they were feeling very low, would then give themselves a 5 on being happy.

In the UK, where CCE undertook an extensive consultation of young people using a similar workshop-based approach in 2010, young people were considerably less positive about how they felt. However the way they rated themselves was consistent with what they were telling us about what was happening in their lives. In Amsterdam, where CCE did an extensive consultation with young people in the Autumn of 2010, young people were very positive about many aspects of their lives, but they were able to evidence this well and convincingly. The responses obtained in the workshops conducted as part of the residency were harder to interpret.

Discussions with others suggested that our experience was not unique. Barking Gecko, as part of a fascinating production under development for the Perth International Arts Festival, have interviewed over the last few months 500 young Western Australians. They reported the same experience. In their case the sharp distinction was

between the very positive renditions of their lives young people delivered in group discussions, and the sharply different and quite harrowing stories which emerged when young people were able to record their feelings using digital technology away from the group.

It may be worth reflecting on why the children and young people involved in the workshops in Western Australia appeared to have different responses to those in other countries. For instance, is this a manifestation of the fact that Western Australia possesses a fairly competitive culture and that this makes it difficult for young people to express how they are really feeling in public? Recent observations by CCE in Holland and Sweden would suggest that these countries have a far less competitive culture in their schools and that as a result discussions between adults and children and young people are more honest and open. If this is the case, CCE would certainly argue that the Dutch and Swedish model was healthier. Or, since almost all the workshops took place in schools, was the behavior of the students merely reflecting the school culture which would rate the 'right' answer as the one attracting the highest score? Would the responses of the children have been different if we had asked them to express their opinion using five randomly selected letters?



Creativity can be applied to education, recreation and vocation

Case study - 'Driving Into Walls' *Produced by Barking Gecko Theatre Company*

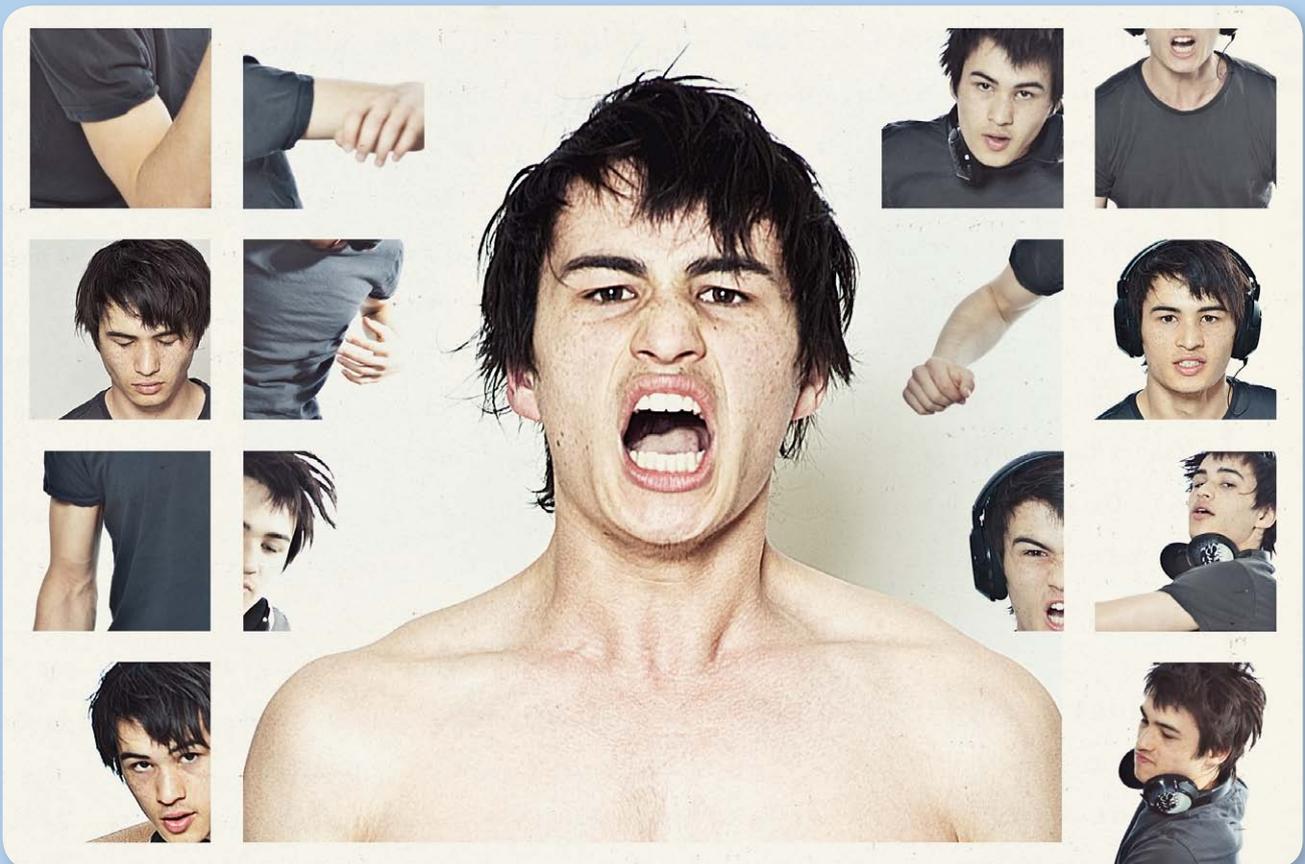
Driving Into Walls by Barking Gecko Theatre Company is an intimate and confronting play that draws back the curtain on what it means to be young in Western Australia today. Criss-crossing regional, rural and urban WA, Barking Gecko collected material from 500 interviews and 'diary room' confessions with WA teenagers to form a springboard from which the narrative and form of Driving Into Walls takes off. By earning trust and building camaraderie, the company has been able to explore sex, race, parties, parents, school, social worlds, technology, bullying, love, loneliness, drugs, depression, happiness and families, and share extraordinary touching moments.

How do young Western Australians feel about a world littered with technological language, sexual visual imagery, isolation, fleeting emotional encounters and constant change? How do they navigate through

a maze that is completely unrecognisable to the generation before them? What are the walls this new world erects around young Western Australians and what happens when they drive into them?

Barking Gecko, a company dedicated to presenting work to children and young people, have marked their 21st birthday year by creating a new work intended to validate and celebrate the lives young people of WA and present a work about them, for them and from them.

Driving Into Walls is a play for teenagers, expressed in a format that reflects their world and uses physicality, film, design, technology and characterisation to tell a story that is intimate and global, confronting and heartfelt, funny and tender, brutal and desperate. It is a play that exposes what the people who will shape the future of this country really think.



We Asked. You Told Us. Photograph by Richard Jefferson Photography

3.2 Understanding and valuing creativity

The exercises undertaken in the workshops with children and young people allowed us to explore their attitudes towards culture and creativity. Children grasped the ideas quickly and mostly enjoyed the opportunity to discuss them and have their views considered.

CCE argues that to achieve the benefits that arise from a creative education, such as improved academic attainment and engagement, those involved must develop a language of creativity, through which teachers, children and young people can reflect on their learning and maximize and embed its impact.

This was well evidenced in the workshops in Western Australia. At the beginning of a particular exercise, students were asked to suggest attributes of creativity. Most groups of children were able to suggest a few. In the case of two of the schools, the students were able to suggest a comprehensive range of attributes without prompting. This was most evident in Roseworth Primary School, where the children immediately suggested the following list:

Imagination, persistency, dedicated, confidence, resilience, inspiration, excitement, getting along, special, enthusiastic, organised, courage, admiration, descriptive, discover, exploring, embracing, co-ordinate, participate, elaborate, outspoken.

Comparing this list with the 'habits of mind' discussed in more detail later in this report (see page 22) reveals the children to have spontaneously identified the overwhelming majority. Students at John Curtin College of the Arts were equally adept. The significance lies in the fact that, in the case of Roseworth, the students perform academically well above expectation, and, in the case of John Curtin College of the Arts, well above average. This provides further evidence to support the hypothesis that students' ability to articulate their understanding of creativity underpins successful learning.

After assessing the creative 'habits of mind' of one of their peers, students were then asked to indicate how important they felt creativity to be, how important it was in their families and how important it was in schools. Consistently children indicated that they rated creativity to be of great importance to them, its importance within the family varied greatly, and they generally did not feel it was considered important by schools - other than at John Curtin College of the Arts and Roseworth, both of whom have extensive cultural and creative programs.

Students were also able to articulate convincingly why they regarded creativity to be important. For instance, a Roseworth Primary School male student stated:

"Creativity is what I will need most when I leave school, especially if I want to start a business or get a good job."



John Curtin College of the Arts students participate in a Thinker workshop

Comments from children and young people involved in the workshops:

"This workshop allowed us to express our opinions and find out about creativity." (La Salle College)

"I think it is really important to make sure kids are creative and use it to do what they want to, not what other people want them to." (La Salle College)

"I liked the workshop because it made me think of how creative people are." (La Salle College)

"Art helps you to be versatile." (Roseworth Primary School)

"The arts is something we love to do. So why would we not do it for a career?" (John Curtin College of the Arts)

"If you're not creative you're boring and no one likes boring people." (John Curtin College of the Arts)

"I see value and need for creativity because without creativity there is no way to explore new ideas." (John Curtin College of the Arts)

"Singing out loud and playing my guitar makes me feel peaceful and calm." (Albany)

"Dancing makes me feel alive." (Albany)

"A creative mind is going to help you do well in most jobs, but you're either naturally creative or not." (Albany)

At the same time there were a number of workshops with teachers, which also allowed the same concepts to be explored. These tended to confirm the experience CCE has had when piloting the same ideas in other countries. Teachers recognised the value of the 'habits of mind' in underpinning successful learning, but were quick to point out that observing these in children in class was often hard because there was little opportunity in the school day for children to display them. So for instance, while all teachers recognised the importance of 'inquisitiveness' and saw 'wondering and questioning', 'exploring and investigating' and 'challenging assumptions' as being fundamental to successful learning, the typical school day left very little opportunity for this to be exhibited. Most teachers did concede that this could be addressed by planning lessons differently. They generally agreed that it was not what you teach, but how you teach it, that matters and that different lesson plans could cover the same ground and achieve similar academic results while simultaneously providing students opportunities to display and explore more creative behaviours. They did not however feel that they would be able to make these changes in their own practice without support through appropriately designed and targeted professional development programs.

Feedback from teachers:

"The questions relating to 'is it wanted/needed/possible' will be buried in my brain as applicable to so many initiatives and projects. I'm going to turn this around immediately – that is: demonstrate first then look for the rules. It's a small start but it will make a huge difference I feel."

"I will be digesting this for a while and will need to reflect upon how to further embed this across my school and interactions."

"The best point was: to teach kids they have the power to change their own lives."

"Thought provoking and inspiring."

"Thank you for a really valuable and inspirational morning. It is a shame that there were not more people and significant educational and political figures in attendance to hear it. It would be great to have the information passed through to educational bodies/boards to act upon."

"Amazing, fantastic, life changing."

"Loved it. Preaching to the converted but it is still wonderful to be able to converse, question and consider future possibilities in this area."

"I liked the link between creativity and wellbeing. More please!"

3.3 Interest in and awareness of the creative industries

While children and young people were generally quick to grasp the qualities and value of creative attributes, with the exception of students at John Curtin College of the Arts, they found it much harder to begin to understand the scope and potential of the creative industries.

Interestingly, in the case of students at John Curtin, less than half were planning to pursue a career in the creative or cultural industries but recognised that the skills they were acquiring through their work in the arts would increase their capacity to succeed more generally, and would create more opportunities for them.

There was also evidence, in schools without a specialism in the arts or a coherent approach to creativity, that young people with real creative ability and interest were adamant that they would not pursue those interests in lieu of a more traditional career. One young boy, who had talked with some passion about his interest and talent in cooking, for instance, was horrified to have it suggested to him that he might like to pursue a career as a chef rather than go into mining.

Employment in mining pays well, and will be attractive for this reason, but the statistics do not suggest that mining will be able to provide employment for all young people in Western Australia when they grow up and there seemed to be a lack of ambition to pursue other interests, or even to understand the nature of the skills required to succeed in mining. As Sam Walsh, Rio Tinto's executive director, said in his opinion piece in *The West Australian* during the residency:

*We are operating in a highly dynamic, competitive and evolving sector, where cutting-edge technology and a preparedness to innovate beyond the traditional boundaries can mean the difference between success and failure. Our employees of tomorrow will need to be flexible, smart thinking and creative....Imaginative approaches to how we recruit and retain people, market our products, manage our procurement function and address issues such as climate change are all helping us to stay ahead of the game.*¹³

This message needs to be communicated to young people growing up in Western Australia today. The skills and jobs required in the mining industry could well change out of all recognition and there is a danger that young people are developing misguided notions about the nature of the employment that will confront them when they graduate.

This complacency, which cannot be blamed on the mining industry, about the guarantee of employment that mining provides probably also explains the size of the creative sector, as analysed by Telesis Consulting et al¹⁴ on behalf of the Government of Western Australia. It is much smaller than would be predicted giving the size and scale of the Western Australian economy and is an inhibiting factor in its development. The creative and cultural industries contribute hugely to making it an attractive place in which to live. Digital technology minimises the disadvantage of geographical remoteness. The relatively small size of the creative industries suggests that businesses are buying from outside Western Australia services that could be provided within the region. Even to sustain the economic benefits of the mining industry, the creative industries need to grow in order to attract the pool of talent from which the industry will need to recruit. As the Telesis report points out, at least 2.5 per cent of the mining workforce can be defined as 'embedded' creatives. In other words, staff fulfilling functions that if delivered on a freelance or outsourced mode would count as being part of the creative industries, such as directly employed press and marketing staff or

designers. A much bigger percentage will be deploying the creative skills required in the creative industries without holding down jobs so labelled.

There is no reason to think therefore that the development of creativity will be any less important to the future economy of Western Australia than it is elsewhere in the economies of the developed world, but there is evidence that this is not understood in schools either by teachers or children, and that this could inhibit the future economic development of Western Australia.

Feedback from participants at the creative industries workshop:

"I feel validated in my push to raise the profile of the creative industries as an area for students to pursue. It was great to meet other people from outside the education sector."

"We need to continue this important work on education and creativity."

3.4 Valuing other cultures

One of the most interesting responses gathered from the students who were consulted as part of the residency was in relation to their interest in learning other languages. As part of the workshops with children and young people, the experience and attitude of the students towards other cultures was explored. We discussed with them the extent to which they had travelled abroad, the countries they had visited, the impression that this had made, their experience of non-European cultural events within Western Australia, the languages they spoke and the languages they would like to learn.

Access to foreign language tuition within schools of Western Australia is very limited, particularly Asian languages which are likely to figure significantly in the future lives of young people brought up in the State. This however is acknowledged as a significant problem with the DE and one which they would like to address.

However, when students were asked what languages they would like to learn, while a range of languages were suggested by individual students, there was a consistent pattern of interest among children in learning an Aboriginal language. The children and young people were obviously aware that there are many Aboriginal languages and dialects, and so this interest was not sparked

13. Walsh S 2011, 'Arts and business offer each other ways ahead', *The West Australian*, 17 November 2011, P. 20.

14. Telesis Consulting et al 2007, *Perth's Creative Industries – an analysis*, City of Perth.

by convenience. Rather it indicated that their natural openness and creativity in embracing diverse cultures was attracting them to explore Aboriginal culture. This should be welcomed.

The Canning Stock Route exhibition, which attracted big crowds when displayed in Perth from 2 to 27 November 2011, demonstrates dramatically the inherent vibrancy of contemporary Aboriginal culture. The remarkable capacity that Aboriginal artists demonstrate in this exhibition to absorb new media and in so doing reinvent and remake their own culture in pulsating contemporary form is

electrifying – all the more so in that they display the same ability whether using traditional pigments or digital media. It reveals Aboriginal culture to be a vibrant contemporary force, which, if embraced by the mainstream, has the potential to contribute towards the forging of a powerful modern identity for Western Australia.

That many young Western Australians appear to be showing an increased interest in Aboriginal culture and want support to help make it happen has the potential to be one of a very positive developments in the future of WA culture. Above all they should be encouraged to achieve it.



Paul Collard and CEO Western Australian Museum Alec Coles meet with community representatives in Albany

Case study - Yiwarra Kuju: the Canning Stock Route and The Canning Stock Route Project

Yiwarra Kuju: The Canning Stock Route is a landmark exhibition of art, oral history, film, photography and internationally award-winning multimedia. Developed and curated by Western Australian cultural organisation FORM, and produced in collaboration with the National Museum of Australia, Yiwarra Kuju offers a rare insight into Aboriginal experiences of Country, Dreaming, family and history in one of the most remote regions of the world.

The Canning Stock Route was created by Alfred Canning, a surveyor with the then Western Australian Department of Lands and Surveys. Canning's task was to find a route through 1850 kilometres of desert, from Wiluna in the Mid West to the Kimberley in the north. He needed to find significant water sources where wells could be dug – enough for up to 800 head of cattle, a day's walk apart –, and enough good grazing land to sustain this number of cattle during the journey south. In 1906, with a team of 23 camels, two horses and eight men, Canning surveyed the route completing the difficult journey from Wiluna to Halls Creek in less than six months. This was to enable beef to be supplied to the Goldfields in the south of the State. To make the route viable, Canning needed to locate the source of all the water along the route. He extracted this information from local Aboriginal people with considerable brutality.

Yiwarra Kuju traces the invisible trajectory of the century-old Canning Stock Route across the Country, stories, laws and relationships it superimposed. Told in the artists' own words, their stories feature on painting labels accompanying each work, in beautifully shot videos within each thematic and geographic area of Country, and in 140 short films that punctuate the award-winning multimedia installation One Road. As such, Yiwarra Kuju provides a rare insight into the significance of Country, Dreaming, family and culture to Aboriginal people in the Western Desert today.

Central to FORM's ethos for the Canning Stock Route Project was the desire to create ongoing training, leadership and employment opportunities for young Aboriginal people, via means that were adaptive, responsive and culturally appropriate, and to help build networks and opportunities for economic empowerment that would go on after the project ended. As well as employing Aboriginal cultural advisors, translators and technicians on the team, FORM devised two development programs for emerging Aboriginal curators and filmmakers.

For all of the young professionals, the experience of working on the project has given rise to new knowledge and awareness, and a desire to share that with other people, but on their own terms and in their own way.



Martu children with the painting Kunkun at Kunawarritji (Well 33). Photo by Morika Biljabu, 2008. FORM Canning Stock Route Project

4. What is creativity and why is it important?

The residency was also asked to consider the importance and value of creativity to the wellbeing of children and young people, drawing where appropriate on international research and evidence. Throughout the residency, the importance and value of creativity in the lives of children and young people was strongly endorsed by adults, children and young people, but it is worth rehearsing the key arguments.

Creativity is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon, which evades narrow definition. It occurs in many domains, including school, work, the wider world, and home. It is comparable to intelligence in a number of ways: every individual has it to some degree¹⁵; it can be developed; it has levels, so that we can ask 'how creative' an individual is¹⁶; it can be expressed in many ways; and it can be viewed as both a domain specific and a general ability.

Creativity has much in common with both 'learning' and 'intelligence' and once broken down into its component elements, it often ends up being included within the bundle of wider skills that policy makers throughout the developed world believe all individuals must acquire if they are going to experience both success and fulfilment in life.

To understand it better, CCE has commissioned a number of literature reviews over the last decade. The latest, completed in the summer of 2011, was produced by Guy Claxton and Bill Lucas at the Centre for Real World Learning at Winchester University¹⁷. This drew on other meta-analytical reviews of the creativity literature including that of Treffinger et al. (2002) which contains a systematic review of 120 definitions of creativity. This latter study located definitions of creativity in academic papers over many years exploring the traits, characteristics, and other personal attributes distinguishing highly creative individuals from their peers. They narrowed these down to 14 key definitions to represent the breadth of variety in emphasis, focus, and implications for assessment of the definitions.

Claxton and Lucas also highlighted the work of Beattie (2000)¹⁸ whose review shows that, since 1950, creativity has been analysed from nine different perspectives, which are: cognitive; social-personality; psychometric; psychodynamic; mystical; pragmatic or commercial and, latterly, more postmodern approaches: biological

or neuroscience; computational; and context, systems or confluent approaches. Beattie also notes the extraordinary range of approaches to the study of creativity, picking up on different themes explored through research including women and creativity; politics and creativity; and levels and types of creativity, either generally, or within specific subjects such as art education.

Despite the multi-dimensional nature of creativity, and the complexity of the debate that surrounds it, Claxton and Lucas have concluded that creativity comprises a number of observable attributes which could serve as indicators of the presence of creativity in individuals. They argue that these key observable attributes can be contained within five 'habits of mind' each possessing three 'sub-habits'. These are:

<i>Habit of Mind</i>	<i>Sub-Habits of Mind</i>
1. Inquisitive	Wondering and questioning Exploring and investigating Challenging assumptions
2. Persistent	Tolerating uncertainty Sticking with difficulty Daring to be different
3. Imaginative	Playing with possibilities Making connections Using intuition
4. Disciplined	Crafting and improving Developing techniques Reflecting critically
5. Collaborative	Cooperating appropriately Giving and receiving feedback Sharing the 'product'

This study is now informing further work being developed by CCE with the OECD which is intended to assist teachers in recognising and nurturing creativity in the classroom.

15. Csikszentmihalyi M 1996, *Creativity: Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention*, HarperCollins

16. Treffinger D, et al 2002, *Assessing Creativity: A guide for educators*, The National Research Centre on the Gifted and Talented

17. Claxton G and Lucas W 2011, *Literature Review: Progression in Creativity; developing new forms of assessment*, CCE

18. Beattie D 2000, 'Creativity in Art: The feasibility of assessing current conceptions in the school context', *Assessment in Education, Principles, Policy & Practice*, 7(2), 175-192.

But why is something as apparently complex and elusive as creativity seen as being fundamental to success and fulfilment in life. Five main reasons are usually given. Firstly, the 'habits of mind' described above unlock access to most aspects of modern life including both the arts and science and underpin success in most areas important to human beings, including relationships and employment. Secondly, the unlocking of creative potential in everyone is central to the modern democratic narrative. It appears to equalise the promise of individual fulfilment in ways in which traditional education and the redistribution of wealth is perceived to have failed. Thirdly, creativity is seen as a vital ingredient in the future economic success of the developed economies, where innovation is considered to depend 'on individuality and being open to thinking in ways that involve challenging social and other norms'¹⁹. In this sense, creativity is seen as a means to ensure that individuals, and thus nations, remain competitive and that businesses are successful. Finally, creative skills appear to be central to nearly all gainful employment in the developed economies, where jobs that do not require these skills are becoming increasingly rare.

How persuasive are these arguments?

It is certainly true that the developed economies are losing their traditional modes of employment. Resource extraction and manufacturing, which generated the vast majority of employment during the industrial era, are no longer central to the creation of jobs in developed economies. Generally, these economies have neither the minerals nor the cost base to compete in these sectors internationally. In the UK, the two largest sectors of the economy are now financial services and the creative industries, the latter being the fastest growing. So if economies are going to survive, it will be because the service and creative sectors continue to grow, replacing employment lost elsewhere. There may not be a strong evidence base to prove that the creative and service sectors have the capacity to grow to fill such a large gap, but for most economists and politicians there is nowhere else to look for new engines to drive growth in employment.

It is also true that in those areas where the UK and the USA's creative industries have been most successful globally, such as in fashion, pop music, design, architecture, television, film making and other digital media, the success has been derived from an individuality and openness of mind combined with a willingness to challenge social and other norms. For this reason, this brand of creativity is highly regarded elsewhere in the world.

There can also be little doubt that contemporary employers have very different expectations of their workforce. The demands of the modern workplace change rapidly and employers now need employees who combine numeracy and literacy with an aptitude for learning, a flexibility of mind, an ability to handle change and a developed inquisitiveness, more than they need employees who have mastered the knowledge required to pass exams in traditional academic subjects. It is also important to stress that many of the jobs in the new economies of the developed world will not be in traditional forms of employment. Portfolio working – where workers combine a variety of part-time jobs – short-term contracts and long periods of self employment will be typical of work in the 21st century. This will require greater self motivation, self reliance and an enhanced ability to work independently and without supervision. In addition, according the UK Government statistics, 60 per cent of all the jobs that kids in school today will do are not yet invented. Young people coming out of school will be expected to be capable of inventing their own jobs as the world is now looking for job creators rather than job seekers.

It seems clear therefore, that the creative 'habits of mind' established by Claxton and Lucas in their recent work will be necessary to succeed in employment in the 21st century and they do underpin success in many areas of life. Creative people are driving the fastest growing sectors in many of developed world's economies and hence more creative people can be assumed to stimulate more growth. Since creative skills will be so central to employment, it is essential that these are developed across society or the current inequities will grow. So a focus nurturing creativity through education would seem to deserve the priority it is receiving.



Artist Paula Hart works with students from Mirrabooka Senior High School

19. Craft A 2008, 'Tensions in Creativity and Education: Enter wisdom and trusteeship?' in Craft A, Gardner H and Claxton G (eds.) *Creativity, Wisdom, and Trusteeship: Exploring the Role of Education*, Corwin Press

Case study - Thistley Hough High School, United Kingdom

The staff of Thistley Hough High School were concerned about the projected exam results for students taking Biology. Working through Creative Partnerships, they brought in theatre practitioner Gordon Poad, who worked with the students to create a play out of the genetic curriculum they were studying in class.

The children created and performed a drama in which they imagined a world – not too far into the future – where the Government has passed a law requiring all 16 year-olds to submit to a blood test. If they were found to be carrying genetic diseases, the law stipulated that they would be sterilised.

The play, entitled *The Trial of Girl A*, deals with the case of a 16 year old girl who fails to take a blood test,

becomes pregnant and is found to be a carrier of a genetic disease. In the subsequent court trial, she is vigorously defended by a team of lawyers who argue that it is an illegal infringement of the girl's human rights to require her to be sterilised. The prosecution however argues for the rights of the unborn child, who will now be born suffering from incurable conditions, and the rights of the State, who will have to meet the cost of supporting the child. The students wrote and performed the whole piece.

The significant aspect of this project, however, was that when the students came to sit their exams at the end of the year, the result were on average 15 per cent better in Biology than in their other science subjects and their interest and retention of the facts significantly higher.

5. Does education need to focus on creativity?

All countries in the developed world see formal education as central to the preparation children and young people need for a successful and fulfilling life. They believe education can make a major contribution to reducing the inequalities that come from accident of birth.

They also think that education should develop in children and young people the skills and knowledge required in 21st century employment and prioritise those skills most likely to contribute to economic growth. What is in dispute, however, is how this can be achieved.

It is hard to provide evidence that a focus on creativity does improve the life chances of young people, simply because so little evidence has so far been gathered. But it is relatively easy to show that the current approaches to achieving the educational objectives described above are facing severe challenges and that change is necessary.

One of the major tools designed to assess the efficacy of the education systems in the developed world is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a testing of 16 year-olds across all the member countries of the OECD in Science, Maths and literacy. These tests, administered to

a sample of students in each country, require them to sit a series of written exams. In addition, they are tested for their interest and confidence in the subjects in which they are examined. PISA tests for interest and confidence because the predictor of progression into a career, in the sciences for example, is interest and confidence, rather than test results. Since one of the main objectives of teaching Science is to generate more scientists, it is important to establish whether success in exams is matched by an increase in interest and self confidence. The OECD then correlates findings. Chart 1 below shows the correlation between the interest students have in Science with Science test results in the latest year for which figures are available (2009). The three-letter codes on the chart indicate the average score achieved by students in each country.

The chart shows clearly that there is a strong inverse correlation between test scores and interest in Science across all the countries tested. The higher the test score, the lower the interest. Students in Finland, who consistently achieve the highest score in PISA tests, display the least interest.

Chart 1 - Correlation between interest in Science and Science score²⁰



20. Avisati F 2010, *Effective Teaching for Improving Students' Motivation, Curiosity, and Self-Confidence in Science* OECD, presentation to Education for Innovation: The Role of Arts and STEM Education, OCED/France Workshop – Paris, 23–24 May 2011

Chart 2 - Correlation between self-concept and Science test scores²¹



Chart 2 shows a similar negative correlation between confidence in Science – self-concept as defined by OECD – and Science scores. It shows that in many of those countries where students achieve high test scores, such as Japan and Korea, there is low self confidence in the subject. While there are undoubtedly cultural influences on this negative correlation, the results are of concern.

So while the focus in education on developing resources vital to future economic growth – such as generating more scientists – does not appear to be achieving its intended goals, what of the potential for education to reduce social inequalities and improve wellbeing?

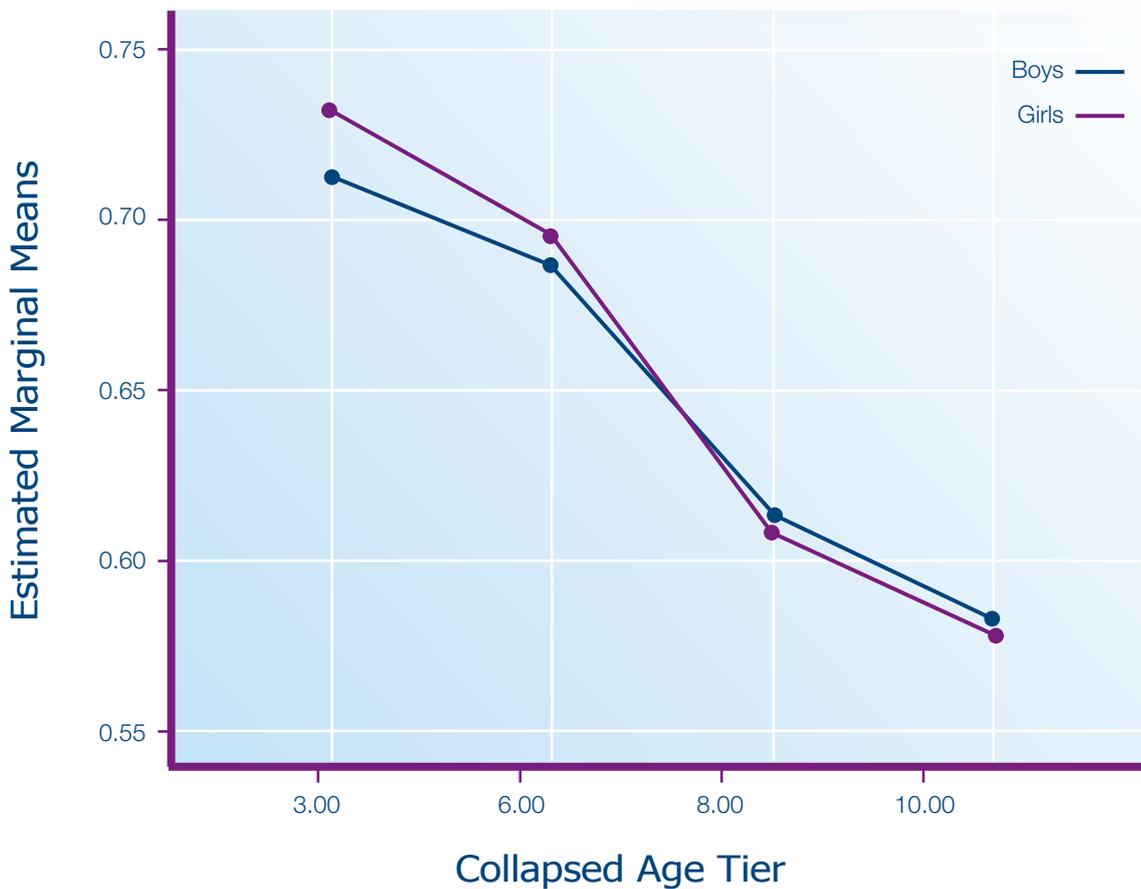
The measurement of wellbeing, to which education is also intended to make a contribution, is a relatively new area

of research, and hence there is little evidence on which a long-term trend can be established. In the UK, CCE have recently been trialling an approach to measuring wellbeing among children and young people in school with the Institute of Education at Cambridge University. The initial trialling of the approach suggests that there is a sharp decline in feelings of life satisfaction and competency among children and young people as they progress through the education system. Chart 3 shows the results of the survey²² which asked 5000 children and young people in English schools in Years 3, 6, 8 and 10 to assess their own wellbeing against a wide range of indicators.

21. Avisati F 2010, *Effective Teaching for Improving Students' Motivation, Curiosity, and Self-Confidence in Science OECD*, presentation to Education for Innovation: The Role of Arts and STEM Education, OCED/France Workshop – Paris, 23–24 May 2011

22. CCE – not yet published

Chart 3 - Children and young people estimate of their own wellbeing in school, Years 3, 6, 8 and 10



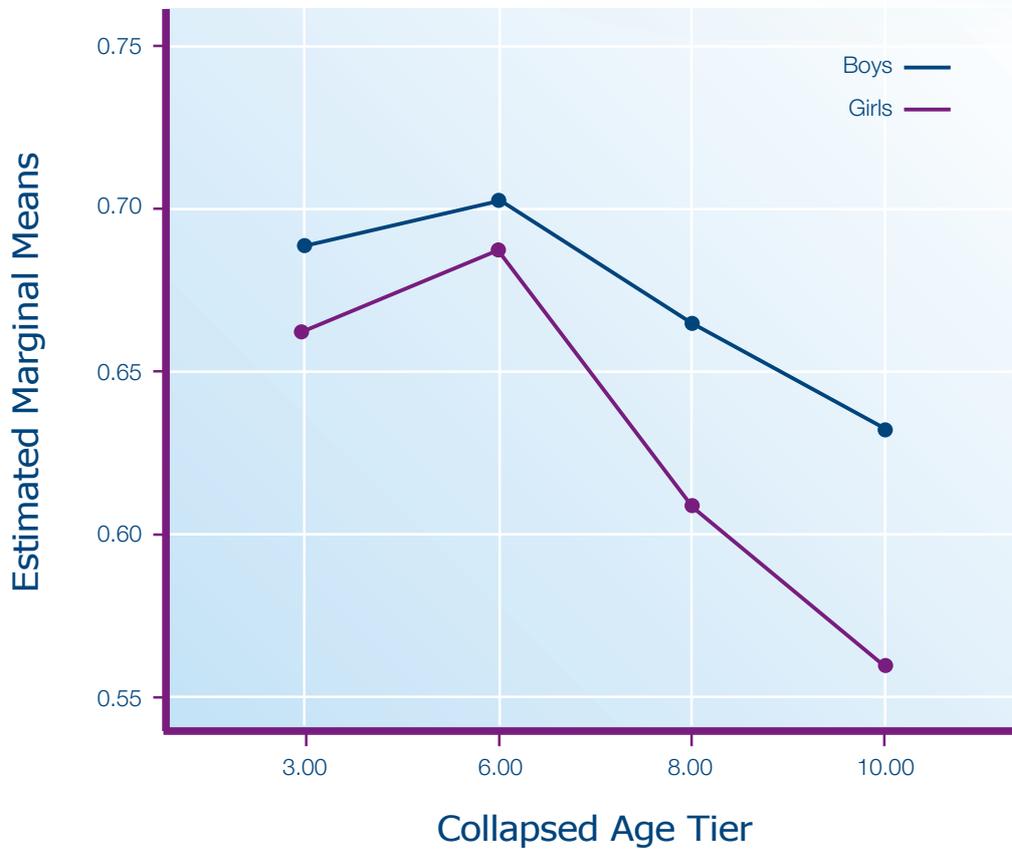
The chart shows a steady decline in feelings of wellbeing, with the steepest drop taking place between leaving primary school and completing the second year of secondary education.

Chart 4, shows the result of a similar assessment²³ by the children and young people of their own competency across a range of indicators. Again it shows a steady decline

in the belief of children and young people in their own competence as they progress through education. The peak at the end of Year 6, which is the final year of primary school education in England, also feels authentic, as it is the point when children tend to feel the most competent, as they finish primary school feeling bigger, better and more able than others below them in the school.

23. CCE – not yet published

Chart 4 - Children and young people estimate of their own competency in school, Years 3, 6, 8 and 10



But if the education systems are not proving themselves to be successful in producing suitably motivated young people, reducing inequality or improving wellbeing, what strategies have been adopted to introduce a focus on unlocking creativity?

Certainly in the UK, under the last Labour Government, there was a sustained effort to support the development of creative teaching and teaching for creativity in the English school system. This was reflected in the commissioning of the Ken Robinson report 'All our Futures'²⁴, which was published in 1999 and utilised in the revision of the national curriculum in 2005, in a number of reports by the school inspection service Ofsted, in an enquiry by the House of Commons Select Committee on Education in 2007 and in the Government's response to the enquiry in 2008, and in initiatives by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, the National College for School Leadership and the Teacher Development Agency.

This led to a variety of approaches such as:

- Building Learning Power
- the Campaign for Learning's work on 'learning to learn'
- Learning Outside the Classroom alliance
- the Royal Society for encouragement of the Arts' Opening Minds
- Musical Futures
- Open Futures, and
- Philosophy for Children.

However, the biggest and most sustained approach was through the establishment of the Creative Partnerships program.

24. National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, 1999, *All our Futures: Creative and Cultural and Education*, DFEE

The principles that made some of these approaches effective were best defined by the UK Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (2005) *Creativity: Find it, promote it*, which argued that schools that were effective in stimulating creativity:

- value and celebrate creativity; the process as well as the outcome
- develop creative pedagogies by encouraging professional collaboration, within and beyond the school
- provide opportunities for students to experience a stimulating physical environment and to engage with creative people
- manage time effectively, providing opportunities for students to explore, concentrate for extended periods of time, reflect, discuss and review.

These attributes were central to the design and delivery of the Creative Partnerships program.

Elsewhere in Europe, however, there has been no similar attempt to focus on the development of creativity. In the mainstream there remains a fairly traditional approach to arts education, where the focus is on providing opportunities for children and young people to enjoy or participate in the arts. So, for instance:

- the Norwegian Cultural Rucksack program pays for performers to give occasional performances in schools
- the Swedish Creative Schools program provides schools with funds to employ the occasional artist
- the Dutch Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie encourages the provision of new cultural opportunities for disadvantaged communities
- the German Kulturagenten für Kreative Schulen program pays artists to work in schools building relationships between the schools
- cultural institutions and KulturKontakt do similar work in Austria.

But the main aim of all these programs is to instill an interest in the arts, and they all lack a theoretical and practical connection with the development of children and young people or a solid rooting in creative pedagogies and the school curriculum. They are programs conceived as being in addition to school work, not as being central to

education. In particular, they lack a systematic approach to teacher development, which should focus on developing an understanding in teachers of creativity, how to nurture it in the classroom and how to allow for its incorporation in lesson planning.

Meanwhile in North America, where within key universities there is substantial research into the nature and character of creativity, there is very little focus on its development in the classroom. There are exceptions. Creative Oklahoma, an initiative within the State of Oklahoma, supports a program called A+ Schools, and the Lincoln Centre has adopted a school which it uses to model some of its ideas for a sustained impact on education. North of the border in Canada, the Royal Conservatory of Music runs a program, entitled Learning through the Arts, which delivers a one-academic-year model of activity for teachers in a number of Canadian schools. All of them share a commitment to providing sustained support for teachers, who ultimately will have to embed a new practice in their classrooms if it is to have the sustained impact on children and young people that is required.

Elsewhere in the major economies, there is a growing awareness of the problems but few system-level programs to address them. Students in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong rank highly in the PISA tables in Science and Maths but suffer from a considerable disparity between high achievements and low engagement of students. Student performance is amongst the very best in the world but results in enjoyment, competence and interest in the subject are among the lowest. The situation is very similar in Korea and Singapore. Currently, the issue is perceived to be one of teacher competence and experience, and all three countries are exploring teacher exchange programs to give teachers the opportunity to experience other approaches. However, this approach does not represent a significant attempt to challenge some of the underlying cultural issues which make unlocking creativity in Chinese, Korean and Singaporean classrooms such a challenge.

So despite a widespread acceptance that education in its current form is failing to deliver on its objectives and even though the importance of nurturing creativity in the classroom is widely accepted, there are few examples of a systematic approach to the implementation of creative education strategies within the OECD countries. It is for this reason that CCE's Creative Partnership program has attracted so much international interest.

Case study - King's Wings

CCE stresses the importance of giving children and young people real responsibility to enable them to learn to become responsible for their own learning and development. In a pioneering project with a primary school serving a disadvantaged community in Stoke-on-Trent in England, children were given responsibility for developing a new learning space in the school grounds as part of a plan to raise attainment and improve aspiration. The children described the project thus:

"We had wanted a new learning space since the school opened (in 2005). When we thought about it we wanted something different, something that would make our minds tick. Our ideas included a tree house and a castle, but when one of our friends came up with the idea of an aeroplane, we all agreed that it was a brilliant idea. The idea made us all small and we thought that our teachers would say 'no'.

Imagine our surprise when Mr Lawrence, our head teacher, loved the idea. We managed to buy a Short 360 aircraft for our school. We were soon thinking about how to use the plane for learning and realised we would have to solve a few problems and start by redesigning the inside.

We can learn anything in a plane. We can imagine it's a time machine and time travel. We can visit the Caribbean, rainforests and deserts and we are thinking about how we can use new technology to power our plane."

The positive effects that working on the project have had on the whole school continue to grow. Attainment across all subjects has increased significantly, with the most positive SAT results in the school's history, and its first ever oversubscribed year.



Staff and students with their aircraft learning space

6. What evidence is there that a focus on creativity delivers measureable educational benefits?

Where a systematic approach to developing creativity in the classroom has been developed the evidence generated is encouraging. Research into the impact of the Creative Partnerships program in the UK probably provides the most compelling evidence, as it is the largest intervention of its kind in the world, and has been accompanied by some of the most thorough evaluations.

6.1 The impact on attainment

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) has completed a study of 13,000 young people who have participated in Creative Partnerships activities. NFER found that:

Young people known to have attended Creative Partnerships activities out-performed those in the same schools... at all three key stages. This was evident in average scores in English, Mathematics and Science, in Key Stages 2 and 3 and in total points scores, best 8 points scores and Science at Key Stage 4.²⁵

The tracking of the same 13,000 young people has continued and NFER submitted a further report in 2008 which concluded that the improvement in academic attainment is being maintained:

The results of this study suggest that Creative Partnerships is contributing to improved levels of attainment. For example, young people who have attended Creative Partnerships activities made, on average, the equivalent of 2.5 grades better progress in GCSE than similar young people in other schools.²⁶

This reflects the observations of head teachers of Creative Partnership schools who were surveyed by British Market Research Bureau (BMRB) in 2006.²⁷ BMRB reported that:

- 75 per cent of head teachers surveyed had observed improvement in academic standards at their schools as a result of being involved in Creative Partnerships programs.
- 79 per cent had observed improvements in attainment as a result of being involved in Creative Partnerships programs.

This impact was most evident in schools in the most disadvantaged areas where 81 per cent of head teachers had observed improvements in both educational standards and attainment as a result of their involvement in the program.

6.2 The impact on parents

A key predictor of the academic attainment of young people is the degree to which their parents are involved in their education. For this reason, Creative Partnerships commissioned a report in 2008 from the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education²⁸ into the extent to which Creative Partnerships programs encourage parents to engage with their child's education. The report found:

- When children are engaged in short-term or long-term Creative Partnerships projects they extensively describe these experiences at home.
- When creative projects in school are sustained, parents feel they understand more about what their children are learning in school, and they begin to develop perspectives on their children as learners and on what constitutes learning in and out of school.
- Parents perceive creative programs as offering long-term benefits which positively influence children's aspirations as well as their learning.
- Creative programs offer low-risk invitations which encourage some parents to engage with teachers and the whole school, in some cases taking on employment at the school as a result of initial involvement in creative projects.
- Such projects also involve some parents in social networks of other adults in the wider community.
- Children's engagement with creative programs leads some parents to reflect on themselves as learners and to take-up cultural and other learning opportunities for themselves as well as for their children.
- Creative partnerships offer strong models for developing and sustaining wider family learning as well as parental involvement in children's learning.

25. Eames A, et al 2006, *The longer term impact of Creative Partnerships on the attainment of young people*, NFER, p. 22, para 5.3.

26. Kendall L, et al 2008, *The longer-term impact of Creative Partnerships on the attainment of young people: Results from 2005 and 2006*, NFER, p. 3.

27. Mackey T and Ullman A 2006, *Creative Partnerships: Survey of Headteachers*, Arts Council England, Creative Partnerships

28. Safford K & O'Sullivan O 2007, 'Their learning becomes your journey' *Parents respond to Children's work in Creative Partnerships*, Centre for Literacy in Primary Education.

6.3. The wider impact on students, schools and teachers

The independent survey of head teachers conducted by BMRB²⁹ and referred to above also assessed the wider impact of the program. Secondary schools reported that:

- 92 per cent have seen an improvement in students' confidence
- 91 per cent have seen an improvement in students' communication skills
- 87 per cent have seen an improvement in students' motivation
- 80 per cent have seen an improvement in students' enjoyment of school
- 78 per cent have seen an increase in students' ability to learn independently
- 70 per cent have seen an improvement in students' behaviour

The impact on teachers was also considerable with head teachers from all schools observing that:

- 94 per cent have seen an improvement in the teaching skills of their teachers
- 92 per cent can see their teachers to be more effective in using creative professionals in the classroom
- 92 per cent can see that their teachers are more willing to take a creative approach

In 2008, NFER explored the impact of Creative Partnerships programs on attendance. This found:

Participation in Creative Partnerships was shown to be associated with an educationally significant reduction in total absence rates in primary schools and that this reduction increased over a period of some years as Creative Partnerships became more established in these schools.³⁰

It must be stressed that finding educationally significant statistical evidence is extremely rare, and indicates a strong probability that the only possible explanation of the evidence is that Creative Partnerships is the cause of the observed effect.

It is also consistent with the other research findings, in that poor attendance at primary schools is mainly the result of poor parental engagement. The fact that Creative Partnerships programs have been shown separately to boost parental engagement and improve student



Workshop held at Mirrabooka Senior High School

motivation would create an expectation that attendance would improve. That the NFER study can independently confirm a dramatic improvement in attendance is highly significant.

6.5. The impact on the economy

Creative Partnerships programs have also been shown to have an impact beyond schools. An independent study by Burns Owens Partnership in 2006³¹ demonstrated that Creative Partnerships is having a significant impact on the development of individual creative practitioners:

Creative Partnerships has nurtured a pool of practitioners and creative agents that are highly skilled, with a strong understanding of the education market.³²

Approximately 35 per cent of creative practitioners in the UK had been working in the sector for less than three years. This group of emerging professionals and new companies gained the biggest benefits from Creative Partnerships in terms of new skills, confidence and CV enhancement. Thus, working on Creative Partnerships programs was shown to have a positive effect on the professional development of the creative sector.

29. Mackey T and Ullman A 2006, *Creative Partnerships: Survey of Headteachers*, Arts Council England, Creative Partnerships

30. Eames A, et al 2008, *The impact of Creative Partnerships on Pupil Behaviour*, NFER.

31. BOP Consulting 2006, *Study of the Impact of Creative Partnerships on the Cultural and Creative Economy*, Creative Partnerships.

32. BOP Consulting 2006, *Study of the Impact of Creative Partnerships on the Cultural and Creative Economy*, Creative Partnerships.

Approximately half of creative professionals who worked with Creative Partnerships have developed other work and employed other creative professionals as a result of their involvement with the program.

It is estimated that around 70 per cent of Creative Partnerships funding goes directly to creative practitioners.

6.6. Ofsted: The impact of Creative Partnerships

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) is the UK Government's school inspection program. In addition to inspecting all schools in England at least once every five years, Ofsted carries out occasional 'theme' reports considering particular aspects of education and specific programs. In 2006 and 2010 Ofsted published reports following inspections of the Creative Partnerships program. The findings of the Ofsted inspection corroborate many of the findings of the studies summarised above, confirming that Creative Partnerships is delivering improvements in the aspiration and achievements of young people and in the skills and creativity of teachers.

Ofsted inspectors reported that they had seen evidence of significant improvements in the basic learning skills of young people who had participated in Creative Partnerships activities:

Improvements in literacy, particularly writing, and speaking were significant in the majority of schools visited... Developing and applying mathematical skills in context was also an indicator of students' achievement which several schools identified... Students used information and communications technology (ICT) effectively to research, explore, develop and model ideas in and across different subjects.³³

Inspectors also found that the projects had improved the confidence and creative skills of young people:

Most Creative Partnerships programs were effective in developing in students some attributes of creative people: an ability to improvise, take risks, show resilience and collaborate with others. Creative practitioners, teachers and support staff clearly valued these as skills for students to develop and apply in order to express their own creativity. The majority of students interviewed knew these qualities were considered important.³⁴



Students from the Great Southern region, including some from remote communities, take part in a workshop

The development of these new skills and attributes contributes significantly to improvement in the overall attitude of young people to education:

Often the outcomes of programs could be seen in changed attitudes and behaviours, and the demonstration of creative approaches to work. This represents a significant achievement; it included teachers who previously lacked belief in their own creativity and ability to inspire creativity in others, and students who were previously unconvinced by approaches to learning or the value of education.

For some students their involvement in Creative Partnerships proved a turning point; good attendance and participation in learning continued beyond the project. In a small but significant proportion of schools, improvements in students' attitudes and behaviour during projects signalled the start of a return to schooling.³⁵

Inspectors also found that Creative Partnerships' programs were contributing to an improvement in the broader wellbeing of children and young people:

The vast majority of students directly involved enjoyed their education in and through Creative Partnerships; good behaviour, cooperation, enthusiasm and pride were common outcomes. Skills that were consistently improved – literacy, numeracy, ICT, self confidence, team working, an ability to show enterprise and handle change – are likely to contribute to students' future economic wellbeing.

33. Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2010, *Learning: creative approaches that raise standards*, Ofsted, HMI080266

34. Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2006 *Creative Partnerships: Initiative and Impact*, Ofsted, HMI2517

35. Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2006 *Creative Partnerships: Initiative and Impact*, Ofsted, HMI2517



The nature of particular initiatives enabled some students to develop good regard for the safety and wellbeing of others; they showed high levels of responsibility in potentially high risk situations such as handling different materials.³⁶

The 2010 Ofsted report confirmed the conclusions reached in the first report:

Schools in challenging circumstances – those with a higher than average proportion of students eligible for free schools meals, low attainment on entry and high rates of student mobility – showed the greatest improvements in students' ability to draw discerningly on a range of data and work collaboratively to solve problems; their reading and writing; their speaking and listening; and their personal development.³⁷

Of particular importance to the arguments in favour of introducing approaches to education focused on creativity was the following conclusion:

In schools with good teaching, there is not a conflict between the National Curriculum, national standards in core subjects and creative approaches to learning. In the schools which were visited for this survey, careful planning had ensured that the prescribed curriculum content for each subject was covered within a broad and flexible framework and key skills were developed. These examples were accompanied by better than average achievement and standards or a marked upward trend.³⁸

Ofsted also commented on how this had been achieved and highlighted the conditions necessary to bring about such improvements in schools:

Good professional development within the school was a key factor in helping teachers to encourage and assess creative approaches to learning and improve their subject knowledge. Externally produced resources and short training courses had limited impact without local training and continuing in-school support.³⁹

As part of their regular inspections of schools, Ofsted inspectors also regularly comment on the impact of Creative Partnerships on the performance of individual schools. For instance in a recent inspection of the London secondary school, Thomas Tallis, Ofsted inspectors wrote:

The school's strong commitment to creative learning helps students to think for themselves in other subjects.

From the start of Year 7 students are encouraged to take a creative approach and they are aware that it will be valued. They become proud to show off their work, becoming more confident learners as a result. Students' personal development is outstanding, and there are clear and documented links between the use of creative tasks, increasing interest, involvement and enthusiasm, and the good or excellent learning that was seen in lessons. Vibrant lessons, in which students' thinking skills are actively promoted, result in achievement that is at least good. Creative learning techniques make a significant contribution to the quality of learning because students are active in producing work, and in assessing their own and one another's work against criteria. This promotes rapid progress.⁴⁰

And this is from a visit to another Creative Partnerships School of Creativity, Rosehill Primary School:

The school's approach to creative learning has a very positive impact on achievement because students are highly motivated to learn, whether this be in developing basic skills or applying their knowledge and understanding. By the end of Year 2, national tests show that standards are significantly above average. Students develop particularly good analytical skills because staff provide innovative structures to support this learning. For example, in Year 2 students confidently analysed the setting, sound, action and language of a film as part of a multimodality project. A much higher than average proportion of students reaches the expected level by the end of Year 6, which reflects students' confidence in gaining new skills. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are much higher than expected. Students develop skills including producing sophisticated 3D animations very confidently or manipulating sound tracks to enhance the reading of the poems that have been written in literacy.⁴¹

Both schools draw their students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Both schools are considered by Ofsted as 'Outstanding', the highest assessment level possible. Both schools exemplify the capacity of Creative Partnerships to help schools to use creative learning to deliver the best quality education for young people.

36. Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2006 *Creative Partnerships: Initiative and Impact*, Ofsted, HMI2517

37. Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2010, *Learning: creative approaches that raise standards*, Ofsted, HMI080266

38. Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2010, *Learning: creative approaches that raise standards*, Ofsted, HMI080266

39. Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2010, *Learning: creative approaches that raise standards*, Ofsted, HMI080266

40. Ofsted 2008 C&D survey report Thomas Tallis School (unpublished)

41. Ofsted 2008, C&D survey report Rosehill Primary School (unpublished)

6.7 Economic Impact

In 2010, CCE commissioned the international accountancy firm PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) to assess the overall economic impact of the Creative Partnerships program. Using the principles and multipliers laid out by the UK Treasury's 'Green Book' which defines how economic impact should be calculated to achieve a consistent and comparable standard across all economic impact analyses, PWC considered the evidence emerging from the complete portfolio of Creative Partnerships research and evaluation.

PWC concluded that the total economic return to the UK Treasury of their investment in Creative Partnerships could be calculated as follows:

Creative Partnerships is estimated to have generated or is expected to generate a net positive economic benefit of just under £4bn. Expressed as a ratio of the benefits to the costs, we estimate that every £1 invested in the program delivers £15.30 worth of benefits.⁴²

In summary, there is convincing and robust independent evidence that a focus on creativity in schools results in improved attainment across the curriculum, more engaged parents, improved motivation, behaviour and attendance and the development of a range of skills which underpin success and fulfilment in children and young people growing up in the 21st century.



Students from Bertram Primary School

42. PricewaterhouseCoopers 2010, *The Costs and Benefits of Creative Partnerships*,: Creativity, Culture and Education

7. *Where next for creativity in Western Australia?*

The time is ripe in Western Australia for a major intervention. It possesses the ambition, the ability and the need. At a strategic level, both within the private and public sector, the importance of creativity is understood, its contribution to improving the wellbeing of children and young people is valued, and the need to take positive action to unlock their creativity acknowledged.

There is also clear evidence that there are schools and other organisations that are already doing so, and that there are people in the education and cultural sectors with the ambition, commitment and talent to see it happen.

To date, however, the approach taken has been small in scale, episodic and lacking in a coherent connection to the core business of schools. Creativity has been treated as a welcome extra, rather than central to the development of successful schools, high achieving students and strengthened communities. In particular, access and benefit is currently more likely to be gained by students from better-off backgrounds who are more likely to attend those schools where such opportunities exist and sign up for after school programs to extend their engagement.

So the priority now for Western Australia should be to build on the excellent practice which already exists, to develop a sustained, long-term intervention in schools. Based on CCE's experience of designing and managing similar programs elsewhere, and assuming that Western Australia employed a similar approach, the following would be recommended for Western Australia.

7.1 Characteristics of a 'creativity' program:

- The program should be targeted at those schools, students and communities who most need access to such a program. The DE Director General, Sharyn O'Neill, described such schools in a meeting during the residency as 'ripe' schools; schools which knew they had a problem, were prepared to do something about it and knew that a different approach was necessary.
- The program should be sustained over a number of years. Although improvements will be visible quickly, real embedded change takes time. CCE's experience elsewhere suggests that schools should be given four years.

- The program should be of sufficient scale. The number of schools who have achieved significant levels of improvement should be enough to trigger a systemic change. It is suggested that working with about 10 per cent of schools in Western Australia (around 80) would be sufficient to generate the evidence, experience and excitement to promote change elsewhere.
- The program should be subject to a rigorous evaluation. Building in from the start both the budget and the systems to rigorously assess the impact of the program would be essential in ensuring that its impact is maximised and that the evidence of value is generated.
- The program should be central to each school's improvement and development agenda and able to work effectively across the curriculum and in any subject.
- The program should be developed around the attributes defined by the UK's Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for successful creative programs which include; valuing and celebrating both the creative process and outcome, encouraging professional collaboration within and beyond the school, providing opportunities for students to experience a stimulating physical environment and to engage with creative people, managing time effectively, providing opportunities for students to explore, concentrate for extended periods of time, reflect, discuss and review.

7.2 Governing partnership with responsibility for the program

To signify the strategic importance of the initiative the program should be overseen by a partnership which included both the public and the private sector, and engaged all the key departments of State, including Education, Culture and the Arts and Regional Development as well as the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

7.3 Characteristics of an organisation to deliver the program

The day-to-day management of the program would only require a small team. Experience elsewhere suggests that such teams are most effective when located within larger institutions where they benefit from the latter's scale, authority and reach. This approach also tends to keep down costs as the program can benefit from shared central services such as finance, office management and HR. On this basis, an organisation which took responsibility for such a program in Western Australia should have the following characteristics.

- It should have an organisational vision which places creativity at its heart.
- It should have the capacity and the desire to make the delivery of the program central to the long term development of the organisation.
- It should be of sufficient scale and financial robustness to handle the funding and management of such a program with ease.
- It should be accustomed to operating on a statewide basis.
- It should be able to signal clearly that creativity is not confined to the arts by operating across a wide spectrum of cultural, scientific and technical arenas.
- It should have experience of working within the education sector and with schools in particular.
- It should be prepared and have the capacity to deploy existing staff to support the program.

7.4 Creative and cultural partners

The in-school programs would be developed in partnership with cultural and creative individuals and organisations from across Western Australia. Working together with teachers, children and young people, they would devise and deliver creative projects which addressed and resolved a wide variety of school issues.

This way of working would provide opportunities for all the major cultural institutions in Western Australia to be involved in the program as well as many creative companies and individuals. It would be the responsibility of the program team to broker and manage these partnerships.

This would enable the program to harness the considerable talent and creativity which exists within the State for the benefit of its children and young people.



Roseworth students work on their column

7.5 Timescale for the launch of a program

Experience elsewhere strongly favours aligning the delivery of the program to the academic year. Schools plan on this basis and if the program is to be central to a school's plans, then it will have to align to their planning frameworks.

This argues in favour of having the program begin in January. Prior to the start of the program in schools, the following milestones would have to be completed:

- A business case and detailed business plan developed and agreed.
- Funding confirmed.
- A team to manage the program appointed.
- Schools to participate in the program selected.
- Teachers and creative professionals to work on the program having received induction training.

The detailed business case would assess the speed with which the program could be implemented in Western Australia

7.6 Impacts

The program would be designed to have the following impacts on children and young people:

- Develop creativity.
- Boost attainment and aspiration among students.
- Increase parental engagement.
- Enhance behaviour.
- Improve wellbeing.

This combination of impacts would also strengthen the future employability of the children and young people who participate.

The program would also constitute a substantial investment in the professional development of teachers in Western Australia as it would provide them with the opportunity to refresh and develop their practice with the help of outside professional help.

7.7 Scale of funding required

A four year program in schools of the scale suggested would cost between AU\$7m and AU\$8m. Very little funding would be required in 2012. The remainder of the funding would be spread over four years, implying an annual budget of around AU\$1.75m. Six or seven partners each contributing AU\$250,000 per year would enable this project to happen.

If the program were to achieve a similar rate of return to that achieved by Creative Partnerships in the UK, this would return over AU\$100 million to the State.



Paul Collard and Michelle Scott present at a Thinker stakeholder seminar

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

This is an exciting time for Western Australia. It has one of the strongest economies in the developed world, a wide variety of natural resources and advantages, a population which is in the main skilled, confident and ambitious. It has the opportunity to invest wisely for its future.

Despite the richness of its mineral resources, its biggest and most valuable resource is its human capital and any long-term strategy for the State should aim to improve its capacities and capabilities. For this reason, a wise investment in the education of its children and young people may bring the biggest return of all.

This report has argued that the time is ripe for a major investment in unlocking the creativity of the children and young people in Western Australia, and an outline of how this might be achieved is contained in section seven. A number of additional recommendations are also made in the report. These are that:

- The ambitions of the Classroom First strategy, and in particular its commitment to providing a rounded education, requires clearly defined measures of success, beyond the attainment and behaviour factors which are already understood in the classroom and valued in the community.
- Better training and professional development for teachers is offered to support new approaches in the classroom
- Better quality data on the engagement and participation of children and young people in cultural and creative activities needs to be gathered.
- More needs to be done to improve public understanding of the role and importance of creativity and the creative industries.

But the most memorable aspect of the residency was undoubtedly the passion, enthusiasm and excitement of the many people who participated in the workshops,



Paul Collard and students from Bertram Primary School

seminars and discussions that comprised the residency program. This report is intended to capture their clear commitment to invest in all the ways they can in unlocking the creativity of children and young people. The report's recommendations are intended to be an expression of their ambition to make a significant difference to the quality and outcomes of young lives in Western Australia

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The views expressed in this report are those of Paul Collard and are not necessarily those of the Commissioner for Children and Young People or the partner agencies listed below.

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